THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF SAINT JOHN OF DAMASCUS

BY

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A. INTRODUCTION*

Sources of his Life

Until recently, the Greek Vita, composed by a certain John, Patriarch of Jerusalem, who based his findings on an Arabic original, was considered to be the oldest biography of St. John Damascene.¹

* List of Abbreviations

a) Dictionaries

DACL = Dictionnaire d’Archeologie Chretienne et de Liturgie.
DTC = Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique.
BKV = Bibliothek der Kirchenväter.
LThK = Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche.
ThQ = Theologische Quartalschrift.
ZKTh = Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie.
BiDS = A Biographic Dictionary of the Saints.

b) Periodicals

AmHR = The American Historical Review.
ByZ = Byzantinische Zeitschrift. München.
DK = Der Katholik.
EchOr = Echos d’Orient. Paris.
MuB = Le Musée Belge.
OrChrAn = Orientalia Christiana Analecta. Rome.
OrChr = Orientalia Christiana. Rome.
ScC = Scuola Cattolica. Milano.

¹. See P. G. 94, 429-90; reprinted from M. Le Quien St. Joannis Damasceni Opera Omnia I (Paris 1712; Venice 1748) I-XXIV; mention is made of its dependence on the Arabic original, see ibid. P. G. 94, 433B and 489A.
This Vita was enlarged by John Merkouopolis, Patriarch of Jerusalem (1156-66), and edited by Papadopoulos Kerameus from a MS in the National Library in Athens, written in 1367. A third Greek Vita, a rather protracted and unhistorical panegyric, was published by the same editor. In was the great fortune of Constantine al-Bacha, a Basilian monk of the monastery of St. Savior in Saida, to discover the Arabic original of the Vita of St. John Damascene.

Michael, monk and priest, is the author of this Arabic Vita. In the preface to the Vita, he states the reason for its composition. We are informed that the city of Antioch was forced to surrender to the Seljuk Sultan Sulaiman ibn Kutulmis, the founder of the dynasty of Iconium. This occurred on a Wednesday, December 4, 1084, the day on which the Christians celebrated the feast of St. Barbara and St. John Damascene. They prayed most fervently to these Saints and, as by a miracle, obtained their freedom from the Sultan. The following year, the feast of St. Barbara and the pure John was commemorated again. Then a monk, Michael, wished to learn of the life of St. John, but he was told by every one that, neither in Greek nor in Arabic, could there be found a full story of his life. Michael began to gather material without succeeding in finding authentic sources, but merely bits of scattered news or reminiscences written down by contemporary Fathers in brief notes. Yet, these were but anecdotes or apophtegmata, commonly known among the monks of the Orient.

There is but one authority mentioned by name, St. Stephen the Younger, who witnessed the enthusiastic zeal shown by the Damascene in defense of the holy images. Most of his information, however, is derived from hearsay and oft-repeated oral traditions. It is presumed that he would have used genuine biographical material, if it had been

2. Biographie de Saint Jean Damascène; texte original arabe, publié par la première fois par le P. Constantin Bacha (Harisa, Liban, 4th ed. 1912), reprinted as Biography of St. John Damascene; original Arabic text, published for the first time (London 1912); see G. Graf, «Das arabische Original der Vita des hl. Johannes von Damaskus, D K 2 (1913), 184-190; 220-21, which contains a critical examination and a German rendering of the Arabic Vita; see a translation into Russian by A. A. Wasiliew published in St. Petersburg, 1915.


4. See id. lo c. cit. 168-70, preface to the Arabic Vita; see ibid. 189.
available. Due to the lack of historical data, his biographical sketch does not convey the impression of sound and historical reliability.

In the opinion of G. Graf, after a thorough investigation of these sources, a comparison between the Greek recension made by the Patriarch John, and the Arabic Vita discovered by C. al-Bacha, proves the complete identity of the two texts with but slight deviations in the introduction and conclusion. Graf is convinced that the newly discovered Arabic text is actually the one underlying the Greek text, and chronologically prior, and that all historical data in the Greek recension, with one exception, are enlargements, paraphrases and panegyrical embellishments of the Arabic text, and that, in addition, all Greek MSS, one excepted, are of a more recent date than the Arabic Vita which, according to its preface, must have been written shortly after December 4, 1085.

