

## A NEW FRAGMENT FOR NICOLAUS OF DAMASCUS? A NOTE ON SUDA $\alpha$ 1272

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*Abstract:* This paper deals with *Suda*  $\alpha$  1272, providing its source, namely Nicolaus of Damascus, abridged by the Constantinian compilers and possibly depending on Xanthus of Lydia.

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*Keywords:* *Suda*, *Excerpta Constantiniana*, Alcaeus, Heracles, Nicolaus of Damascus, Xanthus of Lydia

A recognised principle in the scholarship on the *Suda*-Lexicon is that its compiler (or compilers) did not quote directly all the sources they cited. In particular, they quoted historical sources through *Mittelquellen*. Already in 1912, C. de Boor claimed the dependence on the *Excerpta Constantiniana* of the historical *lemmata* which are not derived from *lexica* and *scholia*, and that important result was to be accepted three years later by J. Becker.<sup>1</sup> Ada Adler summed the matter up clearly in the *Prolegomena* of her 1928 edition of the *Suda*: ‘Veri Suidae fontes non ii scriptores sunt, quos prooemium mendax enumerat, nec ii qui in glossis totiens citantur, sed compilationes quaedam recentiores, quarum praecipuae nuper detectae sunt.’ She also pointed out that ‘Suidas nullum librum historicum, sed tantum compilationes recentissimas excerpsit’ and even drew up a list of the historical sources of the Lexicon, transmitted through the *Excerpta Constantiniana*.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this paper is to identify the anonymous source of a *lemma*, the ultimate one, and its compiled *Mittelquelle*. This *lemma* is  $\alpha$  1272 Ἀλκαῖος and is devoted to a character of Lydian mythical history. The *lemma* does not depend on any transmitted *scholia* or lexical entries. Consequently, if the compiler(s) of the Lexicon depended for this entry on some ‘historical’ *Excerpta*, reporting features of Lydian history or pseudo-history, we have to look in one of them for its source. In order to find out this source, a crossed, linguistical analysis of some rare or meaningful *iuncturae*, attested in the *lemma*, will help, on the one hand, to rule out, among the authors who used those *iuncturae*, both the fully transmitted and the fragmentary ones who are not supposed to have dealt with the subject and are not classified among the sources of the Byzantine *Excerpta*. On the other hand, it will also help to single out, among the fragmentary ones, the ‘right’ author or authors

<sup>1</sup> Cf. de Boor (1912) and (1914–1919). See also Becker (1915) 10–16, at 13.

<sup>2</sup> Adler (1928–1938) I.xvi and xix. For a list of the historical sources of the *Suda*-Lexicon, cf. xix–xxi. See also Adler (1931) 700–6.

who possibly dealt with the subject and appear as the sources of the Byzantine compilations.<sup>3</sup>

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The *Suda* entry  $\alpha$  1272 provides some, very limited, information about the mythical Alcaeus, ancestor of the Lydian Heraclid dynasty according to Herodotus.<sup>4</sup> He is introduced as the son of Heracles and Omphale, and also as a handsome and courageous man:

Ἀλκαῖος· Ὀμφάλῃς καὶ Ἡρακλέους· ἐγένετο μέγας καὶ ἰσχυρὸς καὶ τὰ πολέμια γενναῖος.

Alcaeus, son of Omphale and Heracles. He was tall and strong, and brave in war.

This genealogy seems unique in all the transmitted traditions. The source of the *lemma* is the first to attribute to *Omphale* a son of Heracles, named Alcaeus (in the early Greek tradition, the name of Amphitryon's father, and later even the original name of Heracles himself);<sup>5</sup> this tradition was to remain strictly isolated, unless it has been varied later (see below). In fact, most ancient testimonies only know a tradition about a son, who will be the founder of the Lydian dynasty, born to Heracles *by a slave-girl of Iardanus* (Alcaeus according to Herodotus 1.7) or a son *by Malis, a slave of Omphale* (Acelus in Hellanicus *FGrHist* 4 F 112 = 28 Ambaglio = 112 Caerols). So, Herodotus and the source of the *lemma* are the only ones to link genealogically Heracles and Alcaeus in a fixed schema, varying the name of Alcaeus' mother. Later, the name of Heracles' Anatolian 'wife' may still change according to tradition, but so does also the name of his son, within different genealogical relationships. With the Carian Barge and her son Bargasus, and the latter's son Cyardus, Apollonius of Aphrodisias gave a rare variant of Heracles' Anatolian progeniture, nowhere else attested (*BNJ* 740 FF 2 and 3a). According to Apollonius himself, Diodorus 4.31.8, and Ovid, *Heroides* 9.54, Omphale had by Heracles a son, Lamus. Diodorus adds that Heracles fathered a son, named Cleodaeus, with a slave-

<sup>3</sup> For a concrete and fruitful application of this principle, see now Favuzzi (1999), (2004a), (2004b), (2004c), (2005), (2006), (2007a), (2007b), (2007c), (2008a), (2008b), (2009–2010), (2011–2012a), (2011–2012b), (2013), and (2014); and, recently, the reflections of Schepens (2010) 10–11. For an analysis of the different sources of the historical *lemmata* of the *Suda*-Lexicon, cf., in a different perspective, Prandi (1999) 9–28.

