

Editorial Principles

MNCH is preserved, in greater or smaller parts, in four manuscripts: two of the mss (X, Y) are composite, containing other texts besides MNCH; two of the mss (B, S) contain only the text of MNCH. While there is no reason to doubt that the original MNCH indeed “translated” the entire *History* of Choniates, it has not survived complete, the mss preserving for us approximately 92 per cent of the text in total.

For the collation we were fortunate in having extremely good quality digital copies of the mss,⁸² while we also had the opportunity to inspect the mss firsthand on several occasions in the years 2013–2019.

Four key areas of clarification need to be made in this note on the editorial principles of the Metaphrase. The first concerns our decision for the autonomous, stand-alone presentation of MNCH; the second, the principal text of the edition and its features; the third, the functions of the three components of the apparatus; the fourth, the Commentary.

The stand-alone text

It is significant that all four of the surviving manuscripts of MNCH preserve the Metaphrase as a free-standing text, without presenting anything of Niketas’ original. In other words, in the period in which it was created and copied, MNCH was perceived as constituting an autonomous text in its own right,⁸³ indeed as constituting the *History* in its own right. This point is underscored by the fact that one of the manuscripts (ms S) bears the title “History of Niketas Choniates” on its first page: Τόμος α’ / Βασιλεία Μανούλ τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ / ἔτη λη’ / *Νικήτα τοῦ Χωνιάτου ἱστορία* (our italics). Furthermore, MNCH preserves the first-person authorial comments of Niketas, indicating again that MNCH did not pretend to be anything other than the “intellectual property” of Choniates, as compared, for example, with the recycling exercise of Skoutariotes.

From a certain perspective a parallel edition of Niketas’ original *History* and MNCH would be convenient. However, a significant obstacle makes a parallel presentation of the texts in printed format deeply problematic: as discussed in the chapter on the manuscript tradition, the exact source text from which MNCH was rendered no longer survives. One could argue that it is possible to re-edit Niketas’ original – perhaps confining one’s task to a careful selection of readings noted in the apparatus of van Dieten’s text, now from one manuscript, now from another – and thereby create

⁸² We are grateful to the respective libraries for so readily responding to our requests for digital copies of the manuscripts, and especially to Christian Foerstel for helping us to gain excellent photographic access to the relevant folios of ms Parisinus gr. 3041.

⁸³ See Hinterberger, “Between simplification and elaboration,” esp. 53–56.

a text that approximates to a conjectured source from which the Metaphrast worked. Of course, this would be a *hypothetical* text, generated through the rather unsatisfactory circular process of picking those readings of the NCH manuscript tradition that happen to coincide (more or less) with the text of MNCH. The procedural and textual (not to mention economic) justification for embarking on such a time-consuming – and somewhat thankless – enterprise seems weak. Therefore, to compare MNCH with Niketas' *History* the reader will do best simply to consult one of the editions already available – by van Dieten, whose apparatus criticus is comprehensive, Pontani, Bekker (the latter, being out of copyright, is readily available online) – and bear in mind that the surviving manuscripts of the *History* are only the cousins of the text from which the Metaphrast was working. This means, of course, that a close comparison of the two texts requires constant referral also to the apparatus criticus of NCH. In our edition, to assist the reader in cross-referring between MNCH and NCH, references to the modern editions of the *History* are contained in the marginal information. (Besides these references, we also note the folio numbers of B or, where B is lacking, the other manuscripts that preserve the text at such points.) As a further guide we insert into the text the paragraph numbering employed in the more recent Pontani edition of NCH (as the reader will see, this numbering does not always correspond to the paragraph arrangement of B itself – this is explained further below). Furthermore, in the Commentary we frequently supply the relevant passage of NCH so as to make the discussion of problematic passages immediately meaningful.

