

To try to provide accurate and authentic information about Zenodotus of Ephesus is a conundrum as little has been recorded about the man that scholars label as 'probably' the first librarian of the Library of Alexandria (Badian). Zenodotus has also been described as the first grammarian, but many consider his greatest service to be the first editor of Homer, or for that matter, of any text. He is the father of textual criticism for he was the first to recognize that sound texts needed to be based on manuscript comparisons (Kent). He is thought to probably have been born around 325 B.C. in Byzantium and to have lived to at least 260 B.C. He moved to Alexandria to study under Zenodotus of Callimachus (Kent). We can assume from this information that he was pursuing the life of a scholar.

Although I did not find definitive information about Zenodotus of Ephesus, the information that I did find began to paint a picture of what his life might have been like. It is important to understand that Zenodotus lived during the time of the Ptolemaic Dynasty (350 – 30 B.C.) which ruled Egypt during the Hellenistic period. During this period, Ptolemy the First Soter financed the establishment of a library. The library was completed during the reign of Ptolemy the Second Philadelphus.

It is interesting to me to read that another man, Demetrius of Phalerum, made claim to being the first librarian under the rule of Ptolemy I and that Zenodotus is said to have dismissed that claim by calling Demetrius nothing more than an organizer.

Furthermore, Zenodotus' successor, Apollonius of Rhodes, actually wrote a book titled *Against Zenodotus* (Canfora). I took away from my readings that there was much competition amongst the scholars of the time and that they did not always agree with each others' opinions or methods.

Just how much influence Zenodotus of Ephesus had on Ptolemy II can only be speculated upon. However, I think it is important to note that Zenodotus was Ptolemy's tutor before he became ruler and continued to work as his advisor after he succeeded his father in the dynasty. It can only be assumed that the time, expense, and dedication it took to build the Library of Alexandria and the aim to collect of half a million scrolls was influenced to a degree by Zenodotus as his tutor, advisor, and superintendent of the library.

I would be remiss to not make a distinction between a modern library and the Library of Alexandria. The Library of Alexandria was a museum and a place for scholars to study their discipline. Ptolemy II was so intent to collect that every ship that came into port was raided of its books. Copies were made and given to the owners, as well as a payment, but the originals were kept in the Library of Alexandria. Books were also purchased across the land, especially in the markets of Athens and Rhodes.

Collecting vast material led to the need to copy and to organize it. This left the great minds of the day, with the support of Ptolemy II, free to collect, copy, criticize and

comment, punctuate, organize, and preserve the collections without the worry of going to war or how to feed themselves. Zenodotus focused on classical literature and is accredited with researching, editing, and translating Homer. He has been criticized for the editing he has done, but many believe that he worked towards a pure form of Homer stripped of the expansions added to make them more enjoyable for Athenians. There are scholars that support Zenodotus in his work with Homer and scholars that disagree with him (Fraser). Through Zenodotus' work, the foundations of the glossary and grammar came to take shape (Easterling).

I came away from my research with a belief that Zenodotus of Ephesus was our first librarian and he is most responsible for educating leaders and scholars of his day in the need for collecting, copying, researching, cataloging, and preserving the writings of humankind.

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