

Rhetoric in Purple: the Renewal of Imperial Ideology in the Texts of Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos

Doctoral Thesis

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Abbreviations and frequently cited texts

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| B | <i>Byzantion</i> |
| Barker, Manuel II | J. Barker, <i>Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425): a study in late Byzantine statesmanship</i> , New Brunswick, N.J., Rutgers University Press, 1969 |
| BF | <i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i> |
| Bryennios, <i>Ta heurethenta</i> | Ἰωσήφ μοναχοῦ τοῦ Βρυεννίου τὰ εὐρεθέντα, ed. E. Bulgares, Leipzig: Breitkopf, 1768-1784, 2 vols |
| Bryennios, <i>Ta paraleipomena</i> | Ἰωσήφ μοναχοῦ τοῦ Βρυεννίου τὰ παραλειπομένα, ed. E. Bulgares, Leipzig: Breitkopf, 1784 |
| BMGS | <i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i> |
| BZ | <i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i> |
| Chortasmenos-Hunger | H. Hunger ed., <i>Johannes Chortasmenos (ca. 1370-ca. 1436/37), Briefe, Gedichte und kleine Schriften. Einleitung, Regesten, Prosopographie, Text</i> , Vienna: Böhlau, 1969 |
| Chrysoloras, <i>Epistolary Discourse</i> | Ch. G. Patrinelis, and D. Z. Sophianos eds, <i>Manuel Chrysoloras and his discourse addressed to the Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus</i> , Athens: Akademia Athēnōn, 2001 |
| Demetrios Chrysoloras, <i>Synkrisis</i> | Demetrios Chrysoloras, “Comparison between the Emperor of Today and the Ancient Rulers,” ed. S. Lampros, <i>Παλαιολογία καὶ Πελοποννησιακά</i> , vol. 3, Athens, 1926, 222-245 |
| <i>Dialog</i> | <i>Manuel Palaeologus: Dialogue with the empress-mother on marriage. Introduction, text and translation</i> , ed. A. Angelou, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991 |
| DOP | <i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i> |
| EEBS | Ἐπετηρὶς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν |
| EO | <i>Échos d'Orient</i> |
| <i>Funeral Oration</i> | <i>Manuel II Palaeologus. Funeral Oration on his Brother Theodore. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Notes</i> , ed. J. Chrysostomides, Thessalonike: Association for Byzantine Research, 1985 |
| GRBS | <i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i> |
| <i>Foundations</i> | Manuel Palaiologos, “Ὑποθῆκαι βασιλικῆς ἀγωγῆς,” <i>PG</i> 156, cols. 313a-384d |
| Isidore, <i>Panegyric</i> | Isidore of Kiev, “Panegyric speech addressed to Emperor John VIII Palaiologos,” ed. S. Lampros, <i>Παλαιολογία καὶ Πελοποννησιακά</i> , vol. 3, Athens, 1926, 132-199 |
| JÖB | <i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i> |
| JÖBG | <i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft</i> |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Kalekas, <i>Letters</i> | <i>Correspondance de Manuel Calecas</i> , ed R.-J. Loenertz, Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1950 |
| Kydones, <i>Letters</i> | <i>Démétrius Cydonès, Correspondance</i> , ed. R.-J. Loenertz, 2 vols., Vatican: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1956–60 |
| <i>Orations</i> | Manuel Palaiologos, “ <i>Orationes septem ethico-politicae</i> ,” PG 156, cols. 385a-562d |
| MM | <i>Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana</i> , 6 vols, F. Miklosich-J.Müller, eds, Vienna: C. Gerold, 1860-1890 |
| Manuel, <i>Letters</i> | <i>The letters of Manuel II Palaeologus: text, translation, and notes</i> , ed. G.-T. Dennis, Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1977 |
| NE | <i>Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων</i> |
| OCP | <i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i> |
| PG | <i>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series graeca</i> , 161 vols. ed. J.-P. Migne, Paris, 1857-1866 |
| PLP | <i>Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit</i> , ed. E. Trapp et alii, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1976-1996 |
| PP | <i>Παλαιολογία και Πελοποννησιακά</i> , ed. Sp. Lampros, 4 vols. Athens, 1912–30; repr. Athens: B. Gregoriades, 1972 |
| REB | <i>Revue des Études Byzantines</i> |
| RESEE | <i>Revue des études sud-est européennes</i> |
| TM | <i>Travaux et Mémoires</i> |
| Symeon–Balfour | <i>Politico-Historical Works of Symeon Archbishop of Thessalonica (1416/17 to 1429)</i> , ed. D. Balfour, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979 |
| ZRVI | <i>Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta</i> |

Note on style and the use of Greek

In the case of common names of individuals and places, I have given the most familiar English form. I did not capitalize the official titles with the exception of the term *Despot* which is capitalized in modern scholarship. For the readability of the text, I have chosen to transliterate many Greek terms as closely as possible, especially court titles (e.g. *mesazōn*, *megas logothetēs*, *oikeios*, *dephensor* etc). However, in the case of less common terms like rhetorical technical terms or recurrent abstract notions, I used Greek characters (e.g. ἐπιτηδεύματα, ἄριστος ἀνὴρ) and, in most instances, I offered the English translation of the terms. When possible I used the most recent English translations of the titles of Byzantine texts (e.g. Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor*, Manuel Chrysoloras' *Epistolary discourse*).

In addition to the modern translations of some of Manuel II Palaiologos' texts (*The dialog on marriage* and the *Funeral oration*), I have offered English translations of other passages which I considered important for the understanding of my arguments. The translated passages (in Greek and Latin) are followed by the original version. In order to clarify some of the points I make in my dissertation, when I considered necessary, in many footnotes I included passages in Greek, especially from less known texts.

Introduction

This dissertation examines the forms and the ideological contents of the political messages embedded in the texts of a late Byzantine emperor, Manuel II Palaiologos (r. 1391-1425). At a time of deep political and social transformations the emperor tried to maintain his position of authority not only by direct political agency but also by advertising his ideas about the imperial office and about the issues at stake in late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Throughout his reign, confronted with numerous challenges to his authority, Manuel II created a parallel literary court where he presided over a group of peer *literati* without his position being contested. It was from within this group that several of his texts were produced and subsequently disseminated in order to promote a renewed version of the idea of imperial authority. His ideological commitments valued education and the use of rhetorical skills as instruments of social and political change. Since my investigation involves the study of the underlying ideological assumptions of the emperor's political discourse, the present dissertation will take into consideration two main areas of research: on the one hand, the political and social contexts in which the emperor's political messages appeared, and, on the other hand, the rhetorical forms and strategies used in the construction of his ideological stance.

Manuel II Palaiologos. A very short biography

Manuel Palaiologos was born in 1350 as the second son of Emperor John V Palaiologos (r. 1354-1391) and of Helena Kantakouzene, the daughter of John VI Kantakouzenos (r. 1347-1354). As the second son of the imperial couple, in the beginning he did not attract from his contemporaries the same attention as his elder brother Andronikos (1348- 1385) unanimously considered at that time to be destined to become John V's legitimate successor.¹ Even so, Manuel soon came to play a key role in his father's diplomatic plans. The first piece of information on Manuel dates from 1355 when his father sent him to Pope Innocent IV as hostage to be educated in the spirit of Latin Christianity, in a move meant to bring much needed western help to the Byzantines.² Then, at the age of sixteen, in 1366, Manuel traveled to

¹ Cf. Barker, *Manuel II*, 5-6.

² Yet, the Pope in Avignon, due to other conflicts he was involved in, did not seem tempted by an alliance with the Greeks and declined the offer. The chrysobull recounting this information was dated to December 15 1355. F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565-1453*, vol 5, München : Beck, 1995, no. 3052, 42-43. Cf. also O. Halecki, *Un empereur de Byzance à Rome: vingt ans de travail pour l'union des églises et pour la*

Central Europe in Buda together with his father, who was visiting King Louis (1342-1382), the Angevin ruler of Hungary, in a further attempt to attract the Christian rulers in a joint-venture against the Ottomans. In Buda Manuel stayed for almost one year as hostage. The emperor father promised Louis that his son would convert to Latin Catholicism, as he himself had already been entertaining this idea.³ But once again the plan did not materialize and after several years Manuel was offered his first administrative position as Despot of Thessalonike, a position he occupied between 1369 and 1373. Although the information regarding his early activities in Thessalonike remains scarce,⁴ the very fact that Manuel was appointed Despot indicates his secondary position in his father's plans, since it was a practice to attach the title of Despot to imperial sons who were not destined to become emperors. Yet, soon, he emerged as the main heir to the throne, following his elder brother Andronikos' failed *coup d'état* in 1373, when he collaborated with the Ottoman heir, Saudji. Eventually, on September 25 1373 Manuel was formally proclaimed co-emperor.⁵

Nevertheless, the issue of the succession to John was far from being definitively settled. Three years later, in 1376, Andronikos tried his luck again and, with Genoese and Ottoman help, succeeded to put into prison the other members of the ruling family.⁶ Manuel remained in prison until 1376 when Emperor John with Ottoman help managed to escape and remove his rebellious son from the Byzantine throne.⁷ Nevertheless, despite the dynastic troubles caused by Andronikos, the ensuing truce between Andronikos and John stipulated that the former, the emperor's first born son, and his line were recognized as legitimate successors to the throne.⁸ This caused Manuel's dissatisfaction as he saw himself deprived of the right of succession, albeit his loyalty to the father-emperor had been proven in so many instances.⁹ In 1382,

défense de l'Empire d'Orient, 1355-1375, London : Variorum Reprints, 1972, 24-31.

³ See P. Wirth, "Die Haltung Kaisers Johannes V. bei den Verhandlungen mit König Ludwig von Ungarn zu Buda," *BZ*, 56 (1963): 271-272. O. Halecki, *Un empereur de Byzance*, 111-137.

⁴ J. Ryder, *The career and writings of Demetrius Kydones: a study of fourteenth-century Byzantine politics, religion and society*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, 47, "Kydones' third prooimion is the most extensive and historically informative: it refers to John V's conferral on his son Manuel of territories in Macedonia and Thessaly. It gives considerable context to this act of John V, making much of Manuel's qualities and the many ways he has served his father (accompanying him on his journey to Hungary in 1365-1366, travelling to him in Venice), as well as illustrating the increasing pressure imposed by the Turks." F. Tinnefeld, "Vier Prooimien zu Kaiserurkunden, verfaßt von Demetrius Kydones," *BS* 44 (1983): 29.

⁵ P. Schreiner (ed.), *Chronica Byzantina Breviora. Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, vol. 1, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979, no. 47, 81.

