

Author and readers: the making of the Modern Greek *Physiologos*

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The *Physiologos* is a text that was originally written in Ancient Greek, believed to have been composed in a Christian milieu in the second century A.D. During the Byzantine centuries it developed into a group of texts with characteristics of a specific literary genre through a number of recensions and manuscripts. The texts are organized in chapters. The subject of each chapter – in the ancient redaction – is a plant or a precious stone or an animal, while the Byzantine recensions concentrate on animals only. (I will leave aside Latin, Slavonic and other translations, given that the focus of this paper is the *Physiologos* in the context of Early Modern Greek literature.) In each of these chapters there is a *persona* speaking allegorically about an animal, or rather a species of animal, referring to the Old Testament and quoting especially the *Psalms* attributed to David. One could say that the *Physiologos* is commenting on the *Psalms* in an allegorical way, making use of both the narrative mode and direct speech (cf. Alpers 1996; Alpers 2000).

In order to talk about the modern Greek *Physiologos* I need to introduce a sixteenth-century writer, Damascenos Studites (on Damascenos see Litsas 2001; Manou 1999 is not reliable). Damascenos was born in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. As a young man, still a lower cleric (ὑποδιάκονος), he published the *Thesavros*, his major work. This is an anthology of Sunday speeches and excerpts of lives of saints, collected, translated into the early modern Greek vernacular and edited by Damascenos Studites. As far as we know, the first edition of the *Thesavros* was printed in Venice in 1557 (Kaklamanis 2005: 333, with references

to the relevant bibliography). Damascenos himself took the manuscript to Venice and supervised the printing and proof-reading of the book. Obviously, the purpose was to produce ready material for parish work in Orthodox churches of the Ottoman-occupied parts of the Greek world. The *Thesavros* was to become one of the best selling Greek books during the Ottoman era (cf. Litsas 2001: 250 n. 9; Kaklamanis 2005: 333). Thus, we may suppose that from the sixteenth until the eighteenth/nineteenth centuries his name was known to every Greek-speaking person able to read a book. Even today one can still find reprints in Christian Orthodox bookstores.

I referred to the *Thesavros* as the most important of the works of Damascenos Studites. The work I will be focusing on in this paper is his second most important one – a zoological work apparently entitled by the author: *Συνάθροισις ἀπὸ τὰ βιβλία τῶν παλαιῶν φιλοσόφων* – *Compilation of the works of old wise writers* (on this text see Moennig 1993 and 2005; on translations into Rumanian and other languages see Velculescu 2001). From the beginning we can keep in mind some facts:

- We can take it for granted that in the first half of the sixteenth century a market for printed books, printed for Greek Orthodox readers in the Ottoman Empire, was established (the standard reference is Layton 1994).
- Damascenos Studites was acquainted with printed books and with the production of Greek books – he had even travelled to Venice (Layton 1994: 164).
- He had realised (obviously) that the printed book was a medium which could reach a wider reading public than manuscripts, and (obviously) he made conscious use of this medium.
- Damascenos Studites became popular through his first major work and his name must have been well known throughout the Ottoman centuries.

- Damascenos Studites was not a creative writer, but an anthologist, compiler and translator of ancient and Byzantine texts into the early Modern Greek vernacular (Litsas 2001).

The *Synathroisis* was not printed during the lifetime of its author, but a couple of decades after his death. Damascenos composed the *Synathroisis* about the year 1568. From that date onwards, until its first appearance in printed form in Venice in 1639, it circulated in manuscript. Today, more than 20 manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are preserved, plus a small number of more recent manuscripts (for the details see Moennig 1993, Karas 1993: 88-101, Karas 1994: 446-9, Moennig 2005). A difference between printed books and manuscript books lies in the fact that copyists used to create unique realisations through the layout and changes in wording, each copy being partly a reproduction and partly a creative re-working. In this paper I will focus on some of these changes, more specifically on changes which may tell us about how readers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries *read* Damascenos's *Compilation*.

First I will examine changes in the work's title. In a few of the older manuscripts Damascenos's work does not have a title at all. Thus, it is possible that the author did not give any title to his compilation. A number of reliable manuscripts transmit, with some minor variants, a title as follows: Δαμασκηνοῦ ἀρχιερέως τοῦ Στουδίτου συνάθροισις ἀπὸ τὰ βιβλία τῶν παλαιῶν φιλοσόφων, ὅσα εἶπαν περὶ τῶν πετεινῶν ὀρνέων καὶ περὶ τῶν χερσαίων ζώων καὶ περὶ τῶν θαλασσίων, καὶ μετάφρασις εἰς τὸ κοινώτερον (A compilation, made by the archpriest Damascenos Studites, of books by old scholars about the birds in the sky, the animals of the earth and the fishes of the sea, as well as a translation into the vernacular) [Plate I].¹

This title contains information about the work. Did the author himself give this title to his work, or did a copyist – a reader of the text – add it? Personally, I think *Synathroisis* was the title given by the author – at least, this title seems to be in accordance with

¹ The plates will be found at the end of the article.

