

THE SIEGE AND THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE IN 1453

ROUTLEDGE

HISTORIOGRAPHY, TOPOGRAPHY,
AND MILITARY STUDIES



MARIOS PHILIPPIDES AND WALTER K. HANAK

THE SIEGE AND THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE IN 1453



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Historiography, Topography, and Military Studies

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Contents

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Abbreviations | ix |
| Preface | xiii |
| Acknowledgments | xxi |
| Maps | xxii |
| Illustrations | xxiii |

PART I – THE PEN

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 1 | Scholarship and the Siege of 1453 | 3 |
| | I. General Remarks | |
| | II. <i>Quattrocento</i> Sources on the Siege and Fall | |
| | A. Eyewitness Accounts | |
| | B. Non-Eyewitness Early Accounts | |
| | III. The Sixteenth-Century Greek Tradition | |
| | IV. Patriarchal and Ottoman Archival Documents | |
| | V. Personal Influence and an Early Literary Circle | |
| | VI. A Note on Turkish Accounts of the Siege | |
| 2 | Four Testimonies: A Ghost, a Pope, a Merchant, and a Boy | 93 |
| | I. “Richerio”: Ghost of an Eyewitness | |
| | II. A Neglected <i>Opusculum</i> by a Pope | |
| | III. Tetaldi: A Merchant of Florence | |
| | IV. A Russian Eyewitness: The Historicity of Nestor-Iskander’s Text | |
| 3 | A “Chronicle” and its Elaboration: Sphrantzes and Pseudo-Sphrantzes | 139 |
| | I. The Name “Sphrantzes” | |
| | II. <i>Minus</i> and <i>Maius</i> | |
| | III. Original Contributions by Pseudo-Sphrantzes | |
| | IV. A Number of Correspondences among the Related Texts | |
| | V. Some Correspondences among Pusculo, Languschi-Dolfin, and the Hypothetical <i>Ignotus</i> | |
| 4 | Myths, Legends, and Tales: Folk History | 193 |
| | I. Troy and Constantinople | |

- II. Prophecies, Omens, Signs, and Portents
- III. The Last Imperial Tomb: Vefa Meidan?
- IV. The Last Imperial Tomb: Hagia Theodosia?

PART TWO – THE SWORD

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Land Fortifications: An Impregnable Fortress “Thou Art” or “Art Not” I. A Historical Digest of the Theodosian Land Walls II. The Physiognomy of the Theodosian Walls III. Mesoteikhion IV. The Gates in the Theodosian Walls and the Neighboring Ecclesiastical Structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The Golden Gate B. The Civil Gates C. The Military Gates V. The Northwestern Fortifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The Walls of Heraklios, Leo V the Armenian, and Manuel I Komnenos, and Their History B. The Physiognomy of the Northwestern Fortifications C. The Civil Gates and Adjacent Structures | 297 |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prelude to the Siege of 1453 I. Sphrantzes’ Bitterness and Imperial Diplomatic Activities II. A Triumph of the Imperial Chancery III. A Failure of the Imperial Chancery | 359 |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Castle and a Bombard I. Rumeli Hisar: The Fortress of Doom II. Urban’s Bombard(s): Ottoman Artillery | 397 |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Naval Maneuvers: Subordinate Operations I. A Sea Battle II. The New Xerxes: A Marvel and a Bridge III. Reaction and Disaster IV. The Exodus | 429 |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land Operations: The Main Targets I. Artillery Deployment and Bombards II. A Change of Tactics: Mines and Siege Towers III. Giustiniani and the Final Assault (May 29) | 475 |
| 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some Observations on Strategy | 547 |
| 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclusions | 561 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Appendices | 569 |
| I. Ephemeris of the Siege | 571 |
| 1. A General Ephemeris | |
| 2. The Latin Ephemeris of Nicolò Barbaro | |
| 3. Translation of the Latin <i>Ephemeris</i> of Nicolò Barbaro | |
| II. Texts on the Execution of Loukas Notaras | 597 |
| III. Kerkoporta | 619 |
| IV: Some Defenders and Non-Combatants | 625 |
| 1. General Remarks | |
| 2. List 1: Defenders and Non-Combatants | |
| 3. List 2: Some Non-Historical Defenders | |
| <i>Bibliography</i> | 663 |
| I. Manuscripts | |
| II. Collections of Documents and Sources | |
| III. Individual Sources | |
| IV. Modern Works | |
| <i>Index</i> | 715 |
| A. Manuscripts | |
| B. Primary Sources, Texts, Authors, Copyists, Editors, and Translators | |
| C. Secondary Sources, Authors, and Editors | |
| D. Places | |
| E. Persons, Families, Orders, and Nations | |



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Abbreviations

| | |
|--------------|---|
| <i>BS</i> | <i>Byzantinoslavica</i> |
| <i>BSEB</i> | <i>Byzantine Studies/Etudes byzantines</i> |
| <i>Byz</i> | <i>Byzantion</i> |
| <i>ByzJ</i> | <i>Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher</i> |
| <i>BZ</i> | <i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i> |
| <i>CBB</i> | P. Schreiner, ed. <i>Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken, Chronica Byzantina Breviora</i> |
| <i>CC</i> | A. Pertusi, ed. <i>La Caduta di Costantinopoli</i> . Vol. 1: <i>Le Testimonianze dei Contemporanei</i> Vol. 2: <i>L'Eco nel Mondo</i> |
| <i>CFHB</i> | <i>Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae</i> |
| <i>CSHB</i> | <i>Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae</i> |
| <i>DOP</i> | <i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i> |
| <i>EI</i> | <i>Encyclopedia of Islam</i> |
| <i>EEBEΣ</i> | Ἐπετηρὶς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν |
| <i>FC</i> | S. Runciman. <i>The Fall of Constantinople 1453</i> |
| <i>FHG</i> | <i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</i> |
| <i>GRBS</i> | <i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i> |

| | |
|------------|---|
| <i>IA</i> | <i>Islâm Ansiklopedisi</i> |
| <i>JHS</i> | <i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i> |
| <i>LCB</i> | D. M. Nicol. <i>The Last Centuries of Byzantium, 1261-1453</i> |
| <i>MCT</i> | F. Babinger. <i>Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time</i> |
| <i>MGH</i> | <i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i> |
| <i>MHH</i> | P. A. Déthier and C. [K.] Hopf, eds. <i>Monumenta Hungariae Historica Ser. Scriptorum</i> (Μάσoδiκ oςztάλύ Irok). Vol. 22.1 |
| <i>NE</i> | N. Iorga (Jorga). <i>Notes et Extraits pour servir à l'histoire des Croisades au XV^e Siècle</i> , 6 vols. |
| <i>NH</i> | <i>Νέoς Έλληνομνημών</i> |
| <i>OCP</i> | <i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i> |
| <i>ODB</i> | <i>Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium</i> |
| <i>OGN</i> | A. E. Vacalopoulos. <i>Origins of the Greek Nation: The Byzantine Period, 1204-1461</i> |
| <i>PaL</i> | K. M. Setton. <i>The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)</i> , vol. 2: <i>The Fifteenth Century</i> |
| <i>PG</i> | J.-P. Migne, ed. <i>Patrologia Cursus Completus, Series Graeco-Latina</i> |
| <i>ΠκΠ</i> | S. P. Lampros. <i>Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά</i> , vols. 3 and 4 |
| <i>PLP</i> | E. Trapp <i>et al.</i> , eds. <i>Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit</i> , 7 vols. |
| <i>RdD</i> | F. Thiriet. <i>Régestes des délibérations du Sénat de Venise concernant la Romanie</i> , 3 vols. |

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|--------------|--|
| <i>REB</i> | <i>Revue des études byzantines</i> |
| <i>RIS</i> | L. A. Muratori, ed. <i>Rerum Italicarum Scriptores</i> |
| <i>RKOR</i> | F. Dölger, ed. <i>Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches</i> |
| <i>SOC</i> | R. Schwoebel. <i>The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453-1517)</i> |
| <i>ST</i> | <i>Studi e Testi</i> |
| <i>TlePN</i> | A. Pertusi and A. Carile, eds. <i>Testi Inediti e Poco Noti sulla Caduta di Costantinopoli</i> |
| <i>TODRL</i> | <i>Trudy otdela drevne russkoj literatury</i> |
| <i>VV</i> | <i>Vizantiiskii Vremennik</i> |
| <i>ZRVI</i> | <i>Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta, Srpska Akademija Nauka</i> |



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Preface

Two concurrent themes run throughout our study. One is intimately involved with the sources relating to or purporting to relate to the events linked with the two-month siege and the ultimate fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks led by the Sultan Mehmed II *Fatih*, the Conqueror (1444-1446, 1451-1481), on May 29, 1453. Their authenticity or inauthenticity, reliability, and factual accuracy are analyzed, and the various folk themes and stories that relate to this memorable event and its aftermath are scrutinized for their veracity. The second theme is occupied with an analysis of the military planning and operational approaches in the course of the siege. Thus the title and sub-title of our study reflects these two concerns.

The first part, *The Pen*, evaluates the voluminous sources, some of which have been traditionally accepted as authentic and as absolutely authoritative by various modern historians. In the course of this study, we will point out that the traditional views on these sources may not be as reliable as they have been deemed to be. On the contrary, some belong to the realm of fantasy and produce legends; others, depending on the agenda of the author, seem to fabricate personalities and events. On the other hand, sources that have been despised or considered to be too confusing, and have been further confused by modern historians, include valuable information that has not been utilized thus far.

Thus Chapter 1 is meant to be an introductory unit and attempts to present in an organized fashion the various narratives of the siege that have come down to us. Here we attempt to evaluate the information of each source. To our knowledge no such catalogue exists, detailing the related *Quellenforschungen* and their accompanying problems, as well as assessing the worth of each narrative. This chapter goes beyond the existing testimonies of eyewitnesses and treats the historiographical tradition that existed in the east after the fall.

Chapter 2 focuses on four narratives that have been neglected by the scholarship on the siege: these include the forgotten Latin narratives of “Riccherio,” Tetaldi, and Pope Pius II, and as well the Slavonic text of Nestor-Iskander, which had been regarded as a confused secondary source composed by an unknown author who was present in the Ottoman camp. We will demonstrate that it is a first-rate source composed by an eyewitness who was with the defenders within the imperial city after his defection from the Ottoman camp and not with the besiegers during the course of the final two months before the fall of Constantinople.

Chapter 4 addresses the thorny matter, which has achieved Homeric proportions in the scholarship of recent centuries, of the evolution of the *Chronicon Minus* into the celebrated *Maius* and of all the problems that are associated with this elaboration. Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos will be discussed, and his various agendas in drastically altering the annual compilation of Georgios Sphrantzes. The elaborator’s dependence upon other non-Greek sources will be demonstrated and his connection to other less well-known chronicles will be pointed out, in the hope of relegating this

complicated problem to its proper position within the historiographical corpus of the siege.

Chapter 4 leads us to folk history, to myths, and to legends that immediately appeared in the days following the siege and the sack, and as well in the ensuing centuries, even by scholars. This excursus also brings us to examine some of the more imposing structures still surviving in Istanbul, such as the Church of Hagia Theodosia/Gül Camii and the thorny problem of its identification and location, or the unimposing areas such as the Vefa Meidan, or even the largely unknown areas even among the current residents of Istanbul such as the square of the Uç baş. These locations are important, as we shall see, for the mythology and legendary accounts associated with them.

The second part of our study, *The Sword*, addresses the operations of the siege itself, analyzing in a systematic fashion the military situation as it confronted the Byzantines and their allies. Our focus in this analysis is upon the strategy employed by both sides, but especially the Ottoman offense. On this basic point, we find previous research seriously lacking. For reasons that are not sufficiently perceptible, modern historians have neglected Ottoman strategy. They tend to view the siege as a series of isolated incidents, which seem *prima facie* to be unconnected. We believe that there was a basic Turkish strategy that evolved during the progression of the siege, as circumstances warranted a change in tactics. Perhaps this strategy vacillated during the course of the siege, as events do not seem to follow a prescribed course of action even in modern warfare. And perhaps at the very end of the siege Ottoman strategy had direction and because of that the Byzantine defenses weakened. It is ultimately the grand strategy of the offense and the defense that concerns our views and us will be summarized in Chapter 11.

This part begins with Chapter 5, which consists of our detailed survey of the existing walls, gates, and defensive and contiguous structures. Over the years it became evident to us that the numerous modern studies of the siege, even by the most eminent scholars and respected authors, display unfamiliarity with the ancient remains. Consequently, we spent a great deal of time surveying the walls, gates, and adjacent structures, even in neighborhoods such as Sulu Kule, which are seldom if ever visited by scholars. We investigated the surviving remains before they were extensively renovated and thus became lost to the scholar interested in the topography of the siege of 1453.

Chapter 6 treats the imperial court's intensive diplomatic activities on the eve of the siege, while Chapter 7 considers the preparations of the Porte, its erection of the Bosphoros Castle, and the intense preparations for building bombards to level the land fortifications.

Chapter 8 considers the Golden Horn sector and, as will become apparent, this section had no important offensive value, but was utilized by the Ottoman forces to weaken the protection at the land walls. The main focus of the Turkish offensive strategy was to compel the defenders to spread thin their troops, both along the land and sea walls. Otherwise, the sea walls came under no immediate or direct threat. The naval focus of the sultan must thus be viewed as secondary to the land operations of his main army.

Chapter 9 deals with the adjustments in offensive strategy of the sultan as the siege ran its course. It is mainly as a result of these changes, recommended by the Ottoman high command, that we may infer the overall grand strategy of the sultan in the siege.

Preface

Chapter 10, albeit rather late in this study, addresses the general questions and assumptions often raised by scholars concerning Mehmed II's strategy for the siege and conquest of the imperial city. As will become evident, the sultan's approach was to vary his strategies, often dictated by circumstances as they evolved over a two-month period.

Chapter 11 contains our conclusions based on the evidence at hand and as we have interpreted it in the previous chapters. In some ways, these conclusions come as a surprise, given the confident statements, albeit insupportable by the available authentic evidence, of scholars that are often encountered in the accounts on the siege.

To these chapters we have added "Appendices" presenting a journal of the events linked to the siege (Appendix I), a compilation of texts addressing the execution of the grand duke, Loukas Notaras (Appendix II), and the notorious incident of the Kerkopoorta, over which scholars have spilled much ink needlessly (Appendix III). Appendix IV, however, considers another oversight in the various investigations of the siege period. As we will have occasion to observe, the compilation of a prosopography of the participants in the siege and the sack of Constantinople has become imperative. There has never been any systematic study of the defenders, aggressors, and survivors, and there is no basic list of participants available to scholarship. We present for the first time an essential, if limited, tool for scholars investigating the siege. This first step for the eventual compilation of a workable prosopography of the defenders is based on available texts.

While we do not wish to criticize in detail the various approaches to the siege by our predecessors, whose views will be examined and evaluated in due course within the appropriate sections of our study, we should stress that what has been produced thus far in scholarship is not, we believe, very satisfactory. The limitations imposed on any investigation of the siege have tended to assert themselves and have often led investigators in the wrong direction and to arrive at simplistic conclusions. Some of these limitations can be attributed to a lack of direct access to the sources that are not easily located and lack translation, as they are written in more than a handful of languages and are difficult to comprehend, even by the standards of the fifteenth century, and by an inferior and unsatisfactory publication of the texts. In addition, the lack of familiarity with the topography of the land and sea fortifications, the actual ruins of the land walls and the little that survives of the sea walls, and most significantly the failure of personal inspection of the areas under siege have simply complicated the difficult task of previous investigators. Their results present an inconclusive picture or an inadequate understanding, leading them into the historiographical traps as they emerged over the centuries.

The last two centuries have witnessed an immense increase in our knowledge of the expansion of the Ottoman Turks into the Greco-Byzantine/Frankish Levant, as new or neglected manuscripts and contemporary testimonies have been steadily discovered. Yet the scholarly views on this subject have been hardly modified, in spite of the new archaeological discoveries and the new manuscript sources that have become available to scholarship. And so if one were to read the story of the siege and fall of Constantinople as it has been told and retold a number of times in the last two hundred years, one would be hard pressed to discover any new insights into this monumental event in the various studies, aside from the literary talents of each author. Thus, while Sir Steven Runciman composed a popular account of the siege of 1453 that has remained in print for almost

forty years since its first edition, there are severe limitations to his approach, and his narrative does not differ substantially in outlook or interpretations from the earlier studies of numerous worthy predecessors, such as father and son A. D. and J. H. Mordtmann, A. G. Paspates, E. Pears, or G. Schlumberger. Our observations also apply to the book by D. Stacton/D. Dereksen. He does not possess Runciman's literary skills or familiarity with the sources, which he could not or did not read in the original languages, but relied on the few, albeit inaccurate and flawed, translations in existence. The only modern scholar whose work demonstrates the availability of sources, and not all, by any means, is K. M. Setton. Their modern accounts may differ in details and in the literary talent that each author possesses, but they can hardly be said to offer new insights and new interpretations. Scholarship is always careful to move slowly in modifying transmitted pictures. As small changes in the form of additions and corrections accumulate, in time new syntheses become imperative. We would go so far as to submit that our basic conception of the siege, the fall, and the sack is still predicated on the interpretations that the nineteenth-century scholars placed on these monumental events.

The nineteenth-century investigators, researchers, and historians in general, we are reminded, were in many ways motivated by concerns that differ considerably from those of modern scholarship. Thus the scholars of that century could not break free from the restraints that their own period had placed upon them. This was an era characterized by nationalistic archetypes and sweeping generalizations, as the "new" nations in southeastern Europe, free at last of the Ottoman yoke, were struggling to survive and were desperate to discover and to isolate, in the events of the past, historical precedents to justify and sanction their new-found liberties. In addition, western European scholars still viewed the Ottoman Turkish Empire as "the sick man" of Europe. Furthermore, under the immense influence of Edward Gibbon, the Greco-Byzantine civilization of the Middle Ages was largely seen as a monolithic theocratic state that showed some sparks of heroism in its final chapters only when the inevitable decline of the Ottoman Turks had arrived. Against such a backdrop, the "causation" of the fall focused on the "degenerate" character of the Greeks, who refused to fight against the Ottoman aggressor. At the same time, the triumphal victory of the Turks over Constantinople was attributed to the advances in western military technology that had been imported by the Turkish forces, such as artillery and the enormous bombards of Mehmed II that supposedly leveled the ancient land fortifications of Constantinople and thus delivered the city to him.

We believe that the time has arrived to discard or to modify radically such simplistic views. Scholarship is obligated to produce new and authoritative analyses of events that may result in surprisingly fresh syntheses. While this is not the proper place to argue in favor of such an approach, the texts presented in this volume would militate in its favor. Even a cursory reading of our texts, for instance, demonstrates that the supposed ace of Mehmed II, that is, his bombards operated by gunpowder, was a failure. The bombards, in fact, achieved very little in the siege of 1453, played a negligible role in the siege of Negroponte, and failed miserably in the siege of Rhodes. The Ottoman victory in 1453 must be attributed to other factors. The Ottoman bombards were too cumbersome, could not be aimed effectively, and failed to reduce to rubble the mighty land fortifications of Constantinople. We should recall that the art of effective deployment of artillery pieces was still in its infancy and that the bombards of the *quattrocento* were still employed as

Preface

battering rams or as stone-throwing catapults. The science of ballistics was still far in the future and unperfected. The effect of bombards was mainly psychological and was felt more by the non-combatants than by the professionals, who must have observed, at least in the course of the siege, the strategic and tactical limitations of Ottoman artillery. The immediate cause of the fall of Constantinople in 1453 must be attributed to the withdrawal of Giustiniani and his disciplined band of *condottieri*, and to the ensuing panic among the remainder of the defenders. The Turks did not breach the land walls. Their defenders in the vicinity of the Gate of Saint Romanos and the Pempton abandoned the ancient fortifications. In the end, the enemy overran this critical sector in the defense of the imperial city.

Similarly, in a later period, the fall of Negroponte/Khalkis in Euboea can be reasonably attributed to the failure of the Venetian commanders to provide effective aid to the besieged, who probably perished in bewilderment, seeing their fleet simply standing by and idly watching the conflict. Immensely more important, more significant, and more effective to operations during the sieges in the Levant of the *quattrocento* were the activities of “renegades,” spies, potential traitors, and the existence of fifth columns within the cities under siege. This specific aspect of warfare has not been exhaustively investigated in modern scholarship and deserves a fresh look. Given the indisputable role played by such individuals as Halil Pasha, the grand vizier of Mehmed II’s Porte, of Loukas Notaras, the “prime minister” of the imperial administration of Constantine XI, of Tommaso Schiavo and of Luca da Curzola and of their cohorts in Negroponte, of Meister George and of Meligalos and of Sophianos in Rhodes in 1481, we believe that a modern investigation of the importance of intelligence and counter-intelligence operations in siege warfare of the period will produce rewarding results.

The systematic study of the fall of Constantinople and of Byzantine-Frankish Greece, in general, as well as the related expansion of the Ottoman Turks into southeastern Europe, was pioneered by K. Sathas, P. A. Déthier, and S. P. Lampros, in their numerous publications that spanned the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century. We have structured this study in the partial belief that their work, while significant, was never brought to a proper conclusion and that their studies and contributions to medieval and Renaissance historiography remain largely inaccessible to English-speaking students. In recent decades our understanding of the monumental events involved in the end of Byzantine Greece and of the expansion of the Ottoman Turks into the Levant and southeastern Europe have been aided and enriched by new and interesting approaches, innovative lines of research, and fresh ways of looking at a fascinating and complicated situation, but the sad fact remains that numerous sources remain inaccessible to the majority of students and scholars. We therefore make no apologies for the unabashedly old-fashioned approach that we have employed in our study.¹

¹ While we subscribe to the following views that Sir Steven Runciman expressed in the “Preface” (p. xi) to his *A History of the Crusades*, vol. 1: *The First Crusade and the Foundation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge, 1951), we would like to stress that the minutiae and the details regarding the siege of 1453 have not been settled, thus far, to allow a solitary historian to take up the pen of Homer or Herodotus, or even of Thucydides, and complete a task that would bring us

We, the authors of this study, have engaged in research and study of the material for the siege of Constantinople in 1453, both independently and in collaboration, for over thirty years. In the course of our detailed analyses of sources and accounts, we discovered that there were numerous gaps and flaws in all scholarly attempts to give meaning to this monumental event. Our research has taken us to numerous libraries in Europe and the United States, and we were compelled to visit and revisit the sites in question countless times. In the process of our research we became dissatisfied and frustrated with the numerous bits of scholarship that have been published on this event. Our collaboration over the course of many years proved an extremely rewarding experience and we present its results here. We wrote this book from the perspective that previous studies were not inclusive and did not address the problems adequately. We hope that we have taken a small step toward this goal. In truth, if this study had been compiled at the end of the nineteenth century or in the course of the twentieth, our understanding of the siege of 1453 would have been on a more solid foundation. We have tried to remedy this situation and we are hopeful that future studies will contribute substantial material that is pertinent to the siege and its aftermath.

A great deal remains to be done. Further research may reveal additional “sources” and “lost” accounts. Likewise, additional information may be uncovered in the Ottoman libraries and manuscript collections that have thus far been overlooked. New authoritative editions of well-known texts have become imperative. To cite one significant example, there is the work of Bishop Leonardo Giustiniani, for which there exists no critical edition of this informative and basic account of the siege. The edition would have to take into consideration all available manuscripts of the *quattrocento* and their valuable marginalia, which remain for the most part unknown to scholars. As well, a critical edition of the text of Ubertino Pusculo is imperative; and other Slavonic versions of the text of Nestor-Iskander will have to be re-examined and re-evaluated, given the newly acquired status of eyewitness. A compilation of the prosopography of the besiegers will furnish additional information, while more insights will be gained from a complete

beyond the “Alexandrine Age” and produce a highly accurate historical investigation that would merit praise among the experts on style and the devotees of creative literature. We quote Runciman’s passage at length: “A single author cannot speak with the high authority of a panel of experts, but he may succeed in giving to his work an integrated and even an epical quality that no composite volume can achieve. Homer as well as Herodotus was a Father of History, as Gibbon, the greatest of our historians, was aware; and it is difficult, in spite of certain critics, to believe Homer was a panel. History writing today has passed into an Alexandrian age, where criticism has overpowered creation. Faced by the mountainous heap of the minutiae of knowledge and awed by the watchful severity of his colleagues, the modern historian too often takes refuge in learned articles or narrowly specialized dissertations, small fortresses that are easy to defend from attack. His work can be of the highest quality; but it is not an end in itself. We believe that the supreme duty of the historian is to write history, that is to say, to attempt to record in one sweeping sequence the greatest events and movements that have swayed the destinies of man. The writer rash enough to make an attempt should not be criticized for his ambition, however much he may deserve censure for the inadequacy of his equipment or the inanity of his results.”

Preface

prosopography of the defenders. Lastly, the field of intelligence and counter-intelligence, double agents, renegades, and downright traitors remains open.

We should add a note in regard to transliteration of names. While we use the accepted form for Christian names that have English equivalents, such as George (exceptions are made for initial citations of prominent Byzantine annalists, hence, Georgios), John, or Constantine, a practice of transliterating other Greek names into English, by-passing the normal transliteration, is observed: thus “Palaiologos” and not “Palaeologus,” “Palaiologan” and not “Palaeologan.” But consistency is elusive. It is more common to encounter “Thessaloniki” and the Latinized “Thessalonica” or the grammatically correct form “Thessalonike.” We should admit that we have been guilty of following the common usage. The same is true for Turkish names and titles. We will encounter “Mehmed” and not the phonetically incorrect “Mehmet” or the pedantic “Mohammed/Muhammad.”

With respect to all the passages cited in a score of languages throughout this work, we have provided our own translations of these passages, unless the name of another translator is cited in an accompanying note. Generally speaking, we have not translated the extensive number of texts cited in the footnotes, unless we believed the language to be rather exotic and the information present to be of substantial significance.

Finally, we should like to note that we have consciously tried, as much as possible but not totally, to avoid redundancy in the use of the adjectival form “Byzantine” or the noun “Byzantium.” The application of this adjective, in particular, to the Greeks of the Middle Ages dates back to the seventeenth century, when French antiquarians first coined it. It is further unfortunate that Gibbon’s towering influence has colored “Byzantine” with its familiar pejorative dimension. We have, therefore, often employed the term “Greek,” which might not be deemed inappropriate if language and religion were to count as criteria for ethnicity. After all, the common language of the average Greek of the *quattrocento* did not differ radically from the spoken idiom of the nineteenth century and the citizens of the modern Hellenic Republic could have understood the spoken idiom of Constantine XI’s subjects with relative ease. Moreover, the religion of the vast majority of modern Greek-speakers remains Orthodox Christianity, which has miraculously survived organized persecutions, forced conversions, and brutal policies during the “Dark Age” of modern Greece. Thus, while one might be charged with anachronism if one were to maintain that the Palaiologan *coda* of the Greek empire was the seminal form of the modern Greek nation, we feel that it is neither anachronistic nor unnatural to employ the term “Greek” for the Christian Greek-speakers of the late medieval Balkans and of Constantinople in the fifteenth century.

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On a number of our visits to Istanbul, our devoted guide was Ismail Bölükbaş. He made our research on the land walls fruitful, although we must admit that our repeated visits to the land fortifications did at times wear him out. But especially, he proved to be a devoted friend who recognized our interests and gained access for us to Gül Camii and other important sites in the city that have not been frequented by western scholars. We should also thank Drs. Sümer Atasoy, Işın Demirkent, Engin Akyürek, and Nurhan Atasoy, the secretariat for the symposium honoring the 550th Anniversary of Istanbul University, May-June 2003, which housed us and made provisions for us to continue our work in Istanbul.

