

The Fall of Constantinople: Bishop Leonard and the Greek Accounts

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THE WORK attributed to George Sphrantzes¹ (1401–1477) has come down to us in two different forms: a short version, the *Chronicon Minus*, and a much larger account, the *Chronicon Maius*. The latter incorporates all of the *Minus*, with a few significant alterations, and presents additional information about events and personalities, as well as a number of irrelevant digressions of little if any historical value. It was once believed that the *Minus* was either a later epitome of the *Maius* or that it represented the notes which Sphrantzes had collected during his active years and which he later expanded into the *Maius* during his residence at Corfu.² Book III of the *Maius* includes a detailed description of the siege, fall, and sack of Constantinople in 1453; the *Minus* devotes only a small section to the siege and its immediate aftermath with no detailed narrative. Because the *Maius* was supposedly written by Sphrantzes, an eyewitness, who was also a functionary of the court and a personal friend of Constantine XI Palaeologus, Book III of the *Maius* was generally held to be of the highest importance in regard to events of the siege.

In 1934, however, J. B. Falier-Papadopoulos demonstrated that the *Chronicon Maius* could not be considered a genuine account by Sphrantzes; only the *Minus* could be his authentic work, while the *Maius* must have been elaborated in a later period.³ By 1936 a candidate for the composition of the *Maius* had been identified: Makarios Melissenos-Melissourgos, the metropolitan of Monemvasia and a notorious forger of Palaeologan chrysobulls, in his

¹ For the proper form of this name cf. V. Laurent, *BZ* 44 (1951) 373–78, and *REByz* 9 (1951) 170–71.

² On the life of Sphrantzes see M. Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire: A Chronicle by George Sphrantzes, 1401–1477* (Amherst 1980), esp. 17f. All quotations from the *Maius* are taken from the critical edition (with Roumanian translation) by V. Grecu, *Georgios Sphrantzes, Memorii 1401–1477. În anexă Pseudo-Phrantzes: Macarie Melissenos Cronica, 1258–1481* (Scriptores Byzantini V: Bucharest 1966).

³ J. B. Falier-Papadopoulos, “Phrantzès est-il réellement l’auteur de la grand chronique qui porte son nom?” *Actes du IV^e Congrès international des études byzantines* (BullInst ArchBulg 9, 1935) 177–89.

Italian-Spanish period, following the battle of Lepanto, almost one century or more after the death of Sphrantzes.⁴ J.-R. Loenertz, in a monumental comparative study of the *Minus* and the *Maius*, concluded that the *Maius* had indeed been elaborated in a later period by a forger who had consulted and even imitated passages from Laonikos Khalkokondylas.⁵ Papadopoulos further showed in 1939 that certain parts of the siege section in Book III bore a resemblance to sections of the narrative in the Latin letter of Bishop Leonard de Langasco of Chios to Pope Nicholas V. Leonard gives an account of his participation in the defense of the Byzantine capital in 1453; his letter was probably finished by 16 August 1453, and thus presents one of the earliest accounts of this event.⁶ Papadopoulos observed that Leonard's narrative of events was followed in the arrangement of episodes by Book III of the *Maius*. Moreover, both the *Maius* and the Latin letter fail to mention the role of Orhan, Mehmed's distant relative, in the defense of Constantinople, while most other authors, including Doukas, Kritoboulos, and Khalkokondylas, know of Orhan and of his eventual death. Papadopoulos concluded with the observation that the quarrel between Giovanni Giustiniani Longo and Loukas Notaras, the Grand Duke, as well as the animal similes in the emperor's last speech, and the description of the colors of the dawn on 29 May 1453, in the *Maius* ultimately derived from Leonard's Latin text. Since then G. Zoras has clearly shown that the speech of Constantine XI before the final assault in the *Maius* is dependent on

⁴ "Über 'Maius' und 'Minus' des Georgios Phrantzes und über die Randnoten des angeblichen Pachomios," BZ 38 (1938) 323-31; cf. his "Ιωάννης Ζ' ὁ Παλαιολόγος καὶ τὸ Χρονικὸν τοῦ Φραντζῆ," BZ 32 (1932) 257-62. On the life of Makarios Melissenos-Melissourgos and his elaboration of the *Maius*, cf. I. K. Khasiotes, *Μακάριος, Θεόδωρος καὶ Νικηφόρος οἱ Μελισσηνοὶ (Μελισσουργοὶ) (16ος-17ος αἰ.)* (Thessalonica 1966), esp. 171ff; F. Dölger, "Ein literarischer und diplomatischer Fälscher des 16. Jahrhunderts: Metropolit Makarios von Monembasia," in *Otto Glaunig zum 60. Geburtstag, Festangabe aus Wissenschaft und Bibliothek* (Leipzig 1936) 25-36 (= *Byzantinische Diplomatie* [Ettal 1956] 371-83). Also cf. V. Grecu, "Georgios Sphrantzes: Leben und Werk—Makarios Melissenos und sein Werk—Die Ausgaben," *Byzantinoslavica* 26 (1965) 62-73, and "Das Memoirenwerk des Georgios Sphrantzes," *Actes du XII^e Congrès internationale des études byzantines* (Ohrid 1961) 327-41.

