CHAPTER FOUR

THE EXTENT OF ‘PUBLICITY’

4.1. Channels for Circulation

The intention in this chapter is to consider the extent to which the ideas found in Demetrius’ writings can be said to have belonged to the public domain—to have been ‘publicised’—and therefore to have direct bearing on understanding his public career. The first part of this chapter will discuss various factors which might throw light on this: the manuscripts, indications taken from Demetrius’ writings themselves, and external indications. The subsequent sections of the chapter will then consider what light the results of this discussion shed on the ‘publicising’ of the main areas of Demetrius’ thought highlighted in Section II.

4.1.1. The Manuscript Evidence

As with Demetrius’ translations, so too with his own writings: a full study of the manuscripts is beyond the scope of this study, and it must instead rely on the rather variable secondary information available. However, although the information available is inadequate in some respects, it does enable certain areas of interest to be highlighted.

The information available is most extensive in the case of the letters. In the course of his work on the letter corpus, Loenertz published detailed discussion of the manuscripts.\(^1\) His conclusion was that the letters were preserved principally through Demetrius’ own efforts to prepare them for publication, and he identified two main phases of editorial activity: one c. 1373/4, another in the 1390s.\(^2\) These conclusions are somewhat disappointing with regard to their potential to answer questions relating to contemporary circulation, since they place the editorial activity outside the timeframe under consideration here and in the hands of the writer, not the recipients. The manuscripts are thus more able to answer questions relating

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\(^1\) Loenertz, R.-J., *Les receuils de lettres de Démétrius Cydonès*, SeT 131 (Vatican City, 1947); also idem, *Demetrius Cydones, Correspondance*, I, III–XVI.

to contemporary understanding of literary letter-writing and collections, rather than to the circulation of ideas contained therein.3

Demetrius’ speeches have not received the same degree of editorial attention. The three ‘imperial orations’4 have, it is true, been edited relatively recently, but without much comment on the manuscripts, while the remaining texts are still dependent on the editions reproduced in the *Patrologia Graeca* (PG). The information available,5 however, does convey certain points. The five manuscripts of relevance to the speeches (Laur. 59, 24,6 Paris. gr. 1213,7 Coislin. gr. 315,8 Burney 759 and Vat. gr. 486)10 all date to the 1390s or later.11 None apparently have autograph elements, so there is no demonstrable editorial link with Demetrius himself.12 The works appear in different combinations in different manuscripts, rather than as an established corpus.13 These details allow some tentative suggestions to be made. The delay between composition and the known copies requires there to have been intermediary manuscripts. Although without detailed study of the manuscripts their exact relationship is unclear, it is probable, given the variation in order and number of the texts, and the lack of evidence of a direct connection with Demetrius, that there were various channels of transmis-

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4 The term is used here only to indicate that they are addressed to emperors: as has been seen, they vary in style, with only the Second Oration to John Kantakuzenos conforming to some degree to encomiastic models.

5 Principally following indications and references in Tinnefeld, *Demetrios Kydones, Briefe*, Vol I, pp. 64 f., section 1.3.


11 Coislin. gr. 315 is a 17th century copy of the 15th century Paris. gr. 1213. Burney. 75 is also 15th century (Loenertz, 1947, 28, 23). Laur. 59, 24 (Loenertz, *Les receuils de lettres de Démétrius Cydonès*, pp. 73–75) and Vat. gr. 486 can both be connected with the 1390s.

12 Although Vat. gr. 486 has a link with Kalekas, which makes a direct connection possible, but even so this would only apply to the *Monody*, the *First Oration to Kantakuzenos* and the *Pro subsidio*.

13 Only one (Laur. 59, 24) contains all 6 speeches; in the other manuscripts, the texts appear in different orders and combinations.