

Abstract

Title: Theodore Metochites' *Stoicheiosis astronomike* and the Study of Philosophy in Early Palaiologan Byzantium
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Ancient Greek philosophy was taught and studied in the Greek-speaking world throughout the Middle Ages. This period in the history of philosophy is still imperfectly known, partly owing to the fact that many of the relevant texts are still unedited. This is true not least of the philosophical works produced during the 'Palaiologan Renaissance.' This is the conventional term for the period of increased scholarly and artistic activity following the recapture of Constantinople by the Byzantine emperor, Michael VIII Palaiologos, in 1261. One of the most prominent figures of this period is the Grand Logothete Theodore Metochites (1270–1332), personal adviser to Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282–1328). Metochites wrote philosophical essays, paraphrases of Aristotle's works on natural philosophy, and a comprehensive introduction to Ptolemaic astronomy. The first Greek work in its genre for centuries, the *Stoicheiosis astronomike* ushered in a revival of Ptolemaic studies in Byzantium. *Stoicheiosis* 1:1 describes the state of mathematical and, in particular, astronomical studies in Byzantium before Metochites. *Stoicheiosis* 1:2–5 purport to specify the place of astronomy within the framework of philosophy in general. Part 2 of the present book offers the first critical edition of *Stoicheiosis* 1:1–5.

The content of these chapters and of other contemporary works on philosophy, by Metochites and others, is discussed in Part 1. Chapter 1 gives a brief overview of Byzantine philosophy up to the reign of Andronikos II. Chapter 2 treats of Metochites' assessment of Aristotle in his philosophical essays, the *Semeioseis gnomikai*. In Chapter 3, a number of early Palaiologan works in various fields of natural philosophy, some of which are unedited, are reported and discussed. Chapter 4 inquires into the history of mathematical and astronomical learning in Byzantium from the late 11th to the early 14th century. Chapter 5 focuses on the content of the 'philosophical' chapters (1:2–5) of the *Stoicheiosis*. Chapter 6 is a paraphrase of these chapters.

Key words: Byzantine philosophy, Theodore Metochites, Aristotelianism, Neoplatonism, Stoicism, natural philosophy, Byzantine astronomy, Ptolemy, Palaiologan Renaissance, Nikephoros Choumnos, Nikephoros Gregoras, Nikephoros Blemmydes, *Stoicheiosis astronomike*, *Semeioseis gnomikai*