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MAPS

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. The Fragmented Byzantine Empire in the Fifteenth Century | 293 |
| 2. The Land Fortifications | 294 |
| 3. The Southern Mesoteikhion | 295 |
| 4. The Northern Mesoteikhion and Northwestern Fortifications | 296 |

Illustrations

Figures

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 1 | Proximity and Dependence of Some Influential Texts | 92 |
| 2 | Plan of Gül Camii/Hagia Theodosia | 289 |
| 3 | Plan of Aya Chapel | 290 |
| 4 | Dardanelles Gun, photograph with the permission and courtesy of the Princeton University Press | 426 |
| 5 | Tentative Reconstruction of Urban's Bombard | 427 |

Plates

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1 and 2 | Golden Gate, inner and outer views |
| 3 | Yedi Kule, the Fortress of Seven Towers |
| 4 | Courtyard of an Inn at Vefa Meidan |
| 5 | Unattributed Drawing at Vefa Meidan |
| 6 | Burial Squares at Vefa Meidan |
| 7 and 8 | Uç baş |
| 9 | Ledge at Uç baş |
| 10 | Aya Gate |
| 11 and 12 | Gül Camii, the "Mosque of the Rose" |
| 13 | The Chapel at the Aya Gate |
| 14 | Chapel (in a mound) near the Aya Gate |
| 15 | Interior View, Gül Camii |
| 16 | Right View of Apse Area, Gül Camii |
| 17 | Sarcophagus at Gül Camii |
| 18 and 19 | Inscriptions at Rhegium Gate |
| 20 | Lykos River Valley |
| 21 | Inner Wall at Top |
| 22 and 23 | Outer Walls and Arches |
| 24 | Thickness of Outer Wall |
| 25 | Outer Wall about Pempton |
| 26 | Peribolos |
| 27 | Mesoteikhion viewed from the North |
| 28 | Xylokerkos |
| 29 | Gate of the Pege |
| 30 | Gate of Rhegium |
| 31 | Gate of Saint Romanos |
| 32 | Gate of Charisios |
| 33 | Moat |
| 34 | Side Gate at Golden Gate, Rear (City-Side) |

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 35 | Burial Chamber near the Gate of Pege |
| 36 | Church of Saint Nicholas, northeastern terrace wall |
| 37 and 38 | Church of Saint Nicholas, front and stone marker |
| 39 | Kara Ahmed Paşa Camii, Byzantine columns and capitals |
| 40 | Church of Saint George terrace wall |
| 41 | Kaligaria Gate, outer (western) view |
| 42 | Adrianople Gate, outer (western) view |
| 43 | First Military Gate |
| 44 | Second Military Gate |
| 45 | Third Military Gate |
| 46 | Fourth Military Gate |
| 47 | Manastir Mescidi |
| 48 and 49 | Küreçibaşı Camii |
| 50 | Fifth Military Gate, the Pempton |
| 51 | Pempton, lowered arches |
| 52 | Pempton, outer wall |
| 53 | Pempton and saint Romanos sector, site of great cannon |
| 54 | Ruins of Blachernai Palace |
| 55 | Wall of Leo V the Armenian |
| 56 | Wall of Manuel I Komnenos |
| 57 | Wall of Manuel I Komnenos at the Porphyrogenite Palace |
| 58 | Area of Xyloporta |
| 59 | Anemas Prison, external view |
| 60 | Rumeli Hisar |
| 61 | Mosque near Pege Gate |
| 62 | Bombard at Rumeli Hisar |
| 63 | Bombard shots at Rumeli Hisar |
| 64 | Stone Shot of the <i>Basilica</i> |
| 65 | Stone Shots at the Golden Gate, within the Fortress of Seven Towers |
| 66 | Drop in Elevation from the Gate of Saint Romanos to the Lykos Valley |
| 67 | Walls along the Golden Horn |
| 68 | Kerkoporta, possible site at ruins |
| 69 | Metal door in wall near the Chora Monastery, eastern view |
| 70 | Sealed gate between tower and Porphyrogenite Palace |

PART I
THE PEN



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Chapter 1

Scholarship and the Siege of 1453

I. General Remarks

During the nineteenth century, “new” sources describing the siege, fall and sack of Constantinople in 1453 were discovered. The texts that had been forgotten or misplaced since the days of the Renaissance were edited and published in scholarly journals. A significant number of important documents saw the light of print for the first time:

1. The report of Angelo Giovanni Lomellino, the Genoese *podestà* of Pera/Galatas, the Genoese suburb across Constantinople on the northern shore of the Golden Horn. This important *epistula* dealing with the siege, sack, and the fate of Pera was composed on June 23, 1453, while Lomellino still felt the effects of the disaster and was still in deep grief and a state of depression.¹

2. The valuable diary of the Venetian physician Nicolò Barbaro, who was on board a Venetian galley in defense of the harbor and who recorded all events, including numerous operations on the western land fortifications. He provides informative lists of Venetian combatants, casualties, refugees, and prisoners who fell into the hands of the Turks and were subsequently ransomed or perished in captivity.²

¹ S. de Sacy, ed., “Pièces diplomatiques tirées des Archives République de Gênes,” *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi* 11 (1827): 74-79; L. T. Belgrano, ed., “Prima serie di documenti riguardanti la colonia di Pera,” *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria* 13 (1877): no. 149, pp. 229-233; N. Iorga, ed., “Notes et extraits pour servir à l’histoire des croisades au XV^e siècle,” *Revue de l’Orient latin* 8 (1900/1901): 105-108; English translation: J. R. Melville Jones, *The Siege of Constantinople 1453: Seven Contemporary Accounts* (Jericho, 1972), pp. 131-135; and improved text with Italian translation in *CC* 1: 42-51.

² Edited by E. Cornet, *Giornale dell’assedio di Costantinopoli 1453 di Nicolò Barbaro P.V. corredato di note e documenti* (Vienna, 1856). This edition remains the only complete, printed form of the Diary. It has been translated into English by J. R. [Melville] Jones, *Nicolò Barbaro: Diary of the Siege of Constantinople* (Jericho, 1969); selections with improved text in *CC* 1: 8-38. There exists a Modern Greek translation by V. A. Lappa, *Η Πόλις Εάλω: Το Χρονικό της Πολιορκίας και της Άλωσης της Πόλης* (Athens, 1991), pp. 93-213. Cf. A. Sagredo, *Sul Giornale dell’assedio di Costantinopoli di Nicolò Barbaro* (Venice, 1856). Katherine E. Fleming, “Constantinople: From Christianity to Islam,” *Classical World* 97 (2003): 73, identifies Nicolò Barbaro as “a Venetian medical student serving as ship’s doctor on a Venetian merchant galley at anchor in the Bosphorous, just off Constantinople’s shores.” Her assertion is questionable, since Barbaro was much older, having been born about 1400, and thus he was in his fifties at the time of his medical service aboard Venetian ships.

3. A section in Zorzi Dolfin's *Cronaca delle famiglie nobili di Venezia*, evidently copied from Languschi's *opusculum* and entitled *Excidio e presa di Constantinopoli nell' anno 1453*.³

4. Adamo di Montaldo's *De Constantinopolitano Excidio ad nobilissimum iuvenem Melladucam Cicadam*, a rhetorical piece composed in the humanistic flowery style favored by intellectuals of the period. It also deals with events, but the work is not chronologically contemporaneous with the siege and sack. It appears to have been written in the early 1470s.⁴

5. The Greek "biography" of Sultan Mehmed II by the Greek historian Kritoboulos, who had contacts with the patriarchate of Constantinople in the years that followed the sack and described these dealings in a manuscript discovered by Philipp A. Déthier in Istanbul.⁵

6. The Slavonic eyewitness account by Nestor-Iskander (İskender), which in its original form was a diary comparable to that of Barbaro whom it complements in a number of respects, but unlike Barbaro's narrative it deals exclusively with the land operations of the siege and not with the Venetian galleys in the harbor of the Golden Horn.⁶

These accounts have invited detailed scholarly analyses of the events that they presented and promised a better understanding of the complicated military operations associated with the end of the medieval Greek "empire" of the Palaiologoi.⁷ Interest

³ Its colorful mixture of sixteenth-century Venetian vernacular and Latin was edited by G. M. Thomas, "Die Eroberung Constantinopels im Jahre 1453 auf einer venetianischen Chronik," *Sitzungsberichte der königl. bayer. Akademie der Wissenschaften, philos.-hist. Klasse*, Band 2 (Munich, 1866): 1-38; Thomas neglected to mention the title of Dolfin's work; selections are also printed in *TiePN*, pp. 169-180. Melville Jones, *The Siege of Constantinople*, pp. 125-131 has translated a short extract from this account into English; it has never been translated in its entirety. Languschi-Dolfin's text and its relation to the narrative of Leonardo and its followers will be discussed in due course; cf. *infra*, II.4.i.

⁴ It was edited by P. A. Déthier, C. Desimoni, and C. Hopf, "Della Conquista di Costantinopoli per Maometto II nel MCCCLIII," *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria* 10 (1874): 289-350; and reprinted in *MHH* 22.1: 35-70; selections with Italian translation in *TiePN*, pp. 188-209. There exists no translation of the complete work into any modern language.

⁵ This detailed history of the period by Kritoboulos was first edited by P. A. Déthier, *Κριτόβουλος Βίος τοῦ Μωάμεθ Β΄*, in *MHH* 21.1 (*sine loco* [Galata/Pera? or Budapest?], *sine anno* [1872?/1875?]): 1-346; other editions followed: C. Müller, *De rebus gestis Muhammetis II*, in *FHG* 5 (Paris, 1883): 52-164; V. Grecu, ed., *Critobul din Imbros din domnia lui Mahomed al II-lea anii 1451-1467*, *Scriptores Byzantini* 4 (Bucharest, 1963), with a Romanian translation; the only translation into English is that of C. T. Riggs, *A History of Mehmed the Conqueror* (Princeton, 1954; repr. 1970). Selections with Italian translation in *CC* 2: 230-251. The latest authoritative edition, with *apparatus criticus* and an informative and a thorough introduction, is that of D. R. Reinsch, ed., *Critobuli Imbriotae Historiae*, *CFHB* 22 (Berlin and New York, 1983).

⁶ For editions, translations, discussion, and evaluation of this important source, cf. *infra*, ch. 2: "Four Testimonies: A Ghost, a Pope, a Merchant, and a Boy," sec. IV.

⁷ For a preliminary study, cf. W. K. Hanak, "Byzantine, Latin, and Muscovite Sources on the Fall of Constantinople (1453) and Its Conqueror, Mehmed II," *Eastern Churches Journal* 3/2 (1996):

created by the discovery of such texts stimulated further research in topography and rudimentary archaeological investigation. Scholars began to visit Constantinople in person in order to evaluate the military situation of 1453 in its proper geographical context. The elder A. D. Mordtmann, for instance, made good use of his familiarity with the Constantinopolitan topography, and his work remains an immensely enhanced study of the siege.⁸ The Greek physician A. G. Paspates, who had been reared and educated in the United States, further enriched his research.⁹ The scholarly community soon realized the value of topographical investigation, as it had already done in the case of classical studies, and important basic research was soon initiated.¹⁰

The eighteenth century had not observed comparable activities in its approach to the siege but had concentrated, uncritically in some instances, on available sources. The case of Edward Gibbon is notorious. His sources were limited and he himself had never visited Constantinople. A number of useful accounts were discovered after Gibbon had finished his work.¹¹ There were also sources available to Gibbon, which he simply

53-68. A further word concerning a misleading and suspect article: Fleming, p. 73, writes of “eyewitness accounts, both Greek and Turkish, paint[ing] an astounding graphic and moving picture of the months-long siege....” Unfortunately, she does not identify or discuss these eyewitness sources.

Two recent and broader works merit scholarly consideration: Růžena Dostálova, “Zu den Vorworten der ältesten Ausgaben der spätbyzantinischen Historiker,” in S. Kolditz and R. C. Müller, eds., *Geschehenes und Geschriebenes. Studien zu Ehren Günther S. Henrich und Klaus-Peter Matschke* (Leipzig, 2005), pp. 479-489; and P. G. Antonopoulos and P. K. Magkafas, “Αυτόπτες μάρτυρες της αλώσεως του 1453: Τέσσαρες αντιπροσωπευτικές περιπτώσεις,” in E. Motos Guirao and M. Morfakidis Filactós, eds., *Constantinopla. 550 años de su caída. Κωνσταντινούπολη. 550 χρόνια από άλωση. 2: La Caída. Η Άλωση* (Granada, 2006): 41-51.

⁸ His analysis ultimately suffered from the lack of original written material, which still awaited discovery and publication; he presented his results in *Belagerung und Eroberung Constantinopels durch die Türken im Jahre 1453 nach dem originalquellen bearbeitet* (Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1858). Years later, the younger J. H. Mordtmann further summarized his researches into the topography of the immediate vicinity: *Esquisse topographique de Constantinople* (Lille, 1892).

⁹ A. G. Paspates, *Βυζαντινά Μελέται Τοπογραφικά καὶ Ἱστορικά*, Βιβλιοθήκη Ἱστορικῶν Μελετῶν 208 (Constantinople, 1877; repr. Athens, 1986); this seminal study was followed by a work that remains useful: *Πολιορκία καὶ Ἄλωσις τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ὑπὸ τῶν Ὀθωμανῶν ἐν Ἐτει 1453* (Athens, 1890; repr. Athens, 1995).

¹⁰ One of the most popular accounts to appear in English was by A. Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople: The Walls of the City and Adjoining Historical Sites* (London, 1899; repr., *sine anno* [2004?]). Other works have followed, but the last word, especially in regard to the monuments relating to the siege, has as yet not been written, as we will observe in due course. In the meantime, standard modern works include R. Janin, *Constantinople byzantine; Développement urbain et répertoire topographique*, Archives de l’Orient Chrétien 4A (2nd ed., Paris, 1964); and *idem*, *La Géographie ecclésiastique de l’empire byzantin*, 1: *Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique* (Paris, 1969). The latest attempt, with limited results and no new information, is provided in M. Balard, “Constantinople vue par les témoins du siège de 1453,” in *Constantinople and Its Hinterland: Papers from the Twenty-Seventh Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Oxford, April 1993*, eds. C. Mango and G. Dagron (Ashgate, 1995), pp. 169-177.

¹¹ E. Pears, *The Destruction of the Greek Empire and the Story of the Capture of Constantinople by the Turks* (New York, 1968 (repr. of 1903 edition), pp. xiii-xiv, lists the sources that were

ignored or failed to utilize. In general, however, the eighteenth century witnessed the discovery and subsequent publication of some precious sources on the siege of 1453: Tetaldi's French version¹² and Ubertino Pusculo's Latin poem of Vergilian hexameters.¹³ It should be noted, nevertheless, that Gibbon's account of the siege was and still is immensely popular, despite limitations, which to a large degree may be attributed to the prevailing standards of scholarship in the eighteenth century. On the other hand, Gibbon should not be found at fault for his failure to recognize the importance of topography or for neglecting chronicles in manuscript form that were buried in widely scattered libraries and collections. Although his work contains numerous shortcomings, various scholars and readers first became familiar with the siege through his popular book. In addition, Gibbon maintained a critical eye on the information available to him and in certain cases he proved a more careful historian than his successors in the following two centuries. Gibbon, for instance, is seldom given credit for suspecting that behind the Greek narrative attributed to the pen of George Sphrantzes (Gibbon's "Phranza") lurks an ecclesiastical elaborator.¹⁴ Gibbon, in fact, anticipated the modern demonstration that

recovered after Gibbon and they include Languschi-Dolfin; Lomellino (whose work has wrongly been attributed to "Ang. Johannis Zacharias" by the time Pears wrote); di Montaldo; "Riccherio" (who turns out not to be a source at all, as we will see in due course; cf. *infra*, ch. 2: "Four Testimonies: A Ghost, a Pope, a Merchant, and a Boy"), sec. 1; and Nestor-Iskander. A similar list had appeared earlier (in 1890) in Paspates' book on the siege, *Πολιορκία καὶ Ἐπιπέλας τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως*, and it was more inclusive than Pears, as Paspates enumerated all the sources that had been unknown to E. Gibbon in his *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J. B. Bury, 7 vols. (London, 1909-1914), and those that Gibbon had failed to use even though they had been readily available to him.

¹² *Informations envoyées, tant par Francisco de Franc, à très reverend pere en Dieu monseigneur le cardinal d'Avignon, que par Jehan Blanchin & Jacques Edaldy marchand Florentin, de la prise de Constantinople par l'empereur Turc le xxix. jour de May MCCCCLIII, à laquelle ledit Jacques estoit personnellement*, E. Martène and U. Durand, eds., *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, 1: *Tomus primus complectens regum ac principum aliorumque virorum illustrium epistolas et diplomata benè multa* (Paris, 1717): cols. 1819-1826. The same editors published a Latin version of Tetaldi's narrative twelve years later: *Veterum scriptorum et monumentorum historicorum, dogmaticorum, moralium amplissima collectio*, 5 (Paris, 1729): 785-800. The French version alone was also printed in *MHH* 22.1: 891 ff. The French version was translated into English by Melville Jones, *The Siege of Constantinople 1453*, pp. 1-10. For the first modern edition of the Latin version, with English translation and commentary, cf. M. Philippides, ed., trans., and annotated by, *Mehmed II the Conqueror and the Fall of Franco-Byzantine Levant to the Ottoman Turks: Some Western Views and Testimonies*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 302 (Tempe, 2007): 133-217, and for the French text, Appendix I, pp. 341-346. For his life, *ibid.*, pp. 21-26. On Tetaldi, cf. *infra*, II.3; and ch. 2: "Four Testimonies: A Ghost, a Pope, a Merchant, and a Boy," sec. III.

¹³ *Constantinopolis libri IV*, ed. G. Bregantini, *Miscellanea di varie operette*, 1 (Venice, 1740); repr. in A. S. Ellissen, *Analekten der mittel- und neugriechischen Literatur*, 3 (Leipzig, 1857): Appendix, 12-83; and *CC* 1: 124-171. On Pusculo, cf. *infra*, II.A.7.

¹⁴ Gibbon, 7: 197, n. 76: "I am afraid that this discourse was composed by Phranza himself; and it smells so grossly of the sermon and the convent that I almost doubt whether it was pronounced by Constantine." For a brief discussion, cf. M. Philippides, "The Fall of Constantinople: Bishop Leonard and the Greek Accounts," *GRBS* 22 (1981): 289, n. 7.

Sphrantzes' *Chronicon Maius* is actually a paraphrase into Greek of Bishop Leonardo's Latin text, which was carried out by a notorious forger of Palaiologan documents, the prelate Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos, one century or more after the death of Sphrantzes.

Thus the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were primarily an age of discovery and recovery. The "new" accounts underscored the need for textual evaluation, for *Quellenforschung*, and for a detailed investigation of the siege. The monumental fall of Constantinople had heralded the end of the Greek version of the Roman Empire. Perhaps it even marked the end of the Middle Ages, according to the reckoning of a few historians who boldly and confidently viewed history as a continuous process accented by abrupt, albeit well-defined and discernible, breaks in chronology.¹⁵ While more sophisticated modern approaches frown upon such views, the least that can be said concerning this matter is that the year 1453 marks the most important date in the two millennia of Greek recorded history. After all, it amounted to a prelude of a long subjugation to an Islamic master. The citizens of the tiny reconstituted Greek nation of the nineteenth century demanded a reliable record of the siege and of the critical period that had witnessed the heroic death of the last Greek emperor of Constantinople, Constantine XI Dragaš Palaiologos. The fall of the imperial city had brought about the permanent occupation of Constantinople. This critical period also ushered in the so-called Dark Age of the infamous Turkish domination. Both the citizens of modern Hellas and numerous European scholars felt an acute need for the formation of a collection of all known eyewitness and near-contemporary accounts of the siege. It was a cumbersome, formidable task for individuals of that era to hunt down either the sources published in a score of periodicals on the continent or to consult the manuscripts themselves, scattered as they were, and still are, in libraries and collections throughout Europe.

Philipp A. Déthier, the energetic director of the Imperial Museum of Antiquity in Constantinople, who was destined to have his share of problems and numerous misunderstandings with the maverick Heinrich Schliemann, eventually undertook this ambitious project. In regard to the latter's notorious excavations and smuggling operations at Hisarlik/Troy, Déthier was so exasperated with Schliemann's attempts to disregard the explicit instructions issued to him by the Ottoman authorities that he threatened to revoke his permit to excavate in the Troad. He had grown particularly impatient with Schliemann's "discovery," questionable purchase, and eventual removal to Greece of a Hellenistic metope depicting the chariot of Helios, nowadays housed in Berlin's Pergamon Museum.¹⁶ In collaboration with the respected medievalist Carl [Karl]

¹⁵ Echoes of this attitude are still with us. One recalls that Sir Steven Runciman begins his highly popular, if on occasion erratic and idiosyncratic, study, *FC*, with the following memorable statement, p. xi: "In the days when historians were simple folk the Fall of Constantinople, 1453, was held to mark the close of the Middle Ages."

¹⁶ On this incident, cf. E. Meyer, *Heinrich Schliemann: Kaufmann und Forscher* (Göttingen, 1969), p. 271; and, in general, D. A. Traill, "Schliemann's Acquisition of the Helios Metope and His Psychopathic Tendencies," in *Myth, Scandal, and History: The Heinrich Schliemann Controversy and a First Edition of the Mycenaean Diary*, eds. W. Calder III and D. A. Traill (Detroit, 1986), pp. 48-81.

Hopf, Déthier produced an impressive collection of all known sources on the siege of Constantinople in 1453 and the scholarly community eagerly anticipated its publication.

Yet, while the first two volumes were being printed and collated in Pera/Galatatas or in Budapest, the official sponsor of this enterprise, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, suddenly announced that the *opus*, already scheduled to appear as volume 21, parts 1 and 2, and volume 22, parts 1 and 2, of the prestigious series *Monumenta Hungariae Historica*, was not to be published for a simple, albeit legitimate reason: an inordinate amount of printing errors had been detected in the galleys. The publication of this useful project then reached a state of scholarly limbo. Officially, the collection was not published, but a number of advanced copies had already been forwarded by the Academy to a few investigators and libraries. These rare surviving copies¹⁷ have been widely sought and eagerly consulted ever since. Some texts included in the Déthier collection have not been printed a second time and the manuscripts still await modern editors. An additional two volumes were prepared but were never printed.

The Déthier project was so ambitious and so formidable that a similar undertaking would not be attempted again for another century. In the meantime, more documents and additional material from archival records pertaining to the siege and fall continued to be unearthed. Thus N. Iorga (Jorga) published numerous documents in his monumental series on the late crusades but, unfortunately, he often presented summaries and short extracts instead of the complete original text.¹⁸ In addition, S. P. Lampros also collected and printed numerous contemporary and near contemporary lamentations, dirges, and popular tales dealing with the siege,¹⁹ which, however, offer little factual material to the historian interested in the diplomacy of the period and in the military operations. Such scholarly efforts culminated in 1976 when the late Agostino Pertusi published his collection of sources.²⁰ In some cases Pertusi presented improved text, since he had taken the trouble to consult and collate manuscripts anew, such as his selections from Barbaro's important *Giornale*, which thus received welcome attention.²¹ The same holds true of Pertusi's selections from Leonardo.²² Finally, there has been considerable improvement over the sixteenth-century printed editions of this key text. Moreover, selections from Puscuro's poem²³ were also an improvement over the careless eighteenth-century printed edition of this work.²⁴ While some narratives were printed in their original languages, with facing-page Italian translation, unfortunately other selections appear only in Italian translation without the original text. Typical examples include Tetaldi's French version (the Latin version does not appear at all),²⁵ Nestor-Iskander (without the Slavonic text),²⁶

¹⁷ *MHH* 21, parts 1-2, and 22, parts 1-2.

¹⁸ *NE* 1-6.

¹⁹ “Μονωδίαι καὶ Θρηνηοὶ ἐπὶ τῇ Ἀλώσει τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως,” *NH* 5 (1908): 190-270.

²⁰ *CC* 1 and *CC* 2 [= *La Caduta di Costantinopoli*, 1: *Le Testimonianze dei Contemporanei*; and 2: *L'Eco nel Mondo* (Verona, 1976)].

²¹ *CC* 1: 8-38; on Barbaro's complete edition, cf. *supra*, n. 2.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 124-171.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 200-213.

²⁴ *Supra*, n. 13.

²⁵ *CC* 1: 175-189; cf. *supra*, n. 12.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 269-298.

the report of Bishop Samuel (without the original German),²⁷ or the report of the refugees Thomas Eparkhos and Diplovatatzes.²⁸ Printed editions of these texts in the original languages are not easily obtainable. This absence of the original testimonies and accounts remains the most severe and frustrating limitation to an investigator consulting Pertusi's collection. Furthermore, one laments the fact that Pertusi presented only selections and short tantalizing extracts. A serious investigator must still consult the rare collection of Déthier. Despite all the errors in the *Monumenta Hungariae Historica*, the texts are after all complete. Viewed from this perspective, the Pertusi collection of selections (an anthology in the final analysis) has only underscored the need for a new exhaustive compilation of all complete sources. An anthology is simply not satisfactory, even though it may have been executed with expert editorial skill. Consequently, the Déthier *opus* has not yet found a worthy successor and remains indispensable.

While the publication of the Pertusi collection was greeted as a useful and a much-needed step²⁹ for a proper understanding of the operations in 1453, its severe limitations soon became apparent. This was after all a collection of selections with the original text sometimes missing. Its very nature as an anthology limited its usefulness, since in certain cases important information was omitted for inexplicable reasons. One typical example requires attention: Pertusi included selections from a letter³⁰ written by the eyewitness Cardinal Isidore, the Greek legate of Pope Nicholas V to Constantinople. Isidore fought heroically in the siege, was wounded during the sack, was then captured, and was somehow ransomed early on, soon after concealing himself in Genoese Pera for ten days while the Turks actively searched for him. He escaped aboard a Turkish vessel that took him to Asia Minor, crossed to Chios, and finally reached safety in Venetian Crete.³¹ Isidore's letter was addressed to his Greek friend, the famous Cardinal Bessarion in Italy, in which he spoke of the drama of Constantinople, thus providing us with a very early testimony by an active participant. The letter is dated *sexta die Iulii anno Domini M^oCCCC^oLIII^o*, "the sixth day of July 1453 A.D." Pertusi has chosen to omit a significant section of this highly informative *epistula*, which treats the execution of several distinguished Greek prisoners of the sultan, including the grand duke of the emperor, Loukas Notaras.³²

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 228-231.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 234-239.

²⁹ Cf., e.g., *PaL* 2: 110, n. 8.

³⁰ *CC* 1: 64-80.

³¹ On these incidents, cf. A. Papadakis, *ODB* 2: 1016. In spite of the statements in *ODB*, Isidore was never officially a prisoner of the sultan, who would have executed him on the spot the moment his true identity had been authenticated.

³² The complete text of this letter was published earlier by G. Hofmann, "Ein Brief des Kardinals Isidor von Kiev an Kardinal Bessarion," *OCP* 14 (1948): 405-414. Pertusi, however, correctly reminds us that the text of this letter would have been composed in Greek and that we are facing, in the Latin version, the literary exercise of a minor humanist who attempted to render Isidore's (presumably elegant) Greek prose into Latin. The other letters that also issued from the pen of Isidore, while he was recovering in Crete, must have also been composed in Greek and translated into Latin by others, as Cardinal Isidore, unlike his good friend the Neoplatonist Bessarion, never managed to master Latin. For his futile attempts to learn Latin, for his pathetic struggle to render

Beyond these two volumes Pertusi prepared another collection of less famous documents and sources.³³ In the meantime, he continued with his quest to identify “new” sources and was able to recover an important account, an unknown *relazione* by the Anconan consul in Constantinople, Benvenuto.³⁴ Pertusi did not live to see the publication of this volume, which, in its final stages, was supervised by A. Carile and was published in 1983. There are serious problems with this volume, however, as the nemesis of Déthier has reasserted itself and this book is plagued by numerous typographical errors. One must still check previous editions in order to isolate and correct the various mistakes.

Despite the need, still sorely felt, for adequate information on the siege, fall and sack of 1453, students of these texts have, by now, sufficient material at their disposal to make some sense of military operations and of the strategy that was employed by besieger and besieged.³⁵ It must be stated at the outset that scholarship has been rather slow and careful to compare, collate, and evaluate “sources.” It is only in the last sixty years, for instance, that the unreliability of the *Chronicon Maius* has been convincingly demonstrated and that the Latin text of Bishop Leonardo’s *epistula* has served as an anchor in the composition of other accounts.