⁵ "Autour du Chronicon Maius attribué à Georges Phrantzès," in *Miscellanea G. Mercati* III (*Studi e Testi* 123 [1946]) 273-311; cf. his "La date de la lettre θ' de Manuel Paléologue et l'inauthenticité du 'Chronicon Maius' des Georges Phrantzès," *EchO* 39 (1940/42) 91-99.

⁶ Leonard's text will be quoted from Migne, PG 159.923ff. For an English translation of this letter see J. R. Melville Jones, *The Siege of Constantinople: Seven Contemporary Accounts* (Amsterdam 1972) 11-42.

Leonard; and this speech may well have originated with Leonard himself and not with an actual historical event.⁷

The similarities between the *Maius* and Leonard's letter do not end here; other sections of the *Maius*, it will be demonstrated, are derived from Leonard. In particular the 'Catalogue' of the defendants and their assigned positions on the fortifications in Melissenos' account are based on Leonard to a large extent. It is not simply the arrangement of the combatants or the order of presentation of the events, already observed by Papadopoulos, that point to such conclusions; it will be shown that there is a linguistic dimension to this problem also, which clearly proves that Melissenos' Greek account in Book III is frequently no more than a direct translation or paraphrase of Leonard's Latin text.

Most scholars have come to accept the fact that the siege section of *Maius* III is at best a secondary document and at worst a derivative work of dubious value. This position has recently been challenged in a lengthy series of articles by M. Carroll.⁸ In spite of her ingenious arguments, none of which is linguistic or textual, Miss Carroll's attempt to elevate the siege section of the *Maius* to respectability as a primary source remains unconvincing. Her suggestion that Melissenos may have expanded a different version of the *Minus*, lost to us, which dealt with the siege of 1453 and which was composed by Sphrantzes himself, lacks positive evidence, and most arguments are reduced to omissions of events in both the *Maius* and the *Minus*. Most importantly, this challenge fails to recognize the importance of Leonard in the composition of the siege section of the *Maius*. Such speculation can be refuted by the combined results of Papadopoulos, Loenertz, Zoras, and the linguistic testimony presented in this study, which, in the final analy-

⁷ J. B. Falier-Papadopoulos, "Ἡ περὶ Ἀλώσεως τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Ἱστορία Λεωνάρδου τοῦ Χίου," *EBS* 15 (1939) 85–95. G. T. Zoras, *Περὶ τὴν Ἀλωσιν τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* (Athens 1959) 71–102. Pseudo-Phrantzes has exercised immense influence over nineteenth and twentieth century historians; in an earlier period Gibbon proved more cautious: "I am afraid that this discourse [the emperor's last speech] 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" (*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. J. B. Bury [London 1902], VII 188 n.76). In this century Pseudo-Phrantzes still exercises considerable influence; cf., e.g., S. Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople 1453* (Cambridge 1965), who is aware of the unreliability of the *Maius* but chooses to incorporate some of the more suspicious events into his narrative without due caution.

⁸ M. Carroll, "Notes on the Authorship of the 'Siege' Section of the *Chronicon Maius* of Pseudo-Phrantzes, Book III," *Byzantion* 41 (1971) 28–44, 42 (1972) 5–22, 43 (1973) 30–38, and 44 (1974) 17–22.

sis, proves that the greatest part of Melissenos' narrative in Book III is based on Leonard unambiguously.

In the sixteenth century Leonard was also used as a source by another Greek writer besides Melissenos. In 1908 S. Lampros described briefly a newly discovered manuscript (*Barberinus gr.* 111), which was later examined by Moravcsik; in time Moravcsik realized that the anonymous author had also made use of Leonard's letter in his treatment of the siege of 1453.⁹ The Greek codex is a copy of a lost original; in its present state it is both acephalous and incomplete. The surviving passages were finally edited and published by G. Zoras in 1958.¹⁰ Internal evidence implies that the anonymous author may have completed his Chronicle by 1530, but a later date, within the sixteenth century, cannot be ruled out.¹¹ Like Melissenos, this author also exhibits a strong tendency to depend on Leonard's letter, duplicating the Latin text both in the arrangement of events and in phraseology. Neither writer seems to have been aware of the other, or of the accounts of Doukas and Kritoboulos; both, however, employed as a source, perhaps indirectly through a possible Italian translation,¹² sections of Khalkokondylas, in addition to Leonard's letter.¹³ It is further conceivable, but by no means certain, that the anonymous author also used Ottoman sources.¹⁴

⁹ This manuscript is discussed by G. Moravcsik, "Άγνωστον Έλληνικόν Χρονικόν περί τῆς Ἱστορίας τῶν Ὀθωμανῶν Σουλτάνων," *PraktAkAth* 5 (1930) 447–49; cf. S. Lampros, "Περὶ τινων Βαρβερινῶν Κωδίκων," *Νέος Έλληνομνήμων* 5 (1908) 454f, and Moravcsik, "Bericht des Leonardus Chiensis über den Fall von Konstantinopel in einer vulgärgriechischen Quelle," *BZ* 44 (1951) 428–36.