⁶ *Chronica Byzantina Breviora*, vol. 1, 9 and 24-26.

⁷ *Ibid.* 7 and 19.

⁸ Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 3177. On the settlement see also F. Dölger, "Johannes VII Kaiser der Rhomäer," *BZ* 31: (1931), 26.

⁹ J. Barker assumes that Manuel intended to resume his position in Thessalonike as Despot (*Manuel II*, 43). Nevertheless Dennis argued that this could not be possible since Manuel had to leave Constantinople in secret and was not expected in Thessalonike when he arrived, G.T. Dennis, *The reign of Manuel II Palaeologus in*

Manuel secretly went back to his previous appanage, Thessalonike, where he assumed the role of city ruler. Disregarding his father's appeals to return to Constantinople, he retained the title of *basileus* and continued to issue chrysobulls from this position.¹⁰ His primary aim seems to have been the restoration of Byzantine authority in Thessaly and Macedonia, which he achieved in the first year of his rule.¹¹ His greatest achievement, recorded by many sources, was the recovery of the town of Serres from the Ottomans.¹² Yet, shortly afterwards, the Ottomans retaliated and in September 1383, they conquered back Serres and started a long siege of Thessalonike that was to last until 1387. During these years, Manuel was confronted with a growing discontent regarding his policy of resisting the Ottomans and, after several attempts to form alliances among the citizens¹³ he was eventually forced to leave the city.

After the Thessalonike episode, he had to show submission to the Ottomans in Brusa. From there, at the emir's request, Manuel traveled back to Constantinople and accepted his father's policy of appeasement with the Ottomans. In 1389, Manuel supported his father-emperor who needed him in order to resist the pressures coming from Andronikos' son, John VII.¹⁴ In April 1390, John VII deposed John V who took refuge together with his loyal son, Manuel, in the fortress of the Golden Gate.¹⁵ In the same year, obeying the new sultan's, Bayezid, request he traveled to Asia Minor to join the Ottoman forces with a military contingent. Captive in the Ottoman camp, Manuel nevertheless managed to escape when in 1391 his father died. He reached Constantinople and assumed power before his nephew, John VII, could occupy the throne.

Shortly afterwards, Manuel returned to Asia Minor, to Bayezid's camp.¹⁶ He was crowned emperor a year later in 1392 at a ceremony which coincided with his much delayed marriage with Helena Dragaš, the daughter of the Serbian lord of Serres, Constantine.¹⁷ Yet, afterwards, he no longer answered Bayezid's appeals for submission, a refusal which led to a

Thessalonica, 1382-1387, Rome: Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, 1960, 45-46.

¹⁰ Dölger, *Regesten*, 3173a, 3175a, 3175b, 3180a, and 3181c, 68-70.

¹¹ Kydones, *Letters*, 243, 244, 247, 249, 250. In some of these letter, Kydones remarks an increased influx of people into the city of Thessalonike during the siege. Cf. Dennis, *The Reign of Manuel II*, 61-64.

¹² Dennis, *The Reign of Manuel II*, 52-76.

¹³ Like the alliance with Theodore Palaiologos and Nerio Acciaioli, Barker, *Manuel II*, 54; or the alliance with Pope Urban VI, Barker, *Manuel II*, 55.

¹⁴ Andronikos died in 1385 in another attempt to overthrow his father.

¹⁵ Manuel's reply was energetic and in August he went to Rhodes where he secured the Hospitallers' support and pushed John VII out of the capital's walls.

¹⁶ Manuel, *Letters*, 12.

¹⁷ Manuel married quite late according to Byzantine standards, at the age of forty two. Previously he had children from his relationship with Zampia, M. Dabrowska, "Ought one to marry? Manuel II Palaiologos' point of view," *BMGS*, 31 (2007): 146-156.

blockade of Constantinople beginning in 1394. Manuel continued to live in the beleaguered City for two further years, but in 1399, following the advice of the French Marshal Boucicaut in charge of the defense of Constantinople, he embarked on a long journey to western Europe in search for financial and military aid.¹⁸ The journey lasted no less than four years¹⁹ during which he resided in Paris at the court of Charles VI and in London at the court of Henry IV.²⁰ Additionally, he pursued an intense diplomatic activity, visited Venice, Padua, Vicenza and sent envoys to Spain and Portugal. The strong impression Manuel produced upon the western rulers and courts is reflected by the lavish reception of the Byzantine emperor in France or England.²¹ A mark of the significance of the diplomatic relations with the West was that the Byzantine emperor offered a decorated manuscript of Dionysius the Areopagite to the French king.²²

Upon his return to Constantinople in 1403,²³ Manuel found the empire in a different political situation. Not only was he enthusiastic about the positive echoes of his requests in the West but he also witnessed the sudden liberation of Constantinople from the Ottoman siege. First, he reached a political settlement with his nephew, John VII, whom he offered the coast of Marmara and the city of Thessalonike as appanages. Second, he insured his succession by

¹⁸ *Propter quod cum praefatus imperator insultibus Turchorum huiusmodi per se sine fidelium suffragio resistere non valeat, civitatem ipsam Constantinopolitanam (quod utique dolenter referimus) deseruit, ac diversas mundi partes circuit, auxilium huiusmodi fidelium implorando*, A. Raynaldi, *Annales ecclesiastici* 1667, Barri: Guerin, 1883, 1400.

¹⁹ M. Andreeva, "Zur Reise Manuels II. Palaiologos nach Westeuropa," in: *BZ* 34 (1934): 37-47; M. Jugie: "Le Voyage de l' empereur Manuel Paléologue en Occident (1399-1403)," in: *EO* 15 (1912): 322-332. C. Marinesco, "Deux Empereurs byzantins en Occident: Manuel II et Jean VIII Paleologue," in: *Comptes-rendus de l' Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Janvier-Mars 1957*, Paris 1958, 23. D.M. Nicol, "A Byzantine Emperor in England: Manuel II's Visit to London in 1400-1401," *University of Birmingham Historical Journal* 12 (1970): 220.

²⁰ *Mensis februaryi xxv die, rex, expulsis ignorancie tenebris quibus a xix die januarii obnubilatus fuerat, cum se peniteret ecclesiam beati Dionysii, die dedicationis eius, minime visitasse, id devotissime peregit in octavis, cum prius sibi in itinere occurrisset dominus Manuel, Graecie imperator. Sane septembri mense esacto, auxilium petiturus regi Angliae transfretaverat; et esto ignorem quid ibi impetraverit, scio tamen quod ambo prenominati principes mutuo se prevenientes honore, simul, totum diurnum, servitium devotissime audierunt. Id non credidi addidisse sine causa, cum nonnulli circumspecti et eminentis sciencie viri, inde scandalizati, indignum dicerent Francos participare cum Grecis ab Ecclesia romana separatis. Sed regem alii sic scusabant, quia ut ad ipsam rediret, modis omnibus laborabat*, "Chronicon Karoli VI," in L. Bellaguet, ed. *Chronique du religieux de Saint-Denys: le règne de Charles VI, de 1380 à 1422*, Paris: Crapelet, 1852, XXI, c. viii.

²¹ The Anonymous of St. Denys "imperator, habitum imperialem ex albo serico gerens." This text is the most extensive source for the reign of the French king Charles VI (Xivrey, *Mémoire*, 100). *Audiens tantum principem tamque famosi domini moderatorem, regnum suum, praeter solitum, jam ingressum, et attendens inde gloriae suae incrementum, honoris amplitudinem, gratiaequae caeteris hoc reputans donum incomparabile*, *Chronicon Karoli VI*, 1, XXI, c. 1.

²² His travel to the West was celebrated by many panegyrist as for instance Isidore, *Encomium for John VIII*, in *PP* 3, 219, 25-28: οὐκοῦν πρὸς τὰ τῆς Ἰταλίας μέρη καὶ τὰς κάτω Γαλλίας πάντοθεν αἰτῶν βοηθῆναι τῇ ἐνεγκαμένη κινδυνευοῦση ἀπαίρει. Ἐλθὼν τοίνυν εἰς τὰ μέρη τὰ πρὸς βορρᾶν τῆς ἐσπέρας ῥῆγα τε ἠγούμενον καὶ ἄρχοντα τοῦ ἔθνους Οὐγκρῶν, δεῖται τοῦθ' ὑπὲρ συμμαχίας τοῦ βοηθήσοντος.

²³ George Sphrantzes, *Memoirs*, ed. V. Grecu, Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1966, II.1: Εἰς τὰς ἀρχὰς οὖν τοῦ ἰβ'-ου ἔτους ἐπανῆλθεν ἀπὸ τῆς Δύσεως εἰς τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν ὁ ἅγιος βασιλεὺς κῦρ Μανουὴλ ὁ Παλαιολόγος, in V. Grecu, ed., *Georgios Sphrantzes. Memorii, 1401-1477*, Bucharest: Academia Reipublicae Romanicae, 1966.

appointing his first born son, John, as co-emperor shortly after his return from the West in 1403. Third, he was able to travel without any constraints to the remote provinces of the empire, Morea and Thessalonike. Thus, he reached the Peloponnese in 1409 after the death of his younger brother, Theodore; there, he installed his underage son, Theodore II Palaiologos as Despot of the region but continued to control the affairs of the province. Later on, in 1415, he returned to the region and rebuilt the *Hexamilion* wall, in order to keep the Ottomans at a distance.²⁴ In Thessalonike, following the death of John VII in 1408, he appointed as Despot his son Andronikos under the supervision of Demetrios Leontares.

Manuel retired from the imperial position in 1422 when John VIII stepped in and changed the orientation of Byzantine politics towards an alliance with the western powers. In 1425, before he died, Manuel took the monastic garment together with the name Matthaïos.²⁵

Aims of the present study

More often than not, Manuel's reign and biography were analyzed exclusively with regard to the political and economic upheavals of the late fourteenth century. Yet, within the field of rhetorical and literary studies scholars have not yet attempted to give a picture of the transformations taking place as well as of the functions fulfilled by rhetoric in this critical period of Byzantine history. In my opinion, the sizable number of hitherto unstudied or little studied rhetorical texts of this period can shed further light on various aspects of late Byzantine political history and especially on the conceptualization of imperial authority.

The present study seeks therefore to shift the focus away from political history and to investigate the different facets of the political messages conveyed in the texts of the late Byzantine emperor Manuel II Palaiologos. The study proceeds from several basic observations: that these texts do not represent isolated artifacts but are part of larger historical and cultural matrices; and that rhetorical texts, such as orations, dialogs, or panegyrics, actively mirrored and mediated the negotiation of power. In Byzantium a close relationship was established between politics and highbrow literacy a relationship subsequently reflected especially in the activities of the Constantinopolitan courtiers.²⁶ Furthermore, with the changes taking place in the society and institutional order there were also shifts in the indicators of social status, in ideas about power, and in what constituted the suitable system of virtues.