his intentions. There exists a document which tells us something about the author's attitude towards his own work: a dedicatory letter. Damascenos Studites dedicated his *Compilation* to a high-ranking Greek official, the Megas Domestikos Michael Cantacuzenos. A number of manuscripts attest the authenticity of the dedicatory letter, which was originally part of the book, but a separate part. Initially, the book was an assortment of documents: the compilation itself, the dedicatory letter (published in Legrand 1894: 444-5), a dedicatory epigram (Legrand 1894: 443), plus a table of contents (which displayed the chapters of the *Compilation* only). At this point this dedicatory letter is of some interest for us, given that Damascenos declares what he believes to be the nature of his work – or what he wants his readers to believe it is. I should add that no autograph of the *Compilation* is preserved:

- και γράφω διὰ ὅσα ζῶα εἶναι ὅπου ἔχουσι τίποτες παράδοξον συνήθειαν (My intention is to write about animals displaying some paradoxical characteristics) [Plate II];
- και μὴν νομήσης ἢ σὴ ἐνδοξότης ὅτι γράφω ἐδικά μου λόγια, ἀλλὰ ὅσα ἔγραψεν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν τῷ Περὶ ζῶων μορίων, και ὁ ποιητὴς Ὀππιανὸς και ὁ σοφὸς Αἰλιανὸς και ὁ σοφώτατος Φιλῆς πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα Μιχαήλον, τσσαῦτα θέλω γράψει και ἐγώ (Please do not think that I am going to write things of my own. I will simply repeat what Aristotle wrote in his *De partibus animalium*, and what the poet Oppian and the wise Aelian wrote and what the most wise Manuel Philes wrote in his work dedicated to the co-emperor Michael IX) [Plates IIIa, IIIb].

These statements need to be explained. I will comment on the literary sources Damascenos mentions:

- comparing the *Synathroisis* to the work of Aristotle, one finds only a few pieces of zoological information which Damascenos took from the ancient work;
- regarding the poet Oppian: only a few traces of the *Haliutica* and the *Cynegetica* can be found in Damascenos's work;

- Damascenos was obviously more acquainted with the *Περὶ ζώων ιδιότητος* of Aelian (ca. 170 – ca. 235).
- His primary source, however, was the *Στίχοι ἰαμβικοὶ περὶ ζώων ιδιότητος* by Manuel Philes, a Byzantine author of the early fourteenth century (the work was printed in Venice in 1533; Legrand 1885: 215-18).

What were the criteria of Damascenos's compilation? Damascenos states that his work deals with any "animal displaying some paradoxical characteristics". And indeed, the *Synathroisis* is organized in chapters, which are sorted in alphabetical order, and each chapter discusses one kind of animal: local animals, animals from foreign parts of the world, mythical animals. We find, for example, a chapter about the cock, a chapter about the viper, a chapter about the unicorn. The presentation of these animals does not concentrate primarily and exclusively on *anatomy* or, say, behaviour, but on the strange, the unexpected – the *paradoxon*, as Damascenos declares in his dedicatory letter. "Strange and unexpected" compared to human experience. Damascenos writes about the crocodile that it does not, like human beings do, move its lower jaw, but its upper jaw. Also, the social behaviour of the pelican is considered remarkable, not because it is so different from human behaviour, but because it is so similar: The parent birds care for their offspring while they are young, and the grown-up birds care for their own elderly parents. The way of feeding can be a paradox; the way some kinds of animals copulate can be a paradox; the symbiosis of two kinds of animals can be a paradox; the animosity of two kinds of animals can be even more of a paradox.

This way of writing about animals is not new in the tradition of Greek literature since antiquity. Anthropomorphic animals described from an anthropocentric point of view: exotic animals, dangerous animals, useful animals – we find these themes both embedded in literary writing of any genre and as the subject of a genre of its own: paradoxography (*ODB* 1583-4). Might it be possible that Damascenos, when quoting Aristotle, Oppian, Aelian

and Manuel Philes in his dedicatory letter, did not exclusively intend to give a bibliography of the works he used as sources, but that he primarily wanted to give us a hint as to the genre his work belongs to: the genre of paradoxography?

This interpretation would help us to explain a number of philological problems of the *Synathroisis*:

- We saw already that Damascenos quotes four authors whose works he used as sources for his own writing, and I stated that our author makes a totally uneven use of these four sources.
- In his dedicatory letter to Michael Cantacuzenos, Damascenos does not quote all the sources of his *Compilation*. A source of information he does not quote is the *Physiologos*. The *Physiologos* does not belong to the tradition of paradoxography, but a number of elements in the *Physiologos* could be read as paradoxographic (for a convenient edition of the Byzantine recensions of the *Physiologos* see Sbordone 1936).
- The *Compilation* of Damascenos Studites, compared to Greek literary production in the sixteenth century, seems to be *sui generis*. Obviously, he is writing in a genre which existed in the history of Greek letters, diachronically, but not in early modern Greek writing.

Another question arises: did sixteenth- and seventeenth-century readers accept Damascenos's attempt to revive a literary genre?