John, Patriarch of Jerusalem, the compiler of the Greek Vita, is probably to be identified with John XIII who, with two of his successors, ruled from 1105-567. A number of MSS speak of John, Patriarch of Antioch, as its author, who is, perhaps, identical with John IV occupying this patriarchal see in 1098, the year in which that city was taken by the first crusaders. Geographically and chronologically, he would be closest to the Arabic biographer. Peeters supposes the author of the Greek Vita to be a certain Georgian writer, Ephrem Mtsire (d. after 1110), who is said to have translated St. John Damascene's biograpy from the Greek into Georgian. Ephrem makes the assertion that the Vita was originally written in Arabic by Michael, a monk in the monastery of St. Simeon, and that it was translated into Greek by Samuel, Metropolitan of Adana, who added many embellishing details.

Outline of this Life

A summary of the Life of St. John Damascene can be given only in the form of a sketch. Until recent times, all biographies and monographs on St. John were based upon the Greek Vita of John of Je-

9. See A n B 33 (1914), 80f.
rusalem as their principal source. Modern research has done much to sift historical truth from legend. M. Jugie summarizes all data concerning the Damascene, which are known with certainty, in the following brief statement: St. John is a descendant of a distinguished Christian family of Damascus in Syria; he was a priest and monk at the Laura of St. Sabas near Jerusalem, he became a prominent figure in the iconoclastic controversy, as a preacher, he enjoyed a far-reaching reputation, and has left us numerous scholarly works which witness to his encyclopedic erudition. All other data must rest on contumies.

John Damascene was probably born in 675, at a time when Damascus served as the residence for the Mohammedan Khalif. Up to recent years, it was generally taken for granted that John belonged to an illustrious and wealthy family, that of the Mansur, i.e., the «Victorious».


This dynasty of Mansur is said to have held, for generations, the political functions of chief minister of finance, handing it down from father to son. According to H. Leclercq\textsuperscript{13}, the tales of John of Jerusalem are not worthy of credence. He suspects him of seemingly replacing history with legend. The claim that the Mansur-dynasty continued to hold on to its financial monopoly throughout the era of the succeeding dynasties of the Persian, Byzantine and Mohammedan rulers, in spite of all their violent antagonisms, seems at least highly questionable.

John of Jerusalem, makes his hero a member of the distinguished line of the Mansur, but why does he keep such a scrupulous silence with regard to another tradition handed down by the Melkite Patriarch Eutychius of Alexandria?\textsuperscript{14}

We possess a report of the Khalif Yazid, son of Moawia, numbering, among his personal associates, a certain Christian named Sargun, known to have taken a regular part in the luxurious banquets and drinking bouts at the court of his patron. The name of Sargun is also associated with the capitulation of the city of Damascus in the year 635. We are informed that the task of negotiation for surrender was entrusted to a certain Mansur, son of Sargun, unless it was Sargun, son of Mansur, or simply Sargun; the Arab chroniclers are undecided as to the exact name. Could he have been the father of our Theologian?

The Egyptian tradition of Eutychius, Patriarch of Alexandria, undoubtedly well informed, makes the formal charge of treason against Sargun. What were his reasons for making such accusations against a family of the man who stood in such high honor? Was not this man, St. John Damascene, once greatly honored by the Second General Council of Nicea (787)? The Melkite Church of Egypt has made no efforts to wipe off the shame which lay upon the name of one of its most illustrious men. Perhaps they sought to white wash the treason of the Mansur traitors by resorting to the realistic political expediency of a fait accompli. The Arab MS\textsuperscript{15} justifies the surrender of Damascus by referring to a parallel surrender of the city of Jerusalem by its Patriarch Sophronius; the MS continues to explain; "The siege lasted on; Mansur (Sargun) went into consultation with God as to the further procedure and was granted leave to give up in surrenders. In the years of the Byzantine Emperor at Constantinople, however, Sargun was a traitor, and

\textsuperscript{13} H. Leclercq, Jean Damascène, DACL 7, 2 (1927), 2186-92.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 2187.
\textsuperscript{15} Quoted by H. Leclercq, ibid., 2188.
the Church of Constantinople placed him under the ecclesiastical ban.

