

9 Sylvester of Antioch's Network of Collaborators

9.1 The Phanariots

The familiarity with the political and economic Greek Orthodox élites of Constantinople, the so-called Phanariots¹ played an important part in a successful relationship with the Ottoman authorities. The few Phanariot families, often related among them, which provided candidates for the positions of great interpreter (drogman) and *beys* or princes for Moldavia and Wallachia, had reached a position of political influence in the first half of the 18th century. The Phanariots' involvement in Church matters, especially in the Patriarchate of Constantinople, was not unusual, as noted by Church historians such as Athanasios Komnēnos Hypsēlantēs and Sergios Makraios.

For a patriarch of Antioch like Sylvester, well-educated in the Greek culture but essentially an outsider in the Constantinopolitan society, good connections in the Ottoman capital were critical. The patriarch even resided in the city for extended periods of time, following the example of the patriarchs of Jerusalem, who had as their residence in the imperial city a *metochion* in the Fener quarter, close to the Ecumenical See. During his stays here, Sylvester's residence was sometimes in palaces belonging to the Phanariotes. This is attested, for example, in a letter of the patriarch to Gregory Ghikas, prince of Wallachia at the time, where he informed him that, as he was preparing to leave the capital, he left Ghikas' palace and was in the process of moving his belongings (Gr. *ρῶχα*) to a *konakion*.² It is not clear whether the Patriarch did this at his own initiative or whether the prince had asked or suggested to him to move out, after a long stay in his residence. Although this is not explicit, it seems a plausible interpretation, considering that the patriarch did not leave the city right away, but only changed his residence.

Having high-rank acquaintances and supporters also came with a high risk, as was often demonstrated in Ottoman society. On February 9, 1742, the ecumenical Patriarch Paisios II announced Sylvester in a letter that, following the death of Alexander Ghikas, his belongings went to the state (*miri* for the imperial treasury). Among his assets was a document attesting to the debt of a significant sum of money, along with interests amounting to 350 *groschen*, which the patriarch owed to Ghikas. The Ottomans requested the patriarch of Constantinople, as a representative of

1 From the Gr. Φανάρι < Tk. *Fener*, a quarter of Constantinople located in the eastern part of the city.

2 Letter of Sylvester to Gregory II Ghikas, prince of Wallachia, September 3, 1749, in MS 210 Hārīṣā, f. 140v.

the Orthodox, to pay this debt. After paying it, the ecumenical patriarch asked the amount of money from Sylvester and sent him the bill. He insisted that the return of the document without a payment of the debt would be interpreted by the Ottoman authorities as an act of insubordination. Sylvester's answer came quickly but was not exactly the one expected in Constantinople. He did not remember borrowing any money from Ghikas and admitted that if such a debt existed, it was contracted by his *epitropoi* in Constantinople at some point during his patriarchate. Moreover, the financial state of the Antiochian See did not allow him to pay the debt immediately and in full. Instead, he was asking to pay in installments for a period of several months, from the modest income of the Patriarchate.³

The precarious financial situation of the Patriarchate is a reoccurring theme in Sylvester's letters, especially during the 1730s and 1740s. Also, in many letters from and to the Phanariot princes of Wallachia and Moldavia, their economic and political support for the Church of Antioch is alluded to, or openly requested. Among these princes were John and Constantine Mavrokordatos, Gregory II Ghikas, and Michael Rakovitzas. The most constant support from the Danubian countries came in the form of revenues from the assets of the two *metochia* granted to the Church of Antioch by the Phanariot princes: Saint Nicholas (Popăuți) near Botoșani, in Moldavia, and Saint Spyridon in Bucharest, Wallachia. The Monastery of Popăuți was in northern Moldavia (nowadays in the city of Botoșani), and it was a *metochion* of the Patriarchate of Antioch since 1751. The monastery was endowed with lands, producing revenue.⁴

It is not clear for how long some other revenues, solemnly instated by the princes in official documents (*chrysoboulloi*), such as the percentage received yearly from certain local revenues, were collected. The two *metochia* were a very small number if compared with those dedicated to the other Patriarchates, or to other famous Holy Places and monasteries of the Orthodox world. They remained dependent on the Antiochian See until the confiscation of the monastic properties by the Romanian government in 1863.⁵ Their abbots were sent from or approved by the Antiochian Patriarchate. Significant collections of documents related to these "dedicated" monasteries and their land and other assets have been preserved in

