

GEORGE M. PARÁSSOGLOU, ΔΕΞΙΑ ΧΕΙΡ ΚΑΙ ΓΟΝΥ [*Dexia cheir kai gony*] : some thoughts on the postures of the ancient Greek and Romans when writing on papyrus rolls, in «Scrittura e civiltà» (ISSN: 0392-1697), 3 (1979), pp. 5-21.

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GEORGE M. PARÁSSOGLOU

ΔΕΞΙΑ ΧΕΙΡ ΚΑΙ ΓΟΝΥ

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE POSTURES OF THE ANCIENT GREEKS
AND ROMANS WHEN WRITING ON PAPYRUS ROLLS¹

*If they wish to write, let them
use their knees for a table².*

Of the postures adopted by the ancient scribe for writing on papyrus, those of the Egyptian are the most abundantly illustrated and well known³. « Normally [...] he sat cross-legged, with his short kilt tightly stretched between his thighs, which thus formed a sort of substitute for a table or writing-desk on which the open section of the roll of papyrus lay. While the right hand wrote, the left steadied the unwritten and still rolled-up portion of the roll, and unwound it as necessary. Other representations show a different posture, in which one knee was raised in front of the writer to form a sloping support for the open section of the roll, which then rested on the knee and thigh. Tables or desks are never used »⁴.

1. A shorter version of this paper was read during the XV^e Congrès International de Papyrologie held at Bruxelles and Louvain from 29 August to 3 September 1977. I am very grateful to Prof. Naphtali Lewis for suggesting that I undertake this study and for correcting much of what I have written; to Prof. Guglielmo Cavallo for inviting me to publish it here and to Prof. Jean Bingen, secretary of the organization committee of the congress, for granting me permission to do so.

2. From an Elizabethan school statute cited by S. F. BONNER, *Education in Ancient Rome, From the elder Cato to the younger Pliny*, London 1977, p. 126, from N. CARLISLE, *The Endowed Grammar Schools*, I, London 1818, p. 515.

3. The little that we know about Jewish scribes has been collected and discussed by B. M. METZGER, *Historical and Literary Studies, Pagan, Jewish, and Christian*, Leyden 1968, pp. 134-7, an appendix not included in the original publication of his paper *When Did Scribes Begin to Use Writing Desks?*, in *Akten des XI. internationalen Byzantinistenkongresses, München 1958*, München 1960, pp. 355-62.

4. T. C. SKEAT, *The Use of Dictation in Ancient Book-Production*, in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 42 (1956), p. 183, who refers to J. ČERNÝ, *Paper and Books*

When we turn, however, to the northern shores of the Mediterranean, we are confronted with a disconcerting scarcity of representations of persons writing on papyrus rolls. The date of the introduction of papyrus for writing purposes in Greece has been the subject of lengthy debates, but we may agree with the leading authority in the field that « by the sixth century B.C. papyrus was clearly in common use in the Greek world, serving as the vehicle for literature as well as for more mundane purposes ». Papyrus was introduced to Rome later, perhaps by the fourth century B.C.⁵ Thanks to vases, frescoes, statues and reliefs we possess an abundance of representations of papyrus books from the sixth century B.C. onwards⁶, but the evidence on the postures of the ancient Greeks and Romans when writing on papyrus rolls is meagre and dates from the imperial period⁷.

in Ancient Egypt, London 1952, pp. 13-14. For the postures of the Egyptian scribes see briefly TH. BIRT, *Die Buchrolle in der Kunst. Archäologisch-antiquarische Untersuchungen zum antiken Buchwesen*, Leipzig 1907, pp. 10-14. Plates may be found in most handbooks of Egyptian art; see the recent collection in M. A. HUSSEIN, *Origins of the Book. Egypt's Contribution to the Development of the Book from Papyrus to Codex*, Leipzig 1970, pp. 27, 29, 31-3, 35, 37. The classic illustration of the typical Egyptian posture of the scribe is the limestone statuette of the so-called « scribe of the Louvre », dating from the Fifth Dynasty (ca. 2700 - ca. 2600 B.C.), reproduced many times. I am not competent to judge the correctness of the theory that the Egyptian scribes depicted in such a posture had placed a triangular lap-board under their kilt to insure rigidity; see L. LEGRAND, *À propos des statuettes d'homme à l'époque archaïque et à l'Ancien Empire*, in *Chronique d'Égypte* 46 (1971), pp. 11-22, esp. 19-20.

5. For the possible dates of the introduction of papyrus as writing material in Greece and Rome see now N. LEWIS, *Papyrus in Classical Antiquity*, Oxford 1974, pp. 84-9, with all the important previous bibliography. The quotation comes from p. 87.

6. The standard collection of the artistic and archaeological evidence is still BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit. For reliefs see also E. PFÜHL, *Zur Darstellung von Buchrollen auf Grabreliefs*, in *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 22 (1907), pp. 113-32, and M. WEGNER, *Die Musensarkophage [Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs, V.3]*, Berlin 1966; for vases, H. R. IMMERWAHR, *Book Rolls on Attic Vases*, in *Classical, Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies in Honor of B. L. Ullman*, I, Rome 1964, pp. 17-48, and *More Book Rolls on Attic Vases*, in *Die Antike Kunst* 16 (1973), pp. 143-7.

7. I do not discuss below the Ficoroni gem that BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., p. 206, describes as depicting a youth writing on « vielleicht eine Rolle, von der man nur den abgerollten Teil sieht », for it is quite obvious that the boy is holding a large rectangular tablet in his left hand and a *stilus* in his right. See O. JAHN, *Über Darstellungen des Handwerks und Handelsverkehrs auf antiken Waldgemälden*, in *Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften* 12 (1870), p. 297 with pl. V.7.

Sources are indeed plentiful when it comes to persons writing on tablets. An accumulation of artistic and archaeological testimony suggests that Muses, administrators, businessmen, and stenographers often wrote while standing, holding their tablets in their left hand⁸. On the other hand there is equally copious evidence, both artistic and literary, to suggest that the Greeks and Romans learned their letters while seated not on the ground but on stools, benches and chairs, the usual furniture of the classical and Hellenistic classroom; that they did their homework seated on stools or chairs; and that it was seated on similar pieces of furniture that their tutors or teachers corrected it⁹. Authors also composed while seated in the same man-

8. See BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., pp. 202-3 and 206-7; H. I. MARROU, *Μουσικὸς Ἀνῆρ. Études sur les scènes de la vie intellectuelle figurant sur les monuments funéraires romains*, Grenoble 1938, pp. 148-50 nos. 187-92; WEGNER, *Die Musensarkophage* cit., pls. 37, 39, 59, 69, 72, 83, 90, 96, 100-2; METZGER, *Studies* cit., pp. 123-4.