In order to give an answer to this question we will need to take one more look at the dedicatory letter. Damascenos refers to the custom of dedicating works of art. In Italy a printed book will be dedicated to a person of high standing [Cod. Meteora Barlaam 204, ca. 1580, f. 101^v; see Plate IV]:

καὶ ἐπειδὴ εἰς τὰ μέρη τῆς Ἰταλίας, ὅταν θέλουσιν νὰ βάλουν κανένα βιβλίον εἰς τὴν στάμπαν, πάντοτε εἰς ἐνὸς μεγάλου ἀνθρώπου ὄνομα τὸ σταμπάρουν, καὶ γράφουν καὶ ἐπιστολὴν εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ βιβλίου πρὸς ἐκεῖνον, ὁμοίως καὶ ἐγὼ πρῶτον μὲν χαρίζω τὸ ποίημά μου τοῦτο

τὸ νέον εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ἀθθεντίας σου, ἔπειτα δέ, ἐὰν εἶναι καὶ τελειώσει ὁ Θεὸς τὸν σκοπὸν μου, τὸ θέλω βάλει εἰς τὴν στάμπαν διὰ μέγα ἔπαινον τῆς ἀθθεντίας σου.

(In Italy, whenever they are going to print a book, they will dedicate it to a high person; they will also address a dedicatory letter to this person, which they will print in the beginning of the book. I want to do the same, dedicating this my new work to your name, and, if God wishes, I will print it to the honour of your highness.)

The book will be read forever and the name of the addressee will be heard until the Lord's Second Coming: μέχρι τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος (ibid., f. 102^r). But things did not happen the way Damascenos wanted. The *Synathroisis* was printed, but with a delay of 70 years, and in the meantime it circulated in manuscripts. That made it subject to textual changes. Parts of the initial assortment were getting lost in the process: the dedicatory letter, for instance, and along with the letter the authorial statements concerning the work. But already some of the very first readers of the *Synathroisis*, readers who had access to Damascenos's dedicatory letter, would form a different impression of the generic identity of the text, as we can see from a codex dating to the last decades of the sixteenth century. This codex, owned by one of the monasteries of Meteora, the Μονὴ Βαρλαάμ, contains the complete assortment by Damascenos Studites, including the table of contents. It also contains an appendix, and it is explicitly stated that this appendix is *not* a text written by Damascenos Studites. This appendix has a new title [Plate V], which is worth commenting on: Ἔως ἐδῶ ἔναι ἡ νέα Φυσιολογία τοῦ προειρημένου μητροπολίτου Ναυπάκτου κυροῦ Δαμασκηνοῦ. Καὶ ἀπεδῶ ἀρχίζει τοῦ μακαριωτάτου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κύπρου κυροῦ Ἐπιφανίου (The new *Physiologia*, written by Damascenos, the late metropolitan bishop of Naupactos, goes up to here. And from here begins the one written by the Archbishop of Cyprus, Epiphanius).

We can draw interesting information from this new title, for instance:

- The person who added this title knew who was the author of the *Synathroisis* and he knew what his position was.
- When Damascenos composed his book, he was bishop of Lita and Rendina; now, we read, he is metropolitan bishop of Naupactos. Damascenos was metropolitan bishop of Naupactos from 1574 until his death in 1577. Thus, the earliest possible date for the codex of the Barlaam monastery is 1574. This is in keeping with Sophianos, who believes that this Barlaam codex was produced ca. 1580 (Bees–Sophianos 1984: 325). It is noteworthy that our copyist – called Kyrillos, according to Sophianos – updates the biographical data about the work’s author, while in the Venetian imprints of the *Thesavros* (to which I referred earlier) Damascenos remained the humble ὑποδιάκονος he was when the *Thesavros* was first printed.
- The appendix in this title is announced as a separate text, as a work of Epiphanius of Salamis. The text that follows is not, of course, a work of the church father, but a *Physiologos* written in the early modern Greek vernacular. This *Physiologos* is, according to the rules of the genre, organized in chapters, as is the *Compilation* of Damascenos Studites, but in this text the chapters are not arranged in alphabetical order. A question arises as to the meaning of the term *Φυσιολογία* in the title of the appendix: is it synonymous with *Physiologos*?
- The text of Damascenos in the manuscript of the Barlaam monastery is closely connected to the text attributed to Epiphanius: ἕως ἐδῶ... ἀπεδῶ seems to connect two things perceived as similar.

The following facts are worthy of note: the chapters of the *Synathroisis* are given in alphabetical order and are numbered. The appendix is also organized in chapters, the chapters are also numbered, and the numeration of the first text is continued in the second text, beginning from chapter 90 (see the Greek numeral ̵ in Plate V). Now let us compare the table of contents in the codex of the Barlaam monastery: it contains both the *Synathroisis* and the appendix, and the break between the two *Φυσιολογίαι* is not

marked in the table of contents; judging from the table of contents one gets the impression that there is only one text, not two texts combined – that the chapter *περὶ τοῦ βασιλίσκου* follows on normally from the chapter *περὶ ὀνοκενταύρου* [Plate VI].