II. *Quattrocento* Sources on the Siege and the Fall

A. Eyewitness Accounts

1. **NICOLÒ BARBARO.** A physician on a Venetian galley, he maintained a journal that has been used by every modern historian investigating the siege. However, Barbaro’s text presents several problems that deal with the prosopographical material and it is not

Latin into the Greek alphabet for easier comprehension, and for his daily exercises, cf. G. Mercatti, *Scritti d’Isidoro il cardinale Ruteno e codici a lui appartenuti che si conservano nella Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana*, ST 46 (Vatican City, 1926).

Two misidentifications should be addressed. Fleming, p. 72, perpetuates an error and states: “the pope sent Cardinal Isidore of Russia, a *Polish cardinal* who had formerly been Archbishop of Russia, on a mission to Constantinople...” [*Italics ours*]. Further, Fleming, p. 75, erroneously identifies Loukas Notaras as “a Constantinopolitan intellectual and theologian of the mid-fifteenth century....”

³³ *TiePN*.

³⁴ A. Pertusi, “The Anconitan Colony in Constantinople and the Report of Its Consul, Benvenuto, on the Fall of the City,” in *Charanis Studies*, pp. 199-218. It was then published with Italian translation in *TiePN*, pp. 4-5. For an English translation: M. Philippides, *Byzantium, Europe, and the Early Ottoman Sultans 1373-1513: An Anonymous Greek Chronicle of the Seventeenth Century (Codex Barberinus Graecus 111)*, *Late Byzantine and Ottoman Studies* 4 (New Rochelle, 1990): 197-199. Cf. *infra*, II.A.6.

³⁵ This topic remains largely unexplored territory; historians of the siege so far have simply followed “sources” uncritically, without much evaluation and without investigating the actual value or status of each testimony; most of the time they have followed secondary sources, elaborations, or downright forged texts that pass as primary accounts. More importantly, no scholar has attempted a military analysis of strategy, role of artillery, infantry tactics, etc. A different approach will be followed in due course; cf. *infra*, ch. 9: “Land Operations,” and ch. 10: “Some Observations on Strategy.”

always clear which piece of information is correct, as several contradictions emerge in his narrative. Thus in one of his lists Barbaro states that the Turks captured the knight Grioni during the sack:³⁶

...tuti...nobeli da Veniexia, i qual fo prexoni in man del turco, tuti tornò a Veniexia, i qual tuti si ave taia, chi ducati doamilia, chi ducati mile, e chi ducati otozento, in men de uno ano tuti si fo tornadi a Veniexia: ...ser Zacaria Grioni, el cavalier, sora comito.

...all Venetian nobles, who were left prisoners in the hands of the Turks and who returned to Venice in less than one year. Some paid a ransom of one thousand ducats, others two thousand, and others eight hundred. They returned to Venice: ...Sir Zacaria Grioni, the knight and commander.

In the following paragraphs Barbaro presents a list of the noble Venetians who died during the siege and sack and enumerates Grioni as a casualty:³⁷ *nobeli morti, da poi la prexa...: ser Zacaria Grioni el cavalier*, “the nobles who fell in the siege: ...Sir Zacaria Grioni, the knight.” As is apparent, there is something wrong with Barbaro’s second list that names casualties. Grioni, as Barbaro noted elsewhere in his narrative, was captured with his ship, while the Venetian fleet was leaving the harbor of Constantinople during the sack:³⁸ *la galia de Candia patron misser Zacaria Grioni el cavalier, quela si fo prexa*, “the galley from Candia with Zacaria Grioni, the knight, as her captain was captured.” To complicate matters further, Languschi-Dolfín reports that Grioni reached Negroponte (Chalcis in Euboea) together with the other ships fleeing from Constantinople:³⁹

Le gallie tre de Romania, et le do gallie sotil Treuisana et Zacharia Grioni de Candia cum le naue de Candia tirate fuora del porto circa a mezo di feceno uela et in 4. zorni perueneno a Negroponte doue trouono M. Giacomo Loredan capitano zeneral cum otto gallie che aspettauano tempo de andar a dar soccorso a Constantinopoli.

³⁶ Barbaro 61 (Cornet); not included in the selections of CC 1; Pertusi, however, has noted and discussed this discrepancy, CC 1: 366-367, n. 173.

³⁷ This list appears in Cornet, pp. 63-65, but not in CC 1, which consistently omits all of Barbaro’s lists.

³⁸ Barbaro 59 [CC 1: 36].

³⁹ Languschi-Dolfín 36. The Grioni matter is further discussed by M. Manoussakas, “Les derniers défenseurs crétois de Constantinople d’après les documents vénitiens,” in *Akten de XI. internationalen Byzantinischen Kongress, München, 1958*, eds. F. Dölger and H.-G. Beck (Munich, 1960), pp. 331-340. Manoussakas published a document that summarizes Grioni’s adventures after his liberation from the Turks (p. 334, n. 21): *De mense uero Julij anni elapsi, ipse Zacharias, redemptam a misirabili captiuitate Teucrorum, in Cretam rediret, et Chium peruenisset, ad instantiam ipsius Benedicti fuit de ordine vestro in carcerem positus, et cohactus fideiubere de ducatis ij C quod redibit Chium ad faciendum rationem cum eo et standum iudicio fori vostre de eo quod ipse Benedictus dicit habere debere a dicto Zacharia. Cf. infra, Appendix IV: “Some Defenders and Non-Combatants,” no. 95.*

The three galleys from Romania, the two light galleys of Trevisano and Zacaria Grioni from Candia with the ships from Candia left the port about noon, made sail, and in four days arrived in Negroponte where they met Giacomo Loredan, the captain general, with his eight galleys awaiting to set sail to come to the aid of Constantinople.

Scholarship has not exhaustively investigated or sorted the additions and changes made to Barbaro's autograph by later hands; so far, some changes made by Marco Barbaro, *il genealogista*, have been noted. Some simply provide clarifications with new information that gradually became available. Marco added, for instance, to the physician's list of executions, a note to indicate that Venice's *bailo*, Girolamo Minotto, was executed along with his son. The latter's fate had been uncertain for some time.⁴⁰ Marco clarified the situation on July 18, 1453: *il Turco feceli tagliar la testa...al bailo nostro et suo fiol*, "the Turk ordered the decapitation...of our *bailo* and of his son."⁴¹ In addition, an anonymous note sought to silence aspersions on the critical withdrawal of Giovanni Giustiniani from his assigned sector during the last battle. While Barbaro himself only noted that the Genoese *condottiere* retreated,⁴² *Zuan Zustignan, zenovexe da Zenova, se delibera de abandonar la sua posta*, "Giovanni Giustiniani, a Genoese from Genoa, decided to abandon his post," the *marginalium* supplies the explanation,⁴³ *per essire ferito de freza*, "because he was struck by an arrow," a statement that is also echoed, almost verbatim by Languschi-Dolfin, *vien ferito de freza*, "he was struck by an arrow."⁴⁴ Furthermore, the last two paragraphs of the journal, which report the aftermath and the wave of executions,

⁴⁰ Complete note: *Dopo presa la città, il Turco fece far cride, che chi avesse case in Costantinopoli gli dicesse, che egli le faria consegnare, et olti grechi et latini andarono a dirli dove erano le sue case, fra quali fu il nostro Bailo, e il Consolo Taragonense, et in vece delle case, il Turco feceli tagliar la testa, a esso Consolo, et a doi altri de' suoi, et al Bailo nostro et suo fiol, et a doi altri nostri nobeli*. Girolamo had two sons who participated in the defense. P<a>olo was killed in action; Zorzi and his father were executed soon afterwards, as Lomellino, the *podestà* of Pera noted (CC 1: 46: *Decapitari fecit [Mehmed] suis [?] diebus bailum Venetorum cum eius filio et aliis septem Venetis; et similiter consulem Catalanorum cum aliis quinque vel sex Catalanis*. The news reached Venice in the guise of rumors, and attempts were made to ransom Zorzi, who, it was thought as late as the beginning of August, was still alive as a prisoner of the sultan. In addition, no one could discover what happened to the wife of Girolamo Minotto in the sack; she seems to have vanished. Cf. *Archivo di Stato, Senato Mar, R.4*, fol. 202: *Cum omnibus notus sit miserabilis casus nobilis viri, ser Jeronimi Minotto, qui erat Baiulus Constantinopolis, qui sic ut habetur ductus est captivus in Turchia cum uxore et uno filio et perdidit omnem facultatem suam*. On the fate of the Minotti, cf. *PaL 2*: 133-134, n. 87; and *CC 1*: 369-370, n. 182. The most accurate information as to the fate of the Minotti was brought to Venice by Catarino Contarini, another defender and prisoner of the Turks who was ransomed and finally reached Venice by August 16, 1453; cf. *Cronaca Magno* [Stefano Magno], (*NE 3*: 300): *Adì 16 agosto [1453], el venne con un grippo Cattarin Contarini da Constantinopoli, il quale se haveva scosso; per lo quale fù inteso della morte dada al bailo et suo fiolo et recuperation de i altri nostri Venetiani, et hebbe notitia del muodo del perder della cittade*.

⁴¹ *CC 1*: 269, n. 182.

⁴² Barbaro 35 [*CC 1*: 33].

⁴³ *CC 1*: 362, n. 140.

⁴⁴ Languschi-Dolfin, fol. 28.

as well as the fate of a *gran baron greco*, “a great Greek baron” (Loukas Notaras?) are additions by Marco. This precious source was first edited and published in its entirety by Cornet. Some relevant sections, with improved text, are reproduced in *CC 1*: 8-39; for an English translation of this text, cf. [Melville] Jones; in addition, there exists a modern Greek translation by Lappa, pp. 89-213.⁴⁵ There also exists a Latin partial translation of the journal, which some scholars have mistakenly assumed to be a fifteenth-century rendition into Latin of the original text, which is composed in the spoken Venetian idiom of the period. This Latin ἐφημερίδες/journal is in actuality a later translation and has been published under the title, *Nicolai Barbari Patricii Veneti Ephemerides de Constantinopoli anno 1453 obsessa atque expugnata*, in *PG 158*: cols. 1067-1078. The journal is further reproduced and translated, *infra*, Appendix I.

2. ANGELO GIOVANNI LOMELLINO. He was the *podestà* of Pera and on June 23, 1453, wrote his report in a letter entitled *Epistula de Constantinopoleos Excidio*. For a long time Lomellino was the subject of a misunderstanding. As the first editor of Barbaro’s journal, in his annotations he had erroneously assumed that “Angelo Zaccaria” was the *podestà* of Pera. This Angelo Zaccaria was a Genoese in Pera who had informed the sultan of the defenders’ plans to burn the Turkish boats that been transported over dry land and launched into the Golden Horn, behind the chain-boom that was blocking the entrance to Constantinople’s harbor. This traitor was named by Ubertino Pusculo in his poem: *...Furtim / Detulit accelerans Machmetto nuntius audax / Angelus ex Galata Zacharias, atque suorum / consilia expandit*, “in secret and in haste, Angelo Zaccaria from Galatas [Pera] with audacity ran to Mehmed and informed him of the plans of his own people.”⁴⁶ Furthermore, Pusculo claims that this traitor by lighting a fire gave the signal to the Turks that the Christian boats were commencing their attack, as their galleys quietly began to leave their anchorage under the cover of darkness:⁴⁷ *Ecce facem summa Galatae de turre levare / Cernitur: hoc Teucris signum fore nuntius ipse / Creditur*, “lo! they saw a torch lifted from the tallest tower of Galatas [Pera]; it is believed that the messenger himself [Zaccaria] gave this signal to the Turks.” The identification of Angelo Zaccaria with Angelo Giovanni Lomellino was simply a confusion based on common first names but this misapprehension plagued scholarship for some time. The actual *podestà* of Pera was not a traitor and was affected deeply by the sack of Constantinople, as his letter reveals. Moreover, his own nephew had volunteered his services, had fought against the janissaries in the last battle, and had been captured, but Lomellino, as he sadly notes, had lost all trace of him in captivity:⁴⁸ *Imperialis nepos meus captus fuit; in redemptione eius feci quantum fuit mihi possibile...dominus...ipsum cepit*, “my nephew Imperiale was captured. I did all that was possible for me to ransom him...the lord [sultan] kept him.” However, his fate is known from a letter of Soderini, who reported on August 30 of the same year that Imperiale had become a renegade by converting to Islam

⁴⁵ Cf. for full citations of these sources, *supra*, n. 2.

⁴⁶ Book IV, 585-588 (Ellissen, p. 72; *CC 1* has not printed this passage in its selections).

⁴⁷ Book IV, 610-611 (Ellissen, p. 72; *CC 1* has not printed this passage in its selections).

⁴⁸ *CC 1*: 50.

and had subsequently obtained a position in the sultan's Porte.⁴⁹ Lomellino's emotional and confused letter⁵⁰ was first edited by de Sacy, pp. 74-79. It was edited and printed a second time by Belgrano, pp. 229-233. Iorga, pp. 105-108, also edited it. An improved text with Italian translation is offered by CC 1: 42-51. Melville Jones, pp. 131-135, has translated it into English.⁵¹

3. JACOPO TETALDI, a merchant from Florence. There survives a French version (before December 31, 1453) and a Latin version whose date remains uncertain but it displays a later appendix (probably of 1454), which addresses the organization of a projected crusade. It is more likely that the Latin version, minus this appendix, antedates the French. In all likelihood, both the French and Latin versions are based on a lost, or misplaced, Italian original. Tetaldi, his manuscripts, editions, and his testimony will concern us later.⁵²

4. BISHOP LEONARDO GIUSTINIANI, the most authoritative source that has spawned a number of followers/imitators in Latin, Greek, and Italian. His *epistula/aviso* of August 16, 1453, to Pope Nicholas V, as he states: *data Chii, XVI die Augusti*, remains our basic source for the event.⁵³ His report was the first extensive narrative in literary form to reach Europe; the disaster is described in graphic detail with the experience of an actual participant in the defense, a proud eyewitness.⁵⁴

Narrabo igitur et flens, et gemens Constantinopolis proxime de cernentibus oculis discrimen ultimum et iacturam...sed quoniam quae visu magis quam quae auditu, verius exponuntur, quod scio loquar: et quod vidi fidelius contestabor.

⁴⁹ NE 2: 493: *Et, perchè ne sappiate il tucto, come noi, vi mando la copia de capituli che hà facto il Turcho co Genovesi et la copia d'una lettera venuta da Scio, da huomo valente et di grande discretione, che si vorrebbero mandare al Sancto Padre et in Corte di Roma. Et questo di c'è rinfrescato peggio per la via di Vinegia, che dicono...che uno Agnolo Lomellino, ch'era podestà in Pera, huomo valente et di grandi riputatione, lo fù carreggiare priete (sic), et uno suo nipote di xx anni hà rinnegato, et hallo facto un gran maestro.*

⁵⁰ There has been little research on this interesting personality; cf. E. Dallegio d'Alessio, "Listes des potestats de la colonie génoise de Péra (Galata), des prieurs et sous-prieurs de la Magnifica Communità," *REB* 27 (1969): 151-157 (with the complaint of CC 1: 41); and, more recently, G. Olgiati, "Angelo Giovanni Lomellino: Attività politica e mercantile dell'ultimo podestà de Pera," *Storia dei Genovesi* 9 (1989): 139-196.

⁵¹ For full citations of these sources, cf. *supra*, n. 1.

⁵² Cf. *supra*, n. 12, and *infra*, ch. 2: "Four Accounts: A Ghost, a Pope, a Merchant, and a Boy," sec. III.

⁵³ Biographies of Leonardo were written long ago and contain inaccuracies; the oldest examples include M. Iustiniani, "Vita Leonardi," in *Caroli Pogii de nobilitate liber disceptatorius et Leonardi Chiensis de vera nobilitate contra Poggium tractatus apologeticus* (Abelini, 1657), cols. 43-48; and J. Quéatif and J. Echard, *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum*, 1 (Paris, 1729): cols. 816-818. In the previous century, the few facts known about the archbishop have been summarized by R.-J. Loenertz, *La Société des Frères Pèrègrinants. Étude sur l'Orient Dominicain*, 1 [= Inst. Hist. FF. Praed., Diss. hist. 7] (Rome, 1937).

⁵⁴ *PG* 159: 923 [CC 1: 124].

With tears and groans will I give an account of the last struggle and loss of Constantinople, which I saw with my own eyes recently...since these events can be related more reliably by an eyewitness than by hearsay. I will tell what I know and will be a trustworthy witness to what I have seen.

Elsewhere in his narrative he emphasized the fact that he was an eyewitness to the events:⁵⁵ *Testis sum*, “I am an eyewitness.” When Cardinal Isidore, en route to Constantinople in 1452, made a stop at the island of Chios, Leonardo fell under the spell of the Greek cardinal, who recruited him for the defense:⁵⁶

cum igitur reverendissimus pater D<ominus> cardinalis Sabinensis pro natione Graecorum legatus, in eius famulatum me ex Chio vocasset, egi summa cum animi mei diligentia, ut... fidem defensarem.

When the most reverend father, the lord cardinal of the Sabines and [papal] legate to the nation of the Greeks, summoned me from Chios to join his retinue, I accepted and committed myself to the defense of the faith with all my energy.

We do not know in what capacity Leonardo assisted in the defense but he was an eyewitness to several important events. He evidently accompanied Isidore and his band of warriors to the walls and he was probably stationed together with the cardinal in the sector of Saint Demetrios:⁵⁷ *Cardinalis a consilio nunquam absens, Sancti Demetrii regionem ad mare defensabat*, “the cardinal, never absent from a council, was defending the region of Saint Demetrios by the sea.” The two friends were finally separated in the early stages of the sack. Cardinal Isidore was wounded in the neighborhood of Hagia Sophia, was captured, and then taken to the Turkish camp. Early on that day, before his identity was established, he was ransomed, as he noted in a letter:⁵⁸

Quos omnes actus et opera praefata propriis oculis vidi, et ego ipse cum viris Constantinopolitanis omnibus una passus sum, licet de manibus impiorum me Deus eripuit, ut Jonam ab utero ceti.

All these events and the aforementioned deeds I saw with my own eyes and I suffered together with all the Constantinopolitans. But God snatched me away from the hands of the impious [the Turks], as he delivered Jonah from the belly of the whale.

⁵⁵ PG 159: 927 [CC 1: 130].

⁵⁶ PG 159: 923. CC 1: 124-126 presents a slightly different text and punctuation: *cum igitur reverendissimus pater, dominus cardinalis Sabinensis, pro unione Graecorum legatus, in eius famulatum me ex Chio vocasset, egi summa cum animi mea diligentia ut...defensarem.*

⁵⁷ PG 159: 935 [CC 1: 150].

⁵⁸ CC 1: 84; cf. *infra*, II.A.5.iii. The letter is dated July 8.

In another letter addressed to his friend Cardinal Bessarion, Isidore supplies details of his adventures and mentions the wound that he received at the gate of “that renowned monastery” [Hagia Sophia]:⁵⁹

et per immortalem Deum, cuius oculis patent et manifesta sunt omnia, saepius ac saepius illum execratus sum ac maledixi crudelem ex Turcis qui me sagitta fixit atque in sinistra capitis parte vulneravit ante ianuam cuiusdam monasterii, non tam acriter tamen ut eadem hora mihi vitam eripuerit, propterea quia eques eram et attonitus et spiculum ipsum magna in parte vires amiserat; sed me Deus, opinor, servare voluit, ut reliquas omnes tales ac tantas infortunatissimae illius urbis adversitates conspiciam.

And by the immortal God, whose eyes see everything most clearly, time and again have I cursed and reviled that cruel Turk who wounded me with an arrow on the left side of my head before the door of that renowned monastery. I was not overly concerned over my possible death at the time, as I was mounted and the shaft itself was almost spent. But I believe that God saved me so that I could witness the ill luck of that hapless city.

Leonardo did not sustain any wounds and fell unharmed into the hands of the Turks. Isidore implies that he himself reached the neighborhood of Hagia Sophia from the walls, presumably his assigned sector of Saint Demetrios, because he had a horse. The importance of a mount to avoid capture or death by the defenders is also underscored by Benvenuto, who states, as his text unfortunately breaks off, that *omnes provisores, ut credit interfecti erant...quia manserunt pedestres in platea*, “all commanders, as it is believed, were killed...because they were left behind on foot in the *piazza/square*.” Perhaps Leonardo had lost his mount, was then captured, and was handled roughly by the Turks:⁶⁰ *Qua tempestate concussus, ego quoque captus sum: et pro demeritis meis vinctus caesusque a Theucris. Non fui dignus cum Christo Salvatore configi*, “caught in that upheaval, I also became a prisoner; and for my sins I was bound and beaten by the Turks. I was not worthy to be crucified with Christ, our Savior.” Leonardo provides no details of his liberation, which, unlike that of his friend and patron, may have occurred early on, as we learn elsewhere that he was able to buy books that the conquerors were selling on the very day of the sack.⁶¹

⁵⁹ CC 1: 66; cf. *infra*, II.A.5.ii.

⁶⁰ PG 159: 925 [CC 1: 128].

⁶¹ Reg. 401, fol. 47b, Secret Archives of the Vatican, Pope Nicholas V, 10/18/53 [= L. Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages Drawn from Secret Archives of the Vatican and Other Original Sources*, trans. and ed. F. I. Antrobus, 2 (7th ed., London, 1949): app. 22.524-525]. The loss of manuscripts, presumably containing ancient works unknown in the west, was a lamentable point in the humanistic literature of the period. Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (the future Pope Pius II) made mention of the irreparable loss a number of times in his correspondence; cf., e.g., his letter to Pope Nicholas V (dated July 12, 1453), CC 2: 46: *Quid de libris dicam, qui illic erant innumerabiles, nondum Latinis cogniti? Heu, quot nunc magnorum nomina virorum peribunt? Secunda mors ista Homero est, secundus Platoni obitus. Ubi nunc philosophorum aut poetarum ingenia requiremus? Extinctus est fons Musarum*. He returns to the same lamentation in

Et sicut eadem petitio subjungebat venerabilis frater noster Leonardus Methalinensis ord. fratrum praedicatorum professor in Constantinopoli et Pera publice dicere praesumit, quod omnes de pr<a>eda a Teucris rapta enim sciente vero domino et contradicente licite emere possunt nec data etiam pretio Teucris soluto restituere tenentur, ipseque archiepiscopus duo missalia et unum breviarium et nonnullos alios libros dict<a>e librari<a>e deputatos emere non dubitaverit.

Our venerable brother Leonardo, the archbishop of Mytilene, a professor of the Order, stated in this report that anyone could buy in Constantinople and Pera, for a settled price, from the loot and booty of the Turks (with the lord's knowledge that his edict was being violated). The archbishop himself did not hesitate to purchase two missals, a breviary, and other books that belonged to the aforementioned library.

We do not know how Leonardo and his books eventually found their way to Chios. One might suppose that Leonardo was one of the passengers on board a western ship that managed to reach the safety of the Aegean archipelago. Perhaps he was one of the refugees on the very vessel that had carried the wounded Giovanni Giustiniani to Chios and to his death. It had to be a Genoese ship,⁶² for the Venetians had left by midday while Leonardo was still a prisoner.

Leonardo's later life is not well documented. It was believed that he returned to the island of Lesbos, was captured by the Turks in the sack of Mytilene in 1462, was subsequently ransomed, and then wrote an account of this siege and sack entitled *De Lesbo a Turcis capta*. This work betrays, however, the hand of a different author. It is written in a less sophisticated style and prose, and employs a different Latin idiom that betrays more parallels with an ecclesiastical sermon than with the humanistic precepts of composition employed by Leonardo in his account of the siege and the sack of 1453. In fact, Archbishop Benedetto, the successor of Leonardo to the see of Mytilene, composed the *De Lesbo*. Pope Pius II nominated Benedetto to this post on December 3, 1459, after the death of Leonardo. The latter returned to Italy in 1458 attempting to gain military aid against his old enemy, Mehmed II, who was making preparations to attack Lesbos. Leonardo died in Italy in late February or early March 1459.⁶³

his letter dated September 25, 1453, to the pope [R. Wolkan, *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini* 3, *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum* 68 (Vienna, 1918): 189; not in CC 2]: *Mansit usque in hanc diem vetustae sapientiae apud Constantinopolim monumentum, ac velut ibi domicilium litterarum esset, nemo Latinorum satis videri doctus poterat, nisi Constantinopoli per tempus studisset. Quodque florente Roma doctrinarum nomen habuerunt Athenae, id nostra tempestate videbatur Constantinopolis obtinere. Inde nobis Plato redditus, inde Aristotelis, Demosthenis, Xenophontis, Thuchididis, Basilii, Origenis et aliorum multa Latinis opera diebus nostris manifestata sunt, multa quoque manifestanda sperabamus. At nunc Vincentibus Turchis et omnia possidentibus, quae Graeca potentia tenuit, actum esse de litteris Graecis arbitror.*

⁶² Cf. *infra*, ch. 8: "Naval Maneuvers: Subordinate Operations," n. 93.

⁶³ The Latin text of this work was edited and published under the erroneous title: *Leonardi Chiensis De Lesbo a Turcis capta epistola Pio papae II missa ex. cod. ms. Ticinensis*, by C. Hopf (Regimonti, 1866), who then reprinted it in his *Chroniques Gréco-Romanes Inédites ou peu*

The second half of the *quattrocento* witnessed great strides with the newly invented printing press. Consequently, eyewitness accounts with sensational appeal proliferated, such as the reports of the Turkish advance⁶⁴ into southeastern Europe and the Balkans. At times they bypassed the stage of manuscript publication and went directly to the typesetter. A clear example is provided by the work of Guillaume Caoursin, whose eyewitness account of the siege of Rhodes in 1480 by the Turks was published in printed form a few months after the withdrawal of the enemy. The notable manuscript of Caoursin's text, illustrated with exquisite miniatures and illuminations depicting the siege and the various councils of the Knights of Saint John, appeared after the publication of the printed pamphlet; it was an understandable delay, since the illustrations could not be executed with a speed that could match that of the printer.⁶⁵

In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries Leonardo's work on the siege became popular and was recorded in various manuscript renditions: *Ven. Marc. lat. XIV 218* (no. 4677), fols. 46^v-68^v; *Ven. Marc. lat. 397* (no. 1733), fols. 1^r-22^r; *Mediol. Trivult. lat. N 641*, fols. 1^r-21^r (unfortunately, this work was not utilized in its entirety by Pertusi in his selections of Leonardo in *CC 1*, or its valuable *marginalia*); *Mediol. Ambros. lat. C 1454*, fols. 25^v-44^r; *Vat. lat. 4137*, fols. 172^r-206^v; *Vat. lat. 5392*, fols. 99^r-106^r; and *Flor. Riccard. lat. 660* [= *M II 19*], fols. 44-50 (which was not consulted by Pertusi for his selections of Leonardo in *CC 1*). In the sixteenth century Leonardo's *aviso* became famous with its translated and printed versions that will be cited presently. The Latin text was first published in 1584.⁶⁶ Bzovius based the early printed editions on a transcription of the *Vat. Lat. ms. 4137*.

The standard edition of this Latin authoritative *epistula* remains the *editio princeps* by D. P. Lonicer, *Chronica Turcica*, 2 (Frankfurt am Main, 1578): 84-102. All other editions, with the exception of the selections in *CC 1* that present a better text, are based on Lonicer: *De Urbis Constantinopoleos Jactura Captivitateque. Повѣсть о Цареградѣ*,

connues publiées avec notes et tables généalogiques (Paris, 1873; repr. Brussels, 1966), doc. 21, pp. 359-366. No English translation of this work exists.

⁶⁴ *SOC*, esp. ch. 1.