3 Both letters are preserved in MS 210 Hârîșă, f. 170r–171v.

4 See Diaconu, *Mănăstirea "Sfântul Nicolae Domnesc" din Popăuți*, cited above.

5 For the relations of the Romanian Principalities with the Orthodox East, see E. Băbuș, I. Moldoveanu, A. Marinescu (eds.), *The Romanian Principalities and the Holy Places along the Centuries*, Bucharest, 2007. For the 1863 act, see M. Popescu-Spineni, *Procesul mănăstirilor închinate*, București, 1936; K. Hitchins, *The Romanians 1774–1866*, Oxford, 1996, p. 313–314; *Secularizarea averilor bisericești (1863). Motivații și consecințe*, Bucharest, 2013.

Romanian archives.⁶ Many have not been published yet. They provide important data for the history of Romanian relations with the Patriarchate of Antioch. However, the history of these *metochia* after 1766 is beyond the scope of this book.

Sylvester's role in establishing these *metochia* as permanent links of the Church of Antioch with the Romanian lands should be noted. Sylvester had already met Gregory II Ghikas in 1724 or 1725 in Constantinople, while the latter was grand dragoman. As we mentioned, there are indications in the sources that Ghikas, together with the patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem, supported the appointment of Sylvester as patriarch of Antioch. In 1725, Ghikas facilitated a first meeting between the French ambassador in Constantinople, Jean-Baptiste Louis Picon, Viscount d'Andrezel, and Sylvester of Antioch. In his letters, Sylvester makes frequent allusions to the support Gregory II Ghikas granted him, presumably during the first years of his office. He calls him κατ' ἐξωχὴν ὑπερασπιστὴς καὶ κηδεμὼν ("defender and protector *par excellence*").⁷

9.2 Patriarch Chrysanthos of Jerusalem

Sylvester's relations with Chrysantos Notaras, the patriarch of Jerusalem between 1707 and 1731, were consistent during the first years of the newly elected patriarch of Antioch. Chrysanthos had succeeded his uncle Dositheos in office. Both were prominent figures of the Greek culture of their time, with a solid theological education. Chrysanthos of Jerusalem was well connected with the Phanariots, the Greek élite in Constantinople.

There are reasons to suppose that Chrysanthos influenced Sylvester in several ways during the first years of the latter's patriarchate. At the time, the patriarch of Jerusalem was mostly residing in Constantinople and had a major influence in the Orthodox Church. It is believed that he composed the dogmatic decisions issued by the Synods held in Constantinople in 1723 and 1727, formulating the Orthodox Church doctrine in opposition to the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. The Acts of these Councils, which were signed, among others, by Athanasios III Dabbās

⁶ The status of the "dedicated" monasteries was a subject of intense debate especially in the mid-19th century with the Romanian authorities asserting that the "dedication" meant the right of usufruct for the revenues of the monasteries, and not full ownership.

⁷ Letter of Sylvester to Gregory II Ghikas, prince of Wallachia, April 6, 1750, in MS 210 Ḥariṣā, f. 45v ("κατ' ἐξωχὴν ὑπερασπιστὰ καὶ κηδεμὼν").

and Sylvester of Antioch, were published by the latter in 1747 in Bucharest, in Arabic translation.⁸

The patriarch of Jerusalem's experience in dealing with Latin missionaries might also have been of real help for Sylvester. Chrysanthos was well connected with the West Europeans of Constantinople, as documented by his visits to the French embassy. During such a visit, he discussed Sylvester's actions with the French ambassador, seemingly defending him.⁹

Chrysanthos had published several books on various subjects, many printed in Wallachia. It is possible that the project of printing books in the Danubian Principalities, later achieved by Sylvester, was also influenced by his conversations with Chrysanthos. Several of these Greek works printed by Chrysanthos are mentioned in a list of books preserved in one of Sylvester's collections of documents and personal notes.¹⁰

It is also possible that Chrysanthos facilitated Sylvester's contact with personalities such as Nikolaos Mavrokordatos, prince of Wallachia at the time, whom Sylvester met in Bucharest in May 1730, on his first visit to the Romanian Principalities,¹¹ as he reported in a letter to Chrysanthos on May 23 of that year.