The codex of the Barlaam monastery is not the only manuscript in which the *Synathroisis* is combined with this very *Physiologos* attributed to Epiphanius, but no manuscript transmits only the *Physiologos* attributed to Epiphanius as a separate text. On the basis of this datum, I suppose that a person, unknown to us, continued the text of Damascenus. This phenomenon is known in the history of literature: a later author – a *continuator* – continues the work of an older author. The remarkable fact is that this anonymous *continuator* understood the paradoxographical, according to Damascenus, *Synathroisis* as a *Physiologos* and continued it as a *Physiologos*, thus changing not the gender, but the genre of our work. Obviously, this happened only a few years after the composition of the original work. And already in the sixteenth century the changes observed in the title of the *Synathroisis* make it obvious that our text, written as a paradoxographic work, was read as a *Physiologos*. See the title in a sixteenth-century manuscript, which today belongs to the collection of the Μετόχιον του Παναγίου Τάφου, but which belonged to private owners in the seventeenth century [Plate VII]:

Φυσιολογία νέα, τὴν ὁποῖαν ἔκαμεν τοῦτος ὁποῦ ἔναι τὴν σήμερον μητροπολίτης Ναυπάκτου, ὀνόματι κύρης Δαμασκηνός, ἔσοντας ὁποῦ ἐπήρε καὶ ἐδανείσθη ἀπὸ τῶν παλαιῶν φιλοσόφων τὰ βιβλία, καὶ ἐξηγεῖται περὶ τῶν ζώων τῆς γῆς καὶ τῆς θαλάσσης, καὶ περὶ τῶν πετεινῶν πουλιῶν.

(The new Physiology, written by the one who is today the metropolitan bishop of Naupactos; he drew information from the works of old writers and writes about the animals of the earth and the sea and the birds in the sky.)

In this title Damascenus is mentioned as the metropolitan bishop of Naupactos – which he was from 1574, as I mentioned pre-

viously – and as a living person τὴν σήμερον – as indeed he was until 1577. Thus, just a few years after its composition and while its author was still alive, readers started to perceive the *Synathroisis* as a new *Physiologos*.

The anonymous *continuator* changed the text by adding an appendix, while other copyists – obviously reflecting the reactions of contemporary readers – changed the text more radically.

It is a remarkable phenomenon that in the course of a few decades the *Synathroisis* became – in a number of manuscripts – an anonymous text. As I hope to demonstrate, this phenomenon is part of the process of homogenization of the *Synathroisis* to the *Physiologos*. Initially I stated that I consider the *Physiologos* as a genre rather than a single text, which circulated in variant forms. Texts belonging to this genre never circulated under the name of their authors. They were distributed anonymously, or they were attributed to persons of high recognition – like Epiphanius of Salamis or Basil the Great.

A manuscript which transmits the *Synathroisis* anonymously is codex 721 of the Russian National Library, St Petersburg, dating to the year 1625. In this codex the *Synathroisis* is in good company, together with the *Πουολόλογος* and the *Tale of the Quadrupeds* – both late-Byzantine texts, the one dialogical, the other narrative, with animals as acting *personae*. In the codex of the Russian National Library the text is transmitted almost totally naked – no dedicatory letter, no table of contents, no author's name – under the bare title: Ἀρχὴ τοῦ Φυσιολόγου (f. 236^v) [Plate VIII]. A strange thing about this codex is that it also contains another text written by Damascenos, a separate chapter of the *Thesavros*, transmitted anonymously. What is most puzzling is a third reference to Damascenos in the same codex, which we find on f. 211^r: here we find written, seemingly without motivation, the name of Damascenos in the genitive case: Δαμασκηνοῦ τοῦ ὑποδιακόνου καὶ Στουδίτου, in the wording familiar to Greek readers since the *Thesavros* was first published in 1557 [Plate IX].

The readers who read the *Synathroisis* as a *Physiologos* and, through the process of manuscript transmission, transformed

Damascenos's text more and more into a *Physiologos*, may seem like phantoms – without a form, without a name. Surely the priest Rhalles, who produced a copy of the *Synathroisis* about the year 1635 in Constantinople is no phantom. Rhalles was a priest in the service of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophanes. Rhalles copied a number of texts in a codex which is preserved in the collection of the Sinai monastery, and he never copied a text without changing it (on Rhalles see Moennig 2004: 11-14).

His copy of the *Synathroisis* is anonymous, an astonishing fact if we take into account that Rhalles was a priest, that Damascenos Studites was a high cleric, that he was a pioneer in translating Byzantine texts into the vernacular, given that the years of the patriarchate of Kyrillos Lukaris were characterized by the efforts for renewing Orthodoxy and that translating into the vernacular was an instrument of this renewal effort. Rhalles's copy has the title Φυσιολόγος ἐξηγητικός [Plate X] and ends with the subscription Τέλος τοῦ Φυσιολόγου [Plate XI].

Rhalles's copy displays a feature of some singularity in the transmission of the *Synathroisis*: someone has added a chapter on the phoenix. Obviously Rhalles, or whoever added this chapter, thought that a *Physiologos* without a chapter about the phoenix is incomplete. Rhalles also changes the order of the chapters from alphabetical to systematic: birds, quadrupeds, fish. But, when he finished the chapter, which was originally the last one, he wrote τέλος τοῦ Φυσιολόγου [Plate XII] – immediately realising, that he had not copied all the chapters. Thus, he deletes τέλος τοῦ Φυσιολόγου – and continues copying.

Rhalles is not the only reader of the *Synathroisis* who, in the course of copying it, changed the alphabetical order of the chapters into a systematic order. The theme of animals has required a system since the first book of Moses. God himself did not create all animals in one act, but according to a zoological system.