<sup>4</sup> Hdt. 1.7. On Alcaeus, cf. Wentzel (1894) 1498.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Hes. *Sc.* 26; Pi. *O.* 6.68; E. *HF* 2; D.S. 1.24; 4.10.

woman before Omphale set him free and married him. Other names for Omphale's son are Acheles in the *scholion* T to Ω 616 and Agelaus in Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Library* 2.7 (165), unless they are, along with Acelus, variants of 'Alcaeus'. Pausanias 2.21.3 suggests yet other names, that of Tyrsenus, as son of Heracles by 'the Lydian woman' (Omphale?), and also that of Hegeleus, Tyrsenus' son. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* 1.28.1 spoke of Tyrrhenus, the son of Heracles by Omphale, as the supposed founder of the Etruscan settlements.<sup>6</sup>

The source of the *lemma* is anonymous as it does not belong to any fully transmitted author: nonetheless, it is possible to identify it. The *lemma* does not depend on any transmitted *scholion* or lexicon. Consequently, we have to look in one of the Byzantine historical *Excerpta* for its source. A lexical inquiry reveals that the *syntagma τὰ πολέμια γενναῖος* is not so common (above all if compared to the more widespread *τὰ πολέμια δεινός*), as it is only attested eighteen times since the first century BC (and never before) until the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries AD, namely eleven times before the *Suda*-Lexicon and twice in the *Suda* itself. More precisely, before the *Suda*-Lexicon it is attested three times in Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Roman Antiquities* 3.65.6; 4.17.4; 10.24.3), twice in Nicolaus of Damascus (*FGrHist* FF 49 and 63, both transmitted by the *Excerpta Constantiniana de virtutibus et vitiis*), twice in Arrian (*Alexander's Anabasis* 5.4.4 and 5.25.1), twice in Flavius Philostratus (*Heroicus* 26.15 and 34.1), perhaps once in Origen (*Fragmenta ex commentariis in epistulam ad Ephesios (in catenis)* 33, l. 26: a quite obscure passage), and once in Nicephorus I, the Christian Byzantine writer and Patriarch of Constantinople of the eighth to ninth century (*Breviarium historicum de rebus gestis post imperium Mauricii* (e cod. Vat. Gr. 977) p. 19, l. 5). Accordingly, the inquiry shows that the only fragmentary and 'useful' authors in whom *τὰ πολέμια γενναῖος* is attested are Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Nicolaus of Damascus. Both are in fact totally or partially known in fragments, and are also 'useful' for our research, as they dealt with the myth-historical subject—Heracles—and above all were known to the compiler of the Lexicon through the Byzantine *Excerpta*. The other authors where the *iunctura* is attested are instead either fully transmitted authors or a fragmentary Christian source such as Origen, who is most unlikely to have dealt with these characters, especially the Lydian genealogy of Heracles, and who was not directly quoted by the author(s) of the *Suda*, and so is not recorded in Adler's list of the sources of the Lexicon. Of course we cannot completely rule out the dependence of the entry on *other* fragmentary authors read and used by the *Suda*-compiler(s) as historical sources, such as

<sup>6</sup> On Omphale, Queen of Lydia, daughter of Iardanus, widow of King Tmolus and lover of Heracles, who served her for one year in expiation of the murder of Iphitus, see Schauenburg (1960); Boardman (1994); Wulff Alonso (1996); Ruiz de Elvira (2001).

John of Antioch, even if he seems not to have dealt with Lydian history, at least in the extant fragments (but he could have done in some lost parts of his work). In the Antiochene, the *iunctura* τὰ πολέμια γενναῖος is not attested but could theoretically have been employed in one or more lost fragments. However, John of Antioch, who employs eighteen times the adjective γενναῖος in the extant fragments, nowhere links it to τὰ πολέμια, preferring instead δεινὸς τὰ πολέμια, at least in F 118 Müller (201 Roberto/142 Mariev), and τὰ πολέμια δεινῶς ἦν ἡσκημένος in F 155 Müller (235 Roberto/180 Mariev).