9. The oldest representation of a Greek writing on tablets while seated on a stool is apparently a Louvre terra-cotta (CA 684) dating from the last quarter of the sixth century B.C. and discovered in Boeotia. It is uncertain whether it represents a student, a scribe, or a *paidagogos* (see E. G. TURNER, *The Papyrologist at Work [Greek, Roman and Byzantine Monographs, 6]*, Durham, N.C., p. 6). Plate in the *Musée du Louvre, Catalogue raisonné*, I, pl. XV B 114; S. A. BOWEN, *A History of Western Education, I: The Ancient World*, London 1972, pl. 7 [*non vidi*]; F. A. G. BECK, *Album of Greek Education. The Greeks at School and at Play*, Sydney 1975, pl. 8.41. For other terra-cottas and vase paintings see conveniently BECK, pl. on p. 6; pls. 8.42, 44; 10.54 (the Douris krater, often reproduced); 13.70-4; and for more references see p. 22 n. 7. From the imperial period comes the funerary stele of young Abeita, originating from Athens; see A. H. SMITH, *A Catalogue of Sculpture in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum*, London 1892-1904, no. 649; PFÜHL, *Zur Darstellung von Buchrollen* cit., pp. 130-1 with pl. 12; A. KLEIN, *Child Life in Greek Art*, New York 1932, p. 29 with pl. 29d [*non vidi*]; MARROU, *Μουσικὸς Ἀνῆρ* cit., p. 151 no. 193; E. G. TURNER, *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World*, Oxford 1971, p. 7 with the frontispiece of the book; BECK, *Album* cit., pl. 71.359. See also below, n. 50. For wooden benches (βάθρα) in Athenian classrooms in the classical era see Plato, *Protagoras*, 315c and 325e, and Demosthenes, *De Corona*, 258. School scenes in vase drawings nearly always include chairs and/or stools; see IMMERWAHR (above, n. 6) and BECK, *Album* cit., *passim*. High-class schools in Rome had even *discipularum cathedras* (Horace, *Sermones*, 1.10.91), but the Pompeian schoolchildren who witness the thrashing of one their classmates are seated on backless benches in the forum and hold their tablets on their knees; the fresco (in the Naples Museum) has often been reproduced, last and best in *Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους*, V, Athens 1974, p. 271. In the delightful Louvre terra-cotta relief which caricatures a school scene (the master has a donkey's head and the pupils those of monkeys) the boys sit in a row — obviously on backless benches; see G. WISSOWA, *Parodia d'una scena di scuola*, in *Mittheilungen des*

ner, holding their tablets on the knees: καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρότιστον, writes Callimachus, ἔμοις ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα γούνασιν, Apollo materialized and whispered in the poet's ear his advice on subtle poetry¹⁰. There is no evidence that either the Greeks or Romans habitually wrote on tablets while seated in the oriental posture, i.e. cross-legged on the ground.

It comes as a surprise, therefore, to discover that one of the reliefs showing Greeks and Romans writing on papyrus rolls depicts the writer seated on the ground. On a fragment from the cover of

Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Röm. Abt.) 5 (1890), pp. 3-11, and the good photograph in BONNER, *Education in Ancient Rome* cit., p. 124. The latter, p. 126, has also drawn my attention to the early third century A.D. *colloquium scholasticum* in the *Hermeneumata Stephani* (G. GOETZ, *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum*, III, Leipzig 1892, p. 377, ll. 7ff.): *discipuli, condiscipuli, locum mihi date. meum scamnum, scamellum, sella* (ἔμὸν βᾶθρον, ὑποπόδιον, δίφρος). *densa te. illuc accedite. meus locus est. ego preoccupavi. sedi, sedeo*. Cf. also the famous late Roman relief in the Rheinisches Landesmuseum at Trier, depicting a classroom scene; it has been often reproduced, last in *Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους*, V, Athens 1974, p. 272 (a splendid color plate).

10. Callimachus, *Aitia*, I, fr. 1 (Pfeiffer), ll. 21-2. There can hardly be any doubt that the Hellenistic prooemium to the *Batrachomyomachia* is modeled on this passage. Lines 1-3 read: ἀρχόμενος πρώτης σελίδος χορὸν ἐξ Ἑλικῶνος | ἔλθειν εἰς ἔμὸν ἦτορ ἐπέυχομαι εἶνεκ' αἰοιδῆς, | ἦν νέον ἐν δέλτοισιν ἔμοις ἐπὶ γούνασι θῆκα. What is open to some doubt is the correctness of the interpretation according to which these three verses describe a poet composing. It is quite likely that the bard is appealing to the Muses to aid him not in the writing (which must indeed have been performed by placing the tablets on the knees) but in the recitation of the poem, which he will sing from tablets just placed on his lap. See A. LUDWICH, *Die homerische Batrachomyomachia des Kares Pigres nebst Scholien und Paraphrase*, Leipzig 1896, pp. 319-21; O. CRUSIUS, *Pigres und die Batrachomyomachie bei Plutarch*, in *Philologus* 58 (1899), pp. 592-3; R. PFEIFFER, *Ein neues altersgedicht des Kallimachos*, in *Hermes* 63 (1928), p. 319; and METZGER, *Studies* cit., p. 126 n. 2. BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., p. 155, compares this passage with the description of a statue of Pindar in Athens in Aeschines, *Epist.* 4 (Hercher): καθήμενος ἐν ἐνδύματι καὶ λύρα ὁ Πίνδαρος διάδημα ἔχων καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν γονάτων ἀνευλιγμένον βιβλίον (i.e. an open roll); but for his strange ideas on δέλτος see now B. ATSALOS, *La terminologie du livre-manuscrit à l'époque byzantine*, I [*Ἑλληνικά*, Παράρτημα 21], Thessaloniki 1971, pp. 106-7 n. 3. SKEAT, *The Use of Dictation* cit., p. 184, who also believes that the opening lines of the *Batrachomyomachia* describe a poet writing, cites with approval ARETINUS's note on line 3 from his 1509 edition of the poem: « *super genibus: hoc nostro tempore observant graeci quod vidimus Venetiis et alibi* ». Aretinus unfortunately does not state whether the Greeks of his time sat on a piece of furniture or on the ground, and if the latter whether cross-legged (a posture they adopted after the Turkish occupation) or otherwise.

a sarcophagus in Rome ¹¹, two bearded men are shown, one reclining and the other seated on the ground. The seated figure is facing right and is bent forward. His legs are not crossed: they are stretched out in front of him, the knees slightly raised off the ground. By the left hand he has grasped both the rolled-up ends of a book in the manner often called « the interrupted reading » ¹² and is holding them in the air. The unrolled portion of the papyrus between the two ends falls in a deep fold, the base of which rests on the man's left thigh with the recto on the outside. In his right hand he is holding a *calamus* poised above the open section of the book. This, then, which has been hailed as « das wichtigste Monument und eigentlich das einzige, das vollständig deutlich ist » ¹³, is probably the representation of a melic poet composing ¹⁴ or, as the shape of the roll would indicate, a reader making an annotation or a correction on the book he is reading. His being represented as sitting on the ground should not be loaded with more significance than it can bear: not only is he not portrayed in the typical oriental posture but, as the other, reclining man in the relief makes clear, all figures on the sarcophagus cover were shown as either seated or reclining on the ground regardless of their identity or the activity in which they were engaged ¹⁵.