This leads us to a codex dating to the end of the sixteenth century which is preserved in the collection of the Iberon monastery on Mount Athos. The anonymous writer organized his text in three parts, 1) birds, 2) quadrupeds, 3) fish. The heading of the

second part, *περὶ ζώων τετραπόδων*, can be seen in Plate XIII. It will also be seen that our anonymous copyist placed the chapter on the lion before all the other quadrupeds. He does so following the conventions of the *Physiologos*, according to which the chapter about the king of the animals must be the leading chapter in the text (Alpers 2000: 999).

How are we to explain these phenomena? In his dedicatory letter Damascenos claims, according to my interpretation, that his work is paradoxographic. But, his statements on his own work are not complete: he does not declare that he is trying to combine two genres: the paradoxographical and the *Physiologos*. More precisely, Damascenos was not the first one to combine paradoxography and *Physiologos*; his model Manuel Philes did the same 250 years earlier in his *Στίχοι ιαμβικοί περὶ ζώων ιδιότητος*. There are two main features that both Philes's book and the *Synathroisis* have in common with the *Physiologos*: all are organized in chapters *περὶ λέοντος*, *περὶ ἀετοῦ* and so on, and the fact that Philes was already playing with the conventions of the *Physiologos* can easily be demonstrated: I referred earlier to the convention of placing the chapter on the king of animals in the *Physiologos* as the leading chapter. Philes dedicated his work to the co-emperor Michael IX, and probably the author was trying to find a parallel between the *βασιλεὺς τῶν ζώων* and the *βασιλεὺς Μιχαήλ*. Then, on reflection, Philes might have thought that it would be wiser to draw a parallel between the king of birds and his addressee, given that the eagle was the symbol of Roman, i.e. Byzantine, imperial power. And, what is more, the eagle is said to live a long life, and *εἰς ἔτη πολλὰ* – live a long life – was the Byzantine formula addressed to the emperor. Thus, the fact that the first chapter in Philes's work is the *περὶ ἀετοῦ* can be taken as a proof that Philes was acquainted to the conventions of the *Physiologos* and that he was playing with these conventions.

Damascenos dedicated his work to a person called Michael, too; he let his *Synathroisis* begin with the chapter about the eagle, too, and let this chapter end in *polychronia* – as his literary antecedent did. Because of the alphabetical order of the chapters one

gets the impression that the chapter about the eagle – ἀετός – came first by accident, and not for eulogistic purposes.

But this is precisely the most subtle element of the *Physiologos* integrated into his paradoxographic *Synathroisis*. More obvious are the many quotations from the *Psalms*, which are so characteristic of the *Physiologos*. I could also quote a number of zoological details and pieces of information Damascenos took from the *Physiologos* and not from his paradoxographic models. But there is also a major difference between the *Synathroisis* and the *Physiologos*: the speaking *persona* of the *Physiologos* is totally absent from the *Synathroisis*.

Damascenos tried to establish his work as a work of paradoxography, despite the relationship to the *Physiologos* which existed from the beginning. But the readers of his work in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not accept Damascenos's proposal – and this because the paradoxographic genre was not productive in that period. A horizon of expectations for the paradoxographic genre did not exist. What did exist instead was a horizon of expectations regarding the *Physiologos*. This genre had been productive through the Byzantine centuries and continued to be productive in post-Byzantine times. Readers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, being acquainted with the *Physiologos*, noticed the resemblance of the *Synathroisis* to the *Physiologos*, and subsequently started to assimilate the *Synathroisis* to their generic expectations. An anonymous *continuator* added chapters, changing the title of the work from *Synathroisis* to *Physiologia*. Some copyists combined the text of Damascenos with different versions of the *Physiologos*, as represented in miscellaneous manuscripts (a fact that I have not stressed in this paper; see Moennig 2005: 263, 264). Other copyists successively removed the traces of the well-known author of the *Synathroisis*, while others removed the original title and supplied the conventional Ἀρχὴ τοῦ Φυσιολόγου, interpolated chapters belonging to the beginning to the *Physiologos* tradition, and changed the order of the chapters.

This analysis makes it easier to understand some changes in the manuscripts of Damascenos's *Synathroisis*. But it teaches us much more: it indicates how deeply embedded in the early Modern Greek literary universe the *Physiologos* was.

In his dedicatory letter Damascenos writes that his intention was to publish his work in Venice. But it was not printed until 1639. In that year a certain Athanasios Melandros, a priest of Trikkala, printed the work using a title which alludes to the original one but which underlines the “scholarly” aspects of Damascenos's work (μερική διάγνωσις = a detailed account), opening a new chapter in the reception of the work [Plate XIV].

It seems that there are no traces of an assimilation to the *Physiologos*. The Venetian imprint circulated in two types – separately and in a combined edition, bound together with the *Heirmologion*. In the title of the combined edition we read: ἔτι δὲ προσετέθη καὶ μέρος ἀπὸ τὸν Φυσιολόγον. And in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century catalogues of Venetian publishers the *Synathroisis* is quoted as *Physiologos*. The modern scholarly companions to Modern Greek literature also refer to the *Synathroisis* as *Physiologos*. Thus, the misunderstanding continues. However, from the year the *Synathroisis* first appeared in print, instead of changing, as it did in the manuscripts, the text became fixed. Thus, the fortune of the *Synathroisis* in manuscript transmission tells us a vivid story about the *Physiologos*, about early Modern Greek writing, about copying and about reading. But whether or not the *printed* text confused readers, the mechanisms of printing and reprinting took place so far away from the readers that there was no longer a way for interactions to take place between the processes of reading the text and reproducing it.²

² This paper is based on the inaugural lecture which I gave at the University of Hamburg in April 2004. I am grateful to Tina Lendari for improving my English.