Eight letters addressed by Sylvester to Chrysanthos survive, suggesting that there were more sent in both directions. The letters were sent in 1728–1730 from various places during the travels of the patriarch of Antioch: Constantinople, Philippopolis, Thessaloniki, Ioannina, and Wallachia.

In a letter sent from Constantinople on March 4, 1728, Sylvester mentions that “we also wrote in Arabic the explanation of the Orthodox Confession”.¹² It is most likely the text composed and agreed upon at the Synod of 1727 in Constantinople. The Arabic text was published two decades later by Sylvester in Bucharest, as mentioned above. The letter might suggest that the patriarch prepared the Arabic translation himself. In another letter sent from Philippopolis (nowadays, Plovdiv in Bulgaria), on August 2, 1728, Sylvester wrote to Chrysanthos (then in Bucharest, preparing to travel to Moldavia) about the disappointing results of his attempt to collect money to pay his debts. On December 6, 1728, he echoed the complaints

⁸ For this edition, see Ch. 16.5.

⁹ Rabbath, *Documents inédits*, vol. II, p. 359.

¹⁰ In MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 18–19. For the text, see Addenda 3.

¹¹ Chrysanthos of Jerusalem and Nikolaos Mavrokordatos exchanged dozens of letters that reflect a close relationship between the two. For the list of letters from Mavrokordatos to Chrysanthos, see: P. Stathē, *Χρύσανθος Νοταράς πατριάρχης Ιεροσολύμων, πρόδρομος του Νεοελληνικού Διαφωτισμού*, PhD dissertation, Thessaloniki, 1996, p. 212–213.

¹² Papadopoulos, “Επιστολαὶ Σιλβέστρου Ἀντιοχείας”, p. 135: “ἀνεγράψαμεν ἀραβιστὶ καὶ τὴν ἐκθεσιν τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ὁμολογίας”.

of the Christians in his eparchy against the persecutions of the “modernizers” (νεωτερισταί, *neōteristai*), asking Chrysanthos’s support for the patriarchal See of Antioch. These “modernizers” are, of course, the supporters of the emerging “Greek Catholic” party, or the *Latinophrones*, as he names them on other occasions. In February 1730, Sylvester wrote to Chrysanthos from Ioannina, where he had spent the winter, about the difficulties of his “wandering” (“περιπλάνισις”).¹³

9.3 Rowland Sherman

Rowland Sherman was an English merchant who took residence in Aleppo towards the end of the 17th century. He learned Arabic well enough to be able to translate theological works into this language. He had an interest in theology beyond the average English merchant in the Levant at the time.¹⁴

Sherman’s relations with the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch had been strong from the time of the patriarch Athanasios III Dabbās.¹⁵ There is also evidence that Sherman was involved in supporting the printing activities in England by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), especially by disseminating their books in the Levant.¹⁶ A pamphlet published in 1725 mentions him as somebody who can help with the distribution of Arabic books from Aleppo to England. The Arabic books published by the SPCK in London were the *Psalter* (1725) and the *New Testament* (1727).¹⁷

Perhaps at Patriarch Athanasios’s initiative, Sherman was involved in the publishing and distribution of the Arabic translation of Ilias Miniatis’s polemical book *Πέτρα σκανδάλου* (*The Rock of Offence*). Sherman’s role in publishing this book in England is not yet confirmed by archival documents.¹⁸ The translation was fin-

13 Papadopoulos, “Επιστολαὶ Σιλβέστρου Ἀντιοχείας”, p. 136–137.

14 For Rowland Sherman, see Mills, *A Commerce of Knowledge*, p. 229–231, 238–247; R. Finnegan (ed.), *Richard Pococke’s Letters from the East (1737–1740)*, Leiden/Boston, 2020, p. 200, 202–204, 209, 210; M. Häberlein, P. Manstetten, “The Translation Policies of Protestant Reformers in the Early Eighteenth Century. Projects, Aims, and Communication Networks”, in A. Flüchter, A. Gipper, S. Greilich, H.-J. Lüsebrink (eds.), *Übersetzungspolitiken in der Frühen Neuzeit/Translation Policy and the Politics of Translation in the Early Modern Period*, Berlin/Heidelberg, 2024, p. 317, 325–326.