A «near-sighted scribe», as he has been quite incorrectly dubbed, is the subject of a sarcophagus in Greek marble, dating from the third century A.D., and now in the Vatican Museum ¹⁶ (Pl. 1). Flanked by a standing female figure (a Muse?) on the left and a seated man

11. F. MATZ and F. VON DUHN, *Antike Bildwerke in Rom mit Ausschluss der grösseren Sammlungen*, Leipzig 1881-2, no. 3121; BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., pp. 204-5 with pl. 129; MARROU, *Μουσικὸς Ἀνήρ* cit., p. 152 no. 196; SKEAT, *The Use of Dictation* cit., p. 184.

12. See BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., pp. 181-96, esp. 182-3. Additional representations now in WEGNER, *Die Musensarkophage* cit., *passim*.

13. BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., p. 204; cf. SKEAT, *The Use of Dictation*, p. 184.

14. BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., p. 204, connecting the pack of rolls and the lyre that are placed on the top of a base (or chest) standing between the two figures with the writer; but this is not necessary.

15. Compare, e.g., the reclining figures on the cover of the sarcophagus reproduced in WEGNER, *Die Musensarkophage* cit., pl. 3.

16. W. AMELUNG, *Die Sculpturen des Vatikanischen Museums*, I, Berlin 1903, p. 865 no. 166, with pl. 108; BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., p. 204 (« Wir haben den Eindruck, dass dieser Schreiber kurzsichtig ist; sonst würde es das Papier auf den Schoss legen ». But this is a posture assumed by a large number of Evangelists in illustrations of Byzantine manuscripts.); MARROU, *Μουσικὸς Ἀνήρ* cit., p. 151 no. 194.

with a papyrus roll on his lap on the right, a bearded man is shown seated on a stool with his left leg moved back and his right stretched forward. He is facing right and is slightly bent. He is holding a *calamus* with the first three fingers of his right hand and writing on something he is holding in his left. According to Amelung this writing material is « eine Rolle », according to Birt it is « wiederum breiter als hoch, dazu etwas aufgewölbt und verrät sich dadurch als Teil einer Rolle. Man muss annehmen, dass die l. Hand das Konvolut, das eigentliche Buch hält; das ist aber nicht mit dargestellt. Man sieht nur das abgerollte letzte Blatt dieses Buchs; und der Schreiber ist gerade am Ende dieses letzten Blattes angelangt ». Be that as it may, it is interesting to note that, although seated, the writer has not used his knee(s) as a support but is holding his writing material in his left hand in mid air — a posture known to us from many representations of the Evangelists in Byzantine manuscripts.

A very clear illustration of a person actually writing on a papyrus roll may be seen on a third century A.D. sandstone funerary monument discovered in Strasbourg¹⁷ (Pl. 2). A man is shown slightly turned to the right and seated in a chair with arms and high back. In his left hand he is holding the wound-up and already written portion of a *volumen* which rests on his left thigh. A section of the roll lies on his lap, and at the center of this papyrus surface rests the tip of a *calamus* which the writer is holding in his right hand. The end of the roll hangs loose, parallel to the man's right leg, without reaching the ground — the writer is nearing the end of his work. We should emphasize the fact that he has not stretched his tunic over his thighs in order to form a support for the open section of the book: it falls freely between his legs forming a shallow fold. Nor has he joined his knees, which are not even on the same level, since the left foot rests on a small, badly represented footstool. Thus the section of the papyrus on which the man writes is not horizontal but has a very slight inclination to the right; this conduces to a more comfortable writing and, consequently, more handsome script¹⁸.

17. E. ÉSPERANDIEU, *Recueil général des bas-reliefs, statues et bustes de la Gaule romaine*, VII, Paris 1918, p. 151 no. 5503, with plate; MARROU, *Μουσικὸς Ἀνήρ* cit., p. 151 no. 195 (a quite misleading description); TURNER, *Greek Manuscripts* cit., p. 7 (who, following MARROU, incorrectly calls it a cippus).

18. The relief gives also an answer (admittedly not applicable to all circumstances) to the question « Where would a person seated on a chair or a stool and writing on

In exactly the same posture (minus the footstool) sits enthroned Rufius Probianus in an ivory diptych in Berlin¹⁹ (Pl. 3) cut in his honor as *vicarius urbis Romae*, a post he held from A.D. 399 to 402. He too is holding the wound-up, already written portion of a papyrus roll in his left hand and is writing with a *calamus* on the section of the papyrus lying over his thighs (and where the artist has inscribed the acclamation *Probiane floreas*). The still rolled-up, unused end of the *volumen* rests on the bottom step of the *vicarius'* throne.

The next piece of evidence is a late second or early third century A.D. sarcophagus discovered on the Via Appia and thence brought to Berlin²⁰. Four scenes of literary activity are depicted on the left and four more on the right of the central inscription of the sarcophagus cover. In the second scene of the group on the right (Pl. 4) a bearded man stands facing right and holding in his left hand a book in the « interrupted reading » manner. He may be dictating to the bearded man who is facing left, seated in a chair with high arched back and no arms. The writing figure has extended his left foot forward and moved his right foot back and up on its toes, thus raising the right knee and thigh. In his right hand he is holding a *calamus* in a perpendicular position. In his left hand he is holding the rolled-up, written portion of a papyrus roll parallel to his right

his knee place his writing tools? » For to the left of the seated man (to the viewer's right) stands a smaller figure holding an inkpot in his right hand (he has been magnanimously permitted to rest this hand on the man's left knee) and a case full of *calami* in his left. According to ÉSPERANDIEU he is a student, according to MARROU a slave, and this is more likely. A comparison of this funerary stele with the ivory diptych described immediately below suggests that the seated man is an administrator rather than a *paidagogos*.

19. W. MEYER, *Zwei antike Elfenbeintafeln der k. Staatsbibliothek in München*, in *Abhandlungen der Bayrischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philos.-philol. Klasse*, XV.1, 1879, München 1881, pp. 35-41, 78; CH. DARENBERG and E. SAGLIO, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*, II.1, Paris 1892, pp. 273-4 and fig. 2457; BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., p. 208; V. GARDTHAUSEN, *Griechische Palaeographie*, I, Leipzig² 1911, p. 39 with fig. 5; R. DELBRUECK, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler* [*Studien zur spätantiken Kunstgeschichte*, 2], Berlin-Leipzig 1929, pp. 46-7 and 250-6 no. 65 with plate; METZGER, *Studies* cit., p. 124 with pl. III.

20. BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., pp. 203-4; MARROU, *Μουσικὸς Ἀρχὴ* cit., pp. 152-3 no. 179; WEGNER, *Die Musensarkophage* cit., p. 13 no. 16 (with copious bibliography) and pls. 22-3, 41a, and 142a. According to WEGNER the reliefs on the sarcophagus cover will receive fuller treatment in the planned first volume of *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*.

thigh on top of which lies part of the open section of the book; the end of it, one supposes, hangs loose, parallel to the man's right leg (as in the previous two reliefs) and hidden from view. Once more, the writer's thighs are not joined and his *pallium* is not stretched over them. The man has placed the tip of the *calamus* on the section of the papyrus lying directly on his right thigh — a thigh which is clearly being used as support.