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PLATES

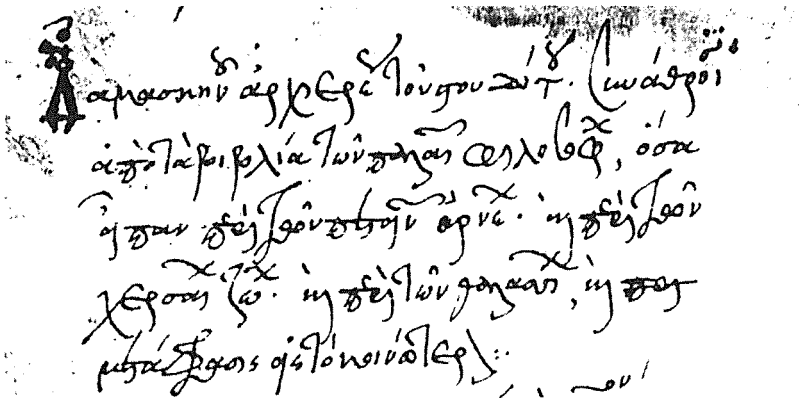


Plate I: Codex Athous Xenophontos 92, anno 1614, f. 2^v (detail)

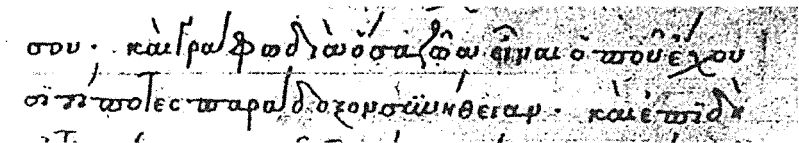


Plate II: Codex Meteora Barlaam 204, ca. 1580, f. 101^v (detail)

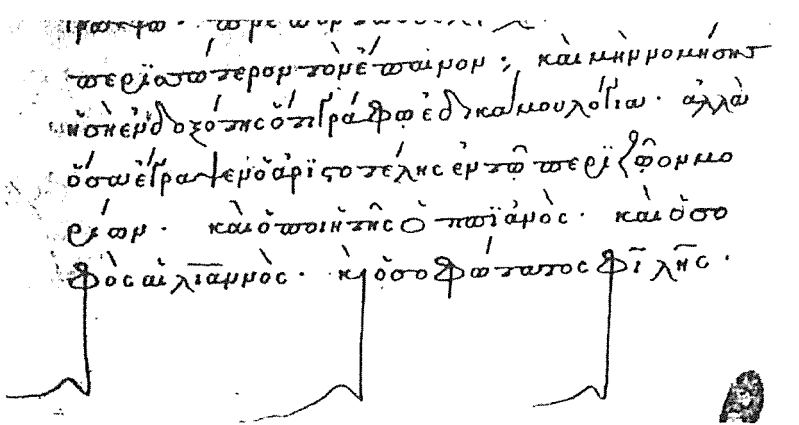


Plate IIIa: Codex Meteora Barlaam 204, ca. 1580, f. 102^r (detail)

προς τον βασιλέα μετὰ πάλαι· ταύτην οὖν
 γράφει καὶ ἐγὼ· καὶ θελῶ εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν
 ἄρχειον·

Plate IIIb: Codex Meteora Barlaam 204, ca. 1580, f. 102^v (detail)

οἱ πτωχοὶ παραδόντες ἑαυτὰς· καὶ ἐπὶ
 δεκάμερην τῆς ἱταλίας· ὅταν θελοῦσι βαλεῖν
 καρενα βιβλιοθεῖς τῆς ἀμύσσης· πάντες εἰς
 ἑνὸς μαγδαλονάρου ὀνοματὸς ἀμύσσης· καὶ
 γράφου καὶ ἐπιστολὴν εἰς τὸν ἄρχιεπίσκοπον
 πρὸς ἐκείνον· ὁμοίως καὶ ἐγὼ· πρῶτον
 μετὰ χαρίζω τὸ ποιημᾶ μου τούτου τὸ μυστήριον εἰς
 τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ἁγίας πνεύματος· εἰπειτα δὲ· εὐαγγέλιον
 καὶ τελειώσει ὁ θεὸς τὸ σκοπὸν μου· τὸ θελῶ
 βάλλει εἰς τὴν ἀμύσσην· διὰ μὲν εἰς τὴν ἀμύσσην
 τῆς ἁγίας πνεύματος· ἡ εὐαγγέλιον ἀκούσθαι τὸ ὄνομα

Plate IV: Codex Meteora Barlaam 204, ca. 1580, f. 101^v (detail)

ἐπὶ τὸν ἐπισημῶν φωνολογίαν τὸν προῆρκεν
 ἐπὶ τὸν μαθητῶν τοῦ κυρίου δαμασκίου·
 καὶ ἀπεδὲξαι τὸν μαθητῶν τούτου ἀρχι
 ἐπίσκοπον κυρίου κυρίου ἐπιφανίου·
 περὶ τοῦ κεφαλαίου·

