

DAMASKENOS the STOUDITE

(ca. 1530-1577)

LIFE

Generally thought to have been born ca. 936-941/1530-1535,¹ D.S. was probably a native of Salonica, since he refers to himself in his own works as “Thessalonikeus.”² The adjective “Stoudite” is problematic, as he could not have studied in the Stoudion monastery of Istanbul, which had been converted to a mosque (İmrahor camii),³ so it must be an honorary title of the period indicating a scholar. He did, however, study in the Patriarchal Academy of Istanbul (Πατριαρχικὴ Ἀκαδημία) during the reigns of Patriarchs Jeremias I (r. 1522-1545) and Dionysios II (r. 1546-1555). He traveled widely to Venice, Mount Athos, Russia, Meteora, Naupaktos, and Arta, and died in 985/1577 while serving as the metropolitan of Naupaktos and Arta in eastern Greece (formally, he had the title of “*exarch* of the entire Aitolia”).⁴ He was a major intellectual figure in the sixteenth century and a well-known teacher, whose students included Patriarch Jeremias II (r. 1522-1545).

Biographical information on his life, up to year 1546, has not survived. From 1550 to 1559 Damaskenos seems to have divided his time between Istanbul and the Meteora monasteries in Thessaly and he may have taught at Trikala. He also traveled to supervise the edition and printing of his book, *Thesaurus*. In the period between 1565-1572 he traveled to Kiev as a representative (ἐξάρχος) of patriarch Metrophanes III (r. 1565-1572). In 1574 he became the metropolitan of Naupaktos (Lepanto) and Arta and died here in 1577.

WORKS

① *Χρονικὸν (Khronikon)*

D.S.’s most important historical work remains problematical, as the question of its authorship has never been securely settled and D.S. has been, perhaps uncritically, presented as its true author.⁵ At the end of his *Physiologia* in the Codex 462⁶ of the Metokhion of All-Holy Sepulchre, there is a chronicle dealing with the long period from the reign of Romulus to Murād III (r. 982-1003/1574-1595) and a composition on the Patriarchs of New Rome (Constantinople), reaching to the year 980/1572. This last work is further known as *Khronikon* and is not assigned an author in the manuscript. Recorded in the manuscript after *Physiologia*, however, it has been reasonably attributed to the pen of D.S.

The fact that it was used as a source by a number of authors in the Patriarchate of Istanbul in the sixteenth century is an indication of the significance of this work, which still remains unedited and unpublished in its entirety. Scholars of the nineteenth century already had realized its importance⁷ and modern research⁸ has shown, through philological and linguistic analysis, that the *Khronikon* was the main source of *Historia Patriarchica* by Manuel Malaxos (d. 1581), who seems to have copied

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D.S.'s text very closely (in some cases verbatim), both in its lexical choices and sentence structure.⁹

The fragment that has been published¹⁰ is of the utmost importance for the early history of the Patriarchate, as it deals with its transfer from the Holy Apostles (after its conversion to a mosque by Mehmed II (r. 848-850/1444-1446, 855-886/1451-1481) to Pammakaristos, and provides us with the earliest account of this important event. It has been speculated that *Khronikon* contains additional information about that early period. Moreover, the text of Damaskenos-Malaxos was also elaborated slightly, and in some cases, supplemented by Theodosios Zygomalas (16th cen.), another well-known intellectual in the Patriarchate. The importance of the last elaboration lies in the fact that it was sent to Martinus Crusius (d. 1607), who included its Greek text and his own valuable translation into Latin in his monumental *Turco-Graecia*.¹¹ Already in the sixteenth century there were persistent rumors that Malaxos was not the original author of the Zygomalas-Crusius version but had copied another earlier work, which can be identified now as the *Historia-Khronikon* by D.S.¹²

The importance of the *Khronikon* is further indicated by the fact that it was also used in the elaboration of George Sphrantzes' (d. 1477) original *Chronikon Minus* into the immensely popular *Chronicon Maius* (ca. 988/1580) by the sixteenth century forger-elaborator Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos (= Pseudo-Sphrantzes) (d. 1585). The importance of D.S.'s *Khronikon* does not stop there, as his text was also used by another immensely popular "historical" work of the Ottoman period, namely *Historikon Biblion* (also known as *Khronographos* as well as *Synopsis Historion*) by Pseudo-Dorotheus of Monemvasia (late 16th-early 17th cen.), which proved to be one of the bestsellers published in Venice (the first edition: 1040/1631).¹³

D.S.'s work seems to have been the source of many other histories. He was clearly among the major scholars in the early history of the Patriarchate during the Ottoman period. Even though our understanding seems to have been improving with modern research,¹⁴ our knowledge of the history of the Patriarchate in the late fifteenth and in the sixteenth centuries is scanty at best and will certainly be enhanced when we possess the full text of D.S.'s work.