The edited text

The basis of the text

The base text for this edition is that preserved in manuscript B, i.e. Monacensis gr. 450. As the preceding discussion of the manuscripts has shown, B is certainly the oldest of the surviving manuscripts of MNCH. It also preserves more of MNCH than any of the other manuscripts, as fewer of its folios have been lost. Third, it is often (though not always) superior in its readings in terms of internal consistency and intelligibility (e.g. scribal omissions are comparatively few or very trivial). Fourth, there is some, albeit confusing, evidence that at least one of the other three manuscripts (i.e. ms Y) somehow descends from B, though not solely from B (again, see the earlier discussion of the mss). In any case, the collation of the four mss reveals B as one version, SXY as another version. That said, this approach should not be understood as the application of the “optimist” in preference to the “recensionist” method, since we do not seek to reconstitute an original source Metaphrase on the basis of our chosen text, but simply to edit and present B's version in contradistinction to the version contained in its three cousin mss (whose alternative readings are presented in the third apparatus). When S, X or Y preserve sections of text that have been lost in B (due to

loss of folios, e.g. M9.1–13, 346.12–349.1, 386.9–387.20), we supply their text instead, and alert the reader to this fact in the edition by presenting the main text in.

The book (i.e. chapter, or “τόμος”) division of the edited text is that given by B and the other MNCH mss. The *History* has conventionally been divided into 19 books in modern editions.⁸⁴ The divergence we see in MNCH corresponds to certain other mss of NCH, i.e. the division of the reign of Alexios Angelos into three books rather than just two (the third book commencing at N535.3 (i.e. M339, here book 17), and the division of the reign of Alexios V Doukas Mourtzouphlos into two books rather than just one (the second commencing at N571.55 (i.e. M364, here book 20). Indeed, the latter’s title, Τοῦ αὐτοῦ Χωνειάτου τόμος ἡ Φιλονεικία τοῦ Δούκα καὶ τοῦ Λάσκαρι περὶ τῆς βασιλείας, indicates the mixed lineage of MNCH: here (again, as with the third book of the reign of Alexios III Angelos, in common with ms V of the NCH manuscript tradition), the stated book numbering is 18, although in fact this is the twentieth book-heading so far encountered in MNCH. We indicate the mismatch in book numbering by adding, in the last five books where the confusion applies, the conventional book numbering⁸⁵ in brackets before the paragraph numbering. Perhaps M shares the confusion over Book 7 of Manuel’s reign as being Book 7 of the *History* (as in V), plus some other short “book,” such as the Reign of Alexios Doukas (barely four pages in our edition), as contained within the previous book?

In presenting the text of B, our approach was to intervene as little as possible. In other words, we set our tolerance level very high with regard to its imperfections. The rules of thumb that we applied may be illustrated by considering a number of characteristic situations and examples. 1) Variant spellings of the same word: when dealing with words that are not of a classical pedigree, e.g. the ethnonyms Ἀλαμανοὶ/Ἀλαμάνοι, Τούρκων/Τουρκῶν we allow variant forms (here the variation in position of accent) to remain in the edited text, as in the ms. Another such example is ταυλία (M349.23) and ταβλία (M353.27), which appear only a few lines apart, and καβαλ(λ)άριος and καβαλ(λ)ικεύω, which appear in B on some occasions with one λ, on others with two. Again, we allow these non-classical vocabulary items to remain in the text exactly as they appear in the ms. without favouring one form over the other. 2) Words, however, with a classical lineage we normalize if they do not appear with a consistent and unequivocal alternative spelling. One such example is ἀνάγη (e.g. ἀναγγάζουσι M264.15, ἀνάγη M264.17) rather than traditional ἀνάγη. B usually prefers -γγ-, but there are occasions (e.g. ἀναγκαίων M291.29, ἀναγκαιότερα M335.22) where he writes -γκ- and accordingly, because of this hesitant divergence from the tradition, we normalize all cases of ἀνάγη and its derivatives to -γκ-. By contrast, B’s highly consistent preference for -γγ- in the case of ὄγγος/ὄγγουται, rather than traditional ὄγκος/

⁸⁴ See van Dieten, “Einleitung,” XIX.

⁸⁵ I.e. the numbering as in *Grandezza*, which essentially follows the chapter and paragraph divisions (though without numbering) established by van Dieten.