I conduct this analysis on two main levels: first, the rhetoric of Manuel's writings that

²⁴ J. Barker, "On the Chronology of the Activities of Manuel II Palaeologus in Morea in 1415," in *BZ* 55 (1962): 39-55.

²⁵ He was buried in the monastery of Pammakaristos.

²⁶ C. Holmes, "Political literacy," in *The Byzantine World*, ed. P. Stephenson, New York: Routledge, 2010, 137-148.

included references to political events, with special emphasis on the reasons behind the author's adherence to, or departure from, the literary tradition in which he was working; second, the ideological statements which Manuel inserted in these highly rhetorical texts, which can help us identify the nuances of his political visions or actions. Within this framework the aim of the present dissertation will be threefold: first, to contextualize the emperor's political texts written during his reign by looking into the changes that led to the specific political and social conditions at the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries. Arguably, the emperor, confronted with multiple challenges to his authority, created a parallel court of peer *literati* which constituted a platform to disseminate his political messages. The second major goal of the dissertation is to identify and scrutinize the literary structures underlying Manuel's political texts: the narrative structures of the *Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*, the dialogic construction of political messages in the *Dialog on marriage*, as well as the compositional features specific to a full fledged didactic program addressed to his son and co-emperor John VIII Palaiologos. It will be argued that Manuel approached the rhetorical traditions of composing different texts for court performance in a creative fashion so as to accommodate his theoretical and practical ideas of governance.

Finally, this dissertation seeks to map the political discourses of the different power agents in Constantinople toward the end of the fourteenth century: the Orthodox clergymen, the rhetoricians, and the emperor. By indicating how various aspects of political power were (re)negotiated across separate interest groups, ultimately I will try to pinpoint those new features of kingship whereby Manuel II understood his ruling function and advertised the imperial position in Byzantium. On the one hand, this renewed representation of imperial function was the manifestation of a constant need to maintain popularity. On the other hand, it was also the expression of a coherent political program connected with the idea that rhetorical education, ethical values, and political power were correlated, a notion that largely drew on conceptions outlined by Hellenistic and late antique rhetoricians.²⁷ Accordingly, unlike most court rhetoricians whose understanding of political rhetoric was rather centered on the betterment of personal affairs which continued to depend on the emperor's person, Manuel claimed a different role of rhetoric in the political sphere that had to do with a civic engagement for the community's benefit.

²⁷ T. Morgan, "Rhetoric: art and articulation," in *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and the Roman World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 190-240.

The present study thus intends to contribute to a better understanding of the structures and practices of power in late Byzantium. In particular, it illustrates the role of the late Byzantine emperors as mediators between an aristocracy with growing interests in trade and a Church whose dominant attitude was to reject attempts to unite with the Latin Church, other than on its own terms.

Structure

My study is divided into three parts. The first unit will discuss the contexts of the production of Manuel's texts. One chapter will examine the economic and social transformations in the late fourteenth century which led to the accelerated weakening of state authority. A particular emphasis will be given to the emergence of a new distinctive class of entrepreneurial aristocracy, resulting from the combination of the *mesoi* active especially in commerce, and the old landowning aristocracy. Furthermore, I will focus on the main challenges to imperial authority: the Church's claims to autonomy from the imperial power, John VII's parallel reign in Thessalonike as *basileus* and *autokrator*, the conflicts with the rebellious lords in Morea, and the external policy which had to accommodate the archenemies, the Ottomans, as well as potential allies, the Latins. The function of the court in this period and the incipient forms of popular government will also be considered. This assessment of the court's role is necessary for understanding the system of power in a double sense: as representation of power and as a place of actual decision making. The second chapter of the first unit will deal with what I designated as the emperor's "literary court" and try to identify the profile of the *theatron*, and of the major groups of participants in this kind of gatherings. The uses of the network and the patronage activities of Manuel and of other contemporary centers of patronage will also be evaluated and compared.

The second unit of my dissertation follows a text-oriented approach providing readings of several texts within their rhetorical and historical contexts. In this section, in order to assess the emperor's strategies of creating his political messages, I document the features of presentation typical of Manuel's persuasive speech. In particular I note the shifts in the construction of multiple authorial voices. The focus of my inquiry here will be about the practice of rhetoric, and more specifically the techniques through which Manuel made rhetorical writings an ideologically effective tool to disseminate political messages. By using different rhetorical modes, Manuel II strove to construct for himself an authorial persona in the framework of which he further produced and conveyed political messages.

Based on the discussion of the underlying socio-political developments and the authorial rhetorical strategies, in the last unit of the dissertation the focus of my investigation widens to encompass the whole spectrum of political texts produced at the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries. Here, I will look into the contents of Manuel II's discourse as mirroring themes of other contemporary political discourses and putting forward an alternative political discourse. I will focus on four major topics of political discourse: social cleavages, the formulation of ethnic Byzantine individuality, Byzantium's enemies and allies, and the approach to imperial authority. I follow the formation of political discourse with regard to two major political groups: the ecclesiastics and the rhetoricians who, in general, reflected the interests of the aristocracy. Then, I turn to analyzing similar themes in the emperor's political discourse as reflected in his texts. The analysis reveals that the emperor unveiled a clearly distinctive view regarding the image and function of the imperial office in the last phase of Byzantium's existence.

Sources

In addressing a topic such as the present one, much depends on the sources used, their advantages, their limitations, or the subjectivity of their authors. It is therefore needed to continue with a brief discussion of the source texts in order to be able to assess their embedded political messages.

By and large, unlike in the case of other studies of Manuel's reign which used as source material primarily official documents, the texts which I explore here fall between oratory and literature. They were meant for public performance but, at the same time, they supported a subsequent re-elaboration in order to be enjoyed as pieces of written literature as well. I chose to focus only on four major texts by Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos: the *Dialog with the empress mother on marriage*, the *Foundations of an imperial conduct*, the so-called *Seven ethico-political orations*, and the *Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*. The reasons why I limited my research to these four texts pertain to the fact that they were composed during his reign and, unlike in the case of other texts of his such as the letters or the *Dialogs with a Muslim*, they reflected in a more systematic way the problems and issues specific to the Byzantine rule of that period. These writings reveal the extent to which the emperor regarded his own literary activities as intertwined with, and reflected in, the administration of the Byzantine state. Moreover, the fact that the four writings were regarded as similar in content and intent is indicated by their inclusion in a single manuscript, the Vindob. phil. gr. 98, part of a series of four manuscripts

which comprised most of the emperor's texts and which were dedicated to his son, John VIII Palaiologos.

Moreover, these four texts stand for particular ways of writing about the empire which emerge from the use of different authorial voices: the *Dialog on marriage* reflects a deliberative voice; the *Funeral oration*, a narrative voice; the *Foundations* and the *Orations*, a didactic voice. Taken together, the strategies originating in the modulations of the author's voice constitute a kind of repertoire for imperial discourse, including a wide range of topics and various conceptual categories. Since they were not confined to Manuel's texts, I will also have the occasion to cite their occurrence in other contemporary writings that deal with political aspects of rulership. In doing so, I wish to suggest that Manuel's texts were also adapted to particular events and rendered into a language that could appeal to peer-writers.

Apart from these four main texts, my study makes use of the emperor's other texts as well. Manuel wrote compositions that appealed to the moral, religious, and political concerns of his audiences, and at the same time drew attention to his own skills. His collection of letters is particularly important for my research as it provides additional information not only with regard to his political vision but also about his connections with various individuals at court and with similar interests in rhetoric. The political texts written before his accession to the throne (the *Admonitory oration for the Thessalonians* and the *Panegyric for his father-emperor upon his recovery from an illness*), the theological treatises, (the *Dialogs with a Muslim* and the *Treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*), or the rhetorical exercises play an important role in acquiring a thorough picture of his literary activities. Although I will not deal *in extenso* with this part of his work, particular attention will be paid to his liturgical texts, prayers and homilies, which unveil his approach to relations with the Church.

In approaching a topic such as the rhetorical-ideological self-representation of an emperor, much depends on other comparative sources which offer similarities and differences from the emperor's texts. It is therefore necessary to proceed with a brief review of the main categories of sources used in the present dissertation. As a popular genre in Byzantium, one would expect a sizable number of historical narratives. However, as has been noticed, the period of Manuel's reign represented a somewhat puzzling gap in the production of historiographical accounts or chronicles. Thus, for more extensive and detailed narratives we have to turn to the later historians who wrote after the Fall of Constantinople: George Sphrantzes' *Memoirs*, Doukas' *History*, or Laonikos Chalkokondyles' *Historical expositions*. Among

these authors, only the first one, Sphrantzes was acquainted with the emperor and even held a position at his court which allowed him to record some of the emperor's sayings. Yet, the reliance on such accounts is to a large extent problematic as all of them were biased in one way or other: for instance, Sphrantzes was against the Ottomans since he and his family suffered from the Ottoman occupation, while Kritoboulos or Chalkokondyles admitted the inevitability of the Ottomans' rise.

On the other hand, since I deal mainly with pieces of court rhetoric, I will draw extensively on texts produced in this milieu and addressed to the emperor. In particular, orations addressed to the emperor represent an important reservoir of themes and notions which will be used as a backdrop against which the emperor's self-representation will be traced. Several texts stand out: Demetrios Chrysoloras' *Comparison between the ruler of today and the ancient rulers*, John Chortasmenos' *Address upon the emperor's return from Thessalonike*, two anonymous panegyrics preserved in mss. Vat. gr. 642 and Vat. gr. 914, Makarios Makres' *Funeral oration*, Plethon's *Memorandum on the Peloponnese*, or Isidore of Kiev's *Panegyric for John VIII*, which includes extensive references to the Emperor Manuel II. Another important category of texts comprises letters addressed to the emperor. Special attention will be given to the letter collections of authors close to the Constantinopolitan court: Demetrios Kydones, Manuel Kalekas, again Isidore of Kiev, Demetrios Chrysoloras, and the humanist scholar, Guarino of Verona. Further information concerning ideology and political discourse comes from the texts of ecclesiastical writers such as Joseph Bryennios, Symeon of Thessalonike, and Makarios of Ankara as well as from extant chancellery documents.