¹⁰ G. T. Zoras, *Χρονικόν περί τῶν Τούρκων Σουλτάνων (κατὰ τὸν Βαρβερινὸν Έλληνικὸν Κώδικα 111)* (Athens 1958); cf. the review by G. G. Arnakis in *Speculum* 36 (1961) 709–12. I am currently preparing a translation with detailed historical commentary of this Chronicle.

¹¹ The author seems unaware that the fortress of Korone (Coron) fell into the hands of Andrea Doria in 1532; the Chronicle only mentions that the janissaries seized Korone in 1500 and hold it "to the present day." E. A. Zachariadou, *Τὸ Χρονικὸ τῶν Τούρκων Σουλτάνων (τοῦ Βαρβερينوῦ Έλληνικοῦ Κώδικα 111) καὶ τὸ Ἱταλικό του Πρότυπο* (Thessalonica 1960), has attempted to establish a later date, within the sixteenth century, for the composition of this work; see however the reservations of Arnakis (*supra* n.10) as to the criteria employed. Codex 111 is a later copy of a lost original. Thus the Chronicle can be dated either *ca* 1530 (Zoras) or after 1573 (Zachariadou).

¹² *Infra* n.28 for details on this possible Italian source.

¹³ On the career and life of Leonard, see in general the convenient summary in Runciman (*supra* n.7) 69ff and 91ff.

¹⁴ Ş. Baştav, "Les sources d'une Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman rédigée par un auteur anonyme grec (1374–1421)," *Belleten* 21 (1957) 161–72, who suggests, but does not prove, that the anonymous author may have used Aşıkpaşazade as his source; cf. the reservations expressed by Arnakis (*supra* n.10). See also Ş. Baştav, "XVI asırda yazılmış grekçe anonim osmanlı tarihine göre İstanbul'un muhasarası ve zabtı," *Belleten* 18 (1954) 51–82.

The linguistic dependence on Leonard will become apparent in the close examination of a few instances.

1. Leonard 934B, Melissenos 5.4–5 (252b, 254b), Anonymous 84.9–13: the confusion of the emperor, his confidence in Giovanni Giustiniani and his three hundred armored soldiers, and the danger of the Saint Romanos sector. Leonard's Latin text has been paraphrased by the Greek authors. Direct translations include: Leonard, *paucitate suorum diffidens, cum trecentis commilitonibus Genuensibus . . . delectis quidem coadjunctis Graecis, circa illam partem murorum Sancti Romani, ubi magis urgebat pugna*; Melissenos, διὰ τὴν ὀλιγότητα ἡμῶν, ἵνα μετὰ τριακοσίων στρατιωτῶν Ἰταλῶν καὶ Ῥωμαίων, ἐν τοῖς μέρεσι τῆς πύλης τοῦ ἁγίου Ῥωμανοῦ, ἔνθα . . . πλεῖον τῶν ἄλλων μερῶν ἐμάχοντο; Anonymous, εἶχε μεγάλη σύχνησι, ἔδωσέ του τριακόσους συντρόφους καὶ ἔστεκότονε κ' ἐφύλαγε εἰς τὴν πόρτα τοῦ Ἀγίου Ῥωμανοῦ, ἀπάνω ὧς τὰ τειχία, διατὶ ἐκεῖ ἦτονε τὸ πλέο κίνδυνο. Moreover, the anonymous author has been quite faithful to Leonard's text at this point, rendering the force of *commilitonibus* by συντρόφους and of *aliquot* by καμπόσους.

2. Leonard 934c, Melissenos 5.4 (253b), Anonymous 84.13–18: the sector defended by Maurice of Genoa. Melissenos, at first sight, seems to have made a mistake in regard to the commander, whom he names as Manuel from Genoa. Maurice was the captain of the Genoese ships that managed to break through the blockade of the Turkish fleet and provision Constantinople. Quite correctly Papadopoulos observed that 'Manuel' must be a copyist's error, which should be emended to 'Mauricius'.¹⁵ It is evident in the phraseology of this passage that both Melissenos and the author of the Chronicle have rendered into Greek the exact information provided in the Latin text. Leonard tells us that Maurice had been placed *inter portam Pighi, id est fontis, usque ad Auream*. This reference is suppressed in Melissenos, who mentions only "the Gate called Golden." The same is true of the anonymous author, who mentions the Golden Gate but not Pege (further known as Selybria, Silivri).¹⁶ Moreover, Melissenos has assigned Theophilos Palaeologus to the Gate of Selybria, in major disagreement with Leonard. It is possible that both the anonymous author and Me-

¹⁵ Falier-Papadopoulos (*supra* n.7) 92; this suggestion was not adopted by V. Grecu in his edition of the *Maius*.