15 Mills, *A Commerce of Knowledge*, p. 230–232.

16 Mills, *A Commerce of Knowledge*, p. 237, 239–243.

17 See S. Mills, “Athanasios Dabbās and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge’s Arabic Bibles”, forthcoming in O. Iacubovschi, S. Noble, I. Feodorov (eds.), *Icons, Ornaments, and other Charms of Christian Arabic Books*, Berlin/Boston, 2024.

18 Mills, *A Commerce of Knowledge*, p. 245.

ished by the Patriarch Athanasios III Dabbās in 1721 in Aleppo, while the book was printed in 1726 in Oxford without mentioning the place or the publisher, but with Athanasios's *Foreword*. The editor was an eminent Arabic scholar, the Frenchman John (Jean) Gagnier.¹⁹ A major part of the print run was sent from England to the Levant and reached Ottoman Syria after Sylvester took over the Patriarchate. It can be assumed also that Sherman and Sylvester collaborated in distributing this book.

Sylvester's relationship with Rowland Sherman is attested by a series of letters addressed by the patriarch to the English merchant, preserved in the Arabic manuscript 348 in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of the Yale University. The manuscript contains unpublished Arabic letters from 1732 and 1734 exchanged by Sylvester with Ilyās al-Ṭrābulī, *lūghūtātī al-kursī al-rasūlī al-Anṭākī* (probably Ilyās Fakhr), and by Patriarch Sylvester with Rowland Sherman.²⁰ The letters contain, among other, theological explanations of the Orthodox dogmas on fasting and icons. At the end of the letters, there is a pronouncement of the patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem, alongside several metropolitans, dated October 1718, against Euthymios Ṣayfī, the metropolitan of Tyre and Sidon. It is a translation of the Greek original issued by the Patriarch Jeremias III, signed by the former patriarchs of Constantinople Athanasios V (1709–1711) and Kyrillos IV (1711–1713), by Chrysanthos of Jerusalem, and by ten metropolitans.²¹ The signature of Kyrillos IV of Constantinople is missing from the Arabic text. The letter is addressed to the patriarch of Antioch (then, Kyrillos V), the clergy and the faithful of the Church of Antioch.

A letter of Makarios of Patmos to Rowland Sherman, dated March 28, 1731, is preserved in a manuscript that was once on the Greek island of Symi.²²

Interesting information on Rowland Sherman is provided by a letter of Iakovos of Patmos: "There is a British man in Aleppo called Sherman, a strong defender of us, who also translated into Arabic the book of Nektarios and that of Ilias called *The Rock of Offence*, printed them in Britain, and distributed them across Syria".²³ There is some difficulty in assessing the value of the information provided by Iakovos

19 Mills, *A Commerce of Knowledge*, p. 245. I shall discuss this book in more detail in Ch. 15.1.

20 For a description of this part of the manuscript in the library catalog, see <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/bibid/3770264>.

21 Delikanēs, *Tὰ ἐν τοῖς κώδιξι τοῦ Πατριαρχικοῦ Ἀρχειοφυλακείου σωζόμενα ἐπίσημα ἐκκλησιαστικά ἔγγραφα*, p. 638–642 (published from the MS 622 of the *metochion* of the Holy Sepulchre in Constantinople, p. 394).

22 A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, "Ἀνέκδοτα Συμαϊκά", *Ἀνατολή. Σύγγραμμα περιοδικόν*, 1, 1880, 7–8, p. 210–214. For the letter's content, see Ch. 12.1.