It is idle to speculate, if Sargun, the traitor, is identical with the one who surrendered the city of Damascus, or if he is to be identified with the father od St. John, or perhaps even with John Damascene himself. In the latter case, St. John would, like another St. Augustine, turn from the life of a worldling and profligate to that of a scholar and saint. In summary, we can do nothing but say that the early life of the Damascene will remain shrouded in mystery. His elementary training in philosophy and theology, St. John is said to have received from Cosmas the Elder, a monk from Calabria or Sicily, who was captured by the Arabs and, subsequently, ransomed by John’s father. Another Cosmas, called the Younger, an adopted orphan, brought up and tutored together with the Damascene by Cosmas the Elder, became Bishop of Majuma later in 74216. Both were noted as monks and melodians in the celebrated Laura of St. Sabas. At any rate, the works of the Damascene witness to his stupendous and encyclopedic knowledge in profane and sacred sciences. Furthermore, M. Jugie17 finds no reason to doubt that John succeeded his father as minister of finance due to the manner in which his name is associated in the acts of the Council of 78718 but he does not favor the view that John had ever held the position of a Grand Vizier to the Khalif19. When in 725, the Iconoclastic controversies begin, we find St. John in Palestine speaking as a priest and representative of John V, Patriarch of Jerusalem (d. 735).

It seems that he was ordained a priest by the latter not later than 726, the year in which he held the first of his fiery orations in defense of images20. Therein he spoke as a priest of Sion, that is Jerusalem, representing its bishop and threatening the heretical Emperor with excommunication. The time at which St. John for the Laura of St. Sabas is not easily determined. The acts of the Seventh General Council, or the Second Council of Nicaea (787) reveal that St. John preferred the shame of Christ to the wealth of Arabia and ill-treatment to the delights of sin21. This appears to be an

17. M. Jugie, Jean Damascène, D T C E 1 (1924), 693.
18. I b i d., 693.
19. See Vita St. Johannis Damasceni: 13 (P. G. 98, 449); see M. Jugie, loc. cit., 693.
21. See J. D. Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et a m p l i s s i m a c o l l e c t i o n e 13 (Florence and Venice 1759), 356 and 400.
allusion to the choice which St. John was obliged to make between his religious vocation and worldly career. Jugie\(^{22}\) thinks that the year 710, in which the Khaliphs increased their hostilities against the Christians, may have determined St. John to retire from public life. The story of the forged letter sent by the Mohammedan Khalif with the intention to discredit John, and the cutting off of his right hand in punishment for his treason, followed by the restoration of his amputated hand through the intercession of the Mother of God appearing to him in a vision in the cell of gis prison, does not seem to be tenable since it is not related by any contemporary records, nor do the acts of the Council of Nicea (787) take notice of this event. The edifying motive of the compiler of the Greek \textit{Vita} becomes very apparent in the charming legend of St. John's humility, who, as a monk under obedience, sold handmade baskets on the market place of Damascus, the very city in which he had formerly held high political office.

But such similar extraordinary details narrated in the \textit{Vita} arouse suspicion give ground to misgivings. But on the contrary, it is when we refer to the contents of his writings that we are able to gather the certain assurance that, in his retirement as a monk at the Laura of St. Sabas, near the city of Jerusalem, St. John unfolded his great talent as a scholarly theologian, a popular preacher, a prolific writer and a model monk up to the very winter of his eloquences\(^{23}\). The note of his Greek \textit{Vita}\(^{24}\), revealing that some of his works have undergone a revision, seems confirmed by the existence of their longer and shorter recensions.

