

Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene and Historiography in Late Antiquity

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In A.D. 569 a monk of Amida, the modern Diyarbakır in eastern Turkey, put together a historical work now known as the Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene. It offers a history of the Roman empire from 450 to 565 approximately, giving details of both church and secular events. For part of the work, the compiler relied primarily, if not exclusively, on a *Church History* composed by Zachariah, bishop of Mytilene: it is for this reason that the whole work was later erroneously ascribed to this Zachariah. Scholars are united in emphasising the importance of this work, which incorporates numerous original church documents; modern accounts of the period frequently rely heavily on it. Yet there has been little work on this history in recent years and no new translation of it since 1899.

The main aim of this project is to put together the first ever complete translation of the work into any modern language and to combine this with a commentary to assist in the interpretation of this important source. To this will be added an introduction, discussing the nature of pseudo-Zachariah's account and placing him in the wider context of history-writing in late antiquity. For the project also has the ancillary aim of taking a broad view of pseudo-Zachariah and to assess the originality of his work; this will be accomplished by comparing his account to those of other authors, in Greek, Latin and Syriac. Although much work has been done recently on history-writing in this period, Syriac authors have received comparatively little attention, and few have compared Syriac writings with those in Greek and Latin.

The project is thus both historical (commenting on the events described in pseudo-Zachariah's work) and historiographical (analysing how pseudo-Zachariah relates events and why he chooses to describe some and not others). It requires expertise in several languages and a wide knowledge of the late antique period. When completed, it will constitute an important resource for the study of the period as a whole.