Methodology and theoretical framework

In comparison with previous studies, the present one is both narrower and larger in its scope. It is narrower because it focuses mainly on the texts of a single author yet broader because these compositions are not only treated just as objects of political propaganda but also as writings belonging to the rhetorical tradition. I propose here to consider the various relations and connections between texts and their political and cultural contexts. Along these lines, I look at the texts, on the one hand, as vehicles for political ideas and, on the other hand, as objects embedded into a network of political processes and social practices. Therefore, in terms of my approach, the investigation will involve several steps.

In a first stage I will try to establish the main features of the political and social context, which in turn will support our understanding of the major changes in the functioning of the

Byzantine institutional machinery. This initial separation of the practices of administration and governing on the one hand, and political culture on the other hand, will allow us to get a clearer sense of how the government functioned and what it was able to accomplish. Connected to this preliminary contextualization is the discussion of Manuel's "literary court" understood as an identifiable group of readers and writers acquainted with one another. Here I will apply basic concepts of social network analysis, such as degrees of acquaintance with the emperor and instrumentality of the network. Secondly, as I explore notions of political thought in rhetorical writings, I will constantly try to answer the following questions: how does the Byzantine ruler construct a coherent representation in writing and what are the cultural, ideological, or literary presuppositions upon which such a construct is based? Despite their conventions and the audience's expectations of conformism, the texts depend heavily on the use of metaphors, elaborated imagery often drawn from poetry, myths, or other literary accounts. Thus, with the *caveat* that an exclusive rhetorical approach can lead to accepting a text's own premises, this kind of analysis will draw extensively on concepts central to rhetorical and literary theory, such as genre understood as an aspect which combines the form (e.g. *kephalaion*, *logos*, *dialogos*) and the function of a text shaped by the occasion of performing the text (deliberative, didactic, funeral); and authorial voice seen as a non-stable and changing aspect across the texts of the same author.

Finally, as neither the biographical-contextualized nor the rhetorical approach can offer a full analysis of the emperor's rhetorical orations, I will turn to the ideological content of the texts. In order to map the competing political discourses during the emperor's reign, I will use here an approach inspired by critical discourse analysis which, by and large, relies on the investigation of both the form of the writings in which a certain discourse surfaces as well as of the "structural relationships of dominance, power and control as they are expressed in language use."²⁸ This mapping of political discourses will be accompanied by an attempt to provide a discourse genealogy in which these different discursive themes will be seen to operate across a range of fourteenth and fifteenth centuries contexts. In my investigation I will use the definition of discourse proposed by A. Jaworski: discourse is language use relative to social, political, and cultural formations; it is a set of interrelated themes reflecting social and political order.²⁹

Secondary literature

²⁸ See R. Wodak, "What critical discourse analysis is about?" in *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*, ed. R. Wodak and M. Meyer, London: Sage, 2001, 2-3.

²⁹ A. Jaworski and N. Coupland, *The Discourse Reader*, London: Routledge, 1999, 12.

As one of the last Byzantine emperors whose reign spanned a period of more than thirty years, Manuel II Palaiologos received much attention from the scholars of later Byzantium. Most often, they included the emperor's activities in larger accounts of social and political history. It is the case of the recent volume by A. Kioussopoulou who used evidence drawn from Manuel II's biography for her argument regarding the political and institutional transformations in late Byzantium under the influence of similar processes in the Italian city states.³⁰ While Kioussopoulou saw the emperor as an important agent of these transformations, N. Necipoğlu's account of late Byzantine political history emphasizes the activity of other social groups in the configuration of the political landscape: aristocrats, businessmen, ecclesiastics, and local *archontes*.³¹ Remarkably, regarding their approach oriented towards political history, both these recent accounts take as point of departure the same statement preserved in Sphrantzes' *Memoirs* according to which an emperor should act as a manager rather than as a ruler in the common sense of the word.³²

In as far as the investigation of political ideology and its expression in rhetoric in late Byzantium are concerned, important comparative material are provided by two studies: D. Angelov's *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium (1204-1330)*³³ which, among other aspects, deals with innovative political ideas on society, economy, and imperial authority, circulating in the early Palaiologan period. He argued that the most important development in the early Palaiologan political thought was the growing gap between official ideology on the one hand and the political ideas of lay and ecclesiastic thinkers on the other. Angelov noticed that, in this period, many of the political debates were aimed against the emperor's autocratic attributes and that the emerging theories of governance as a reciprocal relationship between ruler and subjects paralleled western theories.³⁴ The other study, I. Toth's unpublished doctoral dissertation, *Imperial Orations in Late Byzantium (1261-1453)* provides an analysis of the rhetorical and performative aspects of the public speeches addressed to late Byzantine emperors.³⁵ Toth's aim was to describe one specific Byzantine rhetorical form over the last centuries of its use. Her approach was to evaluate the late Byzantine rhetorical imperial orations on their own

³⁰ A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός. Πολιτική εξουσία και ιδεολογία πριν την άλωση (Emperor or Manager. Political power and ideology before the Fall of Constantinople)*. Henceforth, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, Athens: Polis 2007, 123-124, 128-129.

³¹ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 41-55, and 119-148.

³² Sphrantzes, *Memoirs*, XXIII.7, 60.

³³ Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

³⁴ D. Angelov, "Conclusions," *Imperial Ideology*, 417-423. Cf. also Idem, ed., *Church and Society in Late Byzantium*, Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 2009, 1-10.

³⁵ PhD dissertation, Oxford University, 2003.

terms and within their contexts of production and circulation.

Apart from these accounts of late Byzantine cultural and political history, three books deal specifically with the emperor's personality and activity: the earliest one, B. de Xivrey's *Mémoire sur la vie et les ouvrages de l'empereur Manuel Paléologue* (1853) is an extensive biography augmented by excursuses in contemporary dynastic and political history of western states with which Byzantium was in contact; the second in chronological order, G.T. Dennis' *The reign of Manuel II in Thessalonike* (1959) deals with the short episode of Manuel's rebellious rule in the second city of the empire between 1382 and 1387; finally, J. Barker's *Manuel II Palaeologus. A study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship* (1969) is a detailed monograph which treats extensively the internal and external affairs of Manuel's reign and uses most of the sources available to that date. To these can be added substantial chapters in the studies of D. Nicol and K.-P. Matschke dealing with political, social, and economic aspects of the history of late Byzantium.³⁶ All these extensive treatments of crucial topics such as the dynastic conflicts, the wars with the Ottomans, or the negotiations with the Latins for military aid, dealt with a wide range of historical sources, from documents in Byzantine or western archives to literary sources, especially historical accounts. Even if these authors do not completely overlook the emperor's literary output, they never appear to consider it as a corpus of sources worth investigating thoroughly for its picture of late Byzantine society. For instance, J. Barker's statements on the prolixity and the lack of historical value of the emperor's letters suggest the persistence of a predominant attitude among some Byzantinists of the past in search for different types of evidence.³⁷ On the other hand, more often than not, Manuel was described as an active ruler concerned with military and political developments, who acted according to a political vision that encompassed the entire region of the eastern Mediterranean with its many powerful and threatening players. If his military efforts for pacifying or recapturing Byzantine territories are generally acknowledged, the secondary literature also puts forward the image of a diplomat trying to find a balance between different regional powers. He is presented as a ruler who made the best out of the resources at his disposal including establishing and fostering commercial relations with different trading groups.³⁸ For that reason, in one of the chapters of his book on Byzantium after the battle of Ankara, K.-P. Matschke described Manuel as a

³⁶ D. Nicol, "The Reign of Manuel II: the first crisis- 1391-1402," in *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 296-317; K.-P. Matschke, *Die Schlacht bei Ankara und das Schicksal von Byzanz: Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Geschichte zwischen 1402 und 1422*, Weimar: Böhlau, 1981.

³⁷ J. Barker, *Manuel II*, 393. A similar opinion was expressed by G.T. Dennis, *The Letters of Manuel II*, IX.

³⁸ K.-P. Matschke, "Kaiser oder Verwalter? Die Wirtschaftspolitik Manuels zwischen 1403 und 1422 und ihre Effekte," in *Die Schlacht bei Ankara*, 220-235.

Verwalter, an administrator who engaged in various endeavors with the Latins rather than an emperor in the traditional sense of the term.³⁹

Building on this previous scholarship, my intention here is to provide an alternative perspective on the emperor's activity and personality taking as starting point his intense rhetorical activity. This perspective was only tentatively explored in previous scholarship. The few studies dealing explicitly with the oratorical discussion of empire in Manuel's texts are generally attached to larger scholarly enterprises of Manuel's imperial power. While they touched upon his rhetorical output, a study that would take the imperial texts into serious consideration is still lacking.⁴⁰ Noticeably, when dealing with the emperor's literary output, many scholars turned to his theological texts, as these could be more easily integrated into the intense doctrinary debates of the late Palaiologan period. Thus, albeit in rather sarcastic terms, already in the seventeenth century Leo Allatius (1586-1669), the keeper of Greek manuscripts in the Vatican Library, remarked on the emperor's penchant for learned argumentation in his treatise *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*:

To a brief public statement of a certain Latin, <Manuel> replied in a long treatise comprising many arguments, for he believed that by making use of a verbose speech and indeed of a prolix, dull, and shallow discussion, he could break the power of reason, and by the multitude and excessive size of chapters, as if by dissipating darkness, he could bring forth the light of truthfulness.

*Multo verborum et argumentorum apparatu capitibus centum quinquaginta, succinctae Latini propositioni respondit, putans se prolixiore sermone et multiloquentia plane stulta atque inani, rationum vim infringere, et capitum copia atque immanitate, velut tenebris offusis, veritatis lucem auferre se posse.*⁴¹

Fortunately, the more recent scholars of Manuel's œuvre were more sympathetic than Allatius. With the publishing of modern critical editions of several important texts of his, the judgments concerning the form and function of individual texts became more nuanced. For instance, in the introduction to the *Dialog on marriage*, A. Angelou discussed in some detail the text's prose rhythm.⁴² In their critical editions of Manuel's texts, E. Trapp, J. Chrysostomides, and Ch.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ G. Dennis, *The reign of Manuel*, 16: "Even though Manuel occupies a significant position in the history of Byz, literature the definitive work on his literary production has not yet been written nor is it likely to be for some time to come for a surprisingly large number of his writings remains unedited. Then too, while the Greek employed by Manuel is linguistically pure and classical it is also a very difficult Greek and at times his meanings is something less than crystal clear."

⁴¹ Leo Allatius, *De Ecclesiae occidentalis atque orientalis perpetua consensione*, Cologne: 1648, II, c. XVII, 3, p. 854. The translation is mine.

⁴² A. Angelou, "Introduction" in *Manuel Palaiologos. Dialogue with the Empress Mother on Marriage*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991, 31-38.