From the acts of the Iconoclast synod of Hieria in 754, we learn of the anathematization of three main defenders of images, namely Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople (d. 733); George, Metropolitan of Cyprus (d. 754) and Mansur (spelled in Greek \textit{Μανσορος} in Hebrew מגרש, i. e., bastard with reference to Deut. 23,2), cursed favorer of the Saracens, traitorous worshiper of images, wrangler of Jesus Christ and disloyal to the Empire; Anathema to Mansur, teacher of impiety and bad interpreter of Scripture; and we are informed that 'the Trinity had struck down the three\(^{25}\), the word 

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item See M. Jugie, \textit{Jean Damascène}, D T C 8. I (1924), 693; \textit{La vie de saint Jean Damascène}, E C H O r 23 (1924), 443ff.
\item See \textit{In Dormit. homil. 2. I} (P. G. 96, 724).
\item See P. G. 94, 484B, note 36.
\item \textit{H Χριστος τος φρονης καθηδεν}, see Mansi, \textit{Sacror. Concil. coll.}
\item \textit{Eth. Chri.}, see Mansi, \textit{Sacror. Concil. coll.}
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
bably, refers to their death. The interpretation of death seems preferable, even though this word could be taken in the sense of anathematization or deposition, since the Seventh Ecumenical Council of Nicea (787) when rehabilitating them, paralleled the ban pronounced by the conciliabrum of 754, and declared that the Trinity had glorified the three. We have it on the authority of the Chronographer Theophanes, the Confessor (d. ab. 817) that the iconoclastic Emperor Constantine Copronymos (741-55) changed the name of Mansur ben Sarguna into Μανσύρος. He fastened thereby to the Damascene's name the opprobrious epithet «Mansur», an appellation synonymous with treason in Byzantine ears; such juggling of names was not uncommon in days of factional strife, as we may infer from the equally inglorious subriquet «Copronymos» itself.

S. Vailhé was able to determine the exact date of the death of St. John Damascene on the basis of the details of the Life of St. Stephen a monk at the Laura of St. Sabas, and a nephew of St. John Damascene. Stephen died on March 31, 794, at the age of sixty-nine; we learn of his entry into the Laura at the age of ten years. There he lived at the side of his uncle for a period of fifteen years, that is, in this calculation, until 749 (December 4th), presuming that he was born in the early months of 725. In all probability, the year of the death of St. John Damascene is, therefore, 749, and the day of his death is, perhaps, December 4th.

As early as the ninth century, Theophanes, the Chronographer, honors him as a Saint, and bestows upon him the epithet of Χρυσόσφηνος or the golden-streamed. This may be taken to be an allusion to the river bearing this name and watering his native town of Damascus,

26. Η τροχός τοῦ τρεῖς ἔδεσσαν; see Mansi, l o c. cit. 400.
27. See Theophanes, Chronographia, P. G. 108, 841; concerning the Chronographer Theophanes, see K. Krumbacker, Geschicht der byzantinischen Literatur (Munich 1891), 430; see also Mansi, l o c. cit. 13 (Florence and Venice 1759), 356.
29. See S. Vailbé, Date de la mort de saint Jean Damascène, in Echôr 9 (1910), 28-30.
30. See Vita St. Stephanos, in Acta Sulli III, 594-64.
31. See Theophanes, Chronographia, P. G. 108, 824: In the year 729, there lived at Damascus John Chrysorrhous, son of Mansur, a priest and monk, distinguished by his holiness and knowledge who, in unison with the Bishops of all the East, pronounced excommunication against the Emperor Leo, see Honity in St. John Chrysost., P. G. 96, 762.
but it may also betoken the elegance of his style, the purity of his doctrine and the splendor of his virtues. Since the tenth century, his name appears on the Synaxaria on November 29th or on December 4th32.

The Greek Orthodox Church still observes his feast on December 4th. The Roman Martyrology mentions his name on May 6th33. On August 9, 1890 Pope Leo XIII raised St. John Damascene to the dignity of a Doctor of the Church and extended his feast to the whole Church to be observed on March 27th34. St. John Damascene is the patron Saint for students of Oriental Studies.