οὐγκοῦται, led us to keep the unconventional spelling in our text. Likewise, B consistently prefers Λατῖνοι to Λατῖνοι, so we accordingly allow it to remain in the edited text. 3) Other noteworthy cases in B include: πολυορκία for πολιορκία, but since πολυορκία has a different meaning to the intended “siege,” we tacitly correct under the rubric of itacism. Another case is that of σφόνδηλος, a word which presents non-conventional -η- but since B’s spelling is consistent we allow it to remain in the edited text (even though the other mss often retain the more conventional -υ-). Another case, which nicely illustrates how the pressure of changing semantics leaves orthography vulnerable to instability, is κενοτομ-/καινοτομ- (“destroy,” “destruction”). B employs both spellings (Kriaras records κενοτομ-, LBG καινοτομ-); here, we allow both forms to remain in the text. 4) The orthographical practice of B sometimes allows for loss of the non-syllabic augment in the past tense of verbs, but not always. In such cases, we allow each form to remain in the edited text as and when it appears in the ms (e.g. ὠκονόμησεν and οἰκονόμησεν, ὥρισεν and ὄρισεν). To conclude, we found that each of these phenomena needed to be approached, from an editorial point of view, on its own merits and within these broadly defined margins of tolerance. All these cases as well as other forms that present variation are discussed in detail in the chapter on Language.

Punctuation

With regard to punctuation, the mss show a large degree of consensus. One very characteristic feature of this punctuation, and particularly of B’s punctuation, which we have chosen to retain, is the consistent use of a comma to separate a subordinate or participial clause from the clause with the main verb, a phenomenon that seems to have been common scribal practice, and which has been noted and applied recently by other editors.⁸⁶ For example (M159.24–26):

Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα βλέπων ὁ τότε ἀρχιερεὺς Νικαίας Νικόλαος, τὴν ἀνάγκην εἰς τὸ φιλότιμον διατίθησι. καὶ συνάξας τὸν λαὸν ἅπαντα, παραινεῖ καὶ συμβουλεύεται παραδοῦναι τῷ Ἀνδρονίκῳ τὴν πόλιν ...

However, one ubiquitous aspect of B’s punctuation that we did not retain in full was its frequent superfluity of middle or upper stops (they do not generally seem to be distinguished by the scribe). These we have tended to reduce, occasionally replacing them with commas, or brackets or dashes if the respective clause is parenthetical or of some other digressional or explanatory nature. The sentences immediately continuing from the example just cited illustrate this point (M159.25–160.4):

⁸⁶ A notable recent example: Reinsch, *Michaelis Pselli Chronographia*, vol. 1, esp. XXXIV–XXXV.

Ms. B: καὶ συνάξας τὸν λαὸν ἅπαντα, παραινεί καὶ συμβουλευέται παραδοῦναι τῷ Ἀνδρόνικῳ τὴν πόλιν· πρὶν εἰς μεγαλωτέραν μάχην καὶ ὀργὴν κινηθῇ· οὐδὲ γὰρ δυνατόν ἐστιν ἄπρακτον ὑποστρέψαι. ὥς οὖν εὔρε πάντας ἀποδεχομένους τὸ τῆς εἰρήνης καλὸν· καὶ τὴν συμβουλὴν αὐτοῦ καταδεχομένους, τὴν ἀρχιερατικὴν στολὴν ἐνδυθεῖς· καὶ τὸ θεῖον καὶ ἅγιον εὐαγγέλιον εἰς χεῖρας λαβὼν, ἀκολουθεῖν προσέταξεν αὐτῷ· τοὺς τε διακόνους καὶ κληρικούς ἅπαντας· καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν πλῆθος τῆς πόλεως· ὥς μὴδὲ γυναῖκας ἐντὸς ἀπομεῖναι τοῦ κάστρου· ἀλλὰ πάντες ἀσκέπαστοι καὶ ἀνυπόδετοι δεδεμένοι τὰς χεῖρας· κλάδους καὶ βαῖα κατέχοντες· καὶ παρακλητικαῖς φωναῖς ἐλεεινῶς ἀνακράζοντες· αἰδούμενοι αὐτομολῆσαι πρὸς τὸν Ἀνδρόνικον.