Directly to the left of the central inscription is another dictation scene (Pl. 5). Flanked by two Muses, a youth is shown seated on a stool and facing right. The Muse behind him is not embracing him²¹ but pointing to the piece of papyrus he is holding: she is dictating to, i.e. inspiring, him. Like the bearded man on the opposite scene, the youth has extended his left foot forward and withdrawn his right. His left hand is not shown, hidden behind and under a papyrus sheet held over his thighs. (The youth may be writing either on a *volumen* or on a cut-off section thereof.) His right hand is poised over the open section of the papyrus and, although the artist has not depicted the *calamus*, the fingers are clearly shaped so as to imply that they are holding one. The youth is listening to the Muse, ready to write down the inspired thought; he will use as support neither of his knees but the palm of his left hand placed under the writing material. This, too, is a posture well known from illustrations of the Evangelists in Byzantine manuscripts²².

Finally, a piece of archaeological evidence presented here for the first time. It is a small rectangular marble funerary monument discovered in the area of the eastern cemetery of Thessaloniki and probably dating from the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century A.D. (Pl. 6). An example of provincial art, it is the most colorful of the reliefs that we have examined thus far²³.

21. So, e.g., WEGNER, *Die Musensarkophage* cit., p. 13.

22. See below, n. 32. A very similar scene is depicted in Ambrosianus 519 (M 54 sup.) f. IV^r (11th cent.), where an angel is shown inspiring King David while the latter is writing the psalms; see M. L. GENARO, F. LEONI, and G. VILLA, *Codici decorati e miniati dell'Ambrosiana, ebraici e greci* [*Fontes Ambrosiani*, 33A], Milan n.d. [after 1957], pp. 136-7 no. 41, and pl. LI.

23. Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, inv. no. 10105. It was discovered in ὁδὸς Φιλικῆς Ἐταιρείας and surrendered to the Museum in 1967. It measures 0.478 x 0.615 and preserves traces of the original vivid colors (indigo blue, dark red, reddish brown, light brown, black). A very short note on it has been published by F. PETSAS, 'Αρχαιότητες καὶ Μνημεῖα Κεντρικῆς Μακεδονίας, in 'Αρχαιολογικὸν Δελτίον 23 (1968), Β' (Χρονικά), p. 325. The inscription is not in C. EDSON, *IG*,

A short inscription is set at the lower portion: Παράμονος Σεραπᾶνος²⁴ | καὶ Σεραπᾶς Σεραπᾶνος τῷ ἰδίῳ πατρὶ μνήμης χάριν καὶ ἑαυτοῖς καὶ τῇ μητρὶ καὶ τοῖς ἰδίοις ζῶσιν. Above the inscription is a *nekrodeipnon* scene. In the center, reclining on a *kline*, is the honored dead man with a three-legged table in front of him. At the foot of the *kline*, tightly squeezed in, Paramonos, the elder son, listens, his face full of rapture. The dead man's wife is seated in a throne at the right of the scene, resting her feet on a dais. A young slave holding a *pyxis* is entering from the left. And in front of the *kline* sits Serapas, the younger son, on a wooden stool furnished with a striped cushion, writing at his father's dictation.

The young scribe has raised his left knee and lightly placed the toe of his left boot on the cover of a closed *capsa* standing in front of him and apparently serving as a substitute for a footstool. His left hand is not shown, being hidden behind a papyrus roll, but it must be understood as reaching across to the right, rolled-up end of the *volumen* held parallel to the raised left thigh. His right hand, resting on his left knee, is holding a *calamus*, the upper end of which has been broken off. Vestiges of black letters, painted on the marble, are still visible (though not identifiable), occupying the entire surface of the section of the roll between the two wound-up ends of it. In his desire to portray the entire book the artist has depicted this section, as well as the left rolled-up end of the *volumen*, as floating in the air²⁵. Are we then to surmise that he had meant to show Serapas as using his left arm as support for the open section of the roll that receives the writing? It would surely be quite difficult, if not impossible, to balance thus an open book and then to write on the section between its two wound-up ends. Or should we understand the right

X.ii.i. Prof. D. PANTERMALIS, whom I should like to thank for a very informative discussion on this relief, would rather date it a century later than I do, and he may very well be right.

24. Σεραπᾶνος is genitive (for Σεραπᾶτος), not nominative (for *Serapanus*); cf. the parallel forms Ἀρτεμᾶς, -ᾶνος, and Ζιλᾶς, -ᾶνος, also from Macedonian inscriptions, in M. TOD, *Macedonia. Inscriptions*, in *Annual of the British School at Athens* 23 (1918/19), pp. 67ff., nos. 4 and 8, and cf. P. KRETSCHMER, *Literaturbericht für das Jahr 1918. Griechisch*, in *Glotta* 11 (1921), pp. 229-30. I owe this note to Prof. S. KAPSOMENOS.

25. Note also that, unless he had intended to portray Serapas as writing on the verso, the artist has made him unroll the *volumen* the wrong way. For other representations of S-shaped books see BIRT, *Die Buchrolle* cit., pp. 226-7, and F. G. KENYON, *Books and Readers in Ancient Greece and Rome*, Oxford² 1951, p. 66.

rolled-up end of the *volumen* as the support on which Serapas writes in (necessarily narrow) columns? In either case the knee would serve to steady the writing material and the right hand.

The artistic evidence, then, suggests that, when writing on papyrus rolls, the ancient Greeks and Romans assumed postures quite similar to those they adopted when writing on tablets. Unlike the ancient Egyptians, they did not normally sit on the ground²⁶; but like them, they did not use tables or writing desks²⁷. Occasionally they wrote on the papyrus stretched between their thighs but, unlike the Egyptians, there is as yet no evidence to suggest that they stretched their tunic under it to support it. Such a surface, however, could not have been very steady, while the Greeks and the Romans (also unlike the Egyptians) used as a pen a stiff reed sharpened to a fine point, and there was the danger that its pressure, as a results of an

26. SKEAT, *The Use of Dictation* cit., pp. 183-5, argues that the Greek and Roman scribes of the classical period sat on the ground like the ancient Egyptians and recalls that « in the classical world, as in the Near East generally down to comparatively modern times, life is marked by a general absence of such conveniences as chairs and tables ». He further compares classical Greece with the Albania of 1848, which an English traveller had called a « chair-less land », a description which must have held true for the entire Turkish empire, the Sultan's very palace not excluded. TURNER first fully accepted this theory (*Greek Papyri. An Introduction*, Oxford 1968, p. 2) but is slowly modifying it (*Greek Manuscripts* cit., p. 7; *The Papyrologist* cit., pp. 5-6), and so is in fact SKEAT himself (*The Cambridge History of the Bible*, II, Cambridge 1969, p. 58). What both scholars, and those who agree with their thesis, overlook is the fact that the use or non-use of chairs or stools by a nation is not always (or only) the result of economic conditions but more often than not depends on custom and tradition: compare the Arabs and the Japanese of today. Lastly, although there were indeed fewer chairs and tables in the classical house than in today's living quarters, stools, chairs, benches and tables were indispensable (and numerous) in schools, shops and factories. The ancient shoemaker (to cite but one example) normally sat on a stool or a chair and not only worked in front of a table but even made his clients climb on it in order to have their measurements taken; see below, n. 29.