¹⁶ On this gate see A. Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople: The Walls of the City and Adjoining Historical Sites* (London 1899) 74ff.

lissenos were using a version of Leonard's letter in which the text may have differed slightly (the explanatory *id est fontis* may not be original in the Latin text either: it is not Leonard's practice to provide translations of Greek toponyms in Constantinople, and this may thus be regarded as a gloss). It should be further observed that the Greek texts have neglected Leonard's qualifiers for Maurice, *vir nobilis* and *praefectus*. Furthermore, the two Greek authors describe Maurice's duties in very similar phraseology, which does not derive from Leonard's letter; *φυλάττειν* (Melissenos) and *νὰ φυλάγῃ* (Anonymous) may thus point to a version that both authors were using; this hypothetical text must have been in Greek, employing here some form of *φυλάττω*. The following is the closest parallel in all three texts: Leonard's *lignum castrum, pelibus boum contectum oppositum accurate decertat* is rendered as *ἐλέπολιν ἐναντίαν, καὶ αὐτὴ μετὰ βουβάλων καὶ βοῶν δορῶν ἐνδεδυμένην* (Melissenos) and as *τοῦ καστελλίου ὁποῦ ἐκάμανε οἱ Τοῦρκοι καὶ τὸ ἐπολέμα ἀνδρείως. Τὸ ὁποῖο καστέλλι ἦτονε ξύλινο* (Anonymous).

3. Leonard 934CD, Melissenos 5.4 (253b), Anonymous 84.18–24: the Bocchiardi brothers. Here are some of the closest parallels between the Greek texts and Leonard's account; Melissenos seems to have lifted whole phrases from the Latin letter. We are informed that the Bocchiardi brothers defended the Myriandriion and resisted prolonged attacks so bravely that their deeds can be compared to those of ancient heroes. Among the most notable translations from Latin are *πεζοί τε καὶ ἵππαιοι* by which Melissenos has rendered *nunc pedes nunc eques*, and *καὶ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας*, matched by *μέρα καὶ νύκτα* in the anonymous account, for Leonard's *noctu dieque*; in this last instance Melissenos has even retained the proper word order for the Latin idiom; in the Greek equivalent phrase the order is normally reversed, as in the Chronicle (*cf.* *ἡμερονύκτιον* and *μερονύχτι* in modern Greek—the order is never reversed). In this phrase Melissenos clearly betrays his Latin source. In this section only Melissenos has produced an approximation of the correct form of this sector of the fortifications. The Myriandriion, also known as the Mesoteikhion, was situated in the middle section of the walls near the Gate of Polyandriion, which may explain Leonard's form, *Miliandriio*.¹⁷ The danger of this position is indicated by identical phrases, likewise the praises for the courage of the Bocchiardi brothers. Perhaps the most impor-

¹⁷ Van Millingen (*supra* n.16) 28ff.

tant parallel appears at the end, in Leonard's comparison of the Bocchiardi brothers with the deeds of Horatius Cocles and its echo in the Greek texts. Melissenos has deleted the reference to Horatius, who may not have meant much to Greek readers; his last sentence, however, indicates that the author had ancient heroes in mind, thus betraying his Latin prototype, as is suggested by *ἄθλα καὶ γέρα*, words with archaic flavor, evoking the realm of myths and legends. That some form of Leonard's letter was in front of Melissenos in the composition of this passage is undoubtedly demonstrated and confirmed by "the eternal memory" comment, which can only be regarded as a paraphrase of Leonard's conclusion. The anonymous author also indicates his dependence on Leonard rather differently: he compares the Bocchiardi brothers to Achilles, surely a more meaningful comparison to Greek readers and a stock formula for this author whenever he mentions antiquity. Even though he has deleted "the eternal memory" of Leonard's statement, he betrays his source both in lexical items and in the structure of his sentence, as he closely reproduces the fearless character of the Bocchiardi:

qui tanta animositate, nunc pedes nunc eques, defendunt, ut Horatii Coclitis vires repulsis hostibus aequare viderentur. Nam nec muri fracti concussionem, nec machinarum turbine terri, aeternam memoriam vindicant.

καὶ φόνον εἰς αὐτοὺς οὐκ ὀλίγον ἐποίουν καὶ μέρος μὲν τῶν κλιμάκων αὐτῶν ἔσω ἔσυρον, μέρος δὲ ἔθλαζον καὶ τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἄθλα καὶ γέρα μνήμης αἰωνίου ὑπῆρχον ἄξια (Melissenos).