Of the two selected authors, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Nicolaus of Damascus, the former may be ruled out. In *Roman Antiquities* 1.28.1, Dionysius in fact seems to know only a tradition that *Tyrrhenus*—and not Alcaeus—was the son of Heracles by Omphale, and also the founder of the Etruscan settlements.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand Nicolaus of Damascus, in passages compiled by the Byzantine *Excerpta*, employed τὰ πολέμια γενναῖος twice: in *FGrHist* 90 F 47 §3, in the portrait of Gyges, and in F 63 §1 in that of Sadyattes, the grandson of Gyges.<sup>8</sup> In F 47 §3, Gyges is introduced as a tall (μεγέθει διαφέρων: cf. μέγας in *Suda* α 1272) and handsome man, not only noble at war: ἦν δὲ ὁ Γύγης κάλλει τε καὶ μεγέθει διαφέρων, τά τε πολέμια γενναῖος καὶ τῶν ἡλικίων μακρῶ τὰ πάντα ἄριστος, ἵππων τε καὶ ὀπλων χρῆσιν ἥσκει ('Gyges was very handsome and tall, brave in war and much better in all fields than the people of the same age, and practised in the use of horses and weapons').<sup>9</sup> In F 63 §1, Sadyattes is introduced as follows: ὅτι Σαδυάττης ὁ Λυδῶν βασιλεύς, Ἀλυάττεω παῖς, ἦν μὲν τὰ πολέμια γενναῖος, ἄλλως δὲ ἀκόλαστος ('That Sadyattes, king of the Lydians, son of Alyattes, was a brave king in war even if without restraint in other respects'). *Suda* α 1423, devoted to Alyattes and reproducing τὰ πολέμια γενναῖος, depends on Nicolaus FF 63–5.<sup>10</sup> In my opinion, *Suda* α 1272 can also be plausibly attributed to the compiled Nicolaus of Damascus, not only because it contains the rare *iunctura* τὰ πολέμια γενναῖος which is attested in the *fragmentary* Nicolaus, but also since the subject suits well Nicolaus' Lydian history, dealt with in *FGrHist* 90 FF 15–18, 22, 44–7, 62–5, and 68 of his *Universal History*. Moreover, Nicolaus was well acquainted with the myth of Heracles' madness before accomplishing the twelve labours, reported in F 13.

All three statements of τὰ πολέμια γενναῖος, which can be certainly or likely attributed to Nicolaus of Damascus, involve some characters of Lydian history (Heracles and Alcaeus for the Heraclid dynasty, presented by Herodotus in

<sup>7</sup> The same genealogy in Hyg. *Fab.* 274.20. See also Paus. 2.21.3.

<sup>8</sup> de Boor (1905) 14; Büttner-Wobst and Roos (1906) 343.

<sup>9</sup> For similar introductions by Nicolaus, for instance γενναῖον καὶ μεγαλόφρονα told of Cyrus in F 66 §12, cf. Parmentier-Morin (2001) 94, 98.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Ada Adler in *apparatu*. For the exegetical problems posed by this *lemma*, see Paradiso (2009).