⁶⁵ The copy of Caoursin's work in the Gennadeios Library at Athens bears the title *Guglielmi Caorsici [sic] Rhodiorum vicecancellarii obsidionis Rhodiae urbis descriptio*. While this early printed work at the Gennadeios states neither place nor year of publication, it is clear that we are encountering a copy of the 1480-1481 edition printed in Rome; cf. the evidence cited in *PaL 2*: 346, n. 2. For color photographs of the miniatures accompanying Caoursin's text in various manuscripts, cf. E. Kollias, *The Knights of Rhodes: The Palace and the City* (Athens, 1988), plates 2, 27, 28, 30, 34, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, and 46. Also, cf. the discussion in *SOC*, pp. 121-143; and E. Brockman, *The Two Sieges of Rhodes, 1480-1522* (London, 1969). For a new edition of Caoursin's text, with English translation and commentary, cf. Philippides, *Mehmed II the Conqueror*, pp. 261-313.

⁶⁶ The popularity of this work, in manuscript form, continued in the sixteenth century; for manuscripts of this period, cf. *CC 1*: 121. Also, cf. the observations of Melville Jones, *The Siege of Constantinople 1453*, p. 28 and an unnumbered note at the bottom of same page. As well, K.-P. Matschke, "Leonhard von Chios, Gennadios Scholarios, und die 'Collegae' Thomas Pyropulos und Johannes Basilikos vor, während und nach der Eroberung von Konstantinopel durch die Türken," *Byzantina* 21 (2000): 227-236.

ed. I. I. Sreznevsky (Saint Petersburg, 1855), pp. 50-68; J.-P. Migne, ed. *PG* 159 (Paris, 1866): cols. 923-953; eds. P. A. Déthier and C. Hopf, *MHH, Ser. Scriptores*, 22.1: 553-616, with the Italian translation of Leonardo, as it appeared in Sansovino 623-666; and *Epistola reverendissimi in Christo patris et domini domini Leonardi Ordinis Praedicatorum, archiepiscopi Mitileni, sacrarum litterarum professoris, ad beatissimum dominum nostrum Nicolaum papam quintum [de urbis Constantinopolis captivitate]*, ed. Belgrano, no. 150, 13: 233-257. Also we should note the selections with improved text and Italian translation in *CC* 1: 124-171. The *epistola* has been translated into English by Melville Jones, *The Siege of Constantinople 1453*, pp. 11-42.

Mention should be made of the followers and imitators of Leonardo, whose text they have reproduced in paraphrased form, in actual translation, and in elaboration:

i. Giacomo Languschi and *Ignotus*: A colorful mixture of the fifteenth-century Venetian vernacular and Latin is encountered in Giacomo Languschi's version of the siege that was composed sometime after 1454.⁶⁷ This account is embedded in Zorzi Dolfin's chronicle. Thomas, "Die Eroberung Constantinopels im Jahre 1453," pp. 1-38, first edited it; selections are also printed in *TiePN*, pp. 169-180. A small section of this interesting account has been translated into English by Melville Jones, *The Siege of Constantinople 1453*, pp. 125-131. The text in its entirety remains untranslated. It contains some additional material to Leonardo, including the Italian text of the *aman-name* that Mehmed II granted to Pera after the fall.⁶⁸

Dolfin's chronicle begins with Attila the Hun and ends with the death of Doge Francesco Foscari; it has attracted little scholarly attention. More specifically, in regard to the siege section, Pertusi merely notes a general correspondence in phrasing between Languschi-Dolfin and Leonardo, but he fails to pursue a systematic analysis.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, it has become clear that Languschi-Dolfin's version of the siege and fall contains, to a great extent, parts of Leonardo's narrative translated into the Venetian vernacular.⁷⁰ Furthermore, it is likely that both Pseudo-Sphrantzes and the anonymous

⁶⁷ It now appears that Languschi could not have composed this account, as he seems to have died in 1453. The account can only be attributed to an unknown scribe. Cf. M. C. Davies, "An Enigma and a Phantom: Giovanni Aretino and Giacomo Languschi," *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 37 (1988): 1-29, esp. 16 ff. In addition, cf. Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2008), p. 273, n. 70. To avoid confusion with other source writers and for elucidation, we choose to retain the artificial compound "Languschi-Dolfin" throughout this study to indicate the author of this fascinating account.

⁶⁸ On this work and its relationship to Leonardo's narrative, as well as to other texts of the period, cf. M. Philippides, "The Fall of Constantinople 1453: Bishop Leonardo Giustiniani and His Italian Followers," *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 29 (1998): 189-227, esp. 204-209.

⁶⁹ A. Pertusi, "La lettera di Filippo da Rimini, cancelliere di Corfù, a Francesco Barbaro e i primi documenti occidentali sulla caduta di Costantinopoli (1453)," *Μνημόσυνον Σοφίας Ἀνωτιάδη, Βιβλιοθήκη τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἰνστιτούτου Βενετίας Βυζαντινῶν καὶ Μεταβυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 6 (Venice, 1974): 120-157, esp. 121.

⁷⁰ Such was the conclusion of Pertusi (*supra*, n. 69), who did not realize, however, that the problem is more complicated. Pertusi cites only one correspondence (121: *ad esempio*) and fails to look for this narrative's additional sources, 121: *...una traduzione in volgare della Epistola di Leonardo Giustiniani, spogliata dei referimenti teologici e degli indirizzi rivolti al papa Nicolò V.* Some

codex *Barberini Chronicle 111*,⁷¹ which may have utilized Sansovino's Italian translation of Leonardo, also employs Languschi-Dolfín's vernacular version and not the Latin text of Leonardo directly. Both Pseudo-Sphrantzes and the anonymous author of the *Barberini Chronicle* penned their works in Italy and, one suspects, both were more comfortable with spoken Italian than with scholarly Latin.

In addition, there is a certain relationship between Languschi-Dolfín and Ubertino Pusculo (*infra*, II.A.7). Languschi-Dolfín received some information from Pusculo; both authors display not only similar phraseology, but also information not encountered in Leonardo. Moreover, Languschi-Dolfín also utilized another source, since some of his statements are encountered neither in Leonardo nor in Pusculo. Indeed Languschi-Dolfín displays a certain degree of sophistication. It becomes clear that he was aware of the existence and value of documents. At the end of his narrative, for instance, he cites the document that Mehmed II, through his lieutenant Zaganos Pasha, granted to the Genoese of Pera. This *aman-name* has survived in a Greek version and there is no doubt that this was the original language in which this document was composed. It corresponds to the

further connections are cited by T. Ganchou, "Sur quelques erreurs relatives aux derniers défenseurs Grecs de Constantinople en 1453," *Θησαυρίσματα: Περιοδικὸν τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἰνστιτούτου Βυζαντινῶν καὶ Μεταβυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν τῆς Βενετίας* 25 (1995): 61-82, esp. 62-63.

⁷¹ For the historicity of the text, cf. M. Philippides, "[Χρονικὸν περὶ τῶν Τούρκων Σουλτάνων] 'Chronicle of the Turkish Sultans,'" in *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. C. Kafadar, H. Karateke, and C. Fleischer, Harvard University, Center for Middle Eastern Studies (Cambridge, MA, 2008), electronic article, 7 pp.

For a discussion of this text and its problems, cf. D. Sakel, "A Probable Solution to the Problem of the *Chronicle of the Turkish Sultans*," in *Byzantine Narrative. Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, ed. J. Burke, et al., Australian Association for Byzantine Studies. *Byzantina Australiensia* 16 (Melbourne, 2006): 204 ff. Further, relative to this text, Sakel, pp. 210-211, n. 21, relying heavily and almost exclusively upon the work of Elizabeth A. Zachariadou that in fact is quite significant and merits scholarly attention, makes the questionable observation that Philippides has followed a "pre-Zachariadou view of the sources." It has been his and our approach in all of our studies to view all extant works, both primary and secondary, both ancient and modern, and to try to make some sense of the plethora of materials and interpretations that have been rendered to the events and personages of 1453.

One additional observation should be made regarding the authorship of *Barberini gr. 111*. In his *Byzantium, Europe, and the Early Ottoman Sultans 1373-1513*, Philippides, p. 118, n. 48, Sakel misinterprets Philippides' annotation that reads: "... The translator of this Chronicle into German expresses his doubt that the author was Greek." He may have been a westerner who knew everyday business Greek. Cf. F. Kreutel, *Leben und Taten der türkischen Kaiser. Die anonyme vulgargriechische Chronik Cod. Barb. 111 (Anonymous Zoras)*, *Osmanische Geschichtschreiber* 6 (Graz, 1971), 16-17. It is also possible that the author was one of the numerous spies who were employed by powers in the west and who spent time in the eastern Mediterranean gathering intelligence information; our author could have been employed in this way before [he] composed his chronicle, as he is aware of Ottoman administration and terminology. Sakel states: "Its author is a Greek, not a Greek-speaking Italian, as has been suggested, and indeed not an Italian spy."

Italian text of Languschi-Dolfín. It is entitled (fol. 322 [34-36]): *come el gran Turco fece un priuilegio a Genoesi per hauerli data Pera*.⁷²

This unidentified source that Languschi-Dolfín has utilized is unknown, as some of the information is not duplicated in the surviving chronicles, eyewitness accounts, or *avisi* of the period. Therefore one must assume that Languschi had consulted a document or a source, perhaps from the pen of an eyewitness who has disappeared since the fifteenth century. While the identity of this unknown author, the *Ignotus*, may never be established with any degree of certainty, a likely candidate is Ludovico (or Aluvixe/Alvise/Aloixe, as the name is spelled in the various forms of the Venetian dialect of the *quattrocento*) Diedo, the captain of the galleys of Romania, specifically from Tana. Diedo had reached Constantinople in November 1452, and his ships had guarded the chain across the Golden Horn during the siege in order to protect the harbor from the Turkish fleet. In the course of the long siege he was elevated to the post of *capitano generale del mar*, “naval commander-in-chief,”⁷³ by the Venetian authorities in Constantinople.⁷⁴ Despite his prominent role in the defense and his commanding position, Diedo has never been the subject of a scholarly study or of a monograph. He supervised the orderly departure of the Venetian vessels from the Golden Horn during the sack,

⁷² Both Greek and Italian texts were published by S. P. Lampros, “Ἡ Ἑλληνικὴ ὡς Ἐπίσημος Γλωσσοῦ τῶν Σουλτάνων,” *NH* 5 (1908): 40-79, esp. 66-72. The Greek text was published once more (based on the *ms.* 2817 of the *Eggerton Collection* in the British Museum): E. Dallegio d’Alesio, “Le texte grec du traité conclu par les génois de Galata avec Mehmet II le 1^{er} Juin 1453,” *Hellenika* 11 (1939): 115-124, and has been translated into English by Melville Jones, *The Siege of Constantinople*, Appendix, pp. 136-137. For the Greek and Italian versions, “The *Aman-name* of Mehmed II, Granted to Pera (1453),” cf. Philippides, *Mehmed II the Conqueror*, Appendix II, pp. 347-350. The authenticity of the Greek document was challenged in the nineteenth century by Paspates, *Πολιορκία καὶ Ἄλωσις*, but Lampros argued in favor of its authenticity in 1908. The publication of the document in the British Museum finally dispelled any doubts as to the authenticity of the *aman-name* and further demonstrated the veracity of Languschi-Dolfín’s text.

⁷³ The following documents pertain to Diedo’s activities: Leonardo, *PG* 159: 934 [= Languschi-Dolfín, fol. 20]; Barbaro 8 [*CC* 1: 12], 14-15, 22, 28-29 [*CC* 1: 19], 33, 38-39, and 57-58 [*CC* 1: 35]; Stefano Magno, *Cronaca Magno* (in *NE* 3: 298); and Sphrantzes, *Chronicon Minus*, 36.4 (Maisano, p. 138). In addition, cf. the following archival material: *Archivio di Stato, Sen. Secr.* 19, fol. 203^v [*TIEPN*, p. 9] of July 5, 1453; *Archivio di Stato, Sen. Mar R4*, fols. 198^v-199^f [*TIEPN*, pp. 6-9] of July 23, 1453; *NE* 3: 301; and *RdD* 3: 108 (no. 2931). Furthermore, we should take into consideration the inscriptional evidence and the iconography offered by Diedo’s monumental tomb that still survives; cf. *infra*, ch. 2: “Four Testimonies: A Ghost, a Pope, a Merchant, and a Boy,” esp. n. 41 and n. 42. For the relevant texts, cf. *infra*, Appendix IV: “Some Defenders and Non-Combatants,” no. 55.

⁷⁴ Barbaro 38 [in *CC* 1: 36]: *...galie et altri fusti de più comunitade...e azochè nui cristiani possiamo aver vitoria e onor in questo mondo contra questo turco, e però l’andarà parte per autorità de questo conseio, che el nobel homo misser Aluvixe Diedo capetano de le galie de la Tana, sia fato capetano zeneral del mar, zoè de l’armada che se atruova a esser al prexente in questo porto, e che el dito capetano abia piena libertà da far e desfar de tuti i fusti de questo porto*. Elsewhere, Barbaro places Diedo in charge of the harbor only, 22 [not in *CC* 1]: *...subito quelli si vegnià a referir a misser lo capetano da la Tana, perchè lui si iera fato capetano del porto....*

guided his vessels through the Aegean, put in at the Venetian outpost of Negroponte (Chalcis in Euboea), and safely brought the refugees back to Venice. He was very proud of the role that he played in the drama of Constantinople, as it is recorded by the inscription on his tomb in the Church of SS. Giovanni and Paolo in Venice.⁷⁵ Barbaro notes Diedo's leadership in the exodus of the armada:⁷⁶

...adonca al mezo di con l'aiuto de misser domene Dio, misser Aluvixe Diedo, el capetanio da la Tana, si fexe vela con la sua galia, e poi la galia de ser Jeruolemo Morexini, e poi la galia de Trabexonda vizo patron ser Dolfin Dolfin, ma questa galia de Trabexonda asai stentò a levarse, e questo perché el ne manca homeni cento e sesanta quatro, i qual parte se anegò e parte morti da le bombarde, e morti pur in la bataia per altro muodo, siché apena quela potè levarse; poi se leva la galia sutil de misser Cabriel Trivixan, lui si romaxe in tera in man de Turchi; la galia de Candia patron misser Zacaria Grioni el cavalier, quela si for prexa, poi driedo queste galie si levò tre nave de Candia, le qual son, ser Zuan Venier, ser Antonio Filamati <e> el Galina, e tuti andasemo in conserva nave e galie per infina fuora del streto, con una buora a più de dodexe mì per ora; si el fose stà bonaza o vento in prova, tuti nui saremo stadi prexi.

...in the middle of the day, with the help of our Lord God, Sir Alvise Diedo, the captain from Tana, set sail with his galley. Then came the galley of Sir Jeruolamo Morexini and then the galley from Trebizond with the commander Dolfin Dolfin, but this galley from Trebizond was in difficulty because it was lacking one hundred and sixty-four men. Some had drowned, some had been killed by the bombards, and others died in the course of the battle. She could hardly make her way under sail. Then came the light galley of Sir Gabriel Trivixan [Trevisan], while he remained in the territory in the hands of the Turks. The galley from Candia with the commander Zacaria Grioni, the knight, was captured. Next came the three ships from Candia, which belonged to Sir Zuan Venier, to Sir Antonio Filamati [Philomates], <and to> Galina [Gialinas/Hyalinas]. We all, ships and galleys, proceeded under a *buora* [northeasterly wind], with a speed greater than twelve miles per hour. Had it been calm or had the wind changed direction we would all have become prisoners.

On Diedo fell the sad duty of announcing the disaster to the citizens and authorities of the *Serenissima*. Once in Venice, perhaps in the same evening that the flotilla had arrived, Diedo was called upon to give an oral report on the fall to a stunned audience:⁷⁷

...vadit quod mittatur ad presens ser Ludovio Diedo qui venit capitaneus galearum Romaniae et interfuit illi miserabili cladi ut in hoc Concilio referat ad omnia.

⁷⁵ Cf. *supra*, n. 73.

⁷⁶ Barbaro 58-59 [CC 1: 36-37].

⁷⁷ *Archivio di Stato, Sen. Mar R4*, fol. 199^r [TLePN, p. 8].

...a party was dispatched to summon Sir Ludovico Diedo who went as the captain of the galleys from Romania and was present in the miserable disaster to make a report about everything to the Council.

Diedo was then asked to produce a written *relazione* of his experiences.⁷⁸

His official written report, containing a detailed account of the operations during the siege, has unfortunately vanished. The reasons behind this disappearance are not clear. We could simply suppose that it has been misplaced and that it is still awaiting discovery, even though scholars like the meticulous Pertusi have searched for it in vain. Alternatively, with a measure of suspicion, we may theorize that it was deliberately misplaced, removed, or even destroyed, as it may have contained passages, reports, observations, and comments that may have cast aspersions upon influential members of Venetian families and nobles for their actions during the siege. Nevertheless, we know that this report existed and it may have been one of the sources, perhaps the major source that the Venetian Languschi consulted. Languschi preserved an account of the reception of the news of the fall in Venice, which had preceded the arrival of the refugees. The news had first arrived in the form of letters from Lepanto (Naupaktos) and Corfu; then Diedo and his flotilla arrived to confirm the disaster and to produce this *relazione* that has vanished. It is possible that Diedo took the trouble to read this official report to a large audience before it was filed and before its “disappearance.” Languschi states:⁷⁹

Ad 4. luijo fu de mercatore datina zonzeno a Uenetia e le tre gallie grosse de Romania desfortunate capitano ser Aluise Diedo senza leuar San Marco ne altra insegna senza trombe e pifari, cum ogni segno de mestitia.

On July 4 the merchant ships and the three large galleys from Romania under the unfortunate captain Sir Aluise Diedo came to Venice without flying the banner of Saint Mark or any other insignia, without trumpets and fifes, but with all signs of grief.

In the beginning of his account, Languschi names his sources, but, for reasons that can no longer be explored, as the trail of the lost *relazione* is quite cold and can hardly be followed nowadays, he neglects (perhaps on purpose?) to mention Diedo. There remains the possibility that he never consulted Diedo’s report.⁸⁰

Adoncha lo excidio de Constantinopoli descriuo come la cosa e passada tracta la historia da quelli autori che quella hanno scripto, come hano uisto, imperoche altramente le cose uiste, et altramente le udite se scriueno. Le qual cose ornatamente fono describe dal. R.^{do} uescouo de Mettelino che era in la fameja de Cardinal Sabino legato mandato per la union de Greci lo qual romaxe preson in Constantinopoli, et fu recaptado, et fu etiam descripto da Filippo da Rimano cancellier a Corfu.

⁷⁸ *TlePN*, p. 7.

⁷⁹ Fol. 323 (37), a section entitled: *Come fu lo excidio de Constantinopoli et a che modo.*

⁸⁰ Fol. 313 (5).

I will describe the circumstances of the fall of Constantinople, utilizing in my history the narratives of those authors who actually saw what they described, as it makes a difference to compose something based on events witnessed as opposed on hearsay. The story is described elegantly by the most reverend bishop of Mytilene [= Leonardo Giustiniani of Chios], who was in the retinue of the Cardinal of Sabina [= Isidore], the legate dispatched for the union with the Greeks, who was taken prisoner in Constantinople and was ransomed later, and by Filippo da Rimini, the chancellor of Corfu.

Thus Languschi cites Leonardo, Isidore, and Filippo da Rimini as his sources. Yet some of the information that he presents is not duplicated in these accounts. It is clear that he used material from a source that is not cited anywhere in his narrative, such as Mehmed II's *aman-name* to Pera. Diedo's lost *relazione* may have been one of his sources. Whether this source was actually composed by Diedo or by some other unknown author is unclear. It must have existed and the author's name will be indicated henceforth by the generic *Ignotus*.⁸¹

ii. **Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini** (Pope Pius II) composed an *opusculum* on the siege and fall.⁸² An early printed edition of Aeneas Silvius' pamphlet, under the title *Tractatulus*, was published in the fifteenth century. An early copy is rather logically bound together with Nikolaos Sekoundinos' *Ottomanorum Familia*,⁸³ and is currently housed in the Gennadeios Library of Athens. The very same work of Aeneas Silvius was also published in the collection: *Aeneae Sylvii Piccolominei Senensi, qui post adeptum pontificatum Pius eius nominis secundus appellatus est, opera quae extant omnia, nunc demum post corruptissimas aeditiones summa diligentia castigata & in unum corpus redacta. Quorum elenchum uersa pagella indicabit* (Basileae, sine anno [= 1571], ex officina Henrici Petrini; repr. Frankfurt, 1967), pp. 400-403.⁸⁴ The second edition is clearly later than the Gennadeios pamphlet. The two printed texts are not identical. There are differences in spelling, punctuation, and choice of words. Aeneas Silvius has made extensive use of Leonardo's text. For a modern edition, with English translation and commentary, cf. Philippides, *Mehmed II the Conqueror*, pp. 93-119.

⁸¹ Philippides, "The Fall of Constantinople 1453," p. 209.

⁸² Cf. *infra*, ch. 2: "Four Testimonies: A Ghost, a Pope, a Merchant, and a Boy," sec. II.

⁸³ For the Latin text and English translation, cf. Philippides, ed., *Mehmed II the Conqueror*, pp. 55-91.

⁸⁴ I. P. Medvedev, "Падение Константинополя в Греко-Итальянской гуманистической публицике XV в. [The Fall of Constantinople in Greco-Italian Humanistic Publicity in the Fifteenth Century]," in G. G. Litavrin, ed., *Византия между Западом и Востоком. Опыт исторической характеристики* [Byzantium between West and East. A Characteristic Historical Essay] (St. Petersburg, 1999), pp. 293-332. Medvedev's work contains an analysis of humanistic and apocalyptic issues (pp. 293-312) in the immediate decades after the fall. He further provides in Russian translation from the Latin three letters of Piccolomini (pp. 312-320), respectively to Pope Nicholas V, 12 July 1453; to Nicolaus Cusanus, 21 July 453; and to Leonardo Benvoglianti, 23 September 1453.

iii. Richer's account of the siege,⁸⁵ which had been considered an eyewitness account by "Riccherio," but has now been demonstrated to be a work of the sixteenth century by a French courtier/scholar: Riccherio [Richer], *De rebus Turcarum libri octo* (Paris, 1540). The siege section has been translated under the impression that an eyewitness had composed the narrative, and Melville Jones, *The Siege of Constantinople 1453*, pp. 117-124, colors it accordingly.

iv. Leonardo's text is mainly known through Francesco Sansovino's Italian rendition in his sixteenth-century best-seller: *Historia universale dell'origine et imperio de Turchi: nella quale si contengono la origine, le lege, l'usanze, i costumi, cose religiosi come mondani de' Turchi: oltre cio vi sono tutte le guerre che di tempo sono state fatte da quella natione cominciando da Othomano primo Re di questa gente fino al moderno Selim con le vite di tutti i principi di casa Othomana*, 3 vols. (Venice, 1564, 1568, 1571, and so forth).⁸⁶

v. The Greek rendition of the *Chronicon Maius* by Pseudo-Sphrantzes, that is, Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos, was completed ca. 1580.⁸⁷ It has been edited and translated into Romanian by V. Grecu, *Chronicon Minus. Georgios Sphrantzes, Memorii 1401-1477. În anexă Pseudo-Phrantzes. Macarie Melissenos Cronica, 1258-1481, Scriptores Byzantini 5* (Bucharest, 1966). Its siege description has been translated into English by Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*; and by Margaret G. Carroll, *A Contemporary Greek Source for the Siege of Constantinople, 1453*. Unfortunately, Carroll is under the erroneous impression that this chronicle is an authentic narrative by George Sphrantzes, while, in fact, it is a forgery by Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos.

vi. In the *Codex Barberinus Graecus 111*, it is very likely that Leonardo's letter was further paraphrased into the Greek vernacular of the early seventeenth century through the Italian translation of Sansovino or Languschi-Dolfino, and not directly from Leonardo's Latin text. It was published in its entirety by G. T. Zoras, *Χρονικὸν περὶ τῶν Τούρκων Σουλτάνων (κατὰ τὸν Βαρβ. Ἑλληνικὸν Κώδικα 111)* (Athens, 1958). The siege section was also published by Zoras in a separate pamphlet: *Ἡ Ἀλωσις τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως καὶ ἡ Βασιλεία Μωάμεθ Β' τοῦ Κατακτητοῦ (κατὰ τὸν Ἀνέκδοτον Ἑλληνικὸν Βαρβερινὸν Κώδικα 111 τῆς Βατικανῆς Βιβλιοθήκης)* (Athens, 1952). This chronicle has been translated into German by Kreutel,⁸⁸ and into English by Philippides, *Byzantium, Europe, and the Early Ottoman Sultans 1373-1513*.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Cf. *infra*, ch. 2: "Four Testimonies: A Ghost, a Pope, a Merchant, and a Boy," sec. I.

⁸⁶ On this publication and its importance in the historiography of the siege, cf. Philippides, "The Fall of Constantinople 1453"; and *idem*, "Urbs Capta: Early 'Sources' on the Fall of Constantinople," in *Peace and War in Byzantium: Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.*, eds. T. S. Miller and J. Nesbitt (Washington, 1995), pp. 209-225.

⁸⁷ This "forgery" will be discussed separately, *infra*, ch. 3: "A 'Chronicle' and its Elaboration: Sphrantzes and Pseudo-Sphrantzes."

⁸⁸ Cf. for full citation, *supra*, n. 71.

⁸⁹ On this chronicle, cf. Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, *Τὸ Χρονικὸ τῶν Τούρκων Σουλτάνων (τοῦ Βαρβερينوῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Κώδικα 111) καὶ τὸ Ἰταλικό του Πρώτυπο* (Thessaloniki, 1960); and Philippides, "The Fall of Constantinople."

The manuscript of this text was first described briefly by S. P. Lampros,⁹⁰ and was later examined by G. Moravcsik, who, in time, realized that the anonymous author of this chronicle had also made some use of Leonardo.⁹¹ The *codex* is a copy of a lost original; in its present state it is both acephalous and incomplete. G. T. Zoras, who edited and published the surviving passages, originally dated the composition, through internal evidence, *ca.* 1530, but Elizabeth A. Zachariadou prefers a later date, after 1573.⁹² Zoras demonstrates that the anonymous author was influenced by well-known Italian authors such as Andrea Cambini (*ca.* 1450-1527), who published a *Commentario dell origine de Turchi et imperio della casa ottomana* in Florence between 1528 and 1538, as well as by Paolo Giovio (d. 1552). Zachariadou demonstrates that he also employed Sansovino's *Gl'Annali*. In 1966 Zoras published sections of the *Barberini Chronicle* that had not been included in his original publication. These "new" sections derive from three folios that had fallen out of the main body of eighty-four surviving folios and had been subsequently discovered by Monsignor P. Canard.⁹³ One of these newly discovered folios contains events from the year 1596 and it can be safely concluded that that this work was "composed" or compiled as early as the first quarter of the seventeenth century but not as late as 1671, the date of the death of Cardinal Antonio Barberini.

5. CARDINAL ISIDORE. No comprehensive biography⁹⁴ of this towering figure exists and there are serious, perhaps even insurmountable, problems concerning his youth and early career. It is possible, but not indisputable, for there exists much confusion in our sources,⁹⁵ that Isidore was appointed metropolitan of Monembasia in the Morea in

⁹⁰ S. P. Lampros, "Περὶ ἑνῶν Βαρβερινῶν Κωδίκων," *NH* 5 (1908): 454 f.

⁹¹ G. Moravcsik, "Ἄγνωστον Ἑλληνικὸν Χρονικὸν περὶ τῆς Ἱστορίας τῶν Ὀθωμανῶν Σουλτάνων," *Πρακτικὰ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας Ἀθηνῶν* 5 (1930): 447-449; and *idem*, "Bericht des Leonardus Chiensis über den Fall von Konstantinopel in einer vulgärgriechischen Quelle," *BZ* 44 (1951): 428-436.

⁹² Zachariadou, *Τὸ Χρονικὸ τῶν Τούρκων Σουλτάνων*.

⁹³ G. T. Zoras, "Τὸ Χρονικὸν τῶν Τούρκων Σουλτάνων (Προσθέσεις καὶ Παρατηρήσεις)," *Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Φιλοσοφικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Ἀθηνῶν* 16 (1965/1966): 597-604.