καὶ αὐτοὶ τοὺς ἐκαταδιώχνασι καὶ τοὺς ἐρρίχνασι κάτω καὶ τοὺς ἐσκοτώνασι. Καὶ ἐκάμνασι ὡς Ἀχιλλέοι καὶ δὲν ἐφοβούντησαν τοὺς Ἀγαρηνοὺς μηδὲ διὰ τίποτε (Anonymous).

Mention must be made here of the sections in which the Greek authors agree with each other but do not seem to have drawn their information from Leonard's letter directly. Thus both authors may betray another source, perhaps Greek, as the word *συχνάκις* in Melissenos finds a counterpart in the Chronicle, *καμμία βολά*, but reflects no prototype in Leonard's text. In addition, both Greek authors mention hand-to-hand combat on the walls. Even though the fortifications may have been ultimately suggested by Leonard's *muri fracti*, which may have further influenced Melissenos' choice of *ἔθλαζον*, both authors may have been drawing information from another Greek account, as their choice of words is quite similar (e.g., *ἀπεδιώχθησαν* and *ἐκαταδιώχνασι* in Melissenos and in the Chronicle, but absent in Leonard).

4. Leonard 934D, Melissenos 5.5 (253b), Anonymous 84.24–29: Theodore from Karystos, Theophilos Palaeologus, and John from Germany (John Grant), placed in charge of Caligaria Gate by Leonard and the Chronicle. Melissenos' account, however, provides the greatest departure from Leonard's information. Melissenos reproduces the qualifiers for Theodore almost word-for-word from Leonard and assigns the same erudition to Theophilos but omits Leonard's *nobilis*, perhaps because it is evident in Theophilos' family name, Palaeologus. Theodore, described by Leonard as *in arcu doctissimus*, is given the same skill in Melissenos, who has conveyed the superlative force by a prepositional phrase, *τοξότη ἡσκημένῳ ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον*. Then a departure from Leonard's information follows.

Why Melissenos assigned the sector of Selybria Gate to Theophilos Palaeologus remains obscure. Leonard, as we have seen, had placed Maurice in charge of the Pege Gate. It is well known that 'Pege' and 'Selybria' refer to the same location. In the Byzantine period this gate was known as Pege because it was situated near the Holy Spring, the present Baloukli. It was only after the fall, or shortly before, that Pege Gate became generally known as the Selybria Gate.¹⁸ Perhaps this mention of Selybria instead of Pege may be regarded as another indication of the late composition of the *Mainus*. In July 1570 Markarios Melissenos-Melissourgos personally visited Constantinople in order to argue his own case against Sophronios, the metropolitan of Khristianopolis, in regard to jurisdiction over Androusa; Melissenos won the case, even though suspicions arose as to the nature of the documents that he presented; these documents had been forged, in all likelihood.¹⁹ During his stay in Constantinople Melissenos must have heard tales that were in circulation about the siege of 1453; some he may have incorporated in his elaboration of Sphrantzes' *Minus*. Thus the mention of Pege as Selybria may be reasonably attributed to a story picked up by Melissenos, which also assigned Theophilos to this sector.

Leonard tells us that Theodore and Theophilos were Catholic. That both Greek authors have deleted this may be indicative, once more, of their following a third source. Moreover, the reference to John (Grant) from Germany, who may have actually been of Scottish extraction,²⁰ is followed closely by the two authors. And they

¹⁸ Van Millingen (*supra* n.16) 28ff.

¹⁹ On Melissenos' visit to Constantinople, cf. Khasiotes (*supra* n.4) 84.

²⁰ Runciman (*supra* n.7) 84.

have rendered Leonard's *proteguntque* with the same choice of word, ἵνα φυλάττωσι and ἐφυλάγασι, which may point to another, unknown version of Leonard's letter in Greek, which must have included some form of φυλάττω.

5. Leonard 934D–935A, Melissenos 5.4 (252b), Anonymous 84.30–33: the positions of Contarini and Minotto. It should be pointed out that Melissenos begins his catalogue with Contarini and even here, within the same passage, has reversed Leonard's order of presentation, as is his normal practice. The anonymous author has remained faithful to Leonard's order throughout his catalogue. Melissenos in his discussion of Contarini has elaborated Leonard's descriptive *viriliter* by a relative clause: ὃς οὐ διέλιπε ποιεῖν τὰ ὅσα ἔξεστι στρατιώταις καὶ μάλιστα τοῖς εὐγενέσι. Melissenos then adds other details to the sector assigned to Contarini, which he may have derived from his own first-hand knowledge of Constantinopolitan topography. The anonymous author presents his frequent formula for Venetian noblemen, τζιντιλόμος Βενετζάνος, and, like Melissenos, makes mention of the harbor, which is absent in Leonard, perhaps again indicating a Greek version of Leonard's letter consulted by the two authors. Both authors accurately reproduce from Leonard the information about Minotto and the palace.