Writings: Editions and Translations

St. John’s writings may be classified in six categories: 1) Dogmatic, 2) Polemic, 3) Ascetic, 4) Eumeneutic, 5) Orations, and 6) Poems or Hymns. His most important work - the «Fons Scientiae» - was written at the suggestion of his former fellow-monk, Cosmas Melodus, Bishop of Maiuma. It is divided into three parts, dealing with philosophy35 («Dialectica»), heresies, and the Orthodox faith («De Fide Orthodoxæ»), the most important of the three.

For his philosophical doctrines he is indebted to Aristotle as well as to Plato through Dionysius Areopagites mainly and Maximus the Confessor, whereas the book of heresies is for the most part a reproduction of the «Anakephalaiosis», attributed to St. Epiphanius. Also here he borrows from Leontius of Byzantium and Theodoretus of Cyrous, who traced a similar outline in his work «Haereticorum Fabularum Compendium»36.

The «Fons Scientiae» made its entry into the West through the translation of Burgundio of Pisa (d. 1194) and Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (d. 1253)37. The first printed edition of any portion of the works

34. See A c S S 23 (Rome 1890-91), 255-6.
35. J. Bilz attempted to give an analysis of the philosophical terminology as they were employed in the works of St. John (=Die Trinitätslehre des hl. Johannes von Damaskus, Paterborn 1909, 1-26).
36. P. G. 83, 335-556.
37. See S. H. Thomson, The W r i t i n g s of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (Cambridge 1940), 45-51; translation of Opera Johannis Damasceni; the author claims that the translation (of five works, among them the (De Fide Orthodoxæ) which we here ascribe to Grosseteste, has hitherto been attributed, without proof (see Le Quien in...
of the Damascene was that of the De Fide Orthodoxa, in a Latin version by Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples (d. 1536) at Paris in 1507, and the first Greek edition, in print, of the same treatise was at Verona in 1531. The first attempt to publish the complete Fons Scientiae with other works of St. John, in Latin translation, was made by the Dominican Friar Henry Grave at Cologne in 1543. The first publication of the Fons Scientiae, in Greek and Latin columns, was provided by the learned French Dominican Michel Le Quien who, with the help of other scholars, published all the works which were attributed to St. John Damascene, or in any way associated with his name, at that particular period. He promised them lengthy prolegomena and scholarly dissertations, and edited them in two Folio volumes (Paris 1712; reprinted in Venice 1748).

But this edition still contains much that is spurious or omits works which are attributed to St. John, as only the future will prove. This edition, procured by M. Le Quien, has been reprinted, with a few additions by Gallandi and Cardinal Mai, in J.P. Migne's Greek Series, in volumes 94-96, Paris 1864.

In the eleventh century, the first and third parts of the Fons Scientiae, extracts of the second and other dogmatic works, were translated into Arabic. Their translator is said to have been Abul Fasch Abdallah ibn al Fald, the Melkite Metropolitan of Antioch, who flourished in the middle of the eleventh century.

There is a MS in Arabic translation of some works of St. John extant in the Asiatic Museum of the Academy of Sciences at Leningrad, and the Vatican Library possesses Cod. Vat. Arab. 79 (written in 1223) containing an Arabic translation of fifty-three chapters of the Dialectics and one-hundred chapters of the De Fide Orthodoxa.

There are also many MSS of the Fons Scientiae preserved in the Libraries of London, Paris, Rome, Dublin, Venice, Bologna,

his preface to his edition, Paris 1712, reprinted in P. C. 95, 570; to Burundic of Piss who was known to have translated the De Fide Orthodoxa; see ibid. 45; See E. Hocedez, «Les trois premières traductions du De Fide Orthodoxa de St. Jean Damascène», in Mub 17 (1913), 109-23; «La diffusion de la Translation Lincolniens du De Fide Orthodoxa de St. Jean Damascène», Bul Arch Chr 9 (1918), 180-92; see P. Minges, «Zum Gebrauch der Schrift De Fide Orthodoxa, des Johannes von Damaskus in der Scholastik», ThQ 95 (1914), 225-47.