⁹⁴ M. I. Manoussakas, "Ἡ πρώτη ἄδεια (1456) τῆς Βενετικῆς Γερουσίας γιὰ τὸ Ναὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τῆς Βενετίας καὶ ὁ Καρδινάλιος Ἰσιδώρος," *Θησαυρίσματα: Περιοδικὸν τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἰνστιτούτου Βυζαντινῶν καὶ Μεταβυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν τῆς Βενετίας* 1 (1962): 109-118; L. P. Pierling, S.J., *La Russie et le Saint Siège. Etudes diplomatiques*, 1 (Paris, 1896), 60-105; Mercatti, *Scritti d'Isidoro il Cardinale Ruteno*; A. W. Ziegler, "Isidore de Kiev, apôtre de l'union Florentine," *Irenikon* 13 (1936): 393-410; G. Hofmann, "Papst Kallixt III und die Frage der Kircheneinheit im Osten," *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercatti* 3, ST 123 (Vatican City, 1946): 209-237; A. M. Ammann, "Isidoro," in *Enciclopedia Cattolica* 7 (1951): 251; J. Krajcar, "Metropolitan Isidore's Journey to the Council of Florence. Some Remarks," *OCP* 38 (1972): 367-378; and P. Schreiner, "I teologi bizantini del XIV e XV secolo e i padri della chiesa, con particolare riguardo all'bibliotheca di Isidoro di Kiev," in M. Cortesi, *Padri greci e latini a confronto (secoli XIII-XV)*. Atti del Convegno di studi della Società Internazionale per lo studio del Medioevo Latino (SISMEL). Certos del Galluzzo Firenze 19-20 ottobre 2001 (Florence, 2004), pp. 133-141.

⁹⁵ A summary of the evidence and a discussion of the various problems are included in D. A. Zakythinis, "Μανουὴλ Β΄ ὁ Παλαιολόγος καὶ ὁ Καρδινάλιος Ἰσιδώρος ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ," in *Mélanges offerts à Octave et Melpo Merlier à l'occasion du 25^e anniversaire de leur arrivée en*

1421. A recent and interesting supposition by Kalligas⁹⁶ seeks to identify Isidore with a hypothetical illegitimate son of the despot of the Morea, Theodore I Palaiologos. According to this view, Isidore emerges as a cousin of the last emperor of Constantinople, Constantine XI. In 1453 Isidore was the Greek legate of the pope to Constantinople, fought heroically and bravely throughout the defense, was wounded during the sack,⁹⁷ was captured but was ransomed⁹⁸ soon thereafter on the same day, and subsequently met with a number of adventures before he finally found safety in Venetian Crete, where he composed a number of letters that were then sent to Italy:

i. Letter I, *Epistola composita per Pasium de Bertipaglia notarium ad instantiam reverendissimi domini Isidori cardinalis Sabiniensis*, “a letter put together by Pasio di Bertipaglia, the notary, at the instigation of the most reverend Lord Isidore, the cardinal of Sabina,” is dated July 6, 1453, from Crete: *Ex Candida insulae Cretae pridie Nonas Julii MCCCCLIII*. It was probably composed in Greek by the cardinal and was translated into Latin by Pasio di Bertipaglia. Selections from this letter with Italian translation have been published in *CC* 1: 58-64, but the entire text has not been printed thus far and is contained in only one *quattrocento* manuscript, *Ven. Marc. lat. 496* (1688), fols. 330^r-331^r.

ii. Letter II, is probably the most important in the series, as it contains a detailed description of the siege. It was sent to the Greek Cardinal Bessarion: *Epistola reverendissimi patris domini Isidori cardinalis Ruteni scripta ad reverendissimum dominum Bisarionem episcopum Tusculanum ac cardinalem Nicenum Bononiaeque legatum*, “letter of the most reverend Father, Lord Isidore, the Russian cardinal, to the most reverend Lord Bessarion, the Tusculan bishop and Nicene cardinal, the legate to Bologna.” It bears the same date as the previous letter: *in Creta, die sexta Julii*. This significant letter was composed in Greek but the Greek text has not survived and we only possess its Latin translation by Lianoro de Lianori. It was first published by Hofmann, “Ein Brief des Kardinals Isidor von Kiew an Kardinal Bessarion,” pp. 405-414, who fails to mention that this is only a translation of a Greek original. It survives in three

Grèce, Collection de l'Institut Français d'Athènes 94 (Athens, 1957): 45-69; Mercati, *Scritti d'Isidoro il cardinale Ruteno*; *idem*, “Lettere di un Isidoro, arcivescovo di Monembasia e non di Kiev,” *Bessarione* 32 (1916): 200-207; and V. Laurent, “Isidore de Kiev et la métropole de Monembasie,” *REB* 17 (1959): 150-157. In addition, cf. *PLP* 4, no. 8300 (130-131). Also cf. J. W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship* (New Brunswick, 1969), Appendix 22, pp. 525-528.

⁹⁶ Haris A. Kalligas, *Byzantine Monemvasia: The Sources* (Monemvasia, 1990), pp. 169-170, and n. 98.

⁹⁷ *Supra*, nn. 58 and 59.

⁹⁸ His adventures are summarized (undoubtedly with a great deal of editorial freedom) in the report of the Franciscan brothers of Pera (cf. *infra*, II.A.12) in two versions; Version A: *Et fu presso el cardinale de Rusia et venduto pre schiavo, ma per mazanidade de alchune bone persone se ne venne a Vinexia poveramente et stetili alquanti zorni; possa venne a Bologna et andò a Roma da papa Nicolò quinto...et venne novelle a Bologna adì 4 luglio*. Version B presents an almost identical text with one alteration in its concluding sentence: *...alquanti zurni; posa vene a Bologna et andò a Roma dal papa Nicolò quinto*. A much more detailed and more accurate account of Isidore's adventures is provided by Henry of Soemern; cf. *infra*, II.A.5.viii.b.

manuscripts: one from the *quattrocento* that is housed in Florence, *Riccard. lat. 660* [M II 19], fols. 55^r-61^r; the second, also from the *quattrocento*, is found in Bologna, *Bibl. Univ. lat. B 52*, fols. 40^r-42^v; and the third from the sixteenth century is deposited in Padua, *Bibl. Sem. lat. 126*, fols. 33^r-36^r. The most important of the three manuscripts appears to be the Bolognese *codex*, which is probably the autograph of Lianoro's exercise, as it notes that it is a humanistic exercise:⁹⁹ *Habes iam, Alberte dilectissime, grecam epistolam factam latinam*, "dearest Albert: here is a Greek letter that has been turned into Latin." Selections with Italian translation are printed in *CC 1*: 64-80, with unfortunate omissions of passages that contain important information.¹⁰⁰

iii. Letter III is the only *epistula* of Isidore that had been known for a substantial period of time. It addresses, however, generalities and is meant to awaken Christendom against the Turks. It is exceptionally uninformative with regard to the siege. It is addressed to *universis et singulis Christi fidelibus*, "all the faithful," and is dated July 8, *die octava Iulii*. In its traditional printed form this letter is an abstract and not a verbatim quotation of the manuscript text made by Antonino, the bishop of Florence, who in his *Chronicon*, part III, ch. 13, states: *Haec in substantia sunt in litteris praedictis, etsi aequaliter verba immutata*, "in substance these matters are to be found in aforementioned letter, even though I have somewhat changed the phraseology." Antonino's version is encountered in most printed editions and is not taken directly from manuscripts but from his abstract. Moreover, A. G. Welykyi, "Duae Epistulae Cardinalis Isidori Ineditae," *Analecta Ordinis Sancti Basilii, Записки чина Св. Василий Великого*, ser. 3, 1 (1950): 289-291, also printed the text of this abstract from a particularly unreliable manuscript. The exact words of Isidore or of his translator/redactor, as Isidore never managed to master Latin, were finally published in the selections of *CC 1*. The text in its edited and abbreviated form has been published a number of times, including the edition of Philipp Lonicer, *Chronicorum turcicorum, in quibus Turcorum origo, principes, imperatores, bella, praelia, caedes...* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1578), followed by Nikolaus Reusner, in Johannes Sturm, *De bello adversus Turcas perpetuo administrando* (Jena, 1598), by *PG 159*: cols. 953-956, and by *MHH 21*: 687-702. Selections with Italian translation appear in *CC 1*: 80-90. This was probably the best-known letter by Isidore, as it survives in eight manuscripts of the fifteenth century and one of the seventeenth.¹⁰¹

iv. Letter IV to Pope Nicholas V qualifies as Isidore's official report in his capacity as papal legate to Constantinople. It is not as extensive as his Letter II to his friend Cardinal Bessarion. This letter contains a description of the siege in abbreviated form.

⁹⁹ The complete Latin text of this note is published in *CC 1*: 53.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *supra*, text with n. 32.

¹⁰¹ *Quattrocento*: 1. *Mediol. Bibl. Braid. lat. AE XII 40*, fols. 53^r-54^r;

2. *Paris. Nouv. Acquis., lat. 546*, fols. 167^r-169^r;

3. *Mediol. Trivult. lat. 27^v-31^v*;

4. *Monac. lat. Clm. 4689*, fols. 142^r-143^v;

5. *Haegens Bibl. Reg. lat. 71 E. 62*, fols. 3^v-6^v;

6. *Paris. Bibl. Nat. lat. 3127*, fols. 19^{2v}-19^{4v};

7. *Monac. lat. Clm. 4149*, fols. 309^v-312^r; and

8. *Vat. Barb. lat. 2682* [xxxiii, 202], 58^r-59^r.

The ninth manuscript, *Monac. lat. Clm 4143*, fols. 91^r-94^r, dates from the seventeenth century.

Nevertheless, it includes important details that could be of use to a historian interested in the siege. Like the previous letter, it appears to have been composed or at least translated into Latin on July 8: *die octava Iulii*, as stated at the beginning. The conclusion of the letter mentions July 15: *Datum Cretae, die XV Julii*. It was first published in *NE 2*: 522-524, but this edition seems to have been an inaccurate transcription with numerous errors. The letter is published in its entirety, with Italian translation, in *CC 1*: 90-100. It exists in two surviving *codices* from the fifteenth century: *Mediol. Bibl. Braid. lat. AE XII 40*, fols. 54^v-55^v, and *Paris., Nouv. Acquis., lat. 546*, fols. 169^r-170^v.

v. Letter V, dated: July 26, *die 26 Julii*, is addressed to Francesco Foscari, the Doge of Venice, and adds nothing of importance to the operations of the siege. It has more in common with Letter III. It was first published by Welykyi, “*Duae Epistulae Cardinalis Isidori Ineditae*,” pp. 286-289, along with Letter III, and exhibits the same problems of transcription. Much better, in terms of the text, are the selections in *CC 1*: 100-106. The text survives in a single manuscript of the *quattrocento*: *Vat. Barb. lat. 2682*, fols. 56^v-58^r.

vi. Letter VI, lacking a date anywhere in the manuscript, although *CC 2*: 498 claims that it was written on July 6 to Domenico Capranica and deals with generalities and the situation in the Aegean after the sack. It was published in *NE 2*: 518-519, and with Italian translation in *TlePN*, pp. 12-15.

vii. Letter VII, addressed to the authorities and the city of Florence, *Magnificis dominis prioribus palatii et communitatis Florentinorum*, is dated July 7: *Datae VII Iulii*. It mentions the atrocities committed during the sack, the alleged designs of Mehmed II for world domination, and the panic that ensued throughout the islands of the Aegean after the fall. It was edited by Hofmann, “*Quellen zu Isidor von Kiew als Kardinal und Patriarch*,” pp. 143-157; selections with Italian translation have been printed in *TlePN*, pp. 16-21.

viii. Letter VIII, addressed to the city of Bologna (*ad communitatem Bonnoniae*), is dated July 7. It was published by W. Röhl, “*Ein zweiter Brief Isidors von Kiew über die Eroberung Konstantinopels*,” *BZ 69* (1976): 13-16. Like Letter VII, it considers the Turkish threat to Europe and adds nothing to the siege.

In connection with Isidore’s eight letters, the following material is pertinent to the siege, to the cardinal’s information with regard to the operations, to the sack, and to his subsequent adventures:

a. Isidore’s own letter of February 22, 1455, *Data Romae die XXII Februarii MCCCL^o quinto*, to Philip the Good, the duke of Burgundy, was composed after a certain amount of time had elapsed following the fall. It adds nothing new, except Isidore’s personal testimony that numerous Genoese volunteers from Pera assisted in the defense. Evidently the cardinal was trying to correct the widespread impression that the Genoese from Pera had not assisted in the defense of Constantinople, an impression that had probably been reinforced by the withdrawal of the Genoese *condottiere*, Giovanni Giustiniani, and his forces from the walls at a critical moment during the last battle of May 29:

...nec deerant nobis Ianuenses, qui omni conatu Urbem ipsam tutati sunt, et quamquam simulatu cum Teucro viverent hocque fieret statuto consilio, tamen noctu clam ad nos eos quos valebant ac poterant viros et sic subsidia mittebant frequentique senatu imperatorio aderant.

...nor did we miss the Genoese, who defended the city with all their strength and, even though they pretended to have a treaty of neutrality with the Turk. At night they secretly sent us those men who were strong and able, in addition to other assistance. They were also present at the frequent meetings of the emperor's senate.

This letter was published in its entirety, with Italian translation, in an *editio princeps*, in CC 1: 106-110.

b. A letter by Henry of Soemmern, dated September 11 (1453), *raptim ex urbe Romana, XI^a Septembris*, in which he speaks of the adventures of Isidore from the day of the sack to his arrival in Crete, with a short account of the siege, adding that Isidore was expected to arrive in Rome within the next eight days, *et infra octo dies Romae expectatur*. Henry names his sources in the letter (a section omitted by CC 1), which consist mainly of the letter that Isidore had already sent to the pope, of Isidore's letters to Cardinal Domenico Capranica, and of Isidore's appeal to all Christians.¹⁰²

...hanc totam seriem rei gestae collegi fideliter ex diversis epistolis scriptis ad diversos de ista materia...alia domini cardinali Rutheni, qui de hac re unam papae, aliam domino cardinali Firmano; tertia<m>que...erat omnibus Christifidelibus. Et ex duabus aliis scriptis domino Firmano: quarum unam scripsit ipse agens, familiaris et domesticus dicti cardinalis rutheni, aliam vicarius Ordinis Minorum provinciae Candiae; quarum omnium copias habeo ex copiis domini Firmani.

...I have faithfully collected the chain of events from numerous letters on this subject addressed to individuals...one letter was by the Russian lord cardinal [Isidore], who informed the pope on this matter; another directed to the lord cardinal of Firmano [Domenico Capranica]; ...a third was addressed to all those who believe in Christ. And from two others that he wrote to the lord of Firmano. One was written by a person close to the aforementioned Russian cardinal, and another by the vicar of the Minorites in the province of Candia. I have copies of all these letters, made from the copies of the lord of Firmano.

This note supplies us with good information on the dissemination of information with regard to the sack by the late summer of 1453. Further, it is informative on the circulation of the letters of Isidore and serves also as a reminder that Isidore's complete correspondence on the siege and fall is no longer extant.

The full letter of Henry was published by A. Vigna, "Codice diplomatico delle colonie Tauro-Liguri durante la signoria dell'Ufficio di S. Giorgio (MCCCCLIII-

¹⁰² NE 3: 314.

MCCCCLXXV),” *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria* 6 (1868): 19-21; and in *NE* 3: 307-315. Selections with Italian translation also appear in *CC* 2: 82-96. For a new edition of this Latin letter with an English translation, cf. Philippides, *Mehmed II the Conqueror*, pp. 121-131.

c. A letter by a friend, a *familiaris* (a member of his retinue?) of Isidore, which may have been used by Henry of Soemmern. It employs similar phraseology and deals with adventures of the cardinal after the sack. The letter is dated July 15, 1453: *ex Candia, die XV Julii M.CCCC.LLLIII^o*. It was published in *NE* 2: 519-520, and then reprinted in its entirety with Italian translation in *CC* 1: 114-119.

6. BENVENUTO. He served as the Anconan consul in Constantinople and was a *baro imperatoris*, “a baron of the emperor,” as he proudly styles himself. He is not known from other sources. The manuscript heading includes the following information: *Benevenuto civis Anconitanus in Constantinopoli consul dicit se omnia infra scripta vidisse*, “Benvenuto, an Anconitan citizen and consul in Constantinople, states that he has personally witnessed all the events described below.” He was a participant to the events and wrote a short account, which, however, has unfortunately survived in incomplete form, missing its important conclusion. The date of the manuscript is given as “Venice, July 31, 1453.” It was discovered by Pertusi, who first published it as “The Anconitan Colony in Constantinople and the Report of its Consul, Benvenuto, on the Fall of the City,” pp. 199-218. It was then published with Italian translation in *TlePN*, pp. 4-5. For an English translation, cf. Philippides, *Byzantium, Europe, and the Early Ottoman Sultans 1373-1513*, pp. 197-199. It is not known how Benvenuto escaped from Constantinople. He could have been a passenger aboard one of the refugee ships, perhaps on an Anconan vessel that, as we know from Barbaro (20), was in the harbor of Constantinople during the siege: *...nave...per longo de la cadena...patroni di quele...una de Anchontani, de botte 1000*.

7. UBERTINO PUSCULO. He was the “classical” poet of the siege and had traveled to Constantinople to perfect his knowledge of ancient Greek. He remained in the city throughout the siege. After his captivity he found his way back to Italy, via Rhodes, and composed a poem describing the situation before and during the siege and sack. This poem is of the utmost value for the historian, for Pusculo was an eyewitness to the siege and sack. Moreover, he was a participant who had seen, met, and even conversed with many Italian and Greek defenders, whose activities, operations, and positions on the walls he meticulously noted in his work. Pusculo’s epic poem provides one of the most important accounts of the drama that took place in Constantinople in 1453 and is a reliable prosopography of the defenders.

Pusculo’s work was first printed in the eighteenth century in an inferior edition titled: *Constantinopolis libri IV*. It was edited by G. Bregantini, *Miscellanea di varie operette*, 1 (Venice, 1740). The editor used only the single manuscript housed in Venice’s Marciana Library. G. M. Gervasi had transcribed the text. Bregantini’s text without improvements was reprinted in A. S. Ellissen, *Analekten der mittel- und neugriechischen Literatur*, 3 (Leipzig, 1857): Appendix, 12-83. *CC* 1: 124-171 has published a slim selection from Book IV with Italian translation. Pertusi’s extract presents an improvement over Bregantini’s edition. However, Pusculo’s narrative and information in Books I-III have

been neglected by scholarship. It is unfortunate that this primary document still awaits a modern editor. There exist another four manuscripts of this work but they have never been collated with the Marciana text. A modern edition, with a complete *apparatus criticus*, would be of immense value to anyone interested in the siege and in the situation preceding the siege.

8. EPARKHOS AND DIPLOVATATZES. A short report prepared by two refugees who managed to reach Germany. Their names and the events, however, have been garbled, perhaps through inaccuracies in translation. The document contains the following note at the end:¹⁰³

Disse Ding hat gesagt Herr Thomas Eperkus, ein Graf auss Constantinopel, und Josu Deplorentatz, eins Grafen Sun, und Thutro de Constantinopel, der ir Krichisch in Weilisch prach hat, und Dumita Exswinnilwacz, und Mathes Hack von Utrecht, der ir Welisch in Teutsch hat pracht.

This is what was said by Lord Thomas Eperkus [Eparkhos?], a nobleman from Constantinople, and Josu Deplorentatz [Joseph Diplovatazes?], the son of a nobleman, and Thutro of Constantinople, who translated their Greek into Wallachian, and Dumita Exswinnilwacz, and Matthew Hack from Utrecht, who translated the Wallachian into German.

It was published in *NE* 2: 514-518; an Italian translation without the original German text is published in *CC* 1: 234-239.

9. NESTOR-ISKANDER. He was a youthful eyewitness who had escaped from the Ottoman camp and was with the defenders during the course of the siege. His Slavonic narrative, a diary, makes a substantial contribution to our knowledge of the siege and contains prosopographical material that is not encountered elsewhere. There are three versions of the text: the first dates to the actual diary of Nestor-Iskander that may no longer be extant; the second is a more elaborated literary version with Old Slavonic and

¹⁰³ The name “Deplorantz” in the German text is probably a corruption of “Diplovatazes.” Indeed the two Greek forms of this name can be restored as Joseph Diplovatazes. As J. Harris notes in his meticulous study, *Greek Émigrés in the West 1400-1520* (Camberley, Surrey, 1995), p. 23, n. 57 [restated and re-examined in his “Publicising the Crusade: English Bishops and the Jubilee Indulgence of 1455,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 50 (1999): 35-37], a George Diplovatazes and a Thomas Eparkhos reached England in 1455. Eparkhos was attempting to raise funds to ransom his wife and children, who had been enslaved by the Turks in the sack of Constantinople. There is, however, a problem concerning Diplovatazes’ given name George. Is George Diplovatazes of the English documents the same as “Josu Deplorantz” of the German document? The proximity of Diplovatazes to Eparkhos argues in favor of the view that both refugees may have worked as a team. Eparkhos’ given name of Thomas is identical in the German and the English documents. Is it possible that Eparkhos was associated with a number of refugees from the Diplovatazes family and that George is to be differentiated from “Josu/Joseph”? If indeed George and Josu are the same person, the George/Josu had an interesting subsequent career: in 1456 he handed over the island of Lemnos to a papal expeditionary fleet and then fled to Italy. He spent time in Crete and, according to one tradition, died fighting against the Moors in Spain.

Medieval Russian text.¹⁰⁴ The third version, an emended and interpolated text, exists only in a late sixteenth-century Serbian modified text of an Old Slavonic and Medieval Russian manuscript, Mount Athos, *Hilandar 280 Slavic*, folia 257^r-289^v (*The Tale of Constantinople*).¹⁰⁵ For the Old Slavonic and Medieval Russian renditions of this tale, cf. I. Sreznevsky, *Повѣсть о Царьградѣ* [The Tale of Constantinople] (St. Petersburg,

¹⁰⁴ For modern scholarship, cf. *infra*, ch. 2: “Four Testimonies: A Ghost, a Pope, a Merchant, and a Boy,” sec. IV, as well as M. Philippides, “Some Prosopographical Considerations in Nestor-Iskander’s Text,” *Macedonian Studies* 6 (1989): 35-50; and W. K. Hanak, “Some Historiographical Observations on the Sources of Nestor Iskander’s Tale of Constantinople,” in *The Making of Byzantine History*, eds. Beaton and Roueché, pp. 35-46. Cf. W. K. Hanak, “Nestor-Iskender,” in *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Kafadar, Karateke, and Fleischer, electronic article, 8 pp.

¹⁰⁵ We are particularly grateful to the monks of Hilandar Monastery and Dr. Predrag Matejić, the curator of the Hilandar Research Library, The Ohio State University, who graciously furnished us a copy of the original manuscript. *The Tale of Constantinople* is part, leaves 257^r-289^v, of the ms. *Књига Јосифа Флавија* (The Book of Josephus Flavius). A critical edition is titled: *The Tale of Constantinople. Hilandar Slavic Ms. 280, folia 257^r-289^v*, transcription, trans., and commentary by W. K. Hanak and M. Philippides, forthcoming. For a discussion of the text, cf. D. Bogdanović, *Каталог ћрилских рукописа Манастира Хиландара* [A Catalog of Cyrillic Manuscripts of the Hilandar Monastery] (Belgrade, 1978), no. 280 (pp. 124-125); and *Catalog. Manuscripts on Microfilm of the Hilandar Research Library (The Ohio State University)*, comps. P. Matejić and Hannah Thomas (Columbus, 1992), p. 442. For a good textual analysis of this manuscript, cf. A.-E. N. Tachiaos, “Ἡ Διήγησις περὶ Ἀλώσεως τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως εἰς τὸν Σλαβικὸν Κώδικα Χελαυδαρίου 280,” *Κληρονομία* 3 (1971): 355-366; repr. in *idem*, *Greeks and Slavs: Cultural, Ecclesiastical and Literary Relations* (Thessaloniki, 1997), pp. 155-165. For a comparison with the *Troitse-Sergieva Lavra ms. No. 773*, cf. W. K. Hanak, “One Source, Two Renditions: ‘The Tale of Constantinople’ and Its Fall in 1453,” *BS* 62 (2004): 239-250. For a linguistic analysis of the *Књига Јосифа Флавија* and parallel manuscripts, cf. D. E. Collins, “Lost Times and Lost Empires: Ulterior Motives in the Hilandar Josephus Codices,” forthcoming. And for a literary analysis, cf. M. De Dobbeleer, “The End of the Byzantine Empire through Slavic Eyes: Nestor-Iskander’s *Tale of Constantinople*,” unpublished paper read at the 42nd International Congress on Medieval Studies, May 10-13, 2007, Kalamazoo, MI, 5 pp.; and *idem*, “Ideology within Three Russian Capture Stories. A Matter of Plot and Localization,” *Studia Slavica* 7 (2007): 21-30, esp. 25-26.

There also exist in the Romanian archives in manuscript form other renditions of this source, which were unavailable to us. Extensive descriptions of their contents demonstrate that they are almost identical in content, but not terminology and phraseology, to the *Troitse-Sergeva Lavra* and the *Hilandar* texts. Cf. N. Iorga, “Une source négligée de la prise de Constantinople,” in *Académie Roumaine, Bulletin de la Section Historique* 13 (Bucharest, 1927): 59-68, who (p. 59), does not specifically identify the language of the text, but notes that it “emploie un langage archaïque....” For a discussion and description of the manuscripts in the Romanian archives, one Old Slavonic and three Romanian that date to the seventeenth century, cf. V. Grecu, “La chute de Constantinople dans la littérature populaire roumaine,” *BS* 14 (1953): 57-59; and I. Bianu, *Biblioteca Academiei Române. Catalogul manuscriselor românești*, 2 vols. (Bucharest, 1907 and 1913), 1: 104-107, 109-115, and 348-349; 2: 250-252. For late South Slavic texts based on the *Troitse-Sergieva Lavra ms.*, cf. F. J. Juez Gálvez, “La caída de Constantinopla y los eslavos meridionales,” in P. Bádenas de la Peña and Inmaculada Pérez Martín, eds., *Constantinopla 1453. Mitos y realidades*, Nueva Roma, Bibliotheca Graeca et Latina Aevi Posterioris, 19 (Madrid, 2003): esp. 400.