Plate V: Codex Meteora Barlaam 204, ca. 1580, f. 154^r (detail)

ΠΕΡΙ ΟΥΤΑΠΟΔΟΥ · ξγ ^ν	ΠΕΡΙ ΧΕΛΩΝΑΣ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙ	πδ
ΠΕΡΙ ΠΗΡΑΣ · ξδ ^ν	ΠΕΡΙ ΧΑΜΑΙΛΕΩΝΟΣ	πε
ΠΕΡΙ ΣΡΟΥΘΟΥ · ξε ^ν	ΠΕΡΙ ΟΥΤΑΡΙ ΜΗΧΡΟΥΤΟΥ ΠΟΤΑΜΟΥ	πζ
ΠΕΡΙ ΣΩΛΩΜΑΡΟΥ · ξε ^ν	ΠΕΡΙ ΚΑΤΟΡΧΙΟΥ	πη
ΠΕΡΙ ΣΑΥΡΑΣ · ξς ^ν	ΠΕΡΙ ΑΡΙΟΧΟΙΡΟΥ	πθ
ΠΕΡΙ ΣΑΡΓΟΥ · ξη ^ν	ΠΕΡΙ ΟΥΚΕΡΤΑΥΡΟΥ	πθ
ΠΕΡΙ ΣΚΑΡΟΥ · ξθ	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΚΟΥ	ι
ΠΕΡΙ ΣΗΤΙΑΣ · ο	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΒΟΥΤΩΜΗΣ	ια
ΠΕΡΙ ΣΑΦΑΜΙΣΘΟΥ · οα	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΔΕΡΑΤΩΣ	ιβ
ΠΕΡΙ ΤΡΥΓΩΝΟΣ · οβ	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΦΟΙΡΙΚΟΣ	ιγ
ΠΕΡΙ ΤΥΓΧΗΡΟΥ · ογ ^ν	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΜΑΙΜΟΥ	ιδ
ΠΕΡΙ ΤΑΡΑΜΟΥ · οδ	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΕΛΙΚΑΝΟΥ	ιε
ΠΕΡΙ ΤΡΑΚΤΟΥ · οε	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΩΝ ΒΟΥΡΑΚΩΝ	ις
ΠΕΡΙ ΤΡΥΓΩΝΟΣ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΟΥ	ΤΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΣΤΟΥ ΜΕΡΟΥ	ιζ
ΠΕΡΙ ΤΡΙΛΙΟΥ · οζ	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΕΨΟΠΟΥ	ιη
ΠΕΡΙ ΦΑΩΤΗΣ · οη	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΧΑΡΑΔΡΙΟΥ	ιθ
ΠΕΡΙ ΦΡΥΜΗΣ · οθ	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΛΑΙΟΥ	
ΠΕΡΙ ΦΑΧΑΓΓΙΟΥ · ω	ΤΟΥ ΤΟΛΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΠΥ	
ΠΕΡΙ ΦΥΣΑΛΟΥ · ωα	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΒΑΤΡΑΧΙΟΥ ΛΙΘΟΥ	ρ
ΠΕΡΙ ΧΗΡΑΣ · ωβ	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΗΔΡΟΥ	ρα
ΠΕΡΙ ΧΙΛΙΔΟΝΙΟΥ · ωγ	ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΡΥΣΤΙΚΟΡΑΚΟΣ	ρβ

Plate VI: Codex Meteora Barlaam 204, ca. 1580, f. 144r

Φυσιολογία πάλι ὅποια ἔκαμ
 Τοσοῦτο ἔναυ πάλι σημερον προπολίτης
 και παύλου ὀνομαστικὴς δαμασκ
 ἔσαντας ὁ πού ἔπρε και ἐδακ ζοθη ἀπο
 ἔταλαι φινισσο φ παρθεῖν καὶ ἐξελίτῃ πρὶ
 ἔτασαν πάλι ἔταλαι ἔπρε ἔταλαι ἔταλαι

Plate VII: Codex Constantinopolitanus (nunc Atheniensis) Μετόχιον Παναγίου Τάφου 462, before 1598, f. 11^r (detail)

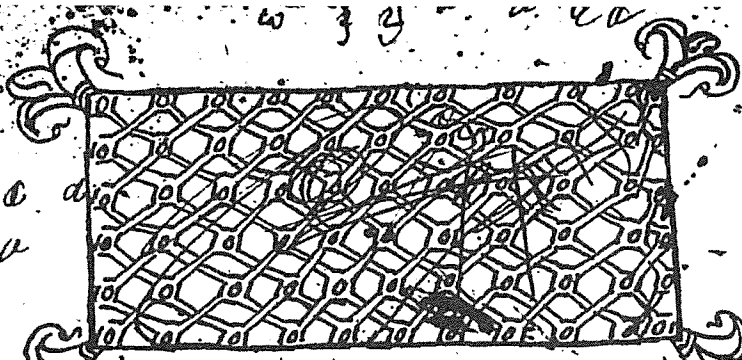
ω 3 2 α α

 Ο ἕρ. πάλι φησὶ ὁ λόγος. ἔτι αὐτῶν α.
 Ο ἕρ. πάλι φησὶ ὁ λόγος. ἔτι αὐτῶν α.
 Ο ἕρ. πάλι φησὶ ὁ λόγος. ἔτι αὐτῶν α.
 Ο ἕρ. πάλι φησὶ ὁ λόγος. ἔτι αὐτῶν α.