Dendrinos provided important hints as to the historical, doctrinary, and literary contexts of the writings they edited: *The dialogs with a Muslim*, *The funeral oration on his brother Theodore*, and *The treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit* respectively.⁴³ All these historians and philologists noticed the emperor's preoccupations, without however proceeding to a more comprehensive discussion. In his collection of essays from 1977, *Church and Society in the Last Centuries of Byzantium*, D. Nicol stated that:

Manuel II was an impressive and attractive figure, urbane and scholarly, a soldier, a writer and a devoutly Orthodox Christian. He came perhaps as near as any Byzantine ever came to the position of a Christian humanist. [...] Manuel II was a striking advertisement for those qualities which the cognoscenti of Italy hoped to find in a Greek. He was a classical scholar in the best sense, with a strong feeling for the style and thought of the ancient Hellenes. But he was a theologian as well, able to argue the merits of his faith with Muslims and to defend the finer points of Orthodox dogma in debate with the Catholic doctors (p. 108-9).

The ensuing study intends to proceed along these lines, although it will not cover the entire œuvre of the emperor or offer a global interpretation. It strives nevertheless to spell out the major rhetorical features and ideological implications of several political writings of the emperor in this late Byzantine context.

⁴³ E. Trapp, "Der Sprachgebrauch Manuels II in den Dialogen mit einem Perser," *JÖBG*, 16 (1967): 189-197. J. Chrysostomides, *Manuel II Palaiologos. The Funeral Oration for Brother Theodore*, 10-12. Ch. Dendrinos, *An annotated critical edition (editio princeps) of Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus' treatise 'On the Procession of the Holy Spirit'*, PhD thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London, 1996.

Unit One: The contexts of production

A study of Manuel II's literary œuvre aiming at the same time at offering a comprehensive analysis of late fourteenth and early fifteenth century political history would, in all likelihood, not do justice to either topic. Nevertheless, such a study must come to an understanding of the social and political conditions not only as historical background, but also as phenomena that influenced the production of certain messages and texts at the emperor's court. For this reason, the primary goal of the present section is to provide a backdrop against which Manuel's and his contemporaries' texts will be analyzed and interpreted in the second and the third parts of this dissertation. This unit of my dissertation is divided in two distinct chapters. In the first I will discuss the major factors and conditions which shaped the profile of Byzantine society in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries: the transformations in the economy according to the situation of a small-scale state, the rise of a new type of aristocracy, the major political challenges which the emperor faced during his reign, and the modifications in the structure of the centers of decision-making. The second section will offer an overview and analysis of the literary context in which the emperor's political writings appeared: the court rhetorical practices which developed during Manuel's reign; the composition of the emperor's network of scholars; and finally the degrees of connectivity and the uses of this scholarly network.

Chapter 1:

The rise of the weak emperor and the challenges to his authority

1.1. The weak state: economic and social transformations in the late fourteenth century. The emergence of an entrepreneurial aristocracy

Manuel's rise to power from a weak political position⁴⁴ was closely intertwined with the political transformations occurring in the second half of the late fourteenth and in the early fifteenth centuries. To a certain extent his three decade long reign mirrored political processes originating in his father's rule, such as the diplomatic efforts to obtain more substantial western aid or to maintain peaceful relations with the Ottoman conquerors. To an even larger extent, Manuel's political career was also influenced by other processes as well, such as the territorial fragmentation and the weakening of the state reflected in the constraints on imperial authority coming from different segments of the Byzantine society. In the following section, I will try to elucidate the underlying social, economic, and institutional factors which shaped the form and contents of the emperor's political messages. Since detailed analyses have already been carried out with regard to the developments in the political history and social structure of the period,⁴⁵ my task here will be limited to offering an account of the transformations in society and institutional structures relevant to the political culture and ideology developed during the reign of Manuel II.

It has long been noticed that during the second half of the fourteenth century several political and administrative processes which affected the functioning of the Byzantine government accelerated their development: the numbers of the population dropped after 1348 owing to the combined impact of factors like plagues, invasions, wars or civil strifes;⁴⁶

⁴⁴ For the emperor's biography, see the *Introduction* of the dissertation.

⁴⁵ During the past few decades several overviews and detailed studies have advanced our understanding of the late Byzantine social and economic processes and their connections: the studies of K.-P. Matschke in *Die Gesellschaft im späten Byzanz: Gruppen, Strukturen und Lebensformen*, Köln: Böhlau, 2001, 15-218 and in *The Economic History of Byzantium: from the seventh through the fifteenth century*, ed. by A. Laiou, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, 2002; N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: politics and society in the late empire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

⁴⁶ Constantinople: 50,000, Thessalonike: 40,000, Monemvasia: 20,000. A. Laiou, "Demography," in A. Laiou and C. Morisson, *The Byzantine Economy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 169-170.

provinces and cities began to reclaim more autonomy from the central government; economic activity decreased; neighbors were more threatening than before; and territories were lost for good through military conquest.⁴⁷ To these factors can be added the fragmentation of the territories under different foreign jurisdictions across the region, a situation which had significant repercussions upon the local politics and economy.⁴⁸ To sum up, the Byzantine state was significantly diminished and had to cope with the problems specific to a small-scale entity.

From the year 1370, when Byzantium became tributary vassal to its more powerful eastern neighbors, the Ottomans gradually extended their control over territories in Thrace and continental Greece. Accordingly, upon his accession to imperial power and throughout his reign, Manuel's authority stretched over a very limited number of isolated territories: Constantinople and the surroundings, parts of the Peloponnese, including the capital Mystras, and Thessalonike (1408-1423), one of the few remaining cities in the empire. Moreover, if this authority over a territorially diminished state was occasionally challenged, in Constantinople, during the long siege of the City between 1394 and 1402, the emperor's connections with the rest of the empire were interrupted. In the Peloponnese, up to the early 1380s, the Kantakouzenoi still enjoyed a strong influence as inheritors of a previous agreement between John V and John VI; their influence continued to be felt even during the rule of the Palaiologoi in the 1390s when the local lords supported one of the successors of Matthew Kantakouzenos.⁴⁹ Close to Constantinople, in Selymbria, John VII inherited his father's, Andronikos IV's right to rule, while in Thessalonike, the same John VII ruled for five years with full imperial privileges (1403-1408).⁵⁰

If the creation of so many autonomous appanages in Morea, Thessalonike, or Selymbria led first to a reduction of Byzantium's capacity to sustain long term strategies of defense,⁵¹ the process of territorial fragmentation generated changes in the empire's economics. These

⁴⁷ The phenomenon has been extensively documented. For overviews see Barker, *Manuel II*, 1-200, or D.M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, 251-394. On the concept of liberty as an ideal pertaining to the rights of cities, reflected in the fourteenth and fifteenth century rhetoric, see D. Angelov, "Three kinds of liberty as political ideals in Byzantium, twelfth to fifteenth centuries," in *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia 2011*, vol 1, ed. V. Gjuzelev, Sofia, 2011, 317-330.

⁴⁸ A. Laiou, "Byzantium and the Neighboring Powers: Small-State Policies and Complexities," in *Byzantium, faith, and power (1261-1557): perspectives on late Byzantine art and culture*, ed. S. T. Brooks, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006, 42-52.

⁴⁹ R.-J. Loenertz, "Pour l'histoire du Péloponèse au XIV^e siècle 1382-1404," in *Byzantina et Franco-Graeca. Articles parus de 1935 à 1966*, Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1970, 227-265.

⁵⁰ S. Mešanović, *Jovan VII Paleolog (John VII Palaiologos)*, Belgrad: Vizantološki institut Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti, 1996.

⁵¹ J.W. Barker, "The Problem of Appanages in Byzantium during the Palaiologan Period," *Byzantina* 3 (1971): 103-122.

modifications were reflected by a shift in the types of income sources. The chief reason for this displacement was that the number of landed properties dropped significantly and, as a consequence, it became impossible for the large land owners to derive any profits from their properties which previously allowed them to maintain a high standard of living.⁵² In addition, several Byzantine urban centers began to acquire a more prominent role in the empire's economy during this period. As A. Laiou and M. Angold have argued, the trend toward an enlarged town autonomy was to some extent promoted by the central government: to many cities the emperors of the later period granted charters and privileges that guaranteed tax exemptions for their properties.⁵³ This trend towards urban autonomy, accelerated from the period of the second civil war (1341-1347), is noticeable ever since the early Palaiologan period:⁵⁴ the towns and their hinterland were gradually isolated from the central authority and assumed the responsibility of their defense and administration. And, because of the growing economic importance of towns in the later decades, the Byzantine economy was forced to generate new means of production that would correspond to the needs of the population: provisioning by increased trading activities and production of manufactured goods for local consumption.

In spite of the impact of these changes in the structure of income sources, the deterioration of the economic situation of the Byzantine state continued.⁵⁵ In the beginning of the fifteenth century the Spanish traveler Gonzalez Ruy Clavijo described the economic state of the city of Constantinople in gloomy terms:

The city was enclosed within a stout and lofty wall, defended by many strong, high towers. Though the circuit of its walls is thus greatly populated and the area spacious, the city is not throughout very densely populated. There are within its compass many hills and valleys where corn-fields and orchards are found and among the orchard lands there are hamlets and suburbs which are included within the city limits. Everywhere throughout the city there are many great palaces,

⁵² Matschke-Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft im späten Byzanz*, 82.

⁵³ Laiou-Morisson, *The Byzantine economy*, 130; L. Maksimović, "The Privileges of Towns" in *The Byzantine Provincial Administration under the Palaiologoi*, Amsterdam: Hackert, 1988, 248-268; M. Angold, "Archons and Dynasts: Local Aristocracies and the Cities of the Later Byzantine Empire," in *The Byzantine Aristocracy, IX to XIII Centuries*, ed. M. Angold, BAR International Series, 1984, 246-250. D. Kyritses also argued that the 'common chrysobulls' issued for the cities of the empire, like Thessalonike, in the first half of the fourteenth century represented a guarantee of security to the middle-to-upper classes of the cities. D. Kyritses on "The common chrysobulls of cities and the notion of property in late Byzantium," *Byzantina Symmeikta* 13 (1999): 229-245.

⁵⁴ A. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins. The Foreign Policy of Andronikos II*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972, 284-299.