23 M. I. Malandrakis, *Ἡ Πατμιάς Σχολή*, Athens, 1911, p. 134: "ἔστιν ἐν Χαλέπιον Βρεττανὸς Σέρμαν λεγόμενος ὑπερασπιστὴς τῶν ὑμετέρων εἰς τὸ ἀκρότατον, ὅστις καὶ τὴν τοῦ Νεκταρίου βίβλον καὶ

of Patmos about Sherman's translation. Maybe Sherman worked together with Dabbās in translating Miniatis's Greek text, or simply Iakovos, who arrived later in Aleppo, was not well informed. What may be accurate is that Sherman distributed the book across Syria. It is also plausible that he was involved in sending the manuscript and arranging for its printing in Oxford. As for Nektarios's book, Michaël Malandrakis thought this was the book against the pope's primacy written by the patriarch Nektarios of Jerusalem (1602/1605–1676, patriarch of Jerusalem 1661–1669).²⁴ Though it is possible that Sherman translated this book, there is no known Arabic edition of it before the one published in 1746 in Iaşi by Sylvester of Antioch.

However, Chrysanthos of Jerusalem's travel notes, where he mentions his visit in Aleppo in 1724, bring clarity to this topic. The patriarch wrote: “Ὁ Ρουλάνδ Σερμὲν Ἄγγλος πραγματευτὴς γνωστὸς καὶ φίλος μας, οὗτινος σύντροφος ἐν τῷ Γαλατᾷ εἰς τὴν Πόλιν ὁ χοτζᾶ Ντοῦτλεῖ Φοῦλε, Ἄγγλος εἰς τὸ Σταυροδρόμι” (“Rowland Sherman [is] an English merchant known to us and our friend, whose companion in Galata, in the City [of Constantinople], is *hotza* Dudley Foley, an Englishman in Stavrodromi”).²⁵ Notaras also declared in his notes:

Ἐνταῦθα ἐδώκαμεν καὶ τῷ ἄνω εἰρημενῶ Ρούλανδ Ἀγγλῶ τὸ κατὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ πάπα ἐγχειρίδιον τοῦ κύρ Νεκταρίου, μεταγλωτισμένον ἀραβιστί, νὰ τὸ πέμψῃ νὰ τυπωθῇ εἰς τὸ Λοντίνι, καὶ νὰ γενουν 500 βιβλία, διὰ τὸ ὅποιον μᾶς ἔγραψε καὶ δώκαμεν εἰς τὴν Πόλιν τῷ συντρόφῳ του Ντοῦτλεῖ Φοῦλε Ἀγγλῶ εἰς τὸ Σταυροδρόμι ζιντζιρλία 100.²⁶

Here [in Aleppo] we gave to the above-mentioned Englishman Rowland the manual against the authority of the pope by kyr Nektarios translated into Arabic, to be printed in London in 500 copies, for which he wrote to us, and we gave in the City [Constantinople] to his companion the Englishman Dudley Foley in Stavrodromi 100 *zintzirlia*.

Chrysanthos's text is clear and allows no differing interpretations. An Arabic book was sent by the patriarch through Rowland Sherman to be printed in London, and it is the same book mentioned by Iakovos. From other sources we learn that the translation was made by Christodoulos, the metropolitan of Gaza, and the text is preserved in two manuscripts, both in libraries of Great Britain. The book was printed either in London or in Oxford in the 1720s.

τὴν τοῦ Ἡλίας τὴν λεγομένην Πέτρα σκανδάλου εἰς τὴν ἀραβικὴν μεταβαλὼν καὶ τύπους ἐκδοὺς ἐν Βρεττανίᾳ διένειμε τοῖς ἐν Συρίαν πᾶσιν”.

24 Malandrakis, *Η Πατριὰς Σχολή*, p. 134.

25 P. Stathē, “Το ἀνέκδοτο οδοιπορικό του Χρύσανθου Νοταρά”, *Μεσαιωνικά καὶ Νέα Ἑλληνικά*, 1, 1984, p. 228.

26 Stathē, “Το ἀνέκδοτο οδοιπορικό του Χρύσανθου Νοταρά”, p. 228–229.

9.4 Sheikh Yūnus Nīqūlā

One of Patriarch Sylvester's collaborators in Beirut was *sheikh* Yūnus (or Yūnis) Nīqūlā al-Jabaylī. As his title suggests, he was a member of a rich and respected family of the city.²⁷

In 1751, he was the representative (*wakīl*) of the patriarch of Antioch in Beirut and the person who provided essential support for the printing activities in the new press established in the city at the patriarch's initiative. He was deemed important enough to be mentioned on the title page of at least one book printed there, the *Book of Hours* (1751). It is not clear what this meant in practice. Based on the analogy with books printed in Moldavia and Wallachia, this could be a mark of respect for a local notable, or for someone who sponsored the book-printing.