38. See J. Langen, Johannes von Damaskus (Gotha 1879), 29ff.

39. See D. Steichenhofer, op. cit. XIV, quoted from Wassilow.
Verona, Vienna, Leningrad, etc. That of Paris alone owns twenty-two MSS of the Dialectica, four MSS of the Haereses, and twenty-seven MSS of the De Fide Orthodoxa. The Library of Vienna also harbors many MSS still unexplored, not to mention the Near East which may yet yield hitherto unknown treasures.

The De Fide Orthodoxa is a comprehensive presentation of the teaching of the Greek Fathers on the main Christian doctrines, especially the Trinity, Creation, and the Incarnation; the Sacraments, Mariology, Images, and other subjects are also treated, but less systematically.

The De Fide Orthodoxa, in the edition of Le Quien, comprises one hundred chapters and is divided into four books. The division into chapters seems to be original, and is, perhaps, intended to parallel the one hundred heresies of the second section of the Fons Scientiae. None of the Greek MSS, however, know of the existence of a division into four books, nor is this suggested by the first printing of the Greek text at Verona (1531). Some MSS are found to have marginal notes made in ink, and from this circumstance, R. Ceillier conjectures that this division may have originated in imitation of the Libri IV Sententiarum of Peter Lombard, due also to the striking similarity of their contents. The only Codex, Regius n. 3445, which Le Quien considers to be of recent date, has two divisions; the doctrine on God or theology, comprising forty-four chapters, or book one and two, and the doctrine of salvation or economy, consisting of fifty-four chapters, or Book three and four. Le Quien retained the division into four books and numbers the one hundred chapters in continuity.

The outline of the De Fide Orthodoxa follows the pattern of Theodoretus of Cyrus' Haereticarum fabularum compendium whose fifth book contains a resume of the orthodox faith and Christian morality. Theodoretus treats the Trinity, creation, matter, angels, demons, man, providence, redemption, biblical revelation, baptism, resurrection, judgment, second Advent of Christ, antichrist, virginity, marriage, immortality, penance and fast. In general, the Damascene


42. P. G. 86, 335-556.
follows this design. Book one (chapters 1-14) treats of God one and trin-
ne; book two (chapters 15-44) deals with the works of God; creation,
angels, demons, world, paradise, man and providence; book three
(chapters 45-73) concerns itself with the Incarnation or with Christo-
logy; book four (chapters 74-100), least orderly, continues commenting
on the events after Christ's resurrection i.e. on christological subjects
(chapters 74-81), then breaks up the well-ordered plan and takes up a
variety of theological matters, such as faith, baptism, the cross, prayers
towards the east, Eucharist, Mariology, veneration of Saints, relics,
images, Sacred Scripture, against Manicheans, Jews, on virginity,
circumcision, anti-Christ and on the resurrection. The Latin transla-
tion of Burgundio of Pisa (d. 1193), perhaps, the first rendering into
Latin, remained the «Damascenian Vulgate» of the medieval schola-
stics down to the sixteenth century. In its barbarity, that is «Lite-
ralness of style», it was, in the opinion of P. Migne43, even exceeded
by that of Robert Grosseteste (d. 1253) and his school. Jacques Lefè-
vre d' Etaples (Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, d. 1538), a humanist, re-
translated the De Fide Orthodoxa in a more polished and readable Latin which appeared in print at Paris (1507). Abbot James
Billius (d. 1581) corrected Lefèvre's translation, Combesis, the great
patristic scholar (d. 1679), amended still further the text of Billius, and
M. Le Quien added a few more corrections to his famous edition of 1712,
at Paris; this edition has been reprinted by J. P. Migne, Patrologiae
cursus completus, series graeca, volume 94, Paris 186444, 517-1228. In 1546, there appeared at Basel an edition which might be
called the first attempt of a collected edition of all the works of St. John.
The 1548 edition of the same contains the Greek and Latin text of the
De Fide Orthodoxa, arranged in parallel columns. The Latin
is that of Lefèvre45, and a commentary by Jodocus Chlentoveus
Neoportuensis (d. 1543) has been added which had already appeared
previously in 1542. Lefèvre's brief explanations to each chapter and

43. See P. Minges, Zum Gebrauch der Schrift De Fide Orthodoxa
des Johannes von Damaskus in der Scholastik ThQ 96 (1914), 225-47; he quotes
Le Quien as characterizing Burgundio's translation as crudis prorsus barbarusque,
see ibid. 337f.; Lefèvre's translation is a revision of that of Burgundio, see ibid.
238; later translation are said to be eversiones elegantiores, see ibid. loc. cit.
44. See D. Stiefenhofer, op. cit. XXVIII.
the lengthy commentary of Chlichtoveus were omitted by Le Quien, with the observation that they had made little or no contribution towards explaining Greek theology.