1.7; Gyges and Sadyattes for the Mermnads).<sup>11</sup> We can possibly infer that all of them may go back to Xanthus of Lydia, who was, for Lydian matters, the only source of Nicolaus of Damascus, at most combined with Herodotus, if F<sub>47</sub> is a contamination of Xanthus' story of Gyges with Herodotean features.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> On these dynasties, see Schubert (1884), at 5–7 on Alcaeus; Radet (1893); Mazzarino (1989<sup>2</sup>) 167–82, with the important objections put forward by Seel (1956); Talamo (1979), at 38–40 on Alcaeus.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. F. Jacoby, *Kommentar* on *FGrHist* 90 F 71, p. 253, 38: 'N.s quelle für alles lydische ist Xanthos'. See also, for the contamination-hypothesis, Jacoby, *Kommentar* on *FGrHist* 90, p. 233, 35–6; F 15, p. 240, 24; FF 44–7, p. 245, 11–12, following Meyer (1892) 167. The relations between Xanthus and Nicolaus are the object of a debate between those who affirm Nicolaus' direct dependence on Xanthus as to the Lydian section of his *Universal History* (that is Nicolaus' FF 15–18, 22, 44–7, 62–5, and perhaps 68) and those who deny it, supposing the filter of a Hellenistic re-elaboration of Xanthus' work. Others however deny a passive dependence of Nicolaus on Xanthus, but suggest on the contrary a rewriting by the former. See, among the first group of scholars, asserting direct dependence, Creuzer (1806) 200; Pomtow (1886) 15–25, esp. 25; Radet (1893) 254; Seidenstücker (1895) 19–44; Jacoby, *Kommentar* on *FGrHist* 90, p. 233, 42–4; Laqueur (1936) 375, 387–90; Pearson (1939) 122–3; Wacholder (1962) 67, 86; Herter (1967) 1357 and especially 1373; Parke (1984) 218, 226–7; Mazzarino (1989<sup>2</sup>) 179 and nn. 526–7; Alonso Núñez (1995) 11; Högemann (2002) 604–5. On the contrary, a first-hand consultation of Xanthus by Nicolaus is excluded by some scholars, who consider the intermediate role possibly played by an *epitome* of Xanthus, made by a certain Menippus (*FGrHist* 765 T 7), or by the forgeries attributed to Xanthus by Dionysius Skytobrachion, according to a piece of information provided but also rejected by Ath. 12.515de (*FGrHist* 765 T 5), or by a Hellenistic revision of the *Lydiaka*. Cf. Welcker (1844) and Tietz (1895–1896) 22–40; von Fritz (1967) I.88–98, esp. 97–8, and I/2 348–77 (*Exkurs 2: Die Λυδιακά des Lyders Xanthos*); Drews (1973) 101–2 and 193–4 (at 101: 'Xanthus' work was epitomized by a certain Menippus, and the abbreviator may have done some revision as well'). Regebogen (1943) 24 thought of Xenophilus *FGrHist* 767 F 1, depending on Xanthus, as Nicolaus' intermediary source. The hypothesis of a *Mittelquelle* transmitting Xanthus to Nicolaus—either Xenophilus or the Hellenistic reviser or even Dionysius Skytobrachion, not Menippus who, as a compiler, did not add to the text or forge it but only abridged it—seems to me too complicated, artificial and superfluous, besides being unproven or at least imprecise and now largely dismissed: cf. Pomtow (1886) 2–7, esp. 6; von Gutschmid (1893) 309; Pearson (1939) 114; Herter (1967) 1356; Rusten (1982) 84. It seems even concretely excluded as most fragments reveal instead a direct connection with an epichoric source, that is the original Xanthus: see *FGrHist* 765 TT 5 and 7 and, for the epichoric motifs, Diller (1956). Toher (1989) esp. 169 has thought of a rewriting, by Nicolaus, of his sources, among which also Xanthus. See also Radet (1893) 254; Pearson (1939) 131; Parke (1984) 226–7; and, for a review of the different interpretations, Dorati (2009) 50 n. 49. These suppositions of reworking, interpolation, and/or contamination with Herodotus, which may be discussed in connection with some fragments of Nicolaus, are to be excluded at least for F 22, where a literally close dependence of Nicolaus on Xanthus is not only much more economical but seems even proved. Cf. a passage of Athenaeus, mentioning openly Xanthus on the same subject as Nicolaus (Xanthus *FGrHist* 765 F 18, quoted in *Deipnosophists* 10.415cd). Both Nicolaus and Athenaeus seem to depend on Xanthus within two different historiographical projects of selection and compilation from the Lydian's text: cf. my 'Commentary on Xanthos of Lydia *BNJ* 765 F 18a and b' and 'Xanthus of Lydia, Source of Nicolaus of Damascus'

Herodotus, however, cannot be the source of Nicolaus, as he transmitted, in 1.7, different genealogical information. For the same reason, Hellanicus too cannot be Nicolaus' source as to this fragment. In Nicolaus of Damascus *FGrHist* 90 F 22, on the other hand, Xanthus named Iardanus (according to the tradition, the king of Lydia, father of Omphale) as the person probably responsible for King Camblitas' poisoning by a drug and possibly his successor.<sup>13</sup> If the *Suda* entry *a* 1272 may be attributed to Xanthus (through Nicolaus), it is worth noting that the Lydian historian shared with Herodotus the record of the name of Alcaeus, but not his genealogy. In fact, Herodotus and Xanthus followed two close but different Greek, perhaps Ionian, traditions as to the Lydian progeniture of Heracles. Xanthus was the first to attribute to Omphale a son of Heracles, named Alcaeus: this tradition, as we have seen, was to remain essentially isolated.

In conclusion, I suggest that *Suda a* 1272, dealing with Lydian mythical history, is derived from Nicolaus of Damascus, and probably ultimately from Xanthus of Lydia.

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(both in preparation). The reworking- or contamination-hypothesis may be also excluded for Alcaeus' genealogy, which cannot have been invented by Nicolaus and does not depend on Herodotus (see *supra*). Nicolaus possibly reworked his sources from a literary and rhetorical point of view (see Toher (1989)), without introducing nevertheless important foreign elements: in his long history of the Lydian dynasty of the Heraclids, he cannot have invented a different genealogy only for the first ancestor of the royal house, following then Xanthus' one for his successors. Cf., for instance, Xanthus' King Kambles (*FGrHist* 765 F 18), called Kamblitas by Nicolaus *FGrHist* 90 F 22.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Nikolaos of Damaskos *BNJ* 90 F 22 and Xanthos of Lydia *BNJ* 765 F 18b, both in preparation.

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