That the initiative of establishing the press in Beirut belonged to Sylvester of Antioch is a well-established fact. He had the typographic tools delivered to him from Wallachia and later wrote that he intended to establish a printing press in "Arabia".

Sylvester wrote in a letter to patriarch Matthaïos of Alexandria in 1749:

[...] αὐτὴν τυπογραφίαν ἐπειδὴ καὶ μᾶς ἠκολούθησαν πολλὰ καὶ βαρύτατα ἐξωδα, τὴν ὁποίαν καὶ ἐσυκώσαμε ἀπὸ Βλαχίαν, ἔχοντες σκοπὸν νὰ τὴν συστήσωμεν εἰς τὸν ἀποστολικὸν μας θρόνον, καὶ διορθώσαμε βάζοντες τὴν εἰς τάξιν καλὴν καὶ θέσιν τριῶν τύπων.²⁸

[...] this printing press, for which great and heavy spending was required, since we have taken it from Wallachia and we intend to install it at our Apostolic Throne, and we have fixed it and have put it in good order, having place for three presses.

He also asked for paper to be sent from Venice for the new press.²⁹ It is not easy to determine what the "printing press" (τυπογραφία, *typographia*) meant. He was probably referring to cast type, matrices, punches, and other typographic tools.

The printing press was eventually established in Beirut. Yūnus Nīqūlā's involvement must have been primarily financial, as he supported the initiative

²⁷ For Yūnus Nīqūlā, see L. Shaykhū, "Tārikh fann al-tibā'a fī al-Mashriq. Fann al-tibā'a fī al-Shām. 4. Al-Maṭābī' fī Bayrūt", *Al-Mashriq*, 3, 1900, p. 501–502; S. Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges. Exposition organisée par le Musée Nicolas Sursock du 27 septembre au 29 octobre 2000*, Beirut, [2000], p. 5; Teodorov, *Arabic Printing for the Christians*, p. 245.

²⁸ MS 210 Ḥarīṣā, f. 112v.

²⁹ Letter of Sylvester to the (Greek) *archontes* of Venice, August 1751; Arampatzoglou, *Φωτειός Βιβλιοθήκη*, 2, p. 188–189, no. ΣΤ' δ/1. See also Ch. 15.4.

with money and the influence of his position in the local society.³⁰ Yūnus Nīqūlā is also attested as a local benefactor in Beirut in 1783, when he sponsored the painting of two icons and of the *templon* (*iconostasis*) of the city's Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Saint George, rebuilt in 1772–1780. His contribution is attested by two inscriptions, one in Greek, the other in Arabic, on the *iconostasis* of the church.³¹

9.5 Spandonis

Spandonis, whose full name may have been Geōrgios Spandonis, was the son of a Geōrgios Spandonis of Constantinople. In a letter written by Sylvester of Antioch in 1744, Spandonis is mentioned as “(son) of Dimitrios”.³² He was for a while a secretary (γραμματεὺς or γραμματικὸς) in the service of Samuel, the patriarch of Alexandria. Spandonis was a learned Greek scholar. Before 1732, he went to Constantinople, while continuing to render services to the patriarch of Alexandria. In September 1732, Samuel granted him the title of *megas rethor* of the Patriarchate of Alexandria, one of the first five *klērikata* (κληρικάτα), offices generally held by lay people.³³

Spandonis was the brother of Theophanis, an archdeacon of the Patriarchate of Alexandria. Already in 1726, Geōrgios was employed as a contact person of patriarch Chrysanthos of Jerusalem with the Russian representative in Constantinople. The letters from Russia sent by metropolitan Arsenios of Thebais were to be directed to Hatzi Spandonis in Constantinople.³⁴ In a letter to Chrysanthos Notaras dated 1728, Sylvester of Antioch mentions Spandonis as “a spiritual son and faithful servant”.³⁵ In another letter, he calls him “our Spandonis”, meaning that he was somehow rendering services to the Patriarchate of Antioch too. He sometimes uses

30 For the press of Beirut, see Feodorov, *Arabic Printing for the Christians*, p. 244–250, and Ch. 15.2 below.

31 Agémian, *Les icônes de Saint-Georges*, p. 5.

32 Gerd, Petrunina, *Αντιοχειαῖς πατριάρχαι καὶ Ρωσσία*, p. 138–139.

33 Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα Τεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας*, 1, p. 481–483.