Edition: καὶ συνάξας τὸν λαὸν ἅπαντα, παραινεί καὶ συμβουλευέται παραδοῦναι τῷ Ἀνδρόνικῳ τὴν πόλιν πρὶν εἰς μεγαλωτέραν μάχην καὶ ὀργὴν κινηθῇ· οὐδὲ γὰρ δυνατόν ἐστιν ἄπρακτον ὑποστρέψαι. ὥς οὖν εὔρε πάντας ἀποδεχομένους τὸ τῆς εἰρήνης καλὸν καὶ τὴν συμβουλὴν αὐτοῦ καταδεχομένους, τὴν ἀρχιερατικὴν στολὴν ἐνδυθεῖς καὶ τὸ θεῖον καὶ ἅγιον εὐαγγέλιον εἰς χεῖρας λαβὼν, ἀκολουθεῖν προσέταξεν αὐτῷ τοὺς τε διακόνους καὶ κληρικούς ἅπαντας καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν πλῆθος τῆς πόλεως, ὥς μὴδὲ γυναῖκας ἐντὸς ἀπομεῖναι τοῦ κάστρου, ἀλλὰ πάντες ἀσκέπαστοι καὶ ἀνυπόδετοι, δεδεμένοι τὰς χεῖρας, κλάδους καὶ βαῖα κατέχοντες, καὶ παρακλητικαῖς φωναῖς ἐλεεινῶς ἀνακράζοντες, αἰδούμενοι αὐτομολῆσαι πρὸς τὸν Ἀνδρόνικον.

In the above example, we could have replaced the upper stop after πόλιν with a comma, but chose not to punctuate at all. Likewise: after καλὸν, ἐνδυθεῖς, αὐτῷ, ἅπαντας. In the manuscript the stops, sometimes lower, sometimes higher on the line, thus serve to demarcate the accretive unfolding of participial clauses, as well as smaller units (e.g. τοὺς τε διακόνους καὶ κληρικούς ἅπαντας) – they seem to draw attention more to the enumeration of the component phrases of the sentence than to the overarching cadence and structure of the period. Interestingly, the scribe does place a comma after καλοδεχομένους, presumably because the subject of the participial clauses has changed, thereby underlining for the reader the new syntactical momentum of the sentence. We do not, then, follow every aspect of B’s practice in respect of punctuation, which, however much it may have been perceived as useful in the organic environment of the handwritten page, is not needed – indeed, creates an element of confusion and visual “noise” – in the clinical environment of a printed text. Naturally, we always pay close attention to the punctuation signs of the ms (particularly in respect of the separation of the clause containing the main verb from clauses of a participial or otherwise subordinate nature), but do not slavishly reproduce it in our edition.

Paragraph division does not always coincide across the manuscripts, and often does not coincide with the paragraph division established in the modern printed editions of NCH. As noted above, we insert into the text the paragraph *numbering* recorded in the Pontani edition, thereby enabling easy cross-reference with that text. Where the paragraphs begin with a capital letter in our edition it should be understood that the principal manuscript itself also gives an indication of paragraph division (i.e. it has a rubric at the beginning of the line of the first sentence of a new paragraph). Where new paragraphs in our edition begin with a lower-case letter, this implies that the manuscript does *not* have any indication of paragraph division. In

certain cases, in terms of formatting, we deliberately ignore the conventional paragraph division of the modern editions, preferring to let B's understanding of paragraph division take precedence.

Iota subscript

Ms B does not use iota subscript, nor do the other mss, with the exception of the second part of ms X (of course, lack of iota subscript is common in Byzantine mss). Since this absence does not disturb the clarity and intelligibility of the text, we decided not to add iota subscript in the edited text.

Accentuation

With regard to accentuation, we have allowed, as already mentioned, certain of B's consistent practices to remain in the edited text, even if they seem to diverge from editorial norms. Some of these phenomena have actually been treated in a similar way in other recent editions, or have been discussed in philological studies, notably by Jacques Noret.⁸⁷ These include, for example, *μηδὲ*,⁸⁸ the consistent application of a grave accent even before punctuation,⁸⁹ the use of the apostrophe after *οὐχ'* (indicating that this word was perceived as an abbreviated *οὐχί*),⁹⁰ and certain phenomena related to enclitics.⁹¹ Another feature of the mss, i.e. frequent double accent on *μὲν*, *δὲ* and *ἐπεὶ*,⁹² we were unable to reproduce in the edited text. Certain words, e.g. *πράγμα*, are consistently accented in a different way to commonly recognized convention (i.e. *πᾶγμα*), and, as already noted, we allow these to remain in the text.

The apparatus

The space below the edited text may contain up to three apparatus. The first in essence forms part of the manuscript page, and presents the marginal legends of the manuscripts, referencing the position on the folio (most often "inferiore," i.e. in the bottom margin) and the paragraph(s) of the edited text. Because this material forms

⁸⁷ Noret, "L'accentuation Byzantine."

⁸⁸ Noret, "L'accentuation Byzantine," 113.

⁸⁹ Noret, "L'accentuation Byzantine," 111–112.