27. METZGER, *Studies* cit., pp. 132-3, cites M. SHAPIRO's suggestion that the introduction of writing desks is connected with the circumstance that « ancient society, being little concerned with the comfort or efficiency of slaves, provided no artificial support for the professional scribe, who was a slave; whereas the medieval scribe, usually a monk, was more likely to improve his means of writing ». It is news to me that the ancient Greeks and Romans were so little concerned with the efficiency of their slaves, and I am certain that such an idea would have greatly surprised big publishers of the ancient world such as Atticus. As for comfort, we should not overlook the fact that the Greeks and Romans sat themselves apparently in the same postures as their slaves.

incautious movement, might puncture the papyrus²⁸. Consequently, a need for some support was felt by many, and the knee, or the thigh, was called upon to provide it.

The exiguous evidence that we possess suggests that such conveniences as writing desks and tables suitable for writing made their first, tentative appearance as early as the third century A.D., but that in fact it was not until the eighth or the ninth centuries that more and more scribes began to use them²⁹; and further, that their employment may not have been as widespread in the East as it was in the West. With the exception of the first and the last pieces of archaeological evidence described above, the postures of the Greek and Roman writers that we have examined may be seen in countless representations of the Evangelists in Byzantine manuscripts of even very late date³⁰. The Evangelists use small tables, it is true — but only in order to place their assortment of tools thereon. They use ἀναλογεῖα or ἀναλόγια to support not only their exemplar (for although they are authors, the Evangelists are often portrayed as copyists) but also their writing material — but in Byzantine manuscript illuminations they do so very rarely indeed. Normally they place their writing material (parchment scrolls and codices now) on the palm of their left hand, on their knee, or across their thighs. Do these representations faithfully portray the postures of the Byzantine scribes? I know of no evidence to indicate that they do not. On the other hand, « the classical tradition was best preserved in book illumination, which had an innate tendency to be conserva-

28. TURNER, *Greek Manuscripts* cit., p. 8; cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 13.79.

29. The evidence has been collected and analyzed by METZGER, *Studies* cit., pp. 126-37, with pls. V-XIX. The fifth century sarcophagus, however, in the Museum of Milan (p. 128, pl. VII) does not depict « a male figure, writing while seated on a chair at a table » but a cobbler working on a piece of leather; the skin hanging from a rod over his head should leave no doubt as to the correct interpretation of the scene. Cf. H. BLÜMNER, *Technologie und Terminologie der Gewerbe und Künste bei Griechen und Römern*, I, Leipzig² 1912, pp. 285-8 with figs. 90-3. On the Ostia relief see further TURNER, *Greek Papyri* cit., pp. 189-90 (on pl. VI), and *Greek Manuscripts* cit., p. 7 n. 2, and p. 8.

30. A large number of representations of Evangelists may now be conveniently found in the monumental *Οἱ Θεσσαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους. Εἰκονογραφημένα Χειρόγραφα*, I-II, Athens 1973-5. See also P. BUBERL, *Die Miniaturenhandschriften der Nationalbibliothek in Athen* [Kais. Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, *philos.-histor. Klasse, Denkschriften*, 60.2, 1916], Wien 1917, and A. M. FRIEND, *The Portraits of the Evangelists in Greek and Latin Manuscripts*, in *Art Studies* 5 (1927), pp. 114-47, and 7 (1929), pp. 1-29.

tive »³¹. Thus, for example, Prophets and Evangelists are shown being inspired by a divine agent in much the same way as heathen poets and philosophers are being inspired by the Muses in ancient reliefs, frescoes, or mosaics³². It has also been convincingly argued that « the stately seated figures of the Evangelists are derived from exemplars which were prefixed to the works of classical authors, such as the major tragic dramatists and the major philosophers, which have parallels in the plastic as well as the graphic arts »³³. The archaeological evidence presented above leaves little doubt that many of the postures of the Evangelists shown in the act of writing or copying also trace their origin to the graphic and plastic arts of Greek and Roman antiquity.

«We should like very much», wrote Prof. E. G. Turner recently, giving expression to a longing that most of his readers must have felt also, « to look over our scribe's shoulder, see him at work, and ask him questions about his craft »³⁴. This is perhaps asking too much, but it is quite exasperating to realize that we lack even a single representation of an ancient Greek or Roman professional scribe, a person, that is, whose task was the multiplication of literary texts. The artistic evidence presented above and the inferences we have derived from the manner in which the Evangelists are portrayed in mediaeval manuscripts allow us to arrive at the proposition that he must have sat in the same posture as the rest of the classical world when writing on papyrus rolls. If we cannot see, however, the ancient scribe at work, we can at least hear his voice, dimmed, it is true, by the great distance in time, but imparting morsels of information which suggest that such a proposition is correct.

The slight literary evidence bearing on the subject³⁵ comes in

31. K. WEITZMANN, *Studies in Classical and Byzantine Manuscript Illumination*, ed. by H. L. KESSLER, Chicago-London 1971, p. 153.

32. E. BETHE, *Buch und Bild im Altertum*, rev. ed. by E. KIRSTEN, Amsterdam 1964, pp. 84-98 and 138-43; WEITZMANN, *Book Illustration of the Fourth Century: Tradition and Innovation*, in *Studies*, pp. 96-125, esp. 116f. See also above, n. 22.

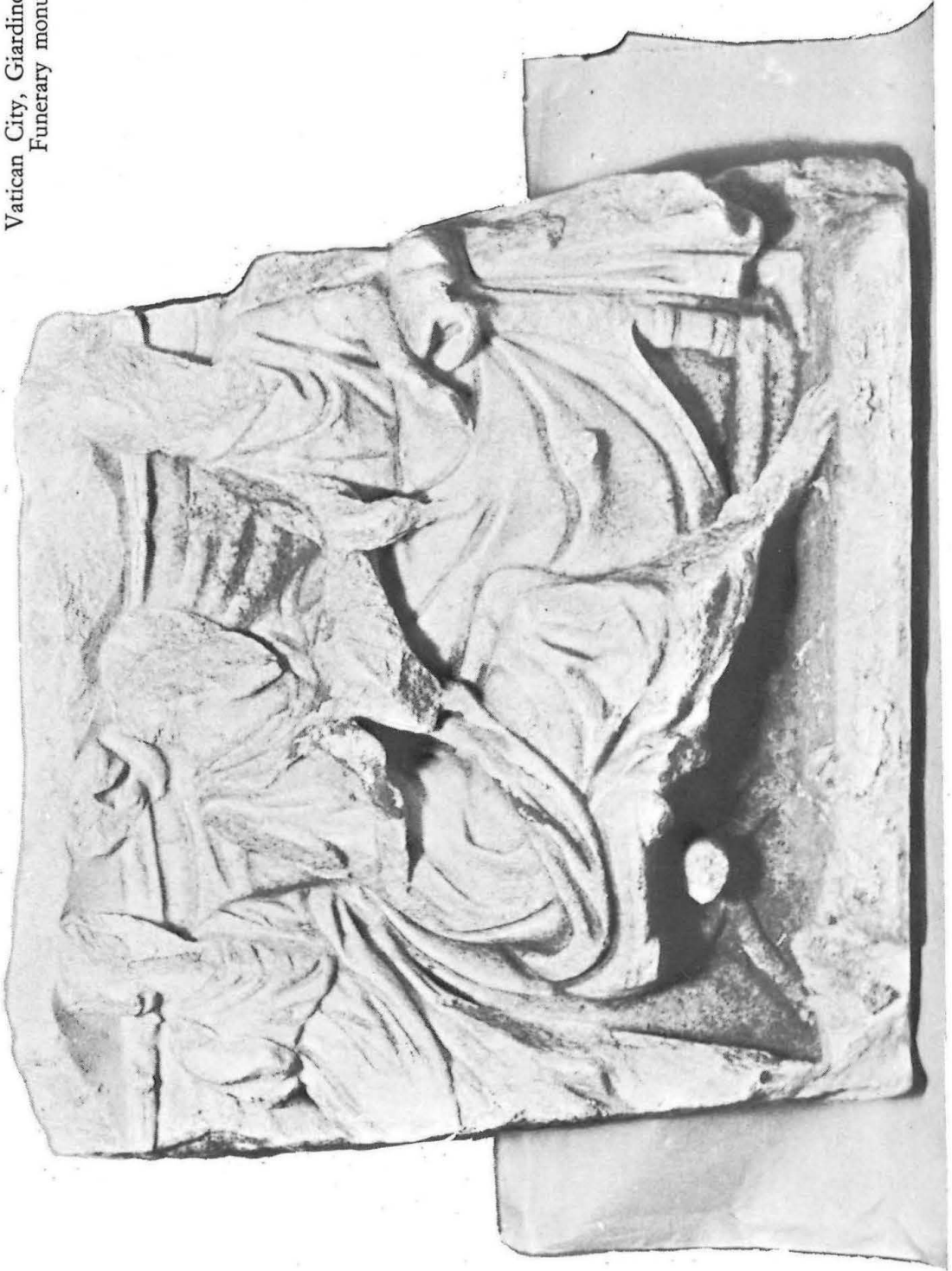
33. METZGER, *Studies* cit., p. 134 n. 1, a synopsis of the theory of A. M. FRIEND (above, n. 30). See also WEITZMANN, *The Character and Intellectual Origins of the Macedonian Renaissance*, in *Studies*, pp. 176-223, esp. 119ff. and 217ff.