② *Κατάλογος Χρονογραφικὸς τῶν Πατριαρχῶν Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ὑπὸ Δαμασκηνοῦ (Στουδίτου) (History of the Patriarchs of Constantinople by Damaskenos (the Stoudite))*

His most valuable work, the *History of the Patriarchs of Constantinople*, has never been published and it is to be hoped that it will find a modern editor, so that D.S.'s contribution to the intellectual life of the sixteenth-century Patriarchate of Istanbul will be properly evaluated and will undoubtedly assist in a better understanding of the Patriarchate under the Ottoman sultans. Its contents include all the individuals who were patriarchs in the city from its foundation by Constantine the Great up to the present day (i.e. 1572 A.D.). It includes the number of years that each patriarch oc-

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cupied the highest patriarchal throne and the those who were expelled from the throne.

Another major work of D.S.'s was *Thesaurus*, which consists of thirty-six homilies he had pronounced (~1557-1558). D.S.'s *Thesaurus* was translated into a number of languages including Russian, Bulgarian, and Karamanid-Turkish for Turcophone Greeks. Another popular work is entitled *Physiologia*. Based on the ancient work of Oppian (late 2nd cen.) and Aelian (d. ca. 230) on animal lore, *Physiologia* appears to have passed as a treatise on zoology at the time. D.S. also produced works of a hagiographical nature on neomartyrs and on various religious matters. Furthermore, D.S. chose the literary genre of the dialogue to produce a satirical criticism of the practices and behavior of the high clergy, including the patriarch. Thirteen of his letters, his works on mathematics, meteorology, and astronomy survive in manuscript form and still remain unedited. His references to Plato, Homer, Aelian, Oppian, Aristophanes, and Herodotus indicate D.S.'s familiarity with ancient literature and its genres. Another indication of D.S.'s acquaintance with ancient Greek literature is his usage of the classical Attic dialect. D.S. also composed works in the spoken idiom, a tendency that was not generally favored at the time. His scholarship and command of ancient as well spoken Greek is impeccable and there are indications that he also knew Turkish, as he employed, in Hellenized form, Turkish words in his text.¹⁵

BIBLIOGRAPHY

① *Χρονικὸν (Khronikon)*

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¹ On D.S., cf. L.N. Manou, *Δαμασκηνός ὁ Στουδίτης: Ὁ Βίος καὶ τὸ Ἔργο του* (Athens, 1999), who analyzes all the evidence concerning his life, summarizes his work and editions, and offers some selections of his unpublished works.

² Cf. the complete title of his *Thesaurus: Θησαυρὸς Δαμασκηνοῦ τοῦ ὑποδιακονοῦ καὶ στουδίτου τοῦ Θεσσαλονικέως*.

³ Howard Crane, *The Garden of the Mosques: Hafiz Hüseyin Al-Ayvansarayî's Guide to the Muslim Monuments of Ottoman Istanbul* (Leiden, et al., 2000), p. 216 (s.v. Mirahur mescidi).

⁴ On the inscription of his tomb cf. Manou, *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, 55.

⁵ Sathas (*Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, (Venice, 1872), vol. 3, 11) had accepted D.S. as an author and even believed that this codex is an autograph. D.S.'s authorship was challenged by A. Kipritschnikow ("Eine volkstümliche Kaiserchronik," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 12 (1892), 303-315). More recently, M. Philippides ("Patriarchal Chronicle of the Sixteenth Century," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 25 (1984), 87-94) has accepted Sathas' view. Manou (*Δαμασκηνός ὁ Στουδίτης*, 94-95), is unaware of the last mentioned study and has embraced the older view. Thus, she does not discuss this work in her monograph on D.S., as she believes that it should not be attributed to him.

⁶ Sathas, *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, 11, n. 1: Codex 569.

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⁷ For example, Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, 11-15.

⁸ Philippides, "Patriarchal Chronicles"; idem, "An 'Unknown' Source for Book III of the *Chronicon Maius* by Pseudo-Sphrantzes," *Byzantine Studies/Etudes Byzantines* 10 (1984), 174-183.