1855); V. Iakovlev, *Сказание о Царьградѣ по древним Сказание по Древним Рукописям* [The Legend of Constantinople according to Ancient Texts] (St. Petersburg, 1868), pp. 56-116. Archimandrite Leonid, *Повѣсть о Царьградѣ (его основании и взятіи Турками въ 1453 году) Нестора Искандера XV Вѣка* [The Tale of Constantinople (Of Its Origin and Capture by the Turks in 1453), by Nestor-Iskander, Fifteenth Century], *Памятники Древней Письменности и Искусства* (St. Petersburg, 1888). Leonid's text was reprinted by O. V. Tvorogov, "Повесть о взятии Царьграда Турками в 1453 Году [The Tale of the Capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453]," in *Памятники Литературы Древней Руси. Вторая половина XV Века* (Moscow, 1982), pp. 216-267. For a new edition, English translation, and commentary, cf. W. K. Hanak and M. Philippides, *Nestor-Iskander: The Tale of Constantinople (Of Its Origin and Capture by the Turks in the Year 1453) (From the Early Sixteenth-Century Manuscript of the Troitse-Sergieva Lavra, No. 773)*, Late Byzantine and Ottoman Studies 5 (New Rochelle, Athens, and Moscow, 1998). Other translations and renditions include: M. Alexandropoulos, *Ἡ Πολιορκία καὶ Ἄλωσις τῆς Πόλεως. Τό Ρωσικό Χρονικό τοῦ Νέστορα Ἰσκεντέρη* (Athens, 1978) (in Greek); P. A. Déthier, *Anonymous Moscovita*, in *MHH* 21.1: 1047-1122 (in French); M. Braun and M. Schneider, *Bericht über die Eroberung Konstantinopels nach der Nikon-Chronik übersezt und erläutert* (Leipzig, 1943) (in German); selections in Italian, without the Slavonic text, by Emanuela Folco in *CC* 1: 267-299; and Matilda Casas Olea, ed., *Néstor-Iskänder. Relato sobre la toma de Constantinopla. Estudio preliminar, traducción y notas* (Grenada, 2003) (in Spanish).¹⁰⁶

10. BISHOP SAMILE (SAMUEL). He was an ecclesiastic, a bishop, or, as he designates himself, *Vladik*, who was present during the siege:

¹⁰⁶ Relying extensively, if not solely, upon Folco's partial Italian translation of *Nestor-Iskander, The Tale of Constantinople...*, F. Martelli, "La conquista di Costantinopoli nelle pagine del Cronografo russo. Riflessioni sull'origine delle tradizioni imperiali in Russa nella prima metà del XVI secolo," *Bizantinistica. Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi*, 2nd series, 3 (2001): 357-381, draws upon her mistranslation of *Russi* which in *CC* 1: 297, reads: "La stirpe russa..." and states in his article (p. 359): "Nestor-Iskander, nell'immediatezza della conquista turca della *čargrad*, concludeva il suo racconto profetizzando la 'riconquista' di Costantinopoli da parte dei russie..." Martelli takes the position that Nestor-Iskander laid the foundation for the notion of Moscow as the Third Rome. His hypothesis is not supported by a correct rendition of this passage. In Hanak and Philippides, *The Tale of Constantinople (Of Its Origin and Capture)*, 86 (pp. 94-95), the text reads: Пишетъ бо: «Русии же родъ съ прежде создательными всего Измаилта побѣдятъ и Сед[ъ]мохолмаго приимуть съ прежде законными его, и въ немъ въцарятъ и судръжатъ Сед[ъ]мохолмаго Русы...», "for it is written: 'The fair [ones] are a race who, with former creations, will vanquish all of the Ishmaelites and will inherit Seven Hills with its former laws. The fair [ones] will rise to the throne of Seven Hills and will hold it firmly....'" The medieval term *Rusii* properly translated means not Russians, but "fair ones," and in the context of the passage speaks of the reconquest of Constantinople and the resumption of rule under them, whatever race or nation that might be. Throughout Nestor-Iskander's diary account, there is no evidence that he viewed Moscow as the Third Rome; rather, this is a supposition of sixteenth-century and later Russian writers who interpolated the passage for their own political-religious ends.

Grossen Gruess von...Samile dem Bladick (oder Bischoff) vnd von dem andern Bladick (oder Bischoff) von Constantinopolis yecz und zusam gefügt in der Walachay.

Warm greetings from...Samile the Vladik (or Bishop) and from the other Vladik (or bishop) of Constantinople who fled together to Wallachia.

This is a report that is worthy of note, which in some ways parallels the testimony given by Eparkhos and Diplovatazes. Like the latter, the substance of the report seems to have suffered in translation. It was dictated on August 6: *Geben an dem sechsten des Monätz Augusti, anno Domini M^oCCCC^oLIIJ^o*. Its text was transcribed in the nineteenth century by G. M. Thomas, who, however, did not publish it: *Hanc epistolam exscripsit in usum D. teutsch, gymnasii schässburgensis rectoris, G. M. Thomas, 3 julii 1855*. It was finally published in *NE* 4: 65-68; and without the original German text, *CC* 1: 234-239 has published the report in Italian translation.

11. CONSTANTINE OF OSTROVICA. This Slavonic text was composed by Konstantin Mihailović, who was in the Ottoman camp with Mehmed II's Serbian contingents. Konstantin eventually became a renegade and joined the janissary corps. Late in his life he renounced Islam and reverted to Christianity. Konstantin has also been the subject of considerable misunderstandings and for a long time he was known as a "Polish janissary." In fact, he was a cavalryman with the Serbian contingent that had been summoned by Mehmed to participate in the siege. The text was first edited and published by J. Los, *Pamiętniki Janczara czyli Kronika Turecka Konstantego z Ostrowicy napisana niedzy r. 1496 a 1501* [A Memoir of a Janissary or a Turkish Chronicle of Konstantine of Ostrovica, Written between the Years 1496 and 1501], in *Bibliotheca Pisa row Posit* (Cracow, 1912), pp. 70-76. There exists a French translation by T. docks, *Memoires d'un janissaries polonaise (et Chrétien), Temin ocular et active du siège et de la pries de Constantinople et de toutes les expéditions de Mahomed II, écrit vers 1498*, in *MHH* 22.2: 249-392, with notes by P. A. Déthier. There also exists an English translation of this source, B. A. Stolz, *Konstantin Mihailović, Memories of a Janissary* (London, 1892; repr. Ann Arbor, 1975). In addition, cf. the selection in Italian translation, without the Slavonic text, by A. Danti in *CC* 1: 256-260.

12. REPORT OF THE FRANCISCANS. It has been preserved in two short versions. Version A includes the date July 4, *adi 4 de luglio*. The report was given by *alquanti frati de Observanzia de san Francesco, che funo prixi nella dicta citade, quali venene a Bologna et disseno tale novitate* (Version B: *disseno alquanti frati de l'Observanza de san Francesco, che fono prixi ne la dita citade; i quali venono a Bologna e diseno tale novitade*), "some brothers of the Order of Saint Francis, who were taken prisoners in the aforementioned city [Constantinople], who came to Bologna and announced the news [of the sack]." This brief, but useful report, was first published by L. A. Muratori, *Historia miscella Bononiensis, RIS* 18 (Milan, 1731): 701-702; then reprinted in A. Sorbelli, *RIS*, n.s., 18.1.4 (Bologna, 1927): 186-190; and in *TlePN*, pp. 25-26.

B. Non-Eyewitness Early Accounts

1. PAOLO DOTTI. He was a lawyer from Padua and chanced to be in Crete. He wrote an account that must have been based on very early oral information that he had received, but not from Cardinal Isidore, who arrived in Crete almost one month later, on July 8, according to Henry of Soemmern: *devenit...inde Cretam, mediocriter valens, VIII^a Julii*, “he came down to Crete...in passable health, on July 8.” Dotti’s letter is dated *XI Junii*, June 11. Often Dotti is not certain of the facts, as he colors his short narrative with phrases such as *fama...fuisse*, “rumor had it.” In addition, he speaks of refugees who had abandoned their homes in the Aegean and fled, in mortal fear of the Turks, to Venetian Crete. They must have been his source. Extracts from his short letter were first published in *NE 2*: 513-514; the entire text was then published by S. P. Lampros, “Μονωδῖαι καὶ Θρηνοὶ ἐπὶ τῇ Ἀλώσει τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως,” *NH 5* (1908): 263-265, with numerous errors in transcription. More recently, it has been printed with improvements and with Italian translation in *CC 2*: 12-17.

2. FRA GIROLAMO FROM FLORENCE. Like Dotti, before the arrival of Isidore, Fra Girolamo was also in Crete and composed a letter to Domenico Capranica on the fall. His letter is dated July 5 (*die quinta Julii*). Unlike Dotti, Fra Girolamo concentrates on the atrocities committed by the conquerors during the sack, on the growing might of the Turks, and on the increasing danger to Europe. A brief extract from this letter was first published in *NE 2*: 520. The complete text, with Italian translation, is printed in *CC 2*: 32-39.

3. LAURO QUIRINI. This well-known humanist who was in Crete at the time wrote a long letter addressed to Pope Nicholas V, *Epistola ad beatissimum Nicolaum V pontificem maximum*, dated July 15, *data Candidae Idibus Iulii 1453*. By that date, Cardinal Isidore had arrived and had probably given a public recitation of his adventures and of the operations during the siege. Isidore may have had a private conversation with Quirini, whose account is authoritative and comprehensive. It is probably the longest timely narrative to be composed by a humanist who was not present during the siege but utilized oral information given to him by survivors and refugees in Crete. His letter includes some of the earliest observations on Ottoman strategy and he is the first author to speak of the structure of the last assault, which came in three successive waves until the defenders were exhausted. It was first edited and published by A. Pertusi, “Le Epistole Storiche di Lauro Quirini sulla Caduta di Costantinopoli e la Potenza dei Turchi,” in *Lauro Quirini Umanista*, Studi e Testi a cura di P. O. Kristeller, K. Krauter, A. Pertusi, G. Ravagnani, C. Seno (Florence, 1977), pp. 163-259.¹⁰⁷ Selections with some Italian translations, for not all printed Latin passages are translated, appear in *TlePN*, pp. 62-94.

4. HENRY OF SOEMMERN. Cf. *supra*, II.A.5.viii.b.

5. AENEAS SILVIUS PICCOLOMINI (POPE PIUS II). Cf. *supra*, II.A.4.ii.

6. NICCOLA DELLA TUCCIA. His *Cronaca di Viterbo* includes a small section on the siege. It was composed in the fall of 1453. It contains information (or gossip?) that is not encountered elsewhere on an individual whom he identifies as *un fiorentine detto Neri, quale era stato 36 anni in detta città, ...ed era tanto in grazia dell’ impratore di*

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Medvedev, pp. 320-325.

Costantinopoli, che sua petizione teneva le chiavi di una porta, “a Florentine called Neri, who had spent thirty-six years in the aforementioned city [Constantinople], ...and was shown such favor by the emperor of Constantinople that he was given, as he had requested, the keys to a gate.” Neri opened this gate in the course of the last battle and allowed the Turks to enter. This account was published over a century ago but scholars have not taken notice of its information, which deserves a fresh look. Cf. I. Ciampi, ed., *Documenti di storia italiana pubbl. a cura della R. Deputazione sugli studi di Storia patria per le provincie di Toscana, dell’ Umbria e delle Marche*, 5 (Florence, 1872): 227-230; the siege section is reprinted in *TlePN*, pp. 96-100.

7. NICCOLÒ TIGNOSI DA FOLIGNO. His account, *Expugnatio Constantino-politana*, really an appendix to a letter that he wrote to a friend, is extensive and involves observations on the personality of Mehmed II, as well as comments on the international situation following the fall. His information derives from an otherwise unknown eyewitness, probably a merchant, who managed to conceal himself during the sack and managed to escape subsequently: *a quodam Pisaurensis, qui toto bello Constantino-politano affuit et in conflictus fine latuit in caverna per dies aliquot*, “from a certain citizen of Perugia, who was present throughout the war in Constantinople and who in the final assault concealed himself in a cavern for a number of days.” This information is probably authentic, as many other survivors attempted to hide in hollows and caverns. Cf., for example, Barbaro’s journal:¹⁰⁸ *Ma i nostri marcadanti che scapolò quelli si se scoxe in le caverne soto tera; passada il furia, quelli si fo trovadi da Turchi, e tuti si fo prexi e poi vendudi per schiavi*, “those of our merchants who escaped [the initial massacre], concealed themselves in subterranean hollows. After their fury subsided, the Turks found them. They were all captured and sold into slavery.” Exactly where these caverns were is not specified but it is possible that the huge water cisterns of Constantinople are meant. A number of them, such as the cisterns of Aetius or Aspar in the vicinity of the critical sector, were easily accessible to defenders who may have been seeking shelter once they had abandoned their posts on the fortifications around the Blakhernai, the Kaligaria/Eğri Gate, or the Adrianople/Edirne Gate. Tignosi’s account has not been known widely and has not been used by modern scholars; its information deserves a fresh look and evaluation. It was first edited and published by M. Sensi, “Niccolò Tignosi da Foligno. L’opera e il pensiero,” *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e filosofia dell’Università degli Studi di Perugia* 9 (1971/1972): 423-431. Its pertinent sections have been reprinted with Italian translation in *TlePN*, pp. 102-121.

8. FILIPPO DA RIMINI. This account is included in a letter to Francesco Barbaro and was written in Corfu at the end of 1453. Da Rimini was the Venetian chancellor of the Greek island of Corfu and in his account we begin to detect the origin of tales that eventually spread throughout Europe, transforming the historical circumstances into tales, legends, and myths. Thus da Rimini reports that the sultan personally raped a woman on the very altar of Hagia Sophia, drawing a conscious parallel with the ancient tales about the rape of Cassandra in a sanctuary and thus assisting in the promotion of the popular

¹⁰⁸ Barbaro 55 [CC 1: 34].

notion that the sack of Constantinople was an act of revenge for the sack of Troy committed by the descendants of the Trojans themselves, the Turks:¹⁰⁹

...victoria tumens Teucrorum rex...celeberrimum Sophiae fanum profanandum...ibi immitis bestia ab miti virgine pudorem extorquens gloriatus se tum ultum Torianae virginis vicem in templo Palladis defloratae.

...the king of the Trojans [= sultan of the Turks], swollen with pride over his victory, ...dishonored the most famous shrine of Wisdom [the Church of Hagia Sophia]. There he deflowered a mild virgin, as if he were a savage beast, and glorified himself by avenging the fate of the Trojan virgin [Cassandra] who was deflowered in the temple of Pallas [Athena].

As we noted earlier, Languschi-Dolfin cites da Rimini's letter as one of the sources that he had consulted. Indeed, Languschi-Dolfin procured this reference to Troy and repeated it with obvious echoes but without excessive rhetorical elaboration in his text:¹¹⁰

Da tanta uictoria sfongiatto el gran Turco disse, hauer se uindicato de la uiolation de la uergine troiana facta nel tempio de Pallas.

The grand Turk [Mehmed II], swollen with pride over his victory, said that he had avenged the violation of the Trojan virgin [Cassandra], which had been committed in the temple of Pallas [Athena].

This important account was first published from a lost transcript of 1870, made from the manuscript housed in Venice's Marciana by G. Valentinelli, in *Epistola ad Franciscum Barbarum, virum inclitum, procuratorem Sancti Marci dignissimum [Excidium Constantinopolitanae urbis]*, in *MHH* 22.1: 656-682; and by A. Pertusi, "La lettera di Filippo da Rimini, cancelliere di Corfù, a Francesco Barbaro e i primi documenti occidentali sulla caduta di Costantinopoli (1453)," *Μνημόσυνον Σοφίας Ἀντωνιάδη, Βιβλιοθήκη τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἰνστιτούτου Βενετίας Βυζαντινῶν καὶ Μεταβυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 6 (Venice, 1974): 120-157. Selections with Italian translation are printed in *TlePN*, pp. 127-141.

9. ANTONIO IVANI DA SARZANA. His account, *Expugnatio Constantinopolitana ad illustrem dominum Federicum Montisferetri Urbini ac Durantis comitem*, is appended to a letter that he sent to Federico di Montefeltro, the duke of Urbino, in the spring of 1454. He was well informed and he had access to archival material that is now perhaps lost forever. Among his acquaintances and employers he lists the doge of Genoa, Ludovico Campofregoso. His description of the siege and sack was probably composed the previous fall of 1453. He cannot vouch for all the

¹⁰⁹ *TlePN*, pp. 138; this is an early story; it is also included in Eparkhos' account (*supra*, II.A.8); cf. *infra*, ch. 4: "Myths, Legends, and Tales: Folk History."

¹¹⁰ Languschi-Dolfin, fol. 321 (p. 31).

information that he presents, or perhaps this hesitation represents the normal affectation displayed by humanists at the time:

...illa ipsa litteris mandavi quae mihi relata sunt; quae si vera erunt, verus atque fidus haberi potere; sin vero minus, velim meae innocentiae parcas.

...I have committed to writing what I have been told. If they represent true events then I can be considered a true historian. If not, please attribute them to my own simplicity.

He reports an incident that took place during the final assault; this event is not cited in any other account. The incident is valuable for it concerns the Venetian land forces in the final assault, of whose actions we hear very little elsewhere. Unfortunately, Ivani does not identify by name the heroic Venetian, who it is suspected¹¹¹ to be Girolamo Minotto, the *bailo* of Venice in Constantinople who was in charge of the sector of Blakhernai during the siege.¹¹²

Inter auxiliares vir quidam Venetus erat animi nempe magni qui desperata salute ingentem militum manum in patientiorem locum deducit, quos pluribus verbis hortatur ut mori pro religione strenue malint quam ignaviter vivere....

Among the auxiliary forces there was a certain courageous Venetian, who, when he saw that the battle was about to be lost, led a huge band of soldiers to an open place, whom he urged with a speech to prefer death in defense of their faith than a cowardly survival....

Minotto was captured in the sack and was executed a few days later by order of the sultan.¹¹³ The exact circumstances of his capture and execution are unknown and his fate was not ascertained for quite some time after the fall. There are numerous vague reports of these circumstances in the surviving accounts. Most succinct is the statement of Lomellino, the *podestà* of Pera:¹¹⁴ *Decapitari fecit...bailum Venetorum cum eius filio et aliis septem Venetis*, “he [Mehmed] ordered the decapitation of the *bailo* of the

¹¹¹ *TlePN*, p. 163, n. 24.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 162.

¹¹³ On the Minotti, cf. *supra*, n. 40. On Girolamo Minotto, cf. *infra*, Appendix IV: “Some Defenders and Non-Combatants,” no. 132. The heroism of Girolamo has been noted by historians, cf., e.g., Chrysa Maltezou, *Ὁ Θεσμός τοῦ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Βενετοῦ Βαίλου (1268-1453)*, Βιβλιοθήκη Σοφίας Ν. Σαριπόλου 6 (Athens, 1970): 51-52: Οὐδείς ὅμως ἔδειξε τὸ θάρρος τοῦ Gerolamo Minotto...[ὁ Minotto] [ἐ]νόμιζεν ὅτι ἡ Βενετία θὰ ἐνίσχυε παντοιοτρόπως τὸν ἀγῶνά του...ἀνευ δὲ ἀναμονῆς ἀπαντήσεως, ...ἀπηγόρευσε τὸν ἀπόπλουν τῶν βενετικῶν πλοίων καὶ ἐτάχθη εἰς τὴν ὑπηρεσίαν τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος.... Θὰ ἠδύνατο νὰ ἀναμείνη τὴν ἐντολὴν τῆς μητροπόλεως, θὰ ἠδύνατο νὰ βοηθήσῃ τοὺς ἀποίκους νὰ διαφύγουν τοῦ κλοιοῦ τῶν Τούρκων, θὰ ἠδύνατο τέλος ὁ ἴδιος νὰ λιποψυχήσῃ. Ὅμως δὲν ἔπραξεν τοῦτο. ... Ὁ βάιλος προσέφερε τὴν βοήθειάν του, ὅτε ἡ χώρα του ἠρνήθη νὰ προσφέρει τὴν ἰδικήν της, ὁ βάιλος διὰ τῆς αὐτοθυσίας του ἔδειξεν εἰς τὴν Δύσιν, ὅτι ὤφειλεν αὕτη νὰ εἶχε πράξει.

¹¹⁴ CC 1: 46.

Venetians, of his son, and of another seven Venetians.” Ivani’s interesting and informative narrative deserves further scholarly attention and evaluation, as modern historians in their investigations of the siege have not employed it. It was published, erroneously as an anonymous source and with the wrong date of composition, under the title: *Anonymi historiola quae inscribitur Constantinopolitanae civitatis expugnatio conscripta a 1459 p. Chr. e cod. chart. Bibl. Templi Cathedr. Strengnes.*, in *MHH* 22.1: 71-94; selections, with Italian translation, were also published in *TlePN*, pp. 146-165.

10. NIKOLAOS SEKOUNDINOS. This well-known and capable Greco-Italian linguist¹¹⁵ delivered an address to the Venetian senate on December 16, 1453, discussing the fall of the imperial city and the death of Loukas Notaras.¹¹⁶ He again pronounced a speech in the court of Naples before Alfonso V on January 25, 1454. This speech is a valuable source for the siege. Even though Sekoundinos had not been present during the siege, he was one of the first westerners to visit the occupied capital of the Greeks after the sack. He accompanied the Venetian envoy Bartolomeo Marcello to the Porte in order to assist in difficult negotiations involving the ransom of Venetians who had been captured by the sultan’s janissaries in the sack of May 29, 1453, and with the thorny problems of resuming trade in the Levant. He probably spent about two months in Constantinople. Then he was dispatched by Marcello to Venice and from there he traveled to Rome and to Naples in order to present his impressions of the new situation in the Levant. His impressions summarized in the speech must include oral information that was passed on to him by survivors of the sack. He is the first source to suggest that the emperor asked his comrades to kill him but when they proved unwilling to do so, he discarded all imperial insignia in the last phases of the general assault in order to evade capture by the janissaries and perished in the desperate struggle of the last stand.¹¹⁷

Imperator ubi hostem ruinas iam occupare moenium victoriaque potiri certissima vidit, ne caperetur vivus...suos, qui pauci aderant, hortari coepit, ut se occiderent; sed cum tantum facinus audere voluisset nemo, imperatoriis insignibus depositis et abiectis, ne hostibus notus fieret, privatum <se> gerens stricto ense in aciem irruit....

¹¹⁵ The basic bibliography on Sekoundinos includes: P. D. Mastrodimitris, *Νικόλαος Σεκουδινός (1402-1464) Βίος και Έργον: Συμβολή εις τήν Μελέτην τών Ἑλλήνων τῆς Διασποράς*, Βιβλιοθήκη Σοφίας Ν. Σαριπόλου 9 (Athens, 1970); *idem*, “Nicolaos Secundinos a Napoli dopo la caduta di Costantinopoli,” *Ἰταλοελληνικά: Rivista di cultura greco-moderna* 2 (1989): 21-38; F. Babinger, “Nikolaos Sagountinos, ein griechisch-venedischer Humanist des 15. Jhdts,” *Χαριστήριον εις Ἀναστάσιον Ὀρλάνδον*, 1 (Athens, 1965): 198-212; Alice-Mary Talbot, “Sekoundinos, Nicholas,” *ODB* 3: 1865; and J. Hankins, “Renaissance Crusaders: Humanist Crusade Literature in the Age of Mehmed II,” *DOP* 49 [*Symposium on Byzantium and the Italians, 13th-15th Centuries*] (1995): 137.

¹¹⁶ T. Ganchou, “Le rachat des Notaras après la chute de Constantinople ou les relations ‘étrangères’ de l’élite byzantine au XV^e siècle,” in *Migrations et Diasporas Méditerranéennes (X^e-XV^e siècles) Actes du colloque de Conques (octobre 1999)*, Série Byzantina Sorbonensia 19, eds. M. Balard and A. Ducellier (Paris, 2002), pp. 179-184.

¹¹⁷ *CC* 2: 136.

When the emperor saw that the enemy was in command of the ruined fortifications and that the battle was lost, so that he would not be taken alive...he asked the few comrades who were still there to put him to death. But as no one was willing to commit such a crime, he removed and threw away his imperial insignia so that the enemy would not recognize him and with bare sword in hand he entered the struggle....

This is an important text on the events of the siege and on the aftermath by a well-informed author, who visited the devastated city soon after the events. Unfortunately, there exists no reliable edition of the complete text. The complete text was first published by V. V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum Meridiolanum vicinorumque populorum*, 1 (Warsaw, 1874): 295-306, but it was based on inferior manuscripts and this edition contains numerous inaccuracies. A better, but incomplete, text was then published in *NE* 3: 316-323; selections, with Italian translation, were then printed in *CC* 1: 128-140.¹¹⁸ But *CC* 1, for some reason, chose to omit the long account of the execution of Loukas Notaras, which is of great interest to historians.

11. GIACOMO (JACOPO) LANGUSCHI. Cf. *supra*, II.A.4.i.

12. JOHN MOSKHOS. He was a minor Greek intellectual in Italy and was commissioned to write this piece, a rhetorical ἐπιτάφιος in honor of the last grand duke of Constantinople, Loukas Notaras. Under the constrictions of the literary genre then in vogue, one should not expect detailed historical information backed by archival material. Strictly speaking, it does not deal directly with the siege of 1453 but with the role that Notaras himself played in the defense and his subsequent execution after the sack. There is every reason to believe that this piece was encouraged, and perhaps was directly commissioned, by Anna Notaras herself, the daughter of Loukas, who, prior to the siege of 1453, had been sent to Venice with her two sisters, Euphrosyne and Theodora.¹¹⁹ In the decade of the 1460s, after he made his escape from Mehmed II's *seraglio*, they were joined by their brother Jacob/Iakobos, whom the sultan had reserved for his harem in 1453.

By the 1470s loud charges were voiced against Notaras.¹²⁰ It was said that he had failed to contribute his fair share to the defense of Constantinople in 1453, in spite of his

¹¹⁸ See also Medvedev, pp. 325-329. For a new edition of the speech, cf. now C. Capizzi, "L'Oratio ad Alphonsum Regem Aragonum (1454) di Nicola Sagundino, riedita secondo un ms. finora ignoto," *OCP* 64 (1998): 329-357.

¹¹⁹ For her business and other activities in Venice in the subsequent decades following the fall of Constantinople, as well as those of her sisters, and later brother upon his arrival, cf. the substantive article of Ganchou, "Le rachat des Notaras," 152 ff., and *passim*.

¹²⁰ A pro-Unionist, Doukas 37.10 was among the first after the fall of the imperial city to raise a charge against the anti-Unionist Loukas Notaras. He attributes to him a statement that reads: "Κρεϊττότερόν ἐστιν εἰδέναι ἐν μέσῃ τῇ πόλει φακιόλιον βασιλεῦσον Τούρκων ἢ καλύπτραν Λατινικήν [It would be better to see the turban of the Turks reigning in the center of the city than the Latin miter]." Most recently, for a discussion of this statement, cf. D. R. Reinsch, "Lieber den Turban als was? Bemerkungen zum Dichtum des Lukas Notaras," in *ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝ. Studies in Honor of Robert Browning* (Venice, 1996), pp. 377-389, esp. pp. 378-380; and Ganchou, "Le rachat des Notaras," pp. 151 f. and 167 ff., and *passim*.

immense wealth. It was especially in Italy that certain texts went so far as to accuse Notaras of high treason. Leonardo, an eyewitness, had reported the grand duke's quarrel with Giovanni Giustiniani, during which the *condottiere* had accused Notaras of being a *proditor/traditore*. Di Montaldo, who wrote an interesting (but thus far overlooked by scholars) account of the siege and sack, also called Notaras a "traitor" and described his last moments with unflattering colors in a key passage that accuses Notaras of opening a gate to admit the attacking enemy:¹²¹

Quod patefacto ut ingerunt hostio per civem, quem Magnum Ducem cognominabant, copiarum introitus numero ingenti patuit.

As they say, the way for the enemy [the Turks] was opened by a citizen, whom they call the Grand Duke, and he offered an opening to a huge number of troops.

Later in his narrative, Notaras is again painted in dark colors:¹²²

Lucas, Magnus Dux cognomento honoris dictus, quem proditiōnis infamia reum fecit ...in regis indignationem devenit. Quam quidem ob rem mox clamitantem e complexibus parentis arripit puerum jussit, cumque invitum violasset, eundem cum patre ac altero fratre morte multandum dedit, objecta de proditiōne civitatis culpa, quam perperam tradisse patrem asserebat.

About Loukas Notaras, called by the honorific title of 'grand duke,' who had been charged with the crime of treason, the king [= sultan] began to feel indignation. Soon thereafter the king [= sultan] ordered that his [Notaras'] young son be tearfully torn from the arms of his parents. He then violated the protesting boy. Next, he ordered that he with his other brother be executed, as he asserted that their father had been charged with treason against his homeland.

Reports about the fate of the Notaras family were numerous and no one could ascertain what had really happened or was the fate of the survivors. As late as March 1454, the facts remained unclear and the authorities in Genoa instructed their envoys, Luciano Spinola and Baldassare Maruffo, to the Porte to inquire into this matter.¹²³

Ex ipso domino Luca credimus superesse filium et filias duas, que dicuntur posite in maxima calamitate et servitute; ex quo volumus intuitu Dei primum, deinde pro honore patrie, inquiratis ubi ille puelle sint, et si aliqua ratione prodesse poteritis eis, enitamini verbo et opera ac studio pro omni commodo earum; et si fieri poterit, incumbite ut meliorem aliquam conditione assequantur; et quoniam id est opus summe misericordie, cavete ne in hoc sitis negligentes. Quod autem de puellis diximus, hoc idem de filio dicimus si egebit presidio vestro.

¹²¹ Di Montaldo 22 (337) [not included in the selections of *TlePN*].

¹²² *Ibid.*, 28 (339) [not included in the selections of *TlePN*].

¹²³ *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria* 13.2 (Geneva, 1877), document no. CLIV (p. 269).