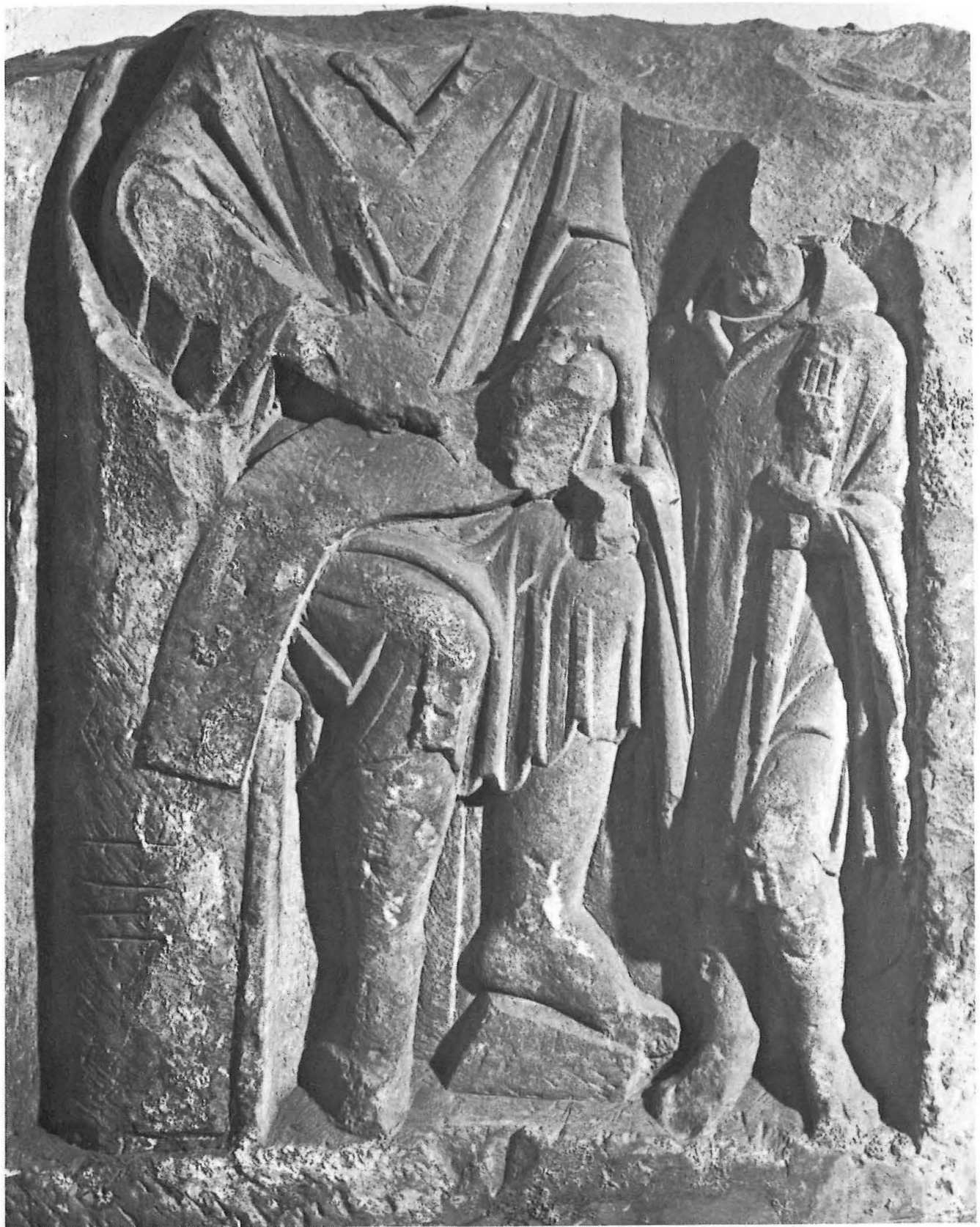
34. *Greek Manuscripts* cit., p. 7.

35. The epigrams in the *Anthol. Palat.* (6.62-8, 295) and other ancient sources that describe the essential equipment of the Hellenistic and Byzantine scribe offer no pertinent evidence. The closest we come to a description of a person (not a pro-

Pl. 1

Vatican City, Giardino della Pigna
Funerary monument





Strasbourg, Musée archéologique
Funerary monument



Berlin, Staatsbibliothek
Ivory diptych



Berlin, Antiken-Sammlung
Sarcophagus cover

Pl. 5
Berlin, Antiken-Sammlung
Sarcophagus cover





Thessaloniki, Archaeological Museum
Funerary monument

the form of a subliterate creation with an astounding capacity of survival, the colophon. The oldest known Greek colophon is written at the end of a Sorbonne papyrus dating from the last quarter of the third century B.C. and containing large portions of Menander's *Sikyonios*³⁶. Like so many mediaeval colophons, it is a composite one (a fact not realized by any of the play's editors), made up of two independent parts clearly separated by a *paragraphos*³⁷:

μη καταγελάτε τῆς γραφῆς [× — ∪ —].
 τοῦ καταγελῶντος τὸ σκέλο[ς × — ∪ —].
 [ὡς ἡδέ]ως ἀνέπαυσα τοὺς τρε[ῖς δακτύλους].