6. Leonard 935A, Melissenos 5.5 (254b), Anonymous 84.29–85.5: Cardinal Isidore, who guarded Saint Demetrios' region; Loukas Notaras, in charge of the harbor; the protection of the Wooden Gate; and the sector guarded by Bishop Leonard himself. Once more the anonymous author has preserved the order of presentation and, to a large extent, the phraseology of Leonard. Melissenos has altered the order but, it remains evident, bases his information on Leonard, even though he has appended his usual topographical details, especially in regard to the districts of the capital, with which he may have been quite familiar. Both Melissenos and the Chronicle depart from Leonard when they omit the name of the Catalan consul.²¹ Likewise in their mention of Bishop Leonard de Langasco and Hieronymus Italianus, both Greek authors fail to reproduce Leonard's family name; this may be another indication of a version of Leonard's letter which made a similar omission. Leonard states that he and Hieronymus Italianus

²¹ On the Catalan contribution to the defense of Constantinople see C. Lascaris-Comneno, *Participacion catalana en la defense de Constantinopla durante su ultimo asedio* (Zaragoza 1958), and Cirac Estopañan, *Byzancio y España: La caída del imperio byzantino y los Españoles* (Barcelona 1954).

guarded the Wooden Gate and the towers called 'Aveniades', which had been repaired at the expense of Cardinal Isidore. Melissenos has suppressed 'Aveniades', which, however, is faithfully recorded in the Chronicle. This omission of Melissenos must be attributed more to confusion than neglect. Leonard's 'Aveniades' must be a corruption of the section of the Heraclian wall commonly known as 'Anemades'.²² Melissenos must have been aware that no Aveniades existed, while the author of the Chronicle followed Leonard's error; by extension, Melissenos further deleted the reference to the towers repaired by the cardinal. All three texts fail to cite the cardinal's name; only Melissenos qualifies him as the cardinal of Russia, revealing beyond doubt that Cardinal Isidore, the papal envoy, is meant. Once more, another version of Leonard's letter may have been followed by the Greek authors at this point, as they both fail to reproduce Leonard's praise for Isidore. Leonard's *Chirluca* (i.e., *κὺρ Λουκάς*) is unquestionably a reference to the Grand Duke, Loukas Notaras. The anonymous author reproduced this name phonetically, *τὸν κὺρ Λούκα*, apparently unaware of the proper accentuation, the grand Duke's family name, his title, or his important position in the court. By contrast, Melissenos omits his first name, states the family name, and adds his proper title; as usual, he elaborates on the geographical details.

7. Leonard 935B, Melissenos 5.6 (255b), Anonymous 85.6–10: the deployment of the clergy on the walls and the duties of Gabriel Trevisano. The Chronicle follows Leonard's order of presentation, while Melissenos reverses it. Melissenos has greatly elaborated Leonard's information, which remains, nevertheless, embedded in the Greek text, and as usual adds topographical details. Of particular interest is Melissenos' expansion of *cordatissime* to *ὡς ποιμὴν καὶ οὐ μισθωτός*; this 'shepherd' simile may indicate Melissenos' ecclesiastical background and may be considered one of his personal touches in the narrative of Book III. Melissenos has also expanded the role of the clergy in the defense. The Greek texts present information that is absent in Leonard, employing similar language, evident in *διαμερισθῶσιν* and *ἐμέρασε*, suggesting again a Greek version that the two authors followed. The anonymous account has purposely deleted Leonard's reference to prayers, as this author generally avoids religious matters, while Melissenos has retained it and provided further elaboration.

8. Leonard 935B, Melissenos 5.6 (255b), Anonymous 85.11–

²² Van Millingen (*supra* n.16) 104ff.

16: the action in the harbor. Melissenos, in an elaboration, observes that no serious engagement ensued in the harbor. The anonymous author, with less elaboration, has rendered Leonard's text into Greek but has deleted *armatae* and *ululatibus*. All three texts describe in colorful language how the Christians challenged the Turkish fleet to battle with musical instruments and drums. The catalogue is then concluded with the following individuals: *Demetrius socer Palaeologus, Nicolausque Gudelli gener, praesidentes ut decurrant urbem, cum plerisque armatis in succursum reservantur*, which is rendered by Melissenos as τὸν δὲ Δημήτριον τὸν Καντακουζηνὸν καὶ τὸν γαμβρὸν αὐτοῦ Παλαιολόγον Νικηφόρον μετὰ καὶ ἐτέρων τινῶν κατέταξαν . . . εἰς οἶον δὴ τόπον ἀνάγκη ὑπάρχει, and by the Chronicle as καὶ τὸν κὺρ Δημήτριο τὸν Παλαιολόγο, υἱὸν τοῦ κὺρ Νικολάου, καὶ τὸ Νικολὸ τὸν Γουδέλο τὸν γαμπρόν του . . . καὶ ἔστεκόντησαν ἑτοιμοί, ὅτι . . . νὰ δράμουνε νὰ βοηθήσουνε ἐκεῖ ὅπου κάμει χρεῖα. Melissenos has suppressed all mention of Goudeles and has substituted another, otherwise unknown individual, Nikephoros Palaeologus; his motivation for this substitution is well known.²³ In addition, Melissenos mentions the headquarters of the reserves, the Church of the Holy Apostles. Melissenos and the Chronicle exhibit another parallel, which finds no echo in Leonard, and consequently points to a common source used by the two Greek authors: both make mention of ἀνάγκη and χρεῖα, absent in Leonard's letter.