34 Letter of Sylvester to Metropolitan Arsenios of Thebais, May 2, 1726, in RGIA, F. 796, Op. 8, D. 84, f. 1–2v. See Gerd, Petrunina, *Αντιοχειαῖς πατριάρχαι καὶ Ρωσσία*, p. 114–115 (Greek text), 115–115 (Russian translation), no. 7.

35 Archim. Ch. A. Papadopoulos, “Addenda et corrigenda περὶ τὸν Σπαντωνή”, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς Φάρος*, 2, 1909, vol. 4, no. 23, p. 429–436.

the diminutive “Spandonakis”. This person is also called “Hatzi Spandonis”, having completed pilgrimages to Jerusalem in 1722 and 1732.³⁶

In a letter sent on January 27, 1733, Theophanis wrote to Patriarch Sylvester, who had returned to his See (presumably, in Damascus) after a journey in the Aegean islands during the previous year, that he was aware the two brothers had supported Sylvester financially in the past. At the time, Spandonis was heading towards Patriarch Sylvester to recover the money he had lent to him.³⁷ On February 1, 1739, while residing in Caesarea of Cappadocia, Patriarch Sylvester wrote an “ὁμολογία” to certify that Hatzi Spandonakis of Constantinople had lent him 1,400 *groschen* (γρόσια) for a period of one year, for the needs of the Patriarchate of Antioch.³⁸ However, there is a problem in the documents. On the same day, an official document was issued in Damascus, signed by the patriarch and with his seal applied in ink on the upper part of the paper, which granted to “Spandonis, the pilgrim” the office of *logothetes* of the Patriarchate of Antioch, for services rendered. The document is preserved in the National Archives of Romania in Bucharest and is one of the few original documents issued by Sylvester that are accessible for study.³⁹ The different location of the two documents issued on the same day might be explained either by the fact that the *omologia* was copied later in the surviving manuscript and a mistake was made as to the date or the location, or that the date or place of the second document is mistaken.

In 1744, Spandonis was appointed as Sylvester’s representative to collect the financial aid from Russia. The patriarch was in Adrianople, on his way to Bucharest, while Spandonis was already in Russia. Sylvester sent letters to the Russian ambassador to certify that Spandonis was the patriarch’s representative, sent to collect aids from Russia.⁴⁰

36 Archim. Ch. A. Papadopoulos, “Ἀλεξανδρινὰ σημειώματα ΙΖ’ . Ἐπιστολὴ Θεοφάνους πρὸν Ἀρχιδιάκονου Ἀλεξανδρείας πρὸς Σίλβεστρον Πατριάρχην Ἀντιοχείας”, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς Φάρος*, 5, 1912, vol. 10, no. 56, p. 191.

37 Papadopoulos, “Ἀλεξανδρινὰ σημειώματα ΙΖ’ ”, p. 188–192.

38 MS 124 Jerusalem, f. 31v.

39 Document issued by Sylvester of Antioch, February 1, 1739, Damascus, in the National Archives of Romania, Bucharest, shelfmark *Achiziții Noi*, MMMXL/3. See Ciucă, Vătafu-Găitan, et al. (eds.), *Colecția Achiziții Noi*, vol. II, p. 164, no. 1812. I thank Archim. Luca Diaconu for kindly providing me a digital copy of this document.

40 Letter of Patriarch Sylvester, then in Adrianople, to Vasily Barsky in Constantinople, April 6, 1744. See Barsukov (ed.), *Странствования Василья Грузоровича-Барского*, vol. 4, p. 56–59 (Greek text and Russian translation).