The first part of the colophon is mutilated at the end and its exact meaning remains elusive, but some connection between the act of writing and the leg is clearly indicated³⁸. The third line, which obviously contains an independent thought, had been incorrectly read at the beginning and its words had been erroneously divided at the

fessional scribe but a voluminous writer) committing his thoughts on papyrus is Plutarch, *Demosthenes*, 29: pursued by Archias and his soldiers, the Athenian orator took sanctuary at the temple of Poseidon in Calauria and then ἐντὸς ἀνεχώρησε τοῦ ναοῦ καὶ λαβὼν βιβλίον ὡς γράφειν μέλλων προσήνεγκε τῷ στόματι τὸν κάλαμον καὶ δακῶν, ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ διανοεῖσθαι καὶ γράφειν εἰώθει, χρόνον τινὰ κατέσχεν, εἶτα συγκαλιψάμενος ἀπέκλινε τὴν κεφαλὴν. That Demosthenes was sitting somewhere is indicated by the subsequent action of Archias: προσελθὼν ἀνίστασθαι παρεκάλει. For βιβλίον = blank papyrus see N. LEWIS, *Papyrus in Classical Antiquity* cit., p. 77 n. 10, and p. 79 n. 16.

36. The colophon appears in P. Sorbonne inv. 2272e. See A. BLANCHARD and A. BATAILLE, *Fragments sur papyrus du Σικυώνιος de Ménandre*, in *Recherches de Papyrologie* 3 (1964), esp. pp. 161-3, and. pl. XIII.

37. « On distingue une baguette plus amplement développée vers l'Ouest que les précédents. C'est très certainement le trait haut d'une coronis ornée, que nous avons cru devoir restituer et qui marquait la fin du texte », BLANCHARD and BATAILLE, *Fragments sur papyrus* cit., p. 163; cf. their representation on p. 161. C. GALLAVOTTI, *Menandri Sicyonius*, Rome² 1972, p. 39, cannot have both a *coronis* and as long a supplement for the beginning of the last line as the one he proposes. The *paragraphos* I see is exactly like the others used by the scribe in the main body of the text.

38. This could be a curse colophon, as BLANCHARD and BATAILLE, *Fragments sur papyrus* cit., p. 162, note; examples of such colophons in W. WATTENBACH, *Das Schriftwesen im Mittelalter*, Leipzig³ 1896, pp. 527-34, and V. GARDTHAUSEN, *Griechische Palaeographie*, II, Leipzig² 1913, pp. 433-4. On the other hand, the scribe may simply be pointing out that he who derides his script has not experienced the pains that the body (especially the legs) of the scribe has suffered during the writing of the manuscript, along the lines of the popular *scribere qui nescit...*; on which see WATTENBACH, pp. 279-86, and briefly, A. DAIN, *Les manuscrits*, Paris² 1964, p. 25.

end³⁹. As presented here, it is the earliest known reference to the labor of the scribe's three fingers, a theme extremely common in later colophons, Greek as well as Latin⁴⁰, and a further confirmation (if another one were needed) of the theory that many of the Byzantine colophons (and through them their Latin derivatives) trace their origin to the Hellenistic period. For the same phrase, with insignificant variations, is found also as part of two composite Byzantine colophons written more than a millennium later:

τοὺς τρεῖς δακτύλους ὡς τοῦ γράφειν ἔπαυσα⁴¹,

and

ὄς (= ὡς) ἠδέως ἔπαυσα τοὺς τρεῖς δακτύλους⁴².

In the latter instance the scribe has not only repeated the *Sikyonios* colophon but added another verse, enumerating two more parts of the body that participate in the arduous task:

καὶ τὸ〈ν〉 τράχηλον σὺν τῷ δεξιὸν γόνει⁴³.

The second papyrus colophon that has some bearing on the question of the posture of the ancient professional scribe is written on a papyrus sheet attached to the end of a roll (and to which it may possibly not belong) containing sections of the third and fourth rhapsodies of the *Iliad* and dating from the third century A.D.⁴⁴.

39. οὐ]κ ἀνέπαυσα τοῦ στρε[(στρε[βλοῦν *aut sim.*) is the reading of BLANCHARD and BATAILLE. But what is read as a mutilated and certain *kappa* at the beginning is clearly the right curve of an *omega* followed by a lunate *sigma*. In τοὺς τρε[ῖς δακτύλους] the new word division and the supplement are due to Prof. K. TSANTSANOGLU, who also called my attention to the existence of Byzantine colophons containing the phrase.

40. See, e.g., WATTENBACH, *Das Schriftwesen* cit., pp. 279-80 and 283-4.

41. Oxon. Bodleianus Auct. E.2.4 (A.D. 1106); see K. and S. LAKE, *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts to the Year 1200*, II, Boston 1934, p. 13 no. 62, with pl. 113.

42. Sabaiticus 114 (A.D. 1019); K. and S. LAKE, *Dated Manuscripts* cit., I, Boston 1934, p. 10 no. 4, with pl. 9.

43. Meter, grammar and syntax betray the Byzantine origin of this verse.

44. British Library, papyrus inv. no. 136. See H. J. M. MILNE, *Catalogue of the Literary Papyri in the British Museum*, London 1927, pp. 21-2 no. 11; A. WIFSTRAND, *Ein metrischer Kolophon in einem Homerpapyrus*, in *Hermes* 68 (1933), pp. 468-72 (revised text on p. 468, which I have checked against a photograph); B. OLSSON, *Der Kolophon in den antiken Handschriften*, in *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 51 (1934), pp. 365-7; SKEAT, *The Use of Dictation* cit., p. 183-4; DAIN, *Le manuscrits* cit., p. 24; BLANCHARD and BATAILLE, *Fragments sur papyrus* cit., p. 163 (confused and misleading); see also the following note.

Written in epigraphic letters, it, too, is clearly a composite colophon: the first verse is spoken by the *coronis* while the remainder, which in turn is made up of two independent thoughts, by the book itself:

ἐγ[ὼ κορ]ωνίς εἶμι, γραμμάτων φύλαξ.
 κάλαμος μ' ἔγραψε, δεξιὰ χεῖρ καὶ γόνυ.
 [ἄν] τινί με χρήσης, ἕτερον ἀντιλάμβανε,
 ἐὰν δέ με [ἀλ]λείφης, διαβαλῶ [σ'] Εὐριπίδη.
 ἄπεχε ⁴⁵.

Once more the *calamus*, the right hand, and the knee cooperate in the production of a manuscript. There is nothing, either in this or in the previous colophon, to imply that the scribes were seated in the oriental posture, i.e. cross-legged on the ground. Admittedly, there is nothing either to prove that they were not.

The participation of the knee(s) in the production of a book (therefore the absence of a writing desk) is indicated also by two more Byzantine colophons. In the first, which is found in two manuscripts of the fifteenth century, we read:

ἔληξαν αὐχὴν, δάκτυλοι τρεῖς καὶ γόνυ,
 ὄμματα, γραφίς, νοῦς, πύχαι, μέλαν, στίχοι ⁴⁶.