Plate VIII: Petropolitanus 721, anno 1625, f. 236^v (detail)

~ ου η γαρ αρενη βουλοισυ· ως βασιλειω η λειν·
 η οθρε ελβων οα λεφανθες· ε σα εη ης ρο ε ε βυ·
 κη ρου η α σρος ε φθε β α ρο ης ο λα ε η ρω α ε
 Δαμασκηνου ε ποδ λακο ης και η ρω
 Δαμασκηνου ε ποδ λακο ης και η ρω
 Δαμασκηνου ε ποδ λακο ης και η ρω
 Δαμασκηνου ε ποδ λακο ης και η ρω
 Δαμασκηνου ε ποδ λακο ης και η ρω

Plate IX: Petropolitanus 721, anno 1625, f. 211^r (detail)

φ υ σ ο λ ο γ ο ς ε λ η γ η ρ ι ο ς η π η ρ ε ι α ε ρ ε ς

Plate X: Sinaiticus 2122, ca. 1635, f. 92^v (detail)

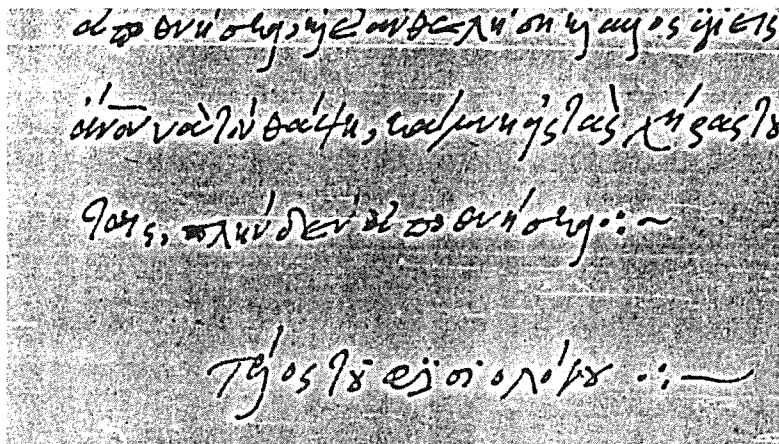


Plate XI: Sinaiticus 2122, ca. 1635, f. 126^r (detail)

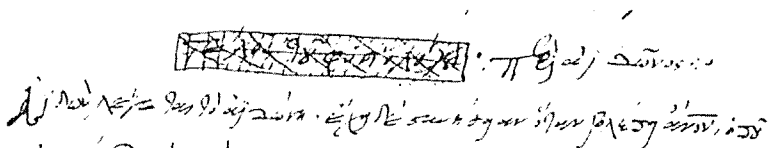


Plate XII: Sinaiticus 2122, ca. 1635, f. 119^v (detail)

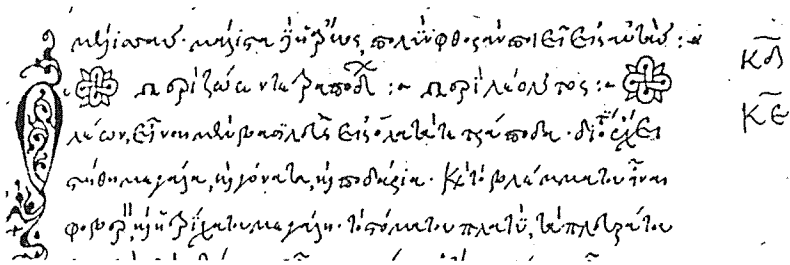


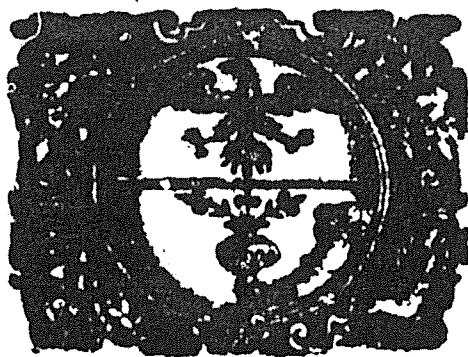
Plate XIII: Codex Athous Iberon 152, 16th century, f. 15^r

ΜΕΡΙΚΗ
Δ Ε Ξ Ε Η Ω Γ Ι Ϛ

ΕΚ ΤΩΝ ΠΑΛΑΙΩΝ
Φιλοσόφων περί φύσεως,

Και ιδιωμάτω πνεῦν ζώων, σιωαθροισθῆσαι
πρὸς τοῦ ἐν δεξιῶσι λογιστάτου,
κλείου Δαμασκίου,
τοῦ σκεδίστου.

Con licentia de' Superiori, & Priuilegio :-



Βενετία, Ἐξ Ἀποκρίσεως Ἰουλιανῆ. αχμγ'

Πουλιῆται κοστὰ, εἰ τὴν Γέφυραν τοῦ ἁγίου Θεοτίτου.

Plate XIV: Title page of the 2nd edition, printed 1643 in Venice, Antonio Giuliani