⁹⁰ Noret, "L'accentuation Byzantine," 119.

⁹¹ See the relevant discussion in the chapter on the Language of MNCH, and Noret, "L'accentuation," 121–145.

⁹² Noret, "L'accentuation," 120–121.

an integral component of the ms page, we do not use a line to separate this apparatus from the edited text. Mss B and Y contain abundant marginal legends, S only a few in its early folios, and X none at all. We record what we take to be original legends that were clearly inserted in the margins around the time of composition. We do not use this apparatus to present marginal corrections to the text by the scribe or readers of the text, or what are clearly later accretions to the matter on the page (these few cases are mentioned in the discussion of the mss). It is usually possible from the hand and the colour of the ink to distinguish between original headings and later marginal accretions. The role of the marginal legends is very similar to that described in Willem Aerts' recent edition of the *Alexander Poem*.⁹³ The vast majority serve simply as content references, either with a plain statement reflecting the content of the adjacent text, e.g. B f. 215^v: ἡ τῆς Πόλεως ἄλωσης, or introduced by ὅτι (most commonly), *περί*, ὅσα, ὁποῖος, ὅπως etc.: e.g. B f. 42^v: ὅτι ὁ βασιλεὺς Μανουὴλ τὰ Νεόκαστρα οἰκῆσε, B f. 98^v: ὅσα ἔπαθον οἱ Θεσσαλονικεῖς ἀπὸ τῶν ἀθέων Λατίνων, B f. 170^v: *περί* τοῦ Φρεδερίχου καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἀμερίγου, etc. A second type is comprised of comments that are introduced by ὅρα, soliciting the reader's attention, e.g. B f. 26: ὅρα τὸ τοῦ Ἀνδρονίκου ἐπινόημα, B f. 207^v: ὅρα μέχρι ποῦ τὸ πῦρ κατέκαυσεν, B f. 214^v: ὅρα τὴν δολιότητα τοῦ δουκὸς, or occasionally *Ση* (i.e. *Σημείωσαι*), even where the legend is merely descriptive, e.g. B f. 147^v: *Ση* *περί* τοῦ Χοτζᾶ. Another type is comprised of a few moral or pious statements and exhortations, e.g. B f. 64: τοῦ σοφοῦ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ μακρὰ βλέπουσιν, B f. 221^v: μέγας ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν καὶ μεγάλη ἡ ἰσχὺς αὐτοῦ ὅτι καὶ παιδεύων ἰᾶται καὶ ὀργιζόμενος δικαίως, πάλιν ἐλεεῖ, B f. 37^v: φεῦ ὅποια ἡ ἀνάγκη ποιεῖ, B f. 229^v: τοῦ φαύλου ἄλλοι εἰσὶν οἱ λόγοι καὶ ἑτέροι αἱ πράξεις. In any case, these marginal legends occasionally contain a reference by the scribe/reader to the person of the author, i.e. Niketas Choniates, e.g. B f. 224: ὅπως ὁ συγγραφεὺς παρὰ τοῦ Φράγγου διεφενδεύθη, B f. 225^v: θρῆνος τοῦ Χωνειάτου πρὸς τὰ τεῖχη τῆς Πόλεως, etc.

The second section of the apparatus records our editorial interaction with B and notable features of B that help complete the picture of its text. When we intervene in the main text, this is indicated. But it should be stressed, as already noted, that we sought to intervene as little as possible, meaning that we allow some anacolutha and rare or unusual forms (for example, in morphology or orthography) that some might consider aberrant to remain if we feel that they do not disrupt the narrative flow too much. These and other problems that emerge in B's text (or across the entire spectrum of BSXY) are addressed in the introductory chapter on the language of MNCH and the Commentary.

The role of the third section of the apparatus is to document the alternative readings of the "family" of the other three manuscripts, S, X and Y. Sometimes these readings may be judged to be "better" than B, sometimes worse, often just alternatives

⁹³ Aerts, *The Byzantine Alexander Poem*, vol. 1, p. 5.

(see the relevant table in the chapter on the manuscripts). Whatever the case, while SXY clearly need to be taken into consideration when making certain editorial decisions in the case of B, the variants therein are viewed as items of separate, albeit parallel, textual substance. We do not record occurrences of nonsense, itacism, psilosis, or alternative accentuation in SXY, with a view to ensuring that this part of the apparatus does not become a kind of nebula of palaeographical detritus where the significant gets lost among the trivial.