On January 21, 1636, the French hierarchy authorized Canon Jean Aubert to procure a critical edition of the complete work of St. John Damascene. Neither he nor his collaborators, François Combeis and Philip Labbé, ever got beyond the first attempts. The final edition is linked up with the name of the Dominican scholar, Michel Le Quien, who with the help of others managed to publish a more or less complete edition which he provided with lengthy prolegomena and scholarly dissertations. It appeared in Paris, in 1712, in two volumes, was reprinted at Venice in 1748, and found its entry into Migne’s Greek series, volumes 94-96, Paris 1864. Migne’s collection contains a few additions by Gallandi and Cardinal Mai. Furthermore, a number of works which claim the authorship of St. John are nowadays generally considered as apocryphal. We must add a Treatise on Faith against the Nestorians, Λόγος περὶ πίστεως κατὰ Ναστοριανῶν, published by F. Diekamp in Theologische Quartalschriften 83 (1901), 555-95.

His other great work, the Sacra Parallele, preserved only in fragments, is a vast compilation of Scriptural and patristic texts on Christian moral and ascetical life. It received its name from the parallel treatment of virtues and vices in its third part.

St. Damascene also wrote a comprehensive commentary on the Pauline Epistles and several homilies of a strongly dogmatic bent, e.g. on the Transfiguration, on Holy Saturday, and on the death of the Virgin. Besides his prose works he composed a number of poems which form part of the Greek Liturgy, though not all of those attributed to him are authentic. Some of these have found their way into modern English hymn-books, e.g. “Come, ye Faithful, raise the strains and The Day of Resurrection: Earth tell it out abroad.”

The Life of Barlaam and Joasaph is apparently also a genuine work of the Damascene, though modern scholars have widely questioned it.

A new critical edition of the complete works of St. John Damascene

46. See P.G. 94, 781.
47. M. Jugie, ‘Jean Damascéen’, DTC 8.1 (1947), 706f., lists works which are doubtful and apocryphal.
48. F. Diekamp, ThQ 83 (1901), 555-95.
49. Both in J. M. Neale’s renderings.
50. So J. M. Hock, O. S. B.
is in the making. The Reverend Dr. Johannes Höck, O. S. B., of the Benedictine Abbey of Scheyern, Bavaria, Germany, will be the chief editor. Numerous Damascenian scholars have been enlisted in this eventful undertaking and the prospects are propitious.

Editions and Translations:

a) Life.

2) Gordillo, Mauritius, ed. and trans., Damascenica: I. Vita Marciana. II. Libellus Orthodoxiae, in O r Ch r 8 (1926), 45f.

3) M. Jugie, A. A., La Vie de saint Jean Damascène, in E c h O r, 23 (1924), 137-161, and 28 (1929), 35.

4) Id., Une Nouvelle Vie et un nouvel écrit de saint Jean Damascène, i b i d., 28 (1929), 35-41.

5) Papadopoulos Kerameus A., in A n a l e c t a I e r o s o l y m i t . S t a c h y o l o g i a s 4, 271-302 and 302-350.


7) K. Acropolites, Panygirikos at Feast of St. John (14th century), in M. P. G. 140, 812-885.

8) S. Vailhé, Date de la mort de saint Jean Damascène, in E c h O r 1906, 28-30.


13) M. Jugie, Remarques sur de prétendus discours, inédits de saint Jean Damascène, in E c h O r 17, 343-344.

b) Writings.

DIALECTICA

The anthropology of Saint John of Damascus

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DE FIDE OTHODOXA


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