⁹ Philippides, "Patriarchal Chronicles." Further detailed analysis and comparison of all related texts (including the patriarchal *Ἐκθροσις Χρονική*) in M. Philippides and Walter K. Hanak, *The Pen and the Sword: The Siege and Fall of Constantinople in 1453: The Historiography, Topography, and Military Studies*, vol. 1, chapter 1, section III (forthcoming). For the *Ἐκθροσις Χρονική* as a source of D.S.'s work, as well as its text, English translation, and commentary, cf. M. Philippides, *Emperors, Patriarchs and Sultans of Constantinople, 1373-1513: An Anonymous Greek Chronicle of the Sixteenth Century* (Brookline, 1990).

¹⁰ Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, 11-15; and (with discussion), Philippides, "Patriarchal Chronicles," 92-94.

¹¹ M. Crusius, *Turcograecia libri Octo à Martino Crusio*, ... (Basel, [1584]). For Crusius and his correspondence with, as well reliance on, patriarchal informants from the Patriarchate in Istanbul, cf. G. E. Zachariades, *Tübingen und Konstantinopel. Martin Crusius und seine Verhandlungen mit der Griechisch-Orthodox Kirche* (Göttingen, 1941); and S. Karouzou, *Μαρτίνος Κρούσιος: Ὁ Πρώτος Φιλέλληνας* (Athens, 1973). Zygomas, a *protonotarios* in the Patriarchate, brought Manuel Malaxos' *Historia Patriarchica* to the attention of Crusius. Zygomas had been acting as interpreter for Patriarch Jeremias II during visits by westerners and he even introduced Stephen Gerlach, a Lutheran chaplain, to the Patriarch. Gerlach kept his well-known *Tagebuch* (Diary) during his stay in Istanbul, which was published long after his death and still contains a wealth of information related to the Patriarch: *Stefan Gerlachs des Aeltern Tagebuch* (Frankfort am Main, 1674). It was Gerlach who put Crusius in touch with Zygomas. Zygomas sent Malaxos' work to Crusius in 1581. The erudition and activities of Zygomas were remembered well into the seventeenth century as it becomes clear in a note composed by Demetrios Prokopios (17th cen.) in his work on Greek scholars of the sixteenth century (Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, vol. 3, 480: "Theodosios Zygomas *floruit* in the reign of Patriarch Jeremias II; he was even honored with an official ecclesiastical title. The patriarch made use of him in all his necessary and official duties; if I may say so, he served him as if he were his right hand. He was a useful man and a scholar."

¹² Gerlach himself was under the impression that Manuel Malaxos was only the copyist of the manuscript that was sent to Crusius and not its author. Malaxos himself states in the text that he simply "translated [sc. the text] into the common idiom [= spoken language]" which clearly implies that he had another text in front of him, composed in the more formal, scholarly idiom. On the Malaxos family, cf. G. di Gregorio, *Il copista Manuel Malaxos, Studio biografico e paleografico-codicologico* (Vatican City, 1991); idem, "Studi su copisti greci del tardo Cinquecento: I: Ancora Manuel Malaxos," *Römische historische Mitteilungen* 37 (1995), 97-144; idem, "Studi su copisti greci del tardo Cinquecento: II," 189-268; F.H. Marshall, "The Chronicle of Manuel Malaxos," *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher* 16 (1972), 137-190; and P. Schreiner, "John Malaxos (16th Century) and his Collection *Antiquitates Constantinopolitanae*," in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*, ed. N. Necipoğlu (Leiden, et al., 2001), 203-214.

¹³ On Pseudo-Dorotheus of Monemvasia, cf. the entry by E.M. J[effreys] and A. K[azhdan] in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, eds. A.P. Kazhdan, et al., (New York, Oxford, 1991), 654; and D. Sakel, "A Probable Solution to the Problem of the *Chronicle of the Turkish Sultans*," in *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, eds. J. Burke, et al. (Melbourne, 2006), 204-220.

¹⁴ For the early history of the Patriarchate, cf. the analysis with detailed bibliography in Philippides and Hanak, *The Pen and the Sword*, vol. 1, chapter 1, section IV.

¹⁵ A typical example is his usage of the term *sürgün*, which he uses, in Greek dress, as *σεργούντις*. On the use of this word by D.S. and his followers, cf. Philippides, "Patriarchal Chronicles," 93.

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November 2008