⁵⁵ The decline is perceivable in the disappearance of golden hyperpyra in the mid fourteenth century and the replacement with silver ones. M. Hendy, "The Transfer to Silver," in *Studies in Byzantine Monetary Economy. C. 350-1450*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, 536-553.

churches, and monasteries, but most of them are now in ruins.⁵⁶

Likewise, numerous other Byzantine accounts allude to the steep and steady economic decline especially of Constantinople and its surroundings.⁵⁷ In a letter addressed to Manuel Chrysoloras in 1398, Manuel Kalekas described the situation in Constantinople under siege in similarly dark colors.⁵⁸ While both these accounts present the situation during and after the siege of Constantinople they also reflect more generally conditions of life in all the territories of the Byzantine empire as well as the poor economic conditions of all social strata.⁵⁹ One of the major consequences of the constant military conflicts and threats, was that prices for land in Constantinople and for basic foodstuffs began to fluctuate significantly.⁶⁰ Given these economic circumstances, the role of the individuals involved in profiteering activities increased.

Another factor which triggered changes within the Byzantine social elites was the increase of the influence of the Latins in the region. In economic terms, by the end of the fourteenth century, the Byzantine economy had been fully dissolved into the Italian dominated trade system.⁶¹ In political terms, it is only in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries that they assumed a distinctive role in the Byzantine imperial politics. An instance of how the Genoese directly influenced Byzantine politics was the rule of the Gattilusi family on the island of Lesbos.⁶² By the mid- fourteenth century, the Gattilusi established themselves as quasi-independent rulers of the place and at the same time they retained as symbol of power the

⁵⁶ Ruy González de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403-1406*, ed. Guy le Strange, New York: Harper, 1928, 70. Cf. M. Angold, "The decline of Byzantium seen through the eyes of western travellers," in *Travel in the Byzantine World: papers from the thirty-fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, April 2000*, ed. R. Macrides, Ashgate: Aldershot 2002, 213-32.

⁵⁷ I. Ševčenko, "The decline of Byzantium seen through the eyes of its intellectuals," *DOP* 15 (1961): 169-86.

⁵⁸ Kalekas, *Letters*, 48. 10-24: τῆς δὲ αὐτῆς ἐστὶ κακίας μὲν ἅφ' ἡμῶν ὀργῆς δὲ παρὰ θεοῦ καὶ τὸ μέχρι τούτου παραμεῖναι τῇ πατρίδι τὰ ἐκ τῆς πολιορκίας δεινά, καὶ τὸ τὴν τούτων ἀπαλλαγὴν ὄρον ἡγουμένους τὸν παρόντα καιρὸν νῦν ἄλιν ὡσπερ ἐν κύκλῳ τὰς μελλούσας ἀναμένειν ἐλπίδας, καὶ τὸ συγκεκλεισμένους δεινῶς, ὄρᾶν μὲν περὶ ἡμᾶς ἐγειρόμενα τεῖχη τῶν πολεμίων καὶ τὸν βάρβαρον ἀκούειν ἀπειλοῦντα τόσα καὶ τόσα, ὄρᾶν δὲ γεωργουμένην ὑπὸ τούτων τὴν ἡμετέραν, καὶ τὸ λιμῶ καὶ πενία τοὺς περιλειφθέντας ἐκτρίβεισθαι. οὕτως ἡμῖν τάναντία πανταχόθεν προσβάλλει, καὶ παρὰ τοσοῦτον δυστυχέστεροι τῶν ἄλλων ἐσμὲν.

⁵⁹ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 57-59.

⁶⁰ As in the case of the modios of wheat which, during the siege, was sold at thirty-two hyperpyra in comparison with a normal price of four to five hyperpyra. C. Morrisson and J.-Cl. Cheynet, "Prices and wages in the Byzantine world," in *Economic History of Byzantium*, Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, 2002, vol. 2, 827-8 (Table 5). Evidence for the fluctuations in the prices comes also from Doukas who mentions that in 1399 a modios of wheat cost more than 20 hyperpyra, Doukas, *Historia*, ed. V. Grecu, Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 1958, 85.

⁶¹ Laiou-Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, A. Laiou, "Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System; Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," *DOP* 34 (1980): 177-222.

⁶² G.T. Dennis, "The Short Chronicle of Lesbos 1355-1428," *Lesbiaka*, 5 (1966): 128-142.

double eagle which also played a central role in the heraldry of the Palaiologan dynasty.⁶³ Once the emperor shifted to a pro-Ottoman position, Francesco Gattilusi increased his support for the Constantinopolitan individuals with anti-Ottoman views such as Demetrios Kydones and Manuel Kalekas, both previously marginalized by John V. Another Latin, the French Marshal Boucicaut, the leader of the defensive operations in the City, proved instrumental in persuading Manuel to leave the capital and search for western aid.⁶⁴ After the siege, in 1403, Marshal Boucicaut together with Francesco Gattilusi offered their support to John VII in his attempt to overthrow Manuel II.⁶⁵

The territorial fragmentation combined with these political and economic factors characteristic to a small size state resulted in further modifications manifested at the higher echelons of Byzantine society. First, due to the shrinkage of resources, large parts of the population, be they poor or wealthy, changed their allegiance from the Byzantine government to the Latins or the Ottomans.⁶⁶ Such tendency was reinforced by the fact that on the one hand, the Latins offered financial support for the state defense and many business opportunities. In Thessalonike around 1423, most of the aristocrats and businessmen had a pro-Latin attitude and exerted pressures on the Despot Andronikos to surrender the city to the Venetians.⁶⁷ In Constantinople a pro-Latin attitude was dominant among the political and economic elites during Manuel's reign, which, in 1438, resulted in the political agreement for a Church union. On the other hand, the Ottomans offered two serious incentives in exchange of obedience: religious freedom and sometimes tax exemptions.⁶⁸ Multiple pieces of evidence suggest that numerous Constantinopolitans sided with the Ottomans during the long siege of 1394-1402, as it was recorded by an early fifteenth century account of the siege:

The inhabitants of Constantinople, reduced to a small number from the many they were, and deeming that that one (i.e. Bayezid) has become now a person more gentle than previously, because of the uncertainties of the future, sent to him an embassy of the most honorable men from among them, agreeing to obey him because he required them to do so except for the case that they could not offer him the city voluntarily. οἱ τῆς Κωνσταντίνου οἰκίητορες, ἐκ πολλῶν ὀλίγοι

⁶³ A. Luttrell, "John V's Daughters: A Palaiologan Puzzle," *DOP* 40 (1986): 110-112.

⁶⁴ J. Barker, *Manuel II*, 200-250. See also J. Delaville Le Roulx, "Constantinople" and "Modon" in *La France en Orient au XIVe siècle: expéditions du Maréchal Boucicaut*, Paris: E. Thorin, 1886, 327-512.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 323.

⁶⁶ In the case of the allegiance for the Latins the Byzantine converts to Catholicism played a significant role. Other Byzantines expressed preferences for the Ottomans. See M. Balivet, "Le personnage du "turcophile" dans les sources Byzantines antérieures au concile de Florence (1370-1430)," in *Byzantins et Ottomans*, Istanbul: Isis, 1999, 31-47.

⁶⁷ N. Necipoğlu, "Byzantine Thessalonike," in *Byzantium between the Latins and the Ottomans*, 56-84.

⁶⁸ H. Inalcik, "Greeks in the Ottoman economy and finances 1453-1500," in *TO ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΝ. Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis, Jr.*, New Rochelle: Caratzas, 1993, 307-19.

περιλειφθέντες, καὶ νομίσαντες ἡμερωτέρου τυχεῖν ἐκείνου, νῦν γοῦν, εἰ δὲ μὴ πρότερον διὰ τὸ τοῦ μέλλοντος ἄδηλον, πέμπουσιν αὐτῷ πρεσβείαν ἄνδρας τῶν παρὰ σφίσι ἐνδόξων, εἴκειν ἅπασιν ὁμολογοῦντες οἷς ἂν ἐκεῖνος ἐπιτάξει ποιεῖν διὰ μόνον δουλείας ὡς μὴ ἐνὸν αὐτοῖς ἐκουσίως τὴν πόλιν καταπροδοῦναι ποτε.⁶⁹

The pro-Ottoman attitude of the lower social classes was particularly visible in Thessalonike in the period before the surrender to the Venetians, and in Morea.⁷⁰

Second, the predominant social and economic conditions of the second half of the fourteenth century elicited shifts in the membership of the governing and social elites. If in the first half of the fourteenth century the members of aristocratic families owned large landed estates, thereby still holding a prominent position in the social hierarchy,⁷¹ by the end of the century, their landed properties in both Asia Minor and continental Greece considerably decreased together with their activities related to agriculture.⁷² Conversely, in the first half of the fourteenth century, the number of individuals without aristocratic pedigree but involved in trade and financial transactions had increased.⁷³ Surely, Byzantine businessmen were also active in the eleventh and the twelfth century.⁷⁴ Yet, what differentiated the Palaiologan businessmen was that these individuals acquired a group identity which often collided with the interests of the old land-owning aristocracy. In a famous passage of his *Memoirs*, John Kantakouzenos described how these individuals in search for business opportunities opposed his plans of gathering financial support for a naval fleet.⁷⁵ The written sources of the mid-

⁶⁹ P. Gautier, “Un récit inédit sur le siège de Constantinople par les Turcs (1394-1402),” in *REB* 23: 1965, 108.37-110.2.

⁷⁰ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 84-103.

⁷¹ After Michael VIII came into power in 1258, Byzantine landed aristocracy enjoyed a period of flourishing and acquired an increased influence in the political life: A.E. Laiou, “Byzantine Aristocracy: The Story of an Arrested Development,” *Viator* 4 (1973): 131-151. This situation, mirrored by John VI Kantakouzenos' success, lasted until the civil wars of the 1340s.

⁷² J. Haldon and A. Laiou considered that the rise of the *mesoi* and the businessmen was to a certain extent a natural phenomenon reflecting the accelerated devitalizing of the ancient class of aristocrats. See Laiou-Morisson, *Byzantine economy*, 199 and J. Haldon, “Social Elites, Wealth, and Power,” in *A social history of Byzantium*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2009, 200-212. Cf. also Th. Ganchou, “La famille Kouμούσης à Constantinople et Négrepont, avant et après 1453,” in *Βενετία-Εύβοια από τον Έγριπο στο Νεγροπόντε*, Venice: Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies, 2006, 51.

⁷³ The term *mesoi* appeared for the first time by the end of the tenth century, N. Svoronos, “Société et organisation intérieure dans l'Empire byzantin au XI-e siècle: les principaux problèmes,” in *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, London 1967. The *mesoi* were commonly identified as those who produced wealth and made it multiply (the manufacturers and merchants). In the famous *Dialogue between the Rich and the Poor* (I. Ševčenko, “Alexios Makrembolites and his ‘Dialogue Between the Rich and the Poor,’” *ZRVI* 6 (1960), p. 221), the relatively big numbers of merchants and skilled artisans are seen as quite rich, but still in a position inferior to that of the aristocracy, Laiou-Morisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 199.

