Title: Eunapius and the Idea of the Decline of the Roman Empire in Zosimus

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Abstract: Although Zosimus is recognised as a generally servile epitomator, it has in the past been customary to regard his statements about the baneful influence of Christianity upon the Empire's fortunes as representing his own considered opinions. This dissertation attempts to show that Zosimus copied these ideas directly from his main source, Eunapius, modifying them only in very minor ways. The first chapter consists in a detailed comparison of the remaining fragments of Eunapius' History with Zosimus. It is shown that in many places Zosimus made only very slight changes in his epitome which were due to the need to condense his source or to his own very different taste in style. He was prone to abridge or omit especially rhetorical or reflective passages and those involving character portrayal. Some minor interpolations he introduced were due either to ignorance on his part or to a consciousness of the changes which the Empire had undergone since the time when his source wrote. The chapter concludes with a study of passages which seem to indicate a major divergence from Eunapius. All of these, it is suggested, conform to the types indicated earlier in the chapter. This part of the study then confirms the impression that Zosimus departed but little, and that rarely enough, from his source. Chapter two carries the study to parts of Zosimus' work for which there are no remains of Eunapius. Although Zosimus' carelessness and incompetence are abundantly revealed some evidence is produced of a crude attempt on Zosimus' part, from time to time, to dramatise, or rather to heighten the drama of, material taken from Eunapius. Attention is drawn to some passages, notably those on the mime and on the auralustralis collatio, which have been seen as Zosimus' own contributions to his work, but which on closer investigation seem also to have been copied from Eunapius. In this chapter also the evidence for other sources within the part of the New History that was taken from Eunapius is reviewed and dismissed.

The decline of the Roman Empire is the subject of the third chapter. The various elements in Zosimus' "theory"--the decline of the cities, the rise of Christianity, the abandonment of paganism--are shown to be present in the works of Eunapius and to a lesser extent Olympiodorus. Moreover two of the cardinal passages in Zosimus' work--the digressions on Palmyra and on the Secular Games--are shown to have probably been taken also from Eunapius. This is not to deny Zosimus all originality as in his proem he emphasises the idea of decline in a way that Eunapius did not. Moreover his work belongs more to the genre of "world history" like those of the Christian chroniclers rather than of "secular history" like his models Eunapius and Olympiodorus. Nevertheless it seems that he took from Eunapius with minimal modifications the religious and political ideas which give distinction to an otherwise insipid piece of work.

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Zosimus laments that the Roman negotiators apparently were unconcerned by divine care and protection. Incidents like these, in which the gods were disregarded, were the cause of the demise of Rome – at least according to Zosimus. The people might have known, because the gods were perfectly comprehensible: after all, there were oracles, which he quotes several times.\footnote{E.g., Zosimus, New History 1.57, 1.58, and 2.37.} There are several errors in the New History, which he may have found in his sources (i.e., Eunapius and Olympiodorus) or may have made himself. Although he refrains from direct polemics, he is biased: for example, he does not tell the story of Constantine’s vision, which might be read as if he accepted a pro-Christian intervention of the Divine. In the fifth century Zosimus the pagan historian borrowed from Eunapius for his account of Julian’s life. In the Lives Eunapius refers to himself modestly in the third person, and never by name. For the facts of his life we depend on Porphyry’s biography of him and the meagre notice by Eunapius. He studied at Alexandria with Ammonius, of whom little is known, and accompanied the Emperor Gordian on his disastrous expedition against Ctesiphon in 243. The Romans, for political rather than religious reasons, feared the influence of the practice of magic, and, under Valens, Maximus was executed in 871. Libanius was no theurgist, but he congratulates Maximus in Letter 606 on his influence over Julian. Eunapius and the idea of the decline of the roman empire in zosimus. By JAMES DAVID FITTON. A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. The various elements in Zosimus’ \textit{theory 11 --the decline of the cities, the rise of Christianity, the abandonment of paganism--are shown to be present in the works of Eunapius and to a lesser extent Olympiodorus. Moreover two of the cardinal passages in zosimus’ work--the digres-sions on Palmyra and on the Secular Games--are shown to have probably been taken also from Eunapius. This is not to deny Zosimus all originality as in his proem he emphasises the idea of decline in a way that Eunapius did not do. More-over his work belongs more to the genre of "world history0. iv.}