We believe that one son and two daughters of Lord Loukas Notaras are alive and are said to be in the greatest danger and servitude. We wish that, for the love of God and for the honor of our country, you inquire about the whereabouts of the daughters and that you try to help them and ameliorate their circumstances in any possible way, by deed, by word, and by persistence. If it can be done, bring about some improvement in their condition. As this amounts to charitable work, please do not neglect it. Our instructions in regard to the daughters also apply to the son if he is in need of your assistance.

The authorities probably did not know that the three daughters of Notaras had been sent to Venice before the onset of the siege. Nevertheless, the family of Notaras had numerous links in Genoa¹²⁴ and the authorities felt obliged to inquire. The youngest son of Notaras, Jacob, who had indeed survived the *seraglio* of the sultan, eventually escaped from Constantinople, as is elucidated in another surviving document, a letter of recommendation¹²⁵ from January 6, 1468, *data Janue die VI Januarii 1468*:

Pro domino Jacobo Notara.... Non ignari sumus amice cum genuensibus versatus sit clarus olim et magnificus vir dominus Lucas Notara constantinopolinus et tunc magnus dux romeorum; quem iniqua et acerba illius fortuna vita et magne parte familie ac bonorum privavit...harum nostrarum litterarum et decreti auctoritate decernimus et statuimus quod magnificus item eques prefati domini Luce filius, dominus Jacobus Notara.

On behalf of Lord Jacob Notaras.... We are not unaware of the friendship of the late, glorious, and magnificent Loukas Notaras of Constantinople, who was then the grand duke of the Romans [= Greeks]. An unjust and bitter fortune deprived him of his life, of a great part of his family, and of his property.... We decree and declare, under our authority in the present letter, that the magnificent knight, Lord Jacob Notaras, is the son of the aforementioned Lord Loukas.

After his escape, Jacob came to Italy and married a woman for whom his sister Anna had no affection, as she herself declared in her will long after Jacob's death.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ K.-P. Matschke, "The Notaras Family and Its Italian Connections," *DOP* 49 [= *Symposium of Byzantium and the Italians, 13th-15th Centuries*] (1995): 59-72; *idem*, "Personengeschichte, Familiengeschichte, Socialgeschichte: Die Notaras im späten Byzanz," in *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo et Età Moderna. Studi in onore di Geo Pitarino*, ed. Laura Balleto, 2 (Geneva, 1997): 787-812, wherein he identifies the Notaras family as a provincial aristocracy; and Ganchou, "Le rachat des Notaras," esp. pp. 151 ff. To understand how in the time of Loukas Notaras the family came to be associated with an urban aristocracy, cf. A. Ducellier and T. Ganchou, "Les élites urbaines dans l'empire d'Orient à la fin du Moyen Age: Noblesse de service ou groupes de passion?," in *Les élites urbaines au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1997), pp. 39-54.

¹²⁵ "Della conquista di Constantinopoli per Maometto II," eds. Déthier, *et al.*, pp. 299-300.

¹²⁶ The will of Anna Notaras has been published in its Greek form from Venetian archives; cf. K. Mertziou, "'Η Διαθήκη τῆς Ἄννας Παλαιολογίνας Νοταρά," *Ἀθηνᾶ* 53 (1953): 17-21. For

ἀκόμη νὰ μηδὲν ἤμπορῇ κανεῖς ἀπὸ τοὺς κομμισαρίους μου νὰ ποιήσῃ κανένα συμβιβασμὸν μὲ τὴν Ζαμπέτα τὴν κονιάδα μου, οὐδὲ μὲ ἄλλον τινα διὰ ὄνομά της, ὅτι πολλὸν βίον μου ἐκατηνάλωσε...ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν βίον ὅλον τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου καὶ αὐτὸν ὅλον τὸν ἐκατέκρυσεν.

My executors will have no authority to come to an understanding with my sister-in-law Zabeta, nor with anyone else acting in her name, as she squandered much of my fortune and concealed all of my brother's property.

Anna died on July 8, 1507.¹²⁷ In the same will she mentions that her sister Theodora, ἀφήνω, διὰ πιστοτάτους μου ἐπιτρόπους καὶ κομμισαρίους...καὶ τὴν...Θεοδώραν τὴν ἀδελφὴν μου, "I designate as my most loyal overseers and executors...and my sister Theodora," was still alive but that her second sister, Euphrosyne, had evidently died:

ἀκόμα νὰ ἐξαγοράσουν ἓνα αἰχμάλωτον ἀπὸ τοὺς Τούρκους Χριστιανὸ καὶ νὰ τὸν ἐλευθερώσουν διὰ τὴν ψυχὴν τῆς Κυρὰ Φροσύνης, τῆς ἀδελφῆς μου, καθὼς τὸ ἐπαφῆκεν ἓν τι πρὸ τὸν θάνατον αὐτῆς.

Let them also ransom a Christian prisoner from the Turks for the soul of Lady Phrosyne [that is, Euphrosyne], my sister, as she had specified before her death.

All sorts of tales circulated that reported conflicting versions of the grand duke's last days, while he was a prisoner of the sultan. In addition, folk motifs also accumulated about the figure of the last grand duke. One was extremely insulting and duplicates material that is also reported in Marco Polo's narrative: Pseudo-Sphrantzes' account of Notaras' execution seems to repeat the "concealed treasure" motif that is encountered in Marco Polo's story of the capture of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258. Notaras attracted

an edition of the complete text, with English translation and commentary, cf. Philippides, *Constantine XI Dragaš Palaeologus*, Appendix VI.

¹²⁷ On Anna Notaras and her will, cf. S. A. Koutibas, *Οἱ Νοταράδες στὴν Ἱππικὴν τοῦ Ἑθνους* (Athens, 1968), pp. 59-61; S. P. Lampros, "Ὁ Κωνσταντῖνος Παλαιολόγος ὡς Σύζυγος ἐν τῇ Ἱστορίᾳ καὶ τοῖς Θρόνοις," *NH* 4 (1907): 417-466; *idem*, "'Ἡ Ἄννα Νοταρᾶ ὡς Κυρία Κώδικος," *NH* 5 (1908): 485-486; Manoussakas, "'Ἡ Πρώτη Ἄδεια (1456)," pp. 109-118; Matschke, "The Notaras Family"; D. M. Nicol, "Anna Notaras Palaiologina," in *The Byzantine Lady: Ten Portraits 1250-1500* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 96-109; and K. Sathas, "'Ἡ Πρώτη ἐν Βενετία Ἑλληνικὴ Τυπογραφία, 1489-1899," *Ἡ Μελέτη* 2 (1907): 470-485. It is our understanding that T. Ganchou is preparing a monograph on Anna Notaras; cf. Maltezoῦ, *Ἡ Βενετία τῶν Ἑλλήνων*, p. 36. Most recently, cf. the brief study of Chrysa Maltezoῦ, *Ἄννα Παλαιολογίνα Νοταρᾶ: Μιὰ Τραγικὴ Μορφή ἀνάμεσα στὸν Βυζαντινὸ καὶ τὸν Νέο Ἑλληνικὸ Κόσμο*. Βιβλιοθήκη τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἰνστιτούτου Βυζαντινῶν καὶ Μεταβυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν Βενετίας, 23 (Venice, 2004), *passim*. Of note concerning the financial investments of Anna, cf. K. Sp. Staikos, "The Printing Shop of Nikolaos Vlastos and Zacharias Kallierges. 500 Years from the Establishment of the First Greek Printing Press," *La Bibliofilia* 102 (2000): 11-32. For archival documentation, nine documents dating between June 15, 1474 and September 28, 1496, of Anna Notaras, cf. Maltezoῦ, *Ἄννα Παλαιολογίνα Νοταρᾶ*, pp. 63-114.

all this lore because he was fabulously wealthy and because he was the chief financial minister of Constantine XI and of the imperial administration. He had worked hard securing loans for the emperor until the siege, a fact that may be behind some strange and rhetorically forced arguments encountered in Moskhos' text.

Anna and her humanistic circle sought to counteract the charges that were in circulation by encouraging or even commissioning Moskhos¹²⁸ to compose this speech, Ἐπιτάφιος Λόγος ἐπὶ τῷ ἐνδοξωτάτῳ καὶ ἐκλαμπροτάτῳ μακαρίτῃ μεγάλῳ δουκὶ κυρῷ Λουκᾷ τῷ Νοταρᾷ, Ἰωάννου τοῦ Μόσχου, *A Funeral Speech in Honor of the Most Glorious and Most Illustrious Grand Duke, the Late Lord Loukas Notaras by John Moskhos*. It is not an accident that Moskhos emphasizes the loyalty of Notaras to the emperor, whom, rumors insisted, the grand duke had betrayed during the last stage of the siege, and his personal contributions to the defense of Constantinople. Notaras' efforts on behalf of his homeland are described in a tortuous, highly suspect narration, which would have made the sophists of antiquity proud of Moskhos, as he clearly tries to make the best case out of a bad situation. He cannot show that Notaras contributed his own funds to the defense. His prose and arguments remain unconvincing, especially in regard to the ardent desire that Notaras supposedly displayed in encouraging others to contribute funds to the defense. Posterity has not been kind to the last grand duke and his figure is still surrounded by considerable controversy, as some scholars see in him a traitor and others a hero who sacrificed his life in depressing circumstances and even turn him into a martyr of Neohellenism. The truth surely lies somewhere in the middle. To the chagrin of his daughters, Loukas Notaras had already become the subject of a lively controversy by the second half of the *quattrocento*. Moskhos' work is a rhetorical attempt to check the

¹²⁸ Moskhos as a scholar and humanist has not attracted a great deal of scholarly attention. For the earlier literature on this figure and for a modern assessment of his career, cf. S. Mergiali-Falangas, "Ἐνας Ἰταλὸς Οὐμανιστὴς καὶ Ἐνας Πελοποννήσιος Δάσκαλος: Σχέσεις Μάρκου Ἀντωνίου Ἀντιμάχου καὶ Ἰωάννου Μόσχου," *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook* 10/11 (1994-1995): 579-584. As Mergiali-Falangas points out, pp. 583-584, n. 7, a succinct biography of Moskhos was given by one of his students and is quoted in E. Legrand, *Biographie hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés en grec par les Grecs au XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, 1 (Paris, 1885): lxxxviii: *Ioannes Moschus, praeceptor meus, Lacedaemonius, vir sane in omni et virtutum et scientiarum genere, non solum meo iudicio, sed totius Graeciae, excellentissimus, sub cuius disciplina quinquennium moratus sum, cuius studium in me singularem extitit ut non praeceptorem, sed parentem nactus viderer. Hunc ergo ob singularem eius doctrinam et politum dicendi genus cum soluta oratione scribendi tum...carminibus, cum Thessalonicensis ad civitatem illam amplissimam atque opulentissimam erudiendam publica pecunia conduxissent, dum itineri maturando sese accingeret, et ego quoque eum sequi statuissem, qui multa adhuc ediscerem ac celebratissimas bibliothecas illas quae in Atho monte sunt, aliquando conspicerem, acutissimo morbo correptus, quinto quo aegrotate coeperat die, maximo omnium moerore decessit.* Moskhos had been a student of George Gemistos Plethon and may have been initiated into Plethon's revival of pagan cults. Mergiali-Falangas points out that Moskhos, a member of the inner circle of Plethon, may even had access to some of Plethon's poems and writings that have since disappeared. On Moskhos, see also Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "Τὰ Λόγια καὶ ὁ Θάνατος τοῦ Λουκᾷ Νοταρᾷ," in *Ροδωνιά: Τιμὴ σπὸν Μ. Ι. Μανούσσακα* (Rethymno, 1996), pp. 135-146.

mounting “bad press,” but ultimately this attempt failed and the role of the last grand duke during the siege of 1453 remains controversial.

The first edition of this speech was produced by E. Legrand, *Δελτίον τῆς Ἱστορικῆς καὶ Ἐθνολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας* 2 (1885/1886): 413-424. It was based on the *ms. No. 2731* in the National Library, Paris, 176^v-187^f. The text, with its first English translation, can be found as Appendix V in a forthcoming biography of the last emperor: Philippides, *Constantine XI Dragaš Palaeologus*.

13. ADAMO DI MONTALDO. In the 1470s Adamo composed his *De Constantinopolitano excidio ad nobilissimum iuvenem Melladucam Cicadam*. It is a noteworthy account and contains information that is not duplicated in other sources. Adamo, for instance, emphasizes the contribution to the defense of Maurizio Cataneo, who rises to the level of Giovanni Giustiniani in the operations. In addition, he includes a long account of the execution of Loukas Notaras, which, in our opinion, shows some familiarity with the “hagiographic” piece of Moskhos (cf. *supra*, II.B.12), as both include a long speech that Notaras supposedly pronounced before his death, with digressions into philosophy and the immortality of the soul. It was first published by P. A. Déthier, C. Desimoni, and C. Hopf, “Della Conquista di Costantinopoli per Maometto II nel MCCCCLIII,” *Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria* 10 (1874): 289-354; and reprinted in *MHH* 22.1: 35-70. Selections with Italian translation further appear in *TiePN*, pp. 188-209.

III. The Sixteenth-Century Greek Tradition

It should be observed that there exists in Greek no authentic eyewitness source that discusses the siege and sack of Constantinople. The so-called Greek historians of the fall, Doukas, Khalkokondyles, and Kritoboulos,¹²⁹ may have consulted participants in the defense and perhaps even Ottoman officials, soldiers, and engineers who had participated in the siege, but they themselves were not in the city and did not directly observe the events as they unfolded. In fact, the only Greek eyewitness is George Sphrantzes (1401-1477), but his authentic work is extremely laconic on the siege and he provides no narrative whatsoever on the operations. From the few references that the authentic text contains one may conclude that Sphrantzes indeed was on the support staff of Constantine XI. It was to Sphrantzes after all that the emperor entrusted the delicate mission of taking a census of the available defensive resources before the commencement of hostilities. Of this incident Sphrantzes himself makes mention:¹³⁰

¹²⁹ For a brief but cogent analysis of these historians, including Sphrantzes, cf. J. O. Rosenqvist, *Die byzantinische Literatur. Vom 6. Jahrhundert bis zum Fall Konstantinopels 1453* (Berlin and New York, 2007), pp. 177-183. For another interpretative analysis of Doukas and Kritoboulos, cf. D. R. Reinsch, “Il Conquistatore di Costantinopoli nel 1453: Erede legittimo dell’imperatore di Bizanzio o temporaneo usurpatore? Alle origini della questione: Appartiene la Turchia all’Europa?,” *Medioevo greco. Rivista di storia e filologia bizantina* 3 (2003): 213-223; and *idem*, “Kritoboulos of Imbros. Learned Historian, Ottoman raya and Byzantine Patriot,” *ZRVI* 40 (2003): 297-311.

¹³⁰ *Minus* 35.8. The translation is quoted from Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, p. 70.

τοῦ γὰρ βασιλέως προστάξαντος τοῖς δημάρχους, ἔγραψεν ἕκαστος τὴν δημαρχίαν αὐτοῦ ἀκριβῶς τοῦ δυναμένου σταθῆναι ἐν τῷ κάστρῳ κοσμικοῦ καὶ καλογέρου καὶ τί καὶ τί ἄρμα πρὸς ἄμυναν νὰ ἔχη ἕκαστος αὐτῶν.... Εἶτα ὀρίζει πρὸς ἐμέ· "αὕτη ἡ δουλεία πρὸς σὲ ἀφορᾷ...καὶ λάβε τὰ κατάστιχα καὶ καθίσας εἰς τὸ ὄσπίτιόν σου λογάριασε ἀκριβῶς πόσοι εἰσὶν ἄνθρωποι καὶ πόσα ἄρματα καὶ πόσα κοντάρια καὶ πόσα σκουτάρια καὶ πόσα τοξάρια." καὶ ἐκτελέσας τὸν ὀρισμὸν αὐτοῦ, φέρων δέδωκα τῷ ἀνθέντῃ μου καὶ βασιλεῖ τὸ καταστιχόπουλον μετὰ λύπης καὶ σκυθρωπότητος ὅτι πολλῆς, καὶ ἔμεινε μόνον ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ ἡ ποσότης εἰς ἐκεῖνον καὶ ἐμέ.

The emperor ordered the demarches to take a census of their demarches and to record the exact number of men – laity and clergy – able to defend the walls and what weapons each man had for defense.... Then he commanded me: ‘This task is for you...take these lists and compute, in the privacy of your home, the exact figure of available defenders, weapons, shields, spears, and arrows.’ I completed my task and presented the master list to my lord and emperor in the greatest possible sadness and depression. The true figure remained a secret known only to him and to myself.

Again, in his authentic account, Sphrantzes writes of the diplomacy and of the court’s futile efforts to attract major military aid from the west,¹³¹ but he remains silent concerning the period of the siege. In a single entry Sphrantzes addresses the fall of the city, by-passing the entire period of the siege. He makes it clear that his duties had taken him away from the critical area by order of the emperor, who may have wished to protect his friend by directing him to another less dangerous sector of the defenses. Had Sphrantzes been present at the critical sector between the civil gate of St. Romanos and the military, the Pempton, he would not have survived, as apparently none did of those who chose to stay in the area under massive attack between the civil Gate of St. Romanos and the Pempton, the Fifth Military Gate. Further, neither Pusculo nor Leonardo, our only eyewitnesses to have furnished a sort of “catalogue of defenders and their positions,” mentions Sphrantzes in the vicinity of the walls. It may be concluded that he did not play an active military role in the defense. It is also possible that Sphrantzes had a non-military role and that he was somewhere with the non-combatant members of the administration within the city. He provides only one reference to the fall and to the death of his friend, the emperor.¹³²

Καὶ τῇ κθ^ῃ μαΐου, ἡμέρα γ^ῃ, ὥρα τῆς ἡμέρας ἀρχῆ, ἀπῆρε τὴν Πόλιν ὁ ἀμηνᾶς· ἐν ἣ ὥρα καὶ ἀλώσει τῆς Πόλεως καὶ ὁ μακαρίτης ἀνθέντης μου κύρ Κωνσταντῖνος βασιλεὺς ὁ Παλαιολόγος σκοτωθεὶς ἀπέθανεν, ἐμοῦ πλησίον

¹³¹ *Minus* 36.1-14.

¹³² *Minus* 35.9. The translation is quoted from Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, p. 70. The elaborator of the *Maius* has recast this paragraph, changing its style by introducing a genitive absolute construction in the beginning and adding a verb at the end, 3.10.9: ἐμοῦ δὲ τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐκείνῃ μὴ εὐρεθέντος πλησίον τοῦ ἀνθέντός μου τοῦ βασιλέως, ἀλλὰ προστάξει ἐκείνου εἰς ἐπίσκεψιν δῆθεν ἐν ἄλλῳ μέρει τῆς πόλεως ἡμην.

αὐτοῦ οὐχ εὐρεθέντος τῆ ὥρα ἐκείνη, ἀλλὰ προστάξει ἐκείνου εἰς ἐπίσκεψιν δῆθεν ἄλλου μέρους τῆς Πόλεως.

On Tuesday May 29, early in the day, the emir [sultan] took possession of the city. In this time of capture my late master and emperor, Lord Constantine, was killed. I was not at his side at that hour but I had been inspecting another part of the city, according to his orders.

Sphrantzes is sufficiently truthful to admit that he did not know how his hero, the emperor, had died. In fact, his silence and his vague reference that he had been dispatched elsewhere within the city by an imperial order are suspect, and some scholars see in this statement a vague admission of flight.¹³³

Sphrantzes has devoted not a single word to the defensive operations. It is indeed a curious omission, which has led some scholars to speculate that the historian may actually have maintained a separate diary. This conjecture seems likely but a further inference that has been made is erroneous, as it presupposes that this hypothetical diary of Sphrantzes somehow fell into the hands of his sixteenth-century elaborator, Makarios Melissenos-Melissourgos, who then enlarged it into the surviving *Maius*.¹³⁴ In spite of ingenious arguments, none of which is linguistic or textual, such attempts to elevate the siege section of the *Maius* to respectability as a primary source remain unconvincing. This hypothesis lacks positive evidence, and most of the arguments associated with it are reduced to omissions of events in both the *Maius* and the *Minus*. Most significant, this challenge fails to recognize the importance of Bishop Leonardo in the composition of the siege section of the *Maius*. Makarios utilized, as has now become abundantly clear, other existing and identifiable accounts to compile his narrative. It is possible that Sphrantzes maintained a diary of the siege period. If he did so, we must conjecture, since all traces of it have vanished, that its nature would have been different from the *Giornale* of Barbaro or of the *epistula* by Leonardo. Unlike Barbaro, Puscuro, and Leonardo, Sphrantzes does not seem to have been on the walls. So his diary would have been of a different makeup, perhaps presenting the views of the non-combatant members of the imperial administration.

¹³³ This is the reasonable conclusion reached by Siderides in a penetrating study, which, however, is not widely known and we will discuss this article in due course. Cf. X. A. Siderides, “Κωνσταντίνου Παλαιολόγου Θάνατος, Τάφος, καὶ Σπάθη,” *Ἡ Μελέτη* 3 (1908): 66: ὁ δὲ Γ. Φραντζῆς, ὦν ἕως τότε πλησίον τοῦ βασιλέως, προστάξει, λέγει αὐτοῦ, ἀπῆλθεν εἰς ἐπίσκεψιν ἄλλου μέρους τῆς Πόλεως, τοῦ οἴοιτο ὅμως τὸ ὄνομα δὲν λέγει· ἐκ τῆς σιωπῆς ταύτης εἰκάζομεν ὅτι ἔφυγεν ἐκεῖθεν χάριν τῆς ἰδίας αὐτοῦ σωτηρίας.

¹³⁴ This extreme position has been expressed by Margaret G. Carroll (Klopf) in a series of lengthy articles, “Notes on the Authorship of the ‘Siege’ Section of the Chronicon Maius of Pseudo-Phrantzes, Book III,” *Byz* 41 (1971): 28-44; 42 (1972): 5-22; 43 (1973): 30-38; and 44 (1974): 17-22. Cf. the criticism of this position in Philippides, “The Fall of Constantinople,” pp. 289-290. It is regrettable that this assumption has accordingly colored her translation and her commentary of the siege section of the *Maius*: Carroll, *A Contemporary Greek Source for the Siege of Constantinople, 1453*. Cf. M. Philippides, “Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos (d. 1585),” in *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*, electronic article, 7 pp.

Sphrantzes was not a professional soldier and he has very little to add about the military aspects concerning the siege of Patras by Constantine that had taken place earlier. As always, he was more interested in diplomatic matters. Of course, it is not known what may have happened to this hypothetical journal. It is possible that it perished early on, perhaps in the early hours of the sack when Sphrantzes fell into the hands of the enemy. However, one would like to note that somehow Sphrantzes was able to consult some of his notes when he compiled his *Minus* years after the sack. Is it possible that he had retained some notes and lost others? Could it be that he had left his notes of the earlier years at Mistra in the Morea when Constantine and he went to Constantinople and that he recovered these notes after his release from captivity? It should be recalled that nowhere in his authentic narrative does he allude to any journal of the siege. There is no hint in the surviving narrative of his activities during the siege. Indeed it amounts to curious silence but allows nothing other than speculation.

Consequently, Greek chronicles that date from the period after the fall necessarily concentrate their attention on the situation that followed the sack, and, specifically, on the affairs of the patriarchate and the patriarchs, with a passing reference to the siege. Again the chronicle of Sphrantzes plays a part in this situation, but the elaborator of Sphrantzes, Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos, has penned the pertinent sections of the *Maius*.

The first patriarch under the sultans was George Scholarios-Gennadios II.¹³⁵ Before the conquest of 1453 there had been no reigning patriarch in Greek Constantinople. The

¹³⁵ Cf., among others, Germanos, metropolitan of Sardis, "Συμβολή εις τοὺς Πατριαρχικοὺς Καταλόγους Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἀπὸ Ἀλώσεως καὶ ἐξῆς," *Ὀρθοδοξία* 8 (1933): 279-285; A. Decei, "Patrik II. Gennadios Skolarios'un Fatih Sultan Mehmet için yazdığı ortodoks i'tikadnamesinin türkçe metni [Patriarch Gennadios Scholarios II and Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror Concerning the Texts of the Fate of the Orthodox and Turkish Faiths]," *Fatih ve İstanbul* 1 (1953): 98-116; C. J. G. Turner, "Pages from the Late Byzantine Philosophy of History," *BZ* 57 (1964): 346-372; *idem*, "The Career of Gennadius-Scholarius," *Byz* 39 (1969): 420-455; A. Papadakis, "Gennadios II and Mehmet II the Conqueror," *Byz* 42 (1972): 88-106; N. M. Vapori, *Codex Gamma of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople* (Brookline, 1974), pp. 22-24; F. Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time* (Princeton, 1978), pp. 410-411. Most recently there has appeared an interesting authoritative study on this personality, which however includes factual errors: M. G. Serges, *Γεώργιος Σχολάριος-Γεννάδιος Β΄: Ὁ Πρῶτος μετὰ τὴν Ἀλωση Οἰκουμηνικὸς Πατριάρχης. Μελέτες γιὰ τὴ Βυζαντινὴ καὶ Μεταβυζαντινὴ Ἱστορία* 3 (Athens, 1996). The most recent biography of Scholarios-Gennadios II is by T. Zeses, *Γεννάδιος Β΄ Σχολάριος. Βίος-Συγγράμματα-Διδασκαλία. Ἀνάλεκτα Βλατάδων* 30 (Thessaloniki, 1980); this is a curious and extremely superficial work, whose avowed aim is to claim sainthood for Scholarios-Gennadios and to diminish the contribution of Bessarion to scholarship. It is amazing that after the passage of five centuries the old controversies and animosities between "Greek" and "Latin" should appear again! A true scholarly, book-length biography of Scholarios in English, or in any other language, remains to be written. Much better, although a great deal shorter, than Zeses' hagiographical work is J. Gill, "George Scholarius," *Unitas* 12 (1960; Eng. ed.): 99-112 (= *Personalities of the Council of Florence and Other Essays* [Oxford, 1964], pp. 79-95). Indirectly, one may follow Scholarios' career through his connection with Plethon; cf. C. M. Woodhouse, *Gemistos Plethon: The Last of the Hellenes* (Oxford, 1986), *passim*. On Scholarios, cf. *PLP* 11: no. 27304 (156-158). C. Livanos, *Greek Tradition and Latin Influence in the Work of George Scholarios. "Alone against All of Europe"* (Piscataway, 2006), has recently and notably treated his

last holder of the title, Gregory III Mammas (1443-1450), had fled from the Greek capital in 1451 to Rome, in face of popular opposition to his religious policies that favored union with the papacy. The emperor afterward appointed no successor during that turbulent period.¹³⁶ Mehmed II, presumably with the approval of and after some consultation with the surviving bishops, elevated Gennadios II to be the first head of the Greek *millet* on January 6, 1454.¹³⁷

The elevation of Gennadios to the patriarchal throne, with the accompanying elaborate narration of the state of affairs, although depressing given the circumstances, has been described in detail in the *Chronicon Maius*.¹³⁸ As long as the authenticity of his *Maius* had not been questioned, this narrative was taken to be, if not an eyewitness account of the ceremony, certainly a well-informed description of a historical event. As modern scholarship has demonstrated repeatedly in the past decades, the *Maius* represents a late “composition,” penned by Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos in Italy, most likely in Naples, *ca.* 1580.¹³⁹

Thus the important passages that deal with this subject have not been penned by the authoritative hand of Sphrantzes, who could not have had any affection for Scholarios-Gennadios, the most vocal opponent of the emperor’s religious policies before the siege of 1453 and a leader of the anti-union faction fiercely objecting to the union of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches that had been agreed upon during the monumental Council of Florence in 1438/1439. During the siege of 1453 Scholarios had advocated a policy of passive resistance to the Turks and had recommended prayers and all-night vigils instead of active duty on the walls.¹⁴⁰ In the days before the siege his activities had

theological positions and interest in the writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Livanos, *ibid.*, pp. 102-111, provides an insightful analysis of Scholarios’ *Lament* and the fall of Constantinople. For Scholarios as a patriarch under Mehmed and for some problems with his later career, cf. now Marie-Hélène Blanchet, “Georges Gennadios Scholarios a-t-il été trois fois patriarche de Constantinople?,” *Byz* 71 (2001): 60-72; and *eadem*, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios (vers 1400-vers 1472). Un intellectuel orthodoxe face à la disparition de l’empire Byzantin*, Archives de l’Orient Chrétien 20 (Paris, 2008): 124-135, for argumentation and justification of his office.