Attention has been focused on these eight passages because they furnish the closest parallels. In fact Leonard's letter finds counterparts throughout Melissenos' siege section. The language of the two accounts is quite close and supplies further evidence that Melissenos indeed relied on Leonard for his siege section in Book III. Some of the more striking examples are the following: *concite strepentibus tympanis, tubis sonantibus, intuentibus nobis invadit, fingens imperatoris navem expugnare velle* (931B) is rendered by Melissenos as μετὰ πάσης χαρᾶς, μετὰ τυμπάνων καὶ κερατίνων σαλπίγγων κροτοῦντες . . . ἐν πρώτοις ἦλθον κατὰ τῆς βασιλικῆς νηός (5.1). During this naval battle of April 22 the Turkish fleet was defeated, in spite of its numerical superiority; Leonard exclaims in jubilation, *quid ultra?* (931C), rendered by Melissenos καὶ τί χρὴ λέγειν; (5.1). The requisitioning of silver and gold from the churches is described in similar terms: *aufferri igitur et conflari*

²³ See Faliier-Papadopoulos (*supra* n.7) 91 and Khasiotes (*supra* n.4) 176.

jussit ex sacris templis sancta Dei vasa, sicuti Romanos pro necessitate temporis fecisse legimus, exque eis pecuniam insigniri (934B) is paraphrased by Melissenos as ἐπειδὴ δὲ καὶ χρημάτων ἐσπάνιζον τὰ βασίλεια διὰ τὸν μισθὸν τῶν στρατιωτῶν, προσέταξεν ὁ βασιλεὺς λαβεῖν τὰ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν σκεύη ἅγια καὶ ἀφιερωμένα τῷ Θεῷ καὶ χρήματα ἐποιήσαμεν (5.7). Even though Melissenos has deleted the reference to the Romans (which is, incidentally, retained in the Chronicle), he goes on to cite Biblical precedents, thus providing an effective substitution for Leonard's classical instance. After the ill-fated attempt of the defenders to burn the Turkish vessels that had been transferred overland to the Golden Horn, Leonard describes the ensuing strife between the Venetians and the Genoese in the capital with the following words: *At posthac inter Venetos et Genuenses Galatae oborta dissensio est* (932C); similar is Melissenos' language: καὶ στάσις μεγάλη ἐγγέγονει μεταξὺ τῶν Ἑνετῶν καὶ Αἰγυπτίων (5.8).

These are only some of the linguistic parallels. Others abound throughout the siege section. Attention has been paid to the catalogue and to some of the more obvious duplications in the two accounts. An immediate conclusion is that the siege section of Book III in the *Mainus* is confirmed, now on linguistic grounds, to be a secondary document. It thus becomes evident that no first-hand, eye-witness account in Greek of the siege, fall, and sack of Constantinople survives. Moreover, Carroll's recent suggestion that Melissenos has elaborated on a different version of the *Minus*, lost to us, which dealt with the events of this siege and was composed by Sphrantzes himself,²⁴ becomes highly unlikely, as the greatest part of Melissenos's narrative in Book III is based on Leonard's Latin text.

Whether Melissenos or the anonymous author could read Latin is not known. Certain details in the anonymous Chronicle indicate that its author may not have felt at home with Latin, or, indeed, with the literate language of Byzantine authors.²⁵ Melissenos, on the other hand, had been a member of the Greek clergy, had travelled extensively in Italy and Spain, and had also dealt personally with influential individuals in situations that demanded knowledge of Latin.²⁶ As we have seen, however, it is not alto-

²⁴ Carroll (*supra* n.8); she has failed to examine Leonard's letter closely and even attributes Melissenos' καὶ τί χρὴ λέγειν; (a translation of Leonard's *quid ultra?*) to Melissenos' own invention, *Byzantion* 42 (1972) 19.

²⁵ Zachariadou (*supra* n.11) Ch. 2.