The other, written on a fourteenth century manuscript, is a more detailed description of the scribe's posture:

γόνυ μὲν ζεύξας⁴⁷ καὶ ὑποκλίνας κάραν,
 χεῖρας ἐκτείνας πρὸς τὰς θείας τετράδας,
 ἐκπεπλήρωκα τὴν θεόσδοτον δέλτον ⁴⁸.

45. Two of the formulae of this third century colophon reappear in a composite colophon of an eleventh century ms. in the National Library at Athens, quoted by H. J. M. MILNE, *An Early Metrical Colophon*, in *Classical Review* 41 (1927), p. 60: κορωνίς εἶμι, δογμάτων θεῶν διδάσκαλος. | ἄν τινί με χρήσης, ἀντίβιβλον λάμβανε· | οἱ γὰρ ἀποδότηι κακοί. With the first verse of both colophons cf. Meleager, *Anthol. Palat.* 12.257.2, where the *coronis* is termed ἐρκοῦρος γραπταῖς πιστοτάτα σελίσιν, and see in general G. M. STEPHEN, *The Coronis*, in *Scriptorium* 13 (1959), pp. 3-14. To the passages from Greek and Latin sources collected on pp. 12-14 there should be added the Byzantine colophon cited above and Philodemus, *Anthol. Palat.* 11.41.7.

46. Vallicellianus 27 (B 128) (15th cent.), and Patmiacus 440 (A.D. 1421), the latter with the variant πτυχαί. See ATSALOS, *La terminologie* cit., I, p. 101 with n. 6.

47. « Having joined my knees »; cf. Heliiodorus, 3.13: τὰ ἀγάλματα τῶν θεῶν Αἰγύπτιοι τῷ πόδε ζευγνύοντες (ζευγνύντες some mss.) καὶ ὡσπερ ἐνοῦντες ἰστάσιν.

48. Athous, Simopetra 63 (A.D. 1321). Prof. B. ATSALOS has kindly supplied me with the following variants: Therapnai (Peloponnesus), Μονὴ τῶν Ἁγ. Τεσσα-

And this is in line with Jos. Bryennius's description of the way in which each part of the scribe's body arduously contributes in the writing of a manuscript: αὐχένος κλίσις, ὀφθαλμῶν ἐπιβολαί, χειρὸς τέχνη, δακτύλων κίνησις, γονάτων κάμψις...⁴⁹.

Writing on a papyrus roll placed on one's lap was indubitably a difficult task and, regardless of the expertise that many of the ancient scribes may have reached (some indeed have left behind them works of great beauty), must have placed serious limitations on what could be achieved, while at the same time leaving its marks on the finished product. Further investigation in this area is certainly needed, but it is a field in which I do not feel at home. I can only end this short note by repeating the words of a master palaeographer, who has drawn a realistic picture of the toiling scribe and has indicated the major consequences of writing on a roll placed on the knee(s):

« Que le lecteur essaye de se représenter lui-même copiant un texte sur ses genoux. Qu'il imagine, par exemple, qu'il écrit sur une longue et étroite bande de papyrus dont il tient dans la main gauche la partie roulée, déjà écrite, cependant que pend le long de sa jambe droite, en une longue banderolle, la partie non encore pourvue d'écriture. On comprendra alors que les colonnes d'écriture qui se succèdent sur le papyrus ne soient pas toujours exactement verticales,

ράκοντα: γόνυ μὲν ζεύξας καὶ κάρα ὑποκλίνας | χειρας ἐκτείνας πρὸς τὰς θείας τετράδας | τὴν θεόδοτον ἐκπεπλήρωκα βίβλον (N. A. BEES, *Katálogos τῶν χειρογράφων κωδίκων τῆς ἐν Θεράπναις μονῆς τῶν Ἁγίων Τεσσαράκοντα*, in *Ἐπετηρὶς τοῦ Φιλολογικοῦ Συλλόγου Παρνασσῶς*, 8 (1904), p. 121); Athous, Καλύβι Ἁγ. Ἄννης (17th cent.): τὸ μὲν [!] ζεύξας ὑποκλίνας δὲ κήρου | χεῖρες ἐκτείνας πρὸς τὰς θείας τετράδας | ἐκπεπλήρωκα τοὺς στίχους τοῦ ἱεροῦ ψαλτηρίου (E. KOURILAS, *Katálogos Ἀγιορειτικῶν χειρογράφων*, in *Θεολογία* 21 (1950), p. 272); Neapolitanus II.E.82 (16th cent.): γόνυ συζεύξας ὑποκλινὰς δὲ κάραν | χεῖρες ἐκτείνας εἰς τὰς θείας τετράδας | τέρμα τόδε εἴληφεν ἡ φιλοσόφων βίβλος; Ambrosianus 335 (F 34 sup. olim T 211) (A.D. 1463): γόνυ μὲν ζεύξας ὑποκλήνας βαρέως | χειρας ἐκτείνας πρὸς τὰς θείας τετράδας | ἐκπεπλήρωκα τὴν θεόδοτον δέλτον; Athens, Nat. Library 53 (A.D. 1813): γόνυ μὲν ζεύξας καὶ κάραν ὑποκλίνας | χειρας δ' ἐκτείνας πρὸς τὰς θείας τετράδας | ἐκπεπλήρωκα τὴν θεόδοτον βίβλον.

49. Quoted by GARDTHAUSEN, *Griechische Palaeographie*, I cit., p. 202. Cf. the ninth (?) century complaint *ardua scriptorum prae cunctis artibus ars est: | difficilis labor est, durus quoque flectere colla, | et membranas bis ternas sulcare per horas*; see WATTENBACH, *Das Schriftwesen* cit., p. 286, and B. M. METZGER, *The Text of the New Testament*, Oxford² 1968, p. 17 with n. 4. Cf. also Athens, Nat. Library 1233 (A.D. 1794): δεξιτερῇ δ' ἐμὴν πορίσεσκε, κλίσις τε καρήνου, | ὄσφύος εἰν ἄλγει ἢ δ' ἐτέρων μελέων.

mais penchent tantôt d'un côté, tantôt de l'autre; on comprendra que l'écriture ait une tendance à être plus large en bas de la colonne qu'en haut. L'usage de la feuille de papyrus ou de parchemin se substituant au rouleau rendit plus facile le travail du scribe et modifia les conditions de la copie et de l'écriture. Le scribe pouvait orienter son « papier » dans tel ou tel sens; il était amené à incliner les lettres de telle ou telle façon, à en modifier le tracé. Les paléographes ont étudié tout cela avec soin. Il semble que sur ce point les latinistes soient en avance sur les hellénistes »⁵⁰.

50. DAIN, *Les manuscrits* cit., pp. 25-6. The theory that the ancient scribe wrote to the dictation of a reader has been « confidently asserted and just as energetically denied ». See SKEAT, *The Use of Dictation* cit. (with all the basic bibliography) and *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, II cit., pp. 57-8 (whence the quotation above and the one below); TURNER, *Greek Manuscripts* cit., pp. 7 and 19-20. It is quite possible, as SKEAT states, that « both dictation and visual copying were employed according to the needs and circumstances of the case », but this does not seem to have had any bearing on the posture(s) of the scribe; copying, of course, from an exemplar (probably placed on a stand, as in the Byzantine book illuminations and the Abeita funerary stele [above, n. 9]) would have made his task more difficult.