¹³⁶ There had been a school of thought that a patriarch did exist in 1453 (or several years earlier) by the name of Athanasios II, or even Anastasios, but this notion has been shown to be fiction, even though this error is still encountered; cf. Gennadios (Metropolitan of Heliopolis), “Ἐπιπέφην ἡ ὄχι Πατριάρχης Ἀθανάσιος Ὀλίγον πρὸ τῆς Ἀλώσεως,” *Ὁρθοδοξία* 18 (1943): 117-123. For a possible alternate explanation, cf. W. K. Hanak, “Pope Nicholas V and the Aborted Crusade of 1452-1453 to Rescue Constantinople from the Turks,” *BS* 65 (2007): 348-352.

¹³⁷ On this date, cf. A. N. Diamantopoulos, “Ὁ Γεννάδιος Σχολάριος ὡς Ἱστορικὴ Πηγὴ τῶν περὶ τὴν Ἀλωσιν Χρόνων,” *Ἑλληνικά* 9 (1936): 295-301.

¹³⁸ On the problems presented by the two versions of Sphrantzes’ account, cf. *infra*, ch. 3: “A ‘Chronicle’ and its Elaboration: Sphrantzes and Pseudo-Sphrantzes,” and the accompanying bibliography.

¹³⁹ On this family of various industrious copyists-forgers who attempted to identify their family with the more illustrious Melissenoi, cf. the fundamental study of I. K. Khasiotes, *Μακάριος, Θεόδωρος, καὶ Νικηφόρος οἱ Μελισσηνοὶ (Μελισσουργοὶ)* (Thessaloniki, 1966). In addition, cf. now the observations of R. Maisano, “Il manoscritto Napoletano II. E. 25 e la storia della tradizione dello pseudo-Sfranze,” *Ἱταλοελληνικά: Rivista di cultura greco-moderna* 2 (1989): 103-121.

¹⁴⁰ On Scholarios’ personality, cf. Gill, *Personalities*, ch. 7.

earned him the scorn of the court,¹⁴¹ where he had become a *persona non grata*. In fact, the very same activities that had alienated him from the Greek court, especially his anti-Catholic and anti-western policies, must have recommended him to the sultan.

The forger of the *Maius*, Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos, however, was a cleric in Ottoman Greece before he made his way to Italy and the west. He displayed a lively interest in ecclesiastical affairs and it is he who has supplied us with a detailed account of the enthronement of Scholarios as Gennadios II, which took place on January 6, 1454. In addition, the concluding sections of Book III of the *Maius* enumerate the powers that the sultan bestowed upon his patriarch on that momentous occasion. In fact, the statements of Melissourgos-Melissenos have long been accepted as fact, since the days when scholars were under the impression that Sphrantzes himself had authored the *Maius*. If indeed it can be demonstrated that this section of the *Maius* was authentic, or, at the very least, based on an authoritative source and not on the imagination of the forger, it would be of the utmost significance for the history of the Orthodox Church and the Greek *millet* under the Osmanli sultans, as the authority, duties, and responsibilities of the patriarch to the Porte are clearly delineated. One particular passage of the *Maius* has given rise to a controversy that has found no resolution thus far and deserves to be quoted at length:¹⁴²

ἔδωκε δὲ προστάγματα ἐγγράφως τῷ πατριάρχῃ [*sc.* Gennadios II] μετ' ἐξουσίας βασιλικῆς ὑπογεγραμμένης κάτωθεν ἵνα μηδεὶς αὐτὸν ἐνοχλήσῃ ἢ ἀντιτείνῃ, ἀλλὰ εἶναι αὐτὸν ἀναίτητον καὶ ἀφορολόγητον καὶ ἀδιάσειστόν τε ἀπὸ παντὸς ἐναντίου, καὶ τέλους καὶ δώσεως ἐλεύθερος ἔσται αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτὸν πατριάρχαι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ὁμοίως καὶ πάντες οἱ ὑποτεταγμένοι αὐτῷ ἀρχιερεῖς.

[The sultan] gave written decrees with royal authority and undersigned by him to the patriarch [*sc.* Gennadios II], which ensured that no man would hinder or annoy him; moreover, the patriarch was absolved of all taxation and tribute. The sultan further declared that all future patriarchs and their high clerics would enjoy the same privileges and similarly would be immune from taxation and tribute forever.

Based on this statement of Melissenos, scholarship has inferred a complete system of relations between the patriarchate and the Porte. Of particular significance seem to be the “written decrees” (προστάγματα ἐγγράφως), presumably a *firman* of some sort, with which Mehmed conferred these “privileges” to the patriarch.¹⁴³ As no other contemporary

¹⁴¹ For Scholarios' activities before and during the siege, cf. *OGN*, ch. 14. Concerning his incarceration immediately after the fall of the imperial city and Mehmed's intervention in his liberation, cf. Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, pp. 68-74.

¹⁴² *Maius* 3.11. The translation is quoted from Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, p. 136.

¹⁴³ Discussion with older bibliography in T. H. Papadopoulos, *Studies and Documents Relating to the History of the Greek Church and People under Turkish Domination* (Brussels, 1952; reissued New York, 1973; 2nd ed. with supplementary material: Aldershot, 1990), ch. 1.

evidence on this crucial point has survived, acceptance or rejection of this *firman* depends directly on the reliability of Melissourgos-Melissenos or on that of his immediate source.

Patriarch Theoleptos was confronted with the question of the conversion to Islam of the existing churches of Constantinople by the grandson of Mehmed II, Sultan Selim I Yavuz, ca. 1520. The patriarch, therefore, was forced to argue that the churches had been assigned to the Greek *millet* by the Conqueror himself following the sack of 1453, and he added the testimony of the three aged janissaries to substantiate his case:¹⁴⁴

... Ὁ Θεόληπτος ἀπεκρίθη ὅτι, " Ἄν ἦναι ἄδεια, θὰ ἐνθυμίσω τὴν Βασιλείαν Σου τὴν ἄλωσιν τῆς Πόλεως· οἱ πρόγονοί μας ἔδωσαν ἀναίματῶς τὸ ἥμισυ μέρος τῆς Πόλεως τῷ σουλτάν Μεχμέτ με τοιαύτας συμφωνίας α', ὅτι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῶν Χριστιανῶν νὰ μὴ γινῶνται τζαμία, β' ὅτι οἱ γάμοι, αἱ ταφαί, καὶ ἄλλα ἔθιμα τοῦ χριστιανισμοῦ νὰ γίνωνται ἀνεμποδίστως, γ' ἡ ἑορτὴ τοῦ Πάσχα με ἐλευθερίαν νὰ πανηγυρίζεται..." Τότε ὁ μουφτής ἠρώτησε τὸν πατριάρχη ἂν ἔχη τὸ ἔγγραφο ταύτης τῆς συμφωνίας· ἀπεκρίθη ὁ πατριάρχης ὅτι νὰ κατεκἀη ἀπὸ πυρκαϊᾶς, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἡμπορεῖ νὰ φέρῃ μάρτυρας τρεῖς γιαννιτζάρους αὐτόπτας τῆς τοιαύτης συμφωνίας. Ἦλθον οὗτοι καὶ οἱ τρεῖς, ἄγοντες ἔτος τῆς ἡλικίας πλησίον τῶν ἑκατόν, καὶ ἐμαρτυρήσαντο ὅτι ἦσαν παρόντες εἰς τὴν ἄλωσιν τῆς Πόλεως, καὶ ἐνθυμοῦνται ὅτι οἱ εὐγενεῖς αὐτῆς ὑπετάγησαν ἐκουσίως τῷ σουλτάν Μεχμέτ, ἐλθόντες καὶ εὐρόντες αὐτὸν ἔξω εἰς τὴν σκηνὴν του, καὶ ἀγαγόντες καὶ τὰς κλεῖς τῆς Πόλεως ἐπὶ χρυσοῦ πινακίου, καὶ ζητήσαντες παρ' αὐτοῦ τινα ἄρθρα ἄτινα ἐδέχθη ὁ σουλτάν Μεχμέτης.

Theoleptos responded: 'If it were permitted, I will remind your Majesty of the fall of the City. Our ancestors surrendered, without a fight, half of the City to Sultan

¹⁴⁴ A. K. Komnenos Hypsilantes, *Ἀθανασίου Κομνηνοῦ Ὑψηλάντου Ἐκκλησιαστικῶν καὶ Πολιτικῶν τῶν εἰς Δώδεκα, Βιβλίον Η' Θ' καὶ Ι' ἦτοι Τὰ Μετὰ τὴν Ἄλωσιν (1453-1789)* (Ἐκ Χειρογράφου Ἀνεκδότου τῆς Μονῆς τοῦ Σινᾶ), ed. A. Germanos (Constantinople, 1870); in Book II: 156-163, of his monumental *Turcograecia libri Octo à Martino Crusio, in Academia Tybigensi Graeco & Latino Professore, vtraque lingua edita. Qvibus Graecorum status sub imperio Turcico, in Politia & Ecclesia, Oeconomia, & Scholis, iam inde ab amissa Constantinopoli, ad haec usque tempora, luculenter describitur* (Basil, sine anno [1584]), Martinus Crusius [Martin Kraus] provides additional details about this incident, which is included in the so-called *Historia Patriarchica* embedded in the *Turcograecia*. This passage states that a patriarchal lawyer named Xenakes devised clever tactics that ensured the continuation of the patriarchal privileges. The text Crusius uses states that these events took place in the reigns of Patriarch Jeremiah and Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. This date is, of course, impossible, as there would have been no one alive from the days of the siege to testify in the court proceedings; therefore Crusius must have been referring to the events that took place in the reign of Selim I and somehow the chronology of this event has been garbled. Such incidents undoubtedly gave rise to the early legend that Constantinople had capitulated in 1453 and was not conquered by the sword; cf. S. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity: A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 189 ff.; and FC, Appendix 2; for a collection of Turkish sources on this matter, cf. J. H. Mordtmann, "Die Kapitulation von Konstantinopel im Jahre 1453," *BZ* 21 (1901): 129-144.

Mehmed under an agreement that (i.) the churches of the Christians would not become mosques, (ii.) weddings, funerals, and other Christian customs will continue unobstructed, and (iii.) the holiday of Easter will be celebrated freely....' The *mufti* asked the patriarch if he had the written document of this agreement. The patriarch responded that it had perished in a fire but that he could produce, however, three janissaries who were eyewitnesses to this pact. The three men, close to one hundred years old, came and testified that they were present at the fall of the City. They remembered that the noblemen of the City willingly submitted to Sultan Mehmed, that they came outside his tent, that they brought the keys of the City on a golden plate, and that they presented a number of petitions, which the Sultan Mehmed granted.

The essential point here is that Theoleptos could produce no legal document from his archives to substantiate his claim.

Yet Melissourgos-Melissenos, who wrote about sixty years after the event, must have employed in the pertinent section of his "composition" of the *Maius* a source that did mention this legal document, or was it an invented *firman* of some sort whose existence had been taken for fact by this time? Clearly, a document could not antedate the reign of Selim I, for the need to prove its existence did not arise before the beginning of the sixteenth century. Neither Mehmed II nor his successor Bayezid II threatened conversion of the handful of churches that had been left to the Greeks after the sack of 1453. Our knowledge for the incident *ca.* 1520 derives solely from the *Patriarchal History*, which Crusius embedded and translated into Latin in his *Turcograecia* in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. The author of the Greek text was reputed to be Manuel Malaxos. Our knowledge of Malaxos is at best scanty. What does seem certain is that Malaxos was a member of the immediate circle of the patriarch.¹⁴⁵ The sources of Malaxos have not been identified thus far, but his importance as an early historian of the patriarchate becomes

¹⁴⁵ On Malaxos, cf. G. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, 1 (2nd ed., Berlin 1958): 414-415; C. A. Papadopoulos, "Περὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Χρονογραφίας τοῦ ἸΣΤ' Αἰῶνος," *Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς Φάρος* 9 (1912): 410-454; and F. H. Marshall, "The Chronicle of Manuel Malaxos," *ByzJ* 16 (1972): 137-190. In addition, cf. now G. De 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. On the family of the Malaxoi, cf. C. Gastgeber, "Neues zur Familie der Malaxoi," *Jahrbuch des österreichischen Byzantinistik* 48 (1998): 273-291. For another scholarly member of this family, cf. now P. Schreiner, "John Malaxos (16th Century) and His Collection of *Antiquitates Constantinopolitanae*," in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*, ed. Nevra Neçipoglu, The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400-1453, 33 (Leiden, Boston, and Cologne, 2001): 203-214. Crusius notes that Malaxos had been a student of Matthew Kamariotes, one of the last scholars of Constantinople, who was still active in the days after the sack as the head of a small school. On Crusius' life, cf. S. Karouzou, *Μαρτῖνος Κρούσιος: Ὁ Πρῶτος Φιλέλλην* (Athens, 1973). Crusius was born in Bamberg on September 26, 1526, and the inscription on his tomb in Stiftskirche reads as follows, in Greek: Ἐνθάδε παιδευτῆς Μαρτῖνος Κρούσιος εὖδω / Ἑλλάδος ἐν Τυβίγγῃ μόνῳ σοί, Χριστέ, πεποιθῶς, and in a Latin paraphrase: *Crusius hic recubo, decui qui graeca utraque latina / diu, Christo spe nixus in uno.*

obvious in the absence of other documentary evidence and in view of the fact that his work has influenced western historiography concerning ecclesiastical affairs of the Levant. Crusius, who held the chair of Greek language at Tübingen from *ca.* 1555, was one of the few individuals in the west to display a lively interest in contemporary Greece under the sultans. Through the offices of Stephen Gerlach, the energetic Lutheran chaplain in Constantinople, Crusius began a regular correspondence with Greek officials at the patriarchate and even became involved in a badly conceived and ill-fated attempt to bring the Lutheran and Greek Churches together.¹⁴⁶ Crusius' lasting achievement was the direct result of his correspondence: the compilation of his famous *Turcograecia*,¹⁴⁷ the main source in the west for the history of Constantinople and the Greeks under the sultans. Fruitful was Crusius' correspondence with Theodosios Zygomalas (b. 1545),¹⁴⁸ a πρωτονοτάριος, "a first notary" of the patriarchate,¹⁴⁹ who furnished most of the

¹⁴⁶ Gerlach maintained a diary of his stay in Constantinople, which was published long after his death: *Stefan Gerlachs des Aeltern Tagebuch* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1674). On Gerlach, cf. E. Benz, *Die Ostkirche im Licht der protestantischen Geschichtsschreibung* (Freiburg, 1952), pp. 24-29. On the attempt of the Protestants and the Orthodox to come to an understanding through the efforts of Gerlach and Crusius, cf. Runciman, *The Great Church*, pp. 246-258.

¹⁴⁷ For the negative reaction of one Greek scholar, certainly an exception, from the Levant to the publication of the *Turcograecia*, cf. G. Fedalto, "Ancora su Massimo Margounio," *BollIstStorVenez* 5/6 (1964): 209-213.

¹⁴⁸ Zygomalas on occasion acted as interpreter for Patriarch Jeremiah II during visits by westerners. It was in fact Zygomalas who introduced Gerlach to the patriarch. Zygomalas' erudition was unusual for that dark period and was often praised by scholars. He was Crusius' chief assistant for the compilation of material that found its way into the *Turcograecia*. He was a critical reporter who sometimes correctly doubted the information that he passed on to the professor at Tübingen. A tale circulated in Constantinople at that time that stated that Constantine XI, the last Greek emperor, had put to death his queen and his children before his capital fell to the Turks. Crusius was intrigued with the question of identifying the last empress and asked Zygomalas to investigate the matter. Zygomalas was very cautious in his reply: *φέρεται δὲ λόγος ὅτι ὁ πρότερον μεταδούς [sc. Constantine XI] τῶν θείων μυστηρίων τοῖς παισὶν αὐτοῦ, τῇ βασιλίσση καὶ πολλοῖς συγγενέσι καὶ οἰκείοις ἅπαντας ἀποκεφαλίσθῃναι προσέταξε τοῦ μὴ αἰχμαλωσίας τυχεῖν. βασιλίσης ὄνομα ὑστάτης οὐκ οἶδα. ἡρώτησα πολλοῖς, καὶ οὐδεὶς μοι εἶχε λέγειν ἀληθείας ῥήματα ἢ γραφὴν δεῖξαι* (*Turcograecia* 96). In fact, the last emperor had neither children nor a wife in 1453. If one bases a judgment of the correspondences between Zygomalas' language in his report to Crusius and the verse chronicle entitled *Χρονικὸν περὶ τῆς τῶν Τούρκων Βασιλείας* by Hierax (in C. N. Sathas, ed., *Μεσαιωνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, Bibliotheca graeca medii, 1 [Venice, 1872; repr. Athens, 1972]: 243-268), it becomes clear that Zygomalas knew of this poem, which reports the same legend. In spite of Zygomalas' caution, Crusius remained convinced of the existence of a last empress and even composed a Greek epigram in her honor. Cf. G. T. Zoras, "Αἱ Τελευταῖαι Στιγμαὶ τοῦ Κωνσταντίνου Παλαιολόγου καὶ τοῦ Μωάμεθ τοῦ Κατακτητοῦ," *Ἑλληνικὴ Δημιουργία* 8 (1951): 202-210 (= G. T. Zoras, *Περὶ τὴν Ἀλωσιν τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* [Athens, 1959], pp. 125-133). On Zygomalas, cf. G. De Gregorio, "Studi su copisti greci del tardo Cinquecento: II. Ioannes Malaxos e Theodosios Zygomalas," *Römische historische Mitteilungen* 38 (1996): 189-268.

¹⁴⁹ On the administrative offices of the patriarchate, cf. Papadopoulos, *Studies and Documents*, pp. 26-60.

material that found its way into the *Turcograecia*. It was Zygomalas who brought to the attention of Crusius the *Historia Patriarchica* of Manuel Malaxos.¹⁵⁰ In fact, before Malaxos' material was shipped to Crusius, it was copied and personally corrected by Zygomalas. The manuscript was completed in April 1577, and was dispatched to Crusius in 1581. In 1584 it appeared embedded, with Crusius' Latin translation, in the *Turcograecia*.

The *Historia Patriarchica* has proved to be a treasure of information for the history of the patriarchs after the fall of Constantinople. Given the deplorable state created by the lack of other archival documentation, by necessity it has been our basic source for this period, not only for the history of the patriarchate but also for that of Ottoman Greece in general. Thus, it is because of Manuel Malaxos, through Crusius, that the western world learned some particulars about Gennadios II's reign and of his immediate successors. However, there are persistent rumors in our sources to suggest that Manuel Malaxos was not, after all, the actual author of the *Historia Patriarchica*. Stephen Gerlach himself believed that Manuel Malaxos was only the copyist of the manuscript that was sent to Crusius and not its author.¹⁵¹ Further, Malaxos himself simply states in the text: μεταγλώτισσεν εἰς κοινὴν φράσιν, "he translated into the common idiom," which implies that he merely changed the linguistic form and literary style of another extant and accessible work.¹⁵²

What then was this source, or the original composition, that proved so influential on the early patriarchate? Damaskenos the Studite as a literary figure has been neglected by modern scholarship.¹⁵³ Reared in Thessaloniki, he served as the metropolitan of

¹⁵⁰ Attention should be directed to a recent article by Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, "La chute de Constantinople en 1453 et la mythologie postérieure," in *Turcica et Islamica: Studi in Memoria di Aldo Gallota*, ed. U. Marazzi (Naples, 2003), esp. pp. 1027-1031, wherein she analyzes the role of Malaxos in the creation of a post-fall mythology. Her article was reprinted in *eadem*, *Studies in Pre-Ottoman Turkey and the Ottomans* (Aldershot, 2007), Essay XXIV.

¹⁵¹ *Turcograecia* 90; Gerlach, p. 448.

¹⁵² The *Historia Patriarchica* attributed to Malaxos was edited by I. Bekker in *Historia politica et patriarchica Constantinopoleos. Epirotica* and was published in the Bonn corpus (CSHB [Bonn, 1849], pp. 78-204). In addition, the same text can be found in *PG* 160: 316 ff. Occasionally scholars confuse Manuel Malaxos with his relative Nikolaos Malaxos, who compiled the Greek version of the *Nomocanon*.

¹⁵³ The only recent studies of Damaskenos as a literary figure have been provided by, first, L. N. Manou, *Δαμασκηνός ο Στουδίτης: Ο Βίος και το Έργο του* (Athens, 1999), which provides a list of all his known works and even edits some of his unpublished compositions. Unfortunately, Manou is of the opinion that this *History* is not by Damaskenos himself. She assigns the title Κατάλογος Χρονογραφικός τῶν Πατριαρχῶν Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ὑπὸ Δαμασκηνοῦ (Στουδίτου) and states, p. 94, that this is an "ἔργο μὴ αποδιδόμενο στο Δαμασκηνό." She identifies this manuscript as a "compilation from Romulus to Sultan Murad III, that is, up to 1570." Manou never explains why this work should not be attributed to Damaskenos, but she simply states (p. 95) that "later research has shown that this work is not by Damaskenos." In the accompanying note (p. 95, n. 153), she cites an article by A. Kipritschnikow, "Eine volkstümliche Kaiserchronik," *BZ* 1 (1892): 303-315; and another by C. A. Papadopoulos, "Περὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Χρονογραφίας," pp. 414 ff. The case has not been decided. For more recent assessments (apparently unknown to Manou), cf. M. Philippides, "Damaskenos the Stoudite (ca. 1530-1577),"

Naupaktos (Lepanto) and Arta and was active during this period.¹⁵⁴ Damaskenos composed a *History of the Patriarchs of Constantinople* from the time of Constantine the Great to ca. 1570. He completed his work about 1572. From the linguistic evidence that will be presently examined, it will become clear that our ultimate source for the history of the patriarchate is this work by Damaskenos. His text was copied, elaborated slightly, and, in some cases, even supplemented by Manuel Malaxos and Theodosios Zygomalas. In this corrected form it was sent to Crusius and eventually appeared in the *Turcograecia*.

The story, however, does not end here. We have already seen that the ceremony for the elevation of Gennadios II by Mehmed II and the “privileges” that the Conqueror granted the Greek patriarch were described by Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos in his *Chronicon Maius*. Melissourgos-Melissenos must have employed, in the composition of Book III of the *Maius*, a source that mentions this (invented?) *firman* of Mehmed, whose existence was so crucial in the incident involving Patriarch Theoleptos and Sultan Selim Yavuz. A close reading of the relevant passage in Melissourgos-Melissenos reveals that indeed he derived most of his information on the enthronement of Gennadios II from the *Historia Patriarchica*, which is attributed to Malaxos or more likely directly copied from a manuscript, if not the actual autograph of Damaskenos, the source of Malaxos’ *Historia*.

That Makarios Melissourgos-Melissenos was also familiar with a form of this text is not surprising. He had an extended stay in Constantinople, in close proximity to the patriarchate, while he was involved in a dispute with regard to ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the city of Androusa in the Morea.¹⁵⁵ During his sojourn Makarios must have become familiar, as is evident in Book III, with Constantinopolitan topography. He has for instance attempted to improve on topographical details that he encountered in western sources, and specifically in his primary source that he read and paraphrased into Greek, the Latin *epistula* of Bishop Leonardo Giustiniani.¹⁵⁶ Makarios elaborated upon, “improved,” and occasionally even corrected the Latin account. It is not quite clear as yet whether Makarios worked directly from the Latin text, from an Italian version, or even from a Greek vernacular paraphrase that has not come down to us.¹⁵⁷ The fact that he dedicated time to “research” demonstrates that he was already acquiring materials for his elaboration of the *Minus*, which he completed in Italy after he fled from the Levant,

in *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Kafadar, Karateke, and Fleischer, electronic article, 6 pp.; and *idem*, “Patriarchal Chronicles of the Sixteenth Century,” *GRBS* 25 (1984): 87-94. The precise identification of the author is not important for our purposes here. What is significant is that such a work had been composed by this time; its eventual publication ought to shed further light on the history of the patriarchate of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

¹⁵⁴ There is no entry for Damaskenos in Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, nor in the *ODB*. Runciman, *The Great Church*, knows of him but erroneously describes his manuscript as an unpublished history of Constantinople. On Damaskenos, cf. M. Gedeon, “Δαμασκηνός Στουδίτης,” *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* 3 (1883): 85-91 (649-661).

¹⁵⁵ Khasiotes, *Μακάριος*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁵⁶ Philippides, “The Fall of Constantinople.”

¹⁵⁷ Philippides, “The Fall of Constantinople 1453: Bishop Leonardo Giustiniani,” pp. 189-227.

probably by 1577, since the earliest *codices* of the *Maius* date to 1577 and 1578.¹⁵⁸ He eventually was buried in Naples. His family tomb bore an inscription in Greek. The monument has disappeared but a Latin translation of its inscription had been preserved and includes the following information:¹⁵⁹

Macarius Archiepisc<opus> Epidauren(sis)...ex praeclarissima Melissenorum et Comnenorum familia et D<ominus> Theodorus germanus frater...Neapoli ...ceciderunt...Macarius pridie Idus Septemb<ris> anno sal. human. MDLXXXV.

Makarios, Archbishop of Epidauros [that is, Monembasia in the Morea]...from the most illustrious family of Melissenoi and Komnenoi and [his] own brother D<ominus> Theodoros...in Naples...departed... Makarios on the day before the Ides of September, the year of human healthfulness, 1585.

The equivalent text in a surviving Greek version, though probably not the original inscription on the tomb but a translation or rendition from the Latin version of the inscription, reads as follows:

Μακάριος ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ἐπιδαύρου...ἐκ τῆς περιφανεστάτης οικογενείας Μελισσηνῶν καὶ Κομνηνῶν οἰκίας καὶ Θεόδωρος αὐτάδελφος...ἐν Νεαπόλει ...κατέπεσον...Μακάριος δωδεκάτῃ Σεπτεμβρίου, ἔτει σωτηρίῳ αἴφε'.

¹⁵⁸ The manuscript tradition of the *Maius* is discussed by Maisano; and by Khasiotes, *Μακάριος*, pp. 175 ff. One manuscript, the *codex Ambros. P 24 sup.*, was copied by Makarios' close associate (and a forger himself), Andreas Darmarios, who was from Monemvasia (at the end of the manuscript he identifies himself and further notes that he completed the *codex* in Toledo, Spain, on September 17, 1578); on one of his many trips to Italy Darmarios was given the material he needed by Makarios. Under Makarios' direct supervision in Naples the codices *Ambros. P. 123 sup.* and *Hierosol. 38* were both copied by the Cypriot copyist Santamaura, who was closely connected with Makarios in Naples in 1577. One additional *codex*, which was read by Leo Allatius in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul in Naples, may be the actual autograph of Makarios but it has long since disappeared, although Khasiotes is of the opinion that it may be identified with the existing *Codex II E.25* in the National Library of Naples (Khasiotes, *Μακάριος*, p. 173, n. 5).

¹⁵⁹ Khasiotes, *Μακάριος*, pp. 64-69, discusses this monument of the Melissenoi and notes that, along with two other tombs, it was demolished in 1634 when the church underwent major renovations. Khasiotes considers the Greek inscription a retranslation (and a "bad translation" at that) of the Latin rendering. We are not convinced that he is correct on this detail. The author of the Greek "translation," Khasiotes believes, was the scholar Nikephoros Sebastos Melissenos, a nephew (not to be confused with his well-known cousin, also called Nikephoros, who was an industrious forger himself). On the other hand, would not Nikephoros Sebastos, out of pride at the very least as he idolized his uncle Makarios, have recorded the inscription on the family tomb in its original form? After all, many others, at that time, had seen and read it before it was destroyed. What purpose would yet another obvious forgery serve?