²⁶ For the travels of Melissenos in Italy and Spain see Khasiotēs (*supra* n.4) Ch. 3.

gether certain that Melissenos and the anonymous author of the Chronicle worked directly from the Latin text of Leonard's letter. In every passage examined, we have noted hints of an intermediate, Greek version of Leonard's letter—the parallels in phraseology between the siege section of the *Maius* and its counterpart in the Chronicle, which have no echo in Leonard's text. That the vocabulary of Melissenos and of the anonymous author is similar, especially in cases where the text of Leonard has not been followed, strongly points to a common Greek version of the bishop's letter that the two sixteenth-century authors may have consulted.

It has been suspected that the source for the Chronicle may have been Francesco Sansovino's *Annali Turcheschi*, which appeared in Venice in 1571.²⁷ Earlier, Sansovino had put together a collection of sources dealing with the history of the Osmanlis, in which he had included an Italian translation of Leonard's letter and parts of Khalkokondylas' narrative.²⁸ It is possible that the author of the Chronicle drew his information from Sansovino, but the linguistic parallels between Melissenos and the anonymous author, unmatched in Leonard, provide evidence that a Greek version of Leonard's letter, and not its Italian translation in Sansovino, may have been employed.

Regardless of the immediate source actually consulted, it remains abundantly clear that some form of Leonard's letter was used by Melissenos in the siege section of Book III of the *Maius*. Thus Melissenos' 'forgery' is not a totally fictional account which purports to be history. He seems to have taken great care to incorporate material that had been reported by at least one eye-witness of this siege, whose account he has evidently enriched by details in topography; these details must have come from his own familiarity with Constantinople. The parts of the *Maius* that fall heavily under suspicion and qualify as forgeries are those that deal directly with the family of the Melissenoi in the fifteenth century: for it is certain that the 'forger' of the *Maius*, whose actual family name was Melissourgos,²⁹ was at great pains to identify himself, his brother

²⁷ *Gl'Annali overo le vite de principi et signori della casa Othomana ne quali si leggono di tempo tutte le guerre particolarmente fatte della natione de' Turchi in diverse provincie del mondo contra i Christiani* (Venice 1571). For subsequent editions and modifications in the title, cf. Zachariadou (*supra* n.11) Ch. 3.

²⁸ *Historia Universale dell'Origine et Imperio de Turchi*, etc. (complete title in Zachariadou [*supra* n.11] 22 n.2). This volume appeared in Venice in 1564 and was so popular that seven subsequent editions followed in the next century.

²⁹ Khasiotes (*supra* n.4) 17ff has shown that the original signatures in documents bore the name 'Melissourgoi' which was later changed to 'Melissenoi'; cf. Philippides (*supra*

Theodoros, and his relatives in general, with the illustrious Byzantine Melissenoi and their connection with the Komnenoi.

It has been claimed that Melissenos' narrative in Book III of the *Maius*, especially in regard to the siege, should not be trusted by historians, unless its information is duplicated by Sphrantzes' *Minus*.³⁰ Perhaps this view should be emended: the *Maius* is not to be trusted unless it reproduces information found in the *Minus* and in Leonard's letter, except, of course, the invented parts in the bishop's account, such as the last assembly of the court and the speech of the emperor. Thus the ultimate source of Book III of the *Maius*, Leonard's letter, comes to occupy a significant place in the history of Greek literature and in the survival of Byzantine historiography. There is no question of 'plagiarism' on the part of Melissenos. The fact that he and the anonymous author used a Latin source, or perhaps an Italian or Greek version of this Latin letter, should not be thought remarkable, as there is good evidence to show that in the last centuries of Byzantium many Greek intellectuals were turning their attention to the West; consequently, Greek translations of Latin works began to appear.³¹ Thus the dependence of Melissenos and of the Chronicle on Leonard may be regarded as a natural step in Greek recognition of historical works written in Latin, as the transition towards the appreciation of Western literature had already occurred before the fall of Constantinople.³²

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n.2) 8. This project of identifying the Melissourgoi with the Melissenoi was continued by the descendants of Theodoros and Makarios in the following century.

³⁰ For a clear expression of this view and the problems concerned with the *Maius* and the *Minus*, cf. J. W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus 1391-1425: A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship* (New Brunswick 1969) xliii.

³¹ A clear example of Western influence in the culture of late Byzantium can be seen in the Byzantine chivalric romances, some of which imply definite familiarity with their Western counterparts; cf. H.-G. Beck, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Volksliteratur* (Munich 1971). Even in earlier periods Greek translations of Caesar, Cicero, Ovid, Boethius, Augustine, Anselm, and Thomas Aquinas began to appear. Thus a translation of Leonard's letter into Greek, or the fact that Leonard's Latin letter was used as a source by Greek authors, should not appear surprising.

³² I should like to express my thanks to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst for a Faculty Research Grant, which allowed the completion of this study; to Professor Edward Phinney for reading an earlier draft of this paper; and to the editorial board and anonymous referee of GRBS for their valuable suggestions for improvement.