A workshop held at the University of Cyprus in 2013 gave participants (mostly Byzantinists, though input from Slavists was also highly illuminating) an opportunity to discuss and explore various issues related to textual criticism and editorial techniques.⁹⁴ Obviously, a key function and purpose of a modern printed edition is to make a text accessible to the wider scholarly readership. Another aim, according to the conference programme, of a critical edition is to “reconstruct the original text as written by its author.” But this latter aim, as indicated already in the discussion of the manuscripts, proves elusive in the case of MNCH. When making our editorial decisions, it is always possible and necessary to appeal to the original *History*. However, there is an existential conundrum at the heart of the metaphrastic project: by definition a metaphrase at one and the same time departs from, yet depends on and attaches to, its source text. To prefer, therefore, a reading from manuscripts S, X or Y because it seems to be *closer* to Choniates’ original than manuscript B, risks in certain important ways misconceiving the purpose and *raison d’être* of the Metaphrase. In other words, while the original *History* will always serve the editor of the Metaphrase as a kind of guiding light and arbiter (supported by careful cross-reference of every word and line of the text), it does not necessarily impose unwaveringly its own meaning on the meaning of the Metaphrase. Given also the complicated nature of the relationship between the surviving manuscripts (discussed above) as well as our lack of certain knowledge regarding the text of the *History* that the Metaphrast was working from, to pursue authorial intention when editing the Metaphrase is to pursue a chimera. The guiding principle here, therefore, is that the text as it survives in the manuscripts is rather imperfect, and in certain places rather unfinished, yet this is as good as it gets: we do not seek to better it.⁹⁵

The reasons for the imperfect, unfinished state of the Metaphrase may be many, but one plausible explanation could be that the text initially existed as a sequence of notes or perhaps marginal or interlinear glosses (i.e. a kind of draft translation), that these were gathered into a new clean text (B?), and that B together with the draft

⁹⁴ Edition and Interpretation, International Workshop 6–8 December 2013, University of Cyprus, Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, organized by Antonia Giannouli.

⁹⁵ See McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*, 65: “The best procedure, in such circumstances, would be to seek after the ‘best text’ among the extant documents and edit that.” McGann discusses editorial approaches that were first formulated in detail by J. Bédier, “La tradition manuscrite du *Lai de l’Ombre*,” *Romania* 54 (1928), 161–196, and 321–356.

translation and/or Niketas' original, provided the basis for our other three subsequent surviving copies, the first possibly being the Paris manuscript (Y), then X and later S (indeed S may have been copied in the West). This hypothesis explains the existence of omissions in Y and X that correspond to full lines of B (usually of the homoteleton type), but also explains why certain variants of the SXY group correspond precisely to Choniates' original or, on the other hand, to perfectly acceptable alternative renderings of the original. These issues have been discussed earlier. But it needs to be stressed that there are no strong reasons for believing that there existed, at some earlier point in time, a clean, perfected Metaphrase from which all our surviving witnesses are derived. In other words, to emend, normalize and otherwise improve the Metaphrase would be both to give it a status it never achieved and to produce a text that never existed.

The Commentary

The reader is encouraged to use the Commentary in parallel with the text. It does not aim at replicating information presented elsewhere, such as, for example, Niccolò Zorzi's *La Storia di Niceta Coniata. Libri I-VIII: Giovanni II e Manuele I Comneno. Materiali per un commento*, which throws valuable light on the first eight books of Choniates' *History*. Rather, the purpose of the Commentary is to elucidate passages of MNCH that are difficult to interpret or that present problems of syntax and grammar, or misunderstanding on the part of the Metaphrast (or scribe). Whenever, therefore, a passage appears confused or bizarre, it is hoped that the reader will find a degree of enlightenment in the Commentary. We became increasingly fond of the Metaphrast's work, and came to understand the text as reflecting the very challenging task of reading and recasting Niketas' original. We also hope that the Commentary throws light on the process of negotiation that MNCH embodies with respect to the linguistic norms and conventions within which it was situated.

Indices

The Indices, divided into two sections (1. Personal names and geographical terms, 2. Notable words), draw attention to vocabulary in MNCH that diverges from conventional norms (and from the formulation in N), whether semantically or in terms of spelling. We also supply relevant lexicographical information.

