

= Eustathios Daphnomeles =

Eustathios Daphnomeles (Greek : Εὐστάθιος Δαφνομέλης , fl. early 11th century) was a Byzantine strategos and patrician who distinguished himself in the Byzantine conquest of Bulgaria . He ranks as one of the most prominent and successful generals in the thirty @-@ year war between Emperor Basil II (r . 976 ? 1025) and Samuel of Bulgaria (r . 997 ? 1014) , helping to end the long conflict by blinding and capturing the last Bulgarian leader , Ibatzes , in 1018 .

= = Biography = =

The main source describing Daphnomeles 's life , and indeed the Bulgarian campaigns (986 ? 1018) of Emperor Basil II , is the late 11th century Synopsis Historion of John Skylitzes , whose chronology is often problematic to reconstruct . Daphnomeles came from the landed aristocracy of Asia Minor , which for centuries provided the Byzantine military elite . Traditional historiography places his first appearance in circa 1005 , when the Adriatic port city of Dyrrhachium is said to have been surrendered by John Chryselios , a local magnate , to the Byzantines . Daphnomeles , at the head of a fleet , took possession of the city . Given the chronologically unclear narrative of Skylitzes , however , it is possible that this episode reflects his later appointment (after 1018) as strategos (military governor) of the city .

Daphnomeles participated in the subsequent conflicts against Tsar Samuel , but his greatest feat was the capture of the Bulgarian leader Ibatzes in 1018 , for which he is given a prominent position in Skylitzes 's work . Following the defeat at the Battle of Kleidion in 1015 , Bulgarian resistance began to collapse . By 1018 , most Bulgarian commanders had surrendered , and only Ibatzes , who had retreated with his followers to the royal estate of Pronista , a naturally strong and defensible highland position , continued to resist . He rejected both bribes and threats from the Byzantines , and for 55 days , the Byzantine army under Emperor Basil II remained encamped at Deabolis nearby , waiting for his surrender . At that point , and as local crowds gathered to Ibatzes 's palace for the feast of the Dormition , Daphnomeles , now strategos of nearby Achrida , on his own initiative , resolved to end the impasse . With only two escorts , he climbed the way to the estate , and announced himself to Ibatzes . Ibatzes , believing that Daphnomeles would not have come alone unless he intended to forge an alliance against Basil , retreated with the strategos to a secluded wooded glade in the gardens for a private discussion . There , Daphnomeles and his two hidden associates sprang on the Bulgarian general , blinded him , and carried him to the upper story of the palace , through the assembled crowds who were too stunned to react . When the Bulgarians recovered , they gathered underneath the building crying for revenge . Daphnomeles , however , addressed them and managed to convince them of the futility of further resistance , and to lay down their arms and seek the emperor 's pardon .

Ibatzes ' capture brought to an end the long conflict between Byzantium and Bulgaria , and according to the Byzantinist Paul Stephenson , secured for Daphnomeles , along with Nikephoros Ouranos and Nikephoros Xiphias , the reputation of one of the most prominent and successful generals in the Bulgarian wars of Basil II .

Following his feat , Daphnomeles was appointed strategos of the thema of Dyrrhachium by a grateful emperor , and given all of Ibatzes 's movable wealth as a reward . In 1029 , however , he was accused of conspiring with other prominent governors of the Balkans to overthrow Emperor Romanos III Argyros (r . 1028 ? 34) in favour of doux Constantine Diogenes . The accused were then recalled to Constantinople , beaten , paraded through the Mese , and banished . Nothing further is known of him .