⁷⁴ Laiou-Morisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 120.

⁷⁵ Kantakouzenos, *History*, III.33-43. The civil war opposing John VI and John V took the form of a conflict between aristocrats and *mesoi*, who were joined by the supporters of John V. A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 47. From the same period dates Alexios Makrembolites' *Dialog between the rich and the poor*.

fourteenth century referred to them as *mesoi*, that is *middlemen*, a name which suggests that, based on their income, they were positioned between the lower social classes and the higher class of the *archontes*, a generic term used for those in power and authority, and hence for the social and political elite.⁷⁶ Frequently, they formed short or long term networks called *syntrophiai* that would provide for their members more security and more power than each one alone could acquire.⁷⁷ Their activities extended beyond the Byzantine realm, for the fragmentation and diminution of the state territories forced them to established business ties with Genoese and Venetian merchants.⁷⁸

Gradually, owing to their intense economic activity and conversely to the impoverishment of the aristocratic families, during the first half of the fourteenth century, these tradesmen not only displaced the members of the old landowning class from their possessions but also forced them out of the trade with various goods and materials.⁷⁹ Nonetheless, despite their intense economic activity, in the second half of the fourteenth century, the *mesoi* completely disappeared from the historical sources as a distinctive social group. This reversal is explainable by two major reasons: first, after their major source of income, namely landed estates, collapsed, most members of Byzantine aristocracy started to form marriage alliances with the *mesoi*; and second, the aristocrats themselves undertook the activities of the *mesoi* and engaged more intensely in commercial and banking activities.⁸⁰

As a result of the contacts with the *mesoi*, by the end of the fourteenth century, the social and political Byzantine elite underwent a significant change. The *archontes*, included now both members of the older prestigious aristocratic families as well as businessmen recruited from among the tradesmen.⁸¹ The influence of the *mesoi* upon the Constantinopolitan aristocracy was further enforced by the transfer to the capital of the Monemvasiote wealthy

⁷⁶ On *archontes* (synonymous with *megistanes* and *dynatoi*) signifying any officials who possessed power see J. Ferluga, "Archon" in *Tradition als historische Kraft: interdisziplinäre Forschungen zur Geschichte des früheren Mittelalters*, ed. by N. Kamp und J. Wollasch, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1982, 254-266.

⁷⁷ See N. Oikonomides, *Hommes d'affaires Grecs et Latins à Constantinople: XIIIe-XVe Siècles*. Montréal: Institut d'études médiévales, 1979. This tendency towards a stronger connectivity between the *mesoi* was further reflected by the fact that they formed marriage alliances among themselves, A. Laiou, "Byzantium and the Neighboring Powers: Small-State Policies and Complexities," in *BMGS*, 6 (1980): 42-53.

⁷⁸ N. Oikonomides, *Hommes d'affaires Grecs et Latins à Constantinople*, 35-52.

⁷⁹ This trend is best documented earlier for Asia Minor and for Thessalonike, See K.-P. Matschke, "Commerce, Trade, Markets, and Money: Thirteenth to Fifteenth Centuries," in *The Economic History of Byzantium*, vol. 2, 801.

⁸⁰ A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 57 and Laiou-Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 199.

⁸¹ N. Necipoğlu (*Byzantium between Ottomans and Latins*, 166) identifies numerous cases of aristocrats who during Bayezid's siege were forced to sell their properties to wealthier Byzantine businessmen, as no other sources of revenue were available. She concludes that there can be distinguished a common pattern whereby members of the aristocracy, having used up their monetary assets from their savings during the first half of Bayezid's siege were compelled thereafter to seek new sources of money.

families who already had experience in commerce. The Eudaimonioannes, the Sophianos, or the Mamonas families acquired their wealth in activities of trade and shipping with the Venetians but saw better opportunities of developing their business in Constantinople.⁸²

The development of this type of aristocracy was interpreted differently by various scholars, depending on the emphasis they set on different phenomena. Thus, Laiou, Haldon, and Matschke consider that since the new kind of aristocracy did not emerge naturally out of the middle class, as it happened in the West, but as an outgrowth of the landowning aristocracy, they represent symptoms of a declining society. On the contrary, Kioussopoulou stressed the parallels between the Byzantines and the Latins, arguing that the Byzantine aristocracy was part of larger social changes in the Mediterranean that presaged a restructuring of society in a way similar to the early modern societies.⁸³

Regardless of the different reasons for its development, it seems to me appropriate to use for this type of aristocracy unparalleled in the Byzantine history the term *entrepreneurial aristocracy*, a term introduced by K.-P. Matschke. The word echoes the double affiliation of these influential individuals: on the one hand they belonged to the group of Greek merchants since they often combined commercial activities with banking and even manufacturing activities which were pursued on a very large scale in the Byzantine realm. The early fourteenth century cases of the *dynatoi* pursuing commercial activities in Chios or Phocaea illustrate this idea.⁸⁴ For the ensuing periods we have the example of the Koumouses family which moved from Negroponte to Constantinople. Members of this family without aristocratic pedigree but with business interests are attested in Constantinople beginning by early 1390s and by the 1450s, Andronikos Koumouses had the position of imperial treasurer.⁸⁵ On the other hand, the family names of the people involved in trading activities during this period indicate that they were also integrated in the Byzantine old aristocratic families.⁸⁶ Thus, during the late fourteenth century, we can identify and follow the careers of numerous members of aristocratic families active in trade and finances such as Goudeles,⁸⁷ Kabasilas, Notaras, or

⁸² According to K.-P. Matschke, "Commerce, Trade, Markets, and Money: Thirteenth to Fifteenth Centuries," in *The Economic History of Byzantium*, vol. 2, 803.

⁸³ A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 42-58.

⁸⁴ D. Kyritses, *The Byzantine Aristocracy in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries*, PhD dissertation Harvard University, 1997, 206-209.

⁸⁵ Th. Ganchou, "La famille Koumoussis à Constantinople et Négrepont," 56-63.

⁸⁶ In K.-P. Matschke, "Spuren eines aristokratischen Unternehmertums in der späten Palaiologenzeit," in *Die Gesellschaft*, 158- 220. Matschke's analysis relies on the observations of the Russian economic historian M. J. Sjuzumov, *Bor'ba za puti razvitija feodal'nych otnosenij v Vizantii, Vizantijskie očerki*, Moscow, 1961, 34-63; 61.

⁸⁷ See A.E. Laiou-Thomadakis, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System: Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," in *DOP* 34 (1982): 199-201. John Chortasmenos also relates that George Goudeles owned a *xenon*, *Letter 8*, in Chortasmenos- Hunger, 157-159.

Angelos.⁸⁸

This new configuration of the political elite had several repercussions on the Byzantine political landscape. Reflecting the previous allegiances of the *mesoi*, their interests remained steadily attached to those of the emperor whom they had supported throughout the last hundred years of the empire from the time of the conflict between the legitimate John V and the usurper John VI, until the Fall of Constantinople.⁸⁹ Yet, in the beginning of the fifteenth century such allegiance became limited to some extent. Due to their “Latin connections,” which opened them new avenues to gain wealth and influence, the Byzantine *archontes* reduced their dependence from the emperor and his court.⁹⁰ This situation constituted a novelty for the Byzantine society, since traditionally, the aristocracy upheld a rather negative opinion towards these types of activities. Frequently, unlike in the previous century, their economic interests did not fit into the framework of the Byzantine state, which had repercussions on the local administration. For instance, in a document dating from 1418 Manuel complained to the Senate of Venice that the Byzantine merchants with the help of the Venetians are not paying their due taxes (*kommerkion*).⁹¹

The relations of this new entrepreneurial aristocracy with the imperial family did not reflect anymore a state of submission but rather a state of mutually profitable collaboration. In particular, John VII, the major contentent in the conflict for the Byzantine throne, relied extensively on a network of aristocratic traders and entrepreneurs who created the financial

⁸⁸ Owing to the good relations with the Genoese and the Turks inherited from Andronikos IV, John VII traded freely with the Latins through the harbors of the appanage of Selymbria. At the end of 1389 Manuel Kabasilas, John VII's economic representative, stayed in Genoa in order to sell a large quantity of grain. During the siege of Constantinople, John Goudeles traveled to the island of Chios on his own ship and acquired large quantities of grain which he afterwards sold in the capital with an inflated price of 31 hyperpyra. K.-P. Matschke, *Die Schlacht bei Ankara und das Schicksal von Byzanz: Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Geschichte zwischen 1402 und 1422*, Weimar: Böhlau, 1981, 131 and M. Balard, *La Romanie Genoise*, vol. 2, Rome: École Française de Rome, 1978, 758. J. Barker, “John VII in Genoa: a problem in late Byzantine source confusion,” *OCP* 28 (1962): 236-237, S. Mešanović, *John VII Palaiologos*, 140. In 1401, Konstantinos Angelos, another member of an aristocratic family fell captive during a business trip from Constantinople to Chios. Cf. *MM*, II, 680. Later on, towards the end of the empire, Luke Notaras offered a similar example of an aristocrat involved in trade. Nicholas Notaras was himself involved in the trade relations of John VII. On the aristocratic family of Goudeles, see S. Lampros, “Ο Βυζαντινὸς οἶκος Γουδέλη,” *NE*, 13, (1916): 211-21.

⁸⁹ See also the recent article by A. Kioussopoulou, “Les hommes d'affaires byzantins et leur rôle politique à la fin du Moyen Âge,” *Historical Review* 7 (2010): 15-21.

⁹⁰ The case of Goudeles provides a vivid picture of Greek traders and financiers who maintained close contacts with each other and with the Genoese. Both Goudeles and Nicholas Notaras are qualified as Januenses by a Genoese notary in 1390; see, Barker, “John VII in Genoa,” 236. Both had almost daily contacts with various members of the de Draperiis family, some of whom bought considerable amounts of grain in ports controlled by John VII. The Genoese political party in Constantinople, whose representatives were Andronikos IV and John VII rested thus on a solid economic foundation. See also A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 108-111.

⁹¹ J. Chrysostoimides, “Venetian commercial privileges under the Paleologi,” *Studi Veneziani* 12 (1970): doc. 19, 354-355.

interface of his close connections with the Genoese.⁹² For instance, Theodore Koumouses, member of the above mentioned family from Negroponte was one of the witnesses mentioned in the treatise between John VII and Genoa. Previously Koumouses had been appointed senator.⁹³ The same aristocratic entrepreneurs were summoned by the emperor to collaborate in the negotiations for the ransoming of the prisoners of Nikopolis in 1396 or in the supplying of the capital with food reserves during the Ottoman siege of 1394-1402. Later on, during the reign of John VIII Palaiologos, an emperor much more inclined toward an open alliance with the Latins, this group became more active and formulated its views more clearly in favor of an alliance with the Latins. Certainly, this political orientation owed much to their multiple economic contacts with the Latin merchants.⁹⁴

The process of change in the profile of the aristocracy ran at different paces in different geographical areas of the empire. If in Constantinople the rhythm of transformation was much faster due to its prestige and position in Mediterranean trade, in other regions still under imperial authority different elements were added to the general equation of social change. In the Peloponnese, where the Ottoman presence was still weak, by the end of the fourteenth century local lords acquired a significant economic influence and opposed the involvement of the central government.⁹⁵ In order to counterbalance the demand of increased taxes from the central government, they often asked for protection from the Venetian Republic and from the Ottomans.⁹⁶ In Thessalonike, it was the old aristocracy who acquired a strong influence and often expressed its opposition to the central government.⁹⁷ Thus, despite the differences from the Constantinopolitan aristocracy, in both Morea and Thessalonike the centrifugal forces affected the group of the local archontes who saw their economic interests endangered by the involvement of the emperor's authority.

To sum up, it appears that by the end of the fourteenth century, the Byzantine

⁹² In this network it appears that George Goudeles and Nicholas Notaras played the role of economic agents for John VII. See below.

⁹³ On Theodore Koumouses (*PLP* 13469) see *MM* 3, XXXIII, 143.

⁹⁴ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 188-233.

⁹⁵ See the inscription found in the village of Parori in the Peloponnese, R.-J. Loenertz, "Res Gestae Theodori Ioann. F. Palaeologi. Titulus metricus A. D. 1389," *EEBE* 25 (1955): 206-210. On the historical information in the inscription see I. Toth and R. Radić, "Res gestae Theodori Ioanni filii Palaeologi en tant que source historique," *ZRVI* 34 (1995): 185-201. For a translation of the inscription, see Appendix 1.

⁹⁶ Manuel II, *Funeral Oration for his Brother Theodore, Despot of Morea*, ed. J. Chrysostomides, Thessalonike: Association for Byzantine Research, 1985 and *The Inscription of Parori*, ed. R.-J. Loenertz. For a translation of the inscription see Appendix 1.

⁹⁷ The Thessalonican aristocrats were divided with regard to their political attitudes: some were in favor of an alliance with the Latins, others wanted Thessalonike to rely on its own resources. The businessmen had connections mostly with the Latins but also with the Ottomans. Matschke, *Die Schlacht bei Ankara*, 56-64.

aristocracy acquired several important traits that differentiated it from the earlier aristocracy. First and foremost, if in the previous decades the aristocrats were dominated by an individualistic attitude,⁹⁸ for the period under consideration the aristocracy begins to acquire a more corporative spirit. This group consciousness rooted in the necessity to form associations with well defined trade interests manifested itself in the promotion of a political orientation that would favor closer connections with the Latins. Towards the end of Manuel's reign, the Byzantine aristocrats tried to impose their control as a group in state administration when they chose the path of supporting Mustafa for the Ottoman Sultanate, a move that was pushed for by the Venetians. Second, if in the first half of the fourteenth century the aristocrats' power was articulated in the framework of a state which had the means to provide privileges, the new entrepreneurial aristocrats in the second half of the century began to elude the dependency on the state. Since with the territorial losses the emperor was deprived of some of the possibilities to distribute lands and state grants, the aristocracy began to search for other means to accumulate wealth.⁹⁹

1.2. Major challenges to imperial authority during Manuel's reign

These structural changes in Byzantine society combined with the growing military threat often resulted in the weakening of the state's authority and in more frequent attacks against the emperor's legitimacy. In the following section I will present four major identifiable challenges to the emperor's authority and ideological position: the ecclesiastics' claims to autonomy of action within the Church, the dynastic conflicts with John VII, the evolution of the relations with the Ottomans and the consequences on the negotiations with the West, and the situation in the Peloponnese where the local archontes were claiming autonomy from the central government in Constantinople. This section, while offering further details regarding the

⁹⁸ In his thesis D. Kyritses argued that in the thirteenth and the early fourteenth centuries the Byzantine aristocrats “never tried to impose their control as a group over imperial authority. They did not form any permanent body.” *The Byzantine Aristocracy in the Thirteenth and the Early Fourteenth Centuries*, PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 1997, 393.

⁹⁹ On the debates around the emperor's and the state's capacity to confiscate and make use of land properties in the Palaiologan period see A. Laiou, “A weak state abandons the economy” in *Byzantine Economy*, 224-230 and K. Smyrlis, “The State, the Land, and Private Property. Confiscating Monastic and Church Properties in the Palaiologan Period” in *Church and Society in Late Byzantium*, ed. D. Angelov, Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, 59-79. Laiou has interpreted the problem of the emperor's prerogatives in taxation issues as evidence of a weak state whose authority was contested by the church and other privileged groups. Nevertheless, Smyrlis argues that the cases of expropriation of monastic and church estates are a reflection of the extent of the emperors' prerogatives in late Byzantium. In addition, in Manuel II's case, Smyrlis points out that this process counterbalanced to some degree the losses of state properties.

context of production of the emperor's political messages, is intended to support the discussion of Manuel's reaction to these challenges by analyzing a different idea of kingship in the last chapters of my dissertation.

1.2.1. Church and emperor

Manuel II's theological preoccupations have always been regarded as an essential part of his political and literary persona.¹⁰⁰ These preoccupations were mirrored by his apologetic texts, *The dialogs with a Muslim*, *The letter to Alexios Iagoup*, or *The treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, as well as by his close association with theologians be the hesychasts (e.g. Makarios Makres, the Athonite hieromonk David, Nicholas Kabasilas) or converts to Catholicism (e.g. Manuel Kalekas, or Maximos Chrysoberges). Nevertheless, despite these interests and connections, during much of his reign, the relations with the Church and members of the clergy were not always smooth.¹⁰¹ Partly, this situation was caused by the Church's steady rise as a powerful political institution during the last two centuries of the empire.¹⁰² As scholars have long argued,¹⁰³ several important events in the Palaiologan period strengthened the position of the Church with regard to other political actors: the Byzantine Church's strong opposition to the union with Rome agreed by Michael VIII, based on a wide popular support, the civil wars of the mid fourteenth century, and the adoption of Hesychasm as the official doctrine of the Byzantine Church. During this period of continuous military conflicts, the Church was often perceived as the only stable institution with a moral ground stronger than that of the imperial authority. The direct effects of this powerful position, were on the one hand the gradual increase of its role as a judicial institution at the social level,¹⁰⁴ and, on the

¹⁰⁰ For instance J. Barker, "Manuel as a Personality and a Literary Figure," in *Manuel II*, 395-440. and also H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im Byzantinischen Reich*, München: C.H. Beck, 712-784

¹⁰¹ To a large extent Manuel's theological preoccupations were linked to his political activities. It has been noticed that the treatise *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit* was written in view of a possible future Church union, as it was not composed as a polemic but rather as an attempt to clarify divergent points: Ch. Dendrinos, *An annotated critical edition of Manuel II Palaiologos' On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, PhD dissertation, Royal Holloway, London, p. VII.

¹⁰² D. Angelov, "Introduction," in *Church and Society in Late Byzantium*, Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1-2. Cf. also the synodal decision confirming the agreement between John V and Andronikos IV in 1381. See below.

¹⁰³ On the relations between the emperor and the Church in general in Byzantium see F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy: Origins and Background*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1966; H. Ahrweiler, *L'idéologie politique de l'Empire byzantin*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1975; D. Geanakopoulou, "Church and State in the Byzantine Empire: A Reconsideration of the Problem of Caesaropapism," *Church History* 34 (1965), 381-403. D. Angelov, ed., "Introduction," *Church and State in Late Byzantium*, 1-10.

¹⁰⁴ In the late empire the Church continued to function as a judicial institution, at a time when its importance in this sphere rose further. Apart from the General Judges (καθολικοί κριταί), the patriarchal tribunal in Constantinople established itself as an authoritative court in late Byzantine Empire. The documents of the patriarchal register which survive in great numbers from the middle of the second half of the 14th c. up until

other hand, the strengthening of the patriarch's position at the political level. Thus, some late Byzantine clerics began to claim that the patriarch's office was superior to the emperor's.¹⁰⁵ A well known instance is to be found in Patriarch Antony IV's letter from 1396 in which he commented to the Russian Prince Vasili on the emperor's role but also extolled the patriarch's and the Church's role.¹⁰⁶

Manuel resisted these claims and throughout his reign tried to assert the authority traditionally assigned to his office.¹⁰⁷ To understand his approach to the Church we need to look at several instances well documented by extant official documents. Like other Byzantine emperors of the later period, Manuel realized that due to the shortage of resources for the increasing defensive needs of the state, the Church remained one of the few institutions in possession of important assets which could serve the state. Already in the fourteenth century, John V had made recourse to confiscations of land properties belonging to the monasteries which he then divided as *pronoia* among his soldiers. His son, Manuel, pursued a similar policy, as it can be noticed from the contemporary documents which often attest the emperor's intervention in the economic activities of wealthy monasteries.¹⁰⁸ Thus, a frequent practice was either to confiscate monastic agricultural lands which were subsequently offered as *pronoia* to soldiers or to pay only partially the financial obligations due to Athonite monasteries.¹⁰⁹

In parallel to the attempts to appropriate monastic possessions for domestic usage, Manuel actively asserted his role as defender of Orthodoxy in both ecclesiastical or political

1402, feature judicial cases pertaining not only to matters of marriage and inheritance but also to disputes over property, money lending, and commercial contracts. J. Darrouzès, *Les registres des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. I, fasc. VI, "Les registres de 1377 à 1410," Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1979.

¹⁰⁵ In 1386, Kydones wrote to Manuel about the arrows of the hesychasts "which do not spare even an emperor." (Kydones, *Letters* 327. 258). Cf. J. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, 267.

¹⁰⁶ For a translation of the letter, see E. Barker, *Social and Political Thought in Byzantium, from Justinian I to the last Palaeologus*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963. See also P. Guran, "Frontières géographiques et liturgiques dans la lettre d'Antoine IV au grand prince de Moscou," in *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies: Sofia, 22-27 August, 2011*, vol 2, Sofia: Bulgarian Historical Heritage Foundation, 2011.

¹⁰⁷ On the emperor's role in appointing the bishops see V. Laurent, "Le Trisépiscopat du patriarche Matