



FROM MY DIARY

I made a trip to Cambridge University Library on Tuesday, to look at a couple of books on Theophanes of Nicaea, rather than waiting several weeks. I was glad to find some money still on my university card, but the photocopiers become more difficult to use each time they get a new one! I got most of what I want; but how I wish that I could have simply downloaded the volumes! One was 50 euros, one was 25 euros, so it was cheaper to drive.

My library card was still valid, at least until September. A much younger-looking face with masses of dark hair looks out of it. For the library staff have not updated the picture since 1999.

The monograph, by I.D.Polemis, naturally references the *editio princeps* of *On the light of Tabor*; by Sotiropoulos. I've been trying to find a copy of this book, but utterly in vain. The National Library of Greece has a copy, and Worldcat tells me that a German library in Bonn has one. Otherwise nothing. I would guess that the title page is entirely in Greek, and that this has baffled cataloguers. It's a warning, to you Greek chaps - always put a title in Roman text somewhere opposite the title page. You won't be sorry.

Another failing of the otherwise excellent monograph was a failure to translate passages from the author. The book had extensive quotations, often half a page. But as these were all in Greek, this meant that the argument was impossible to follow! This is undoubtedly the fault of the publisher, who should have known that normal people do not read middle Greek!

The other book was a Greek text of Theophanes, a later edition. But the editor did not print the page numbers of the *editio princeps* in his edition. This poses quite a problem. Polemis refers to a passage by a bare page number - rather than book 3, chapter 6 - and the widely available later text simply leaves you to guess where it is. It's interesting to see the lack of joined-up thinking here.

Anyway I wrote the article on Theophanes, and I probably won't have occasion to deal with him again.

It did highlight how much material is not very easy to access, even today, even with the mass piracy of PDFs that is such a blessing to independent scholars.

I'm still working on QuickLatin, but less and less so. I ought to upload the new version to the distribution site, and draw a line under that work. But this will mean tangling with creating copy protection for it. I suppose once it is done, it is done.

I went back to working on the ancient life of St George last night. This is dribbling along slowly, but there is no rush.

At some point I must get back to earning money. I've started putting out my CV to the usual places, and we'll have to see what comes along. God will provide, as ever. I have a feeling that I will either get something fairly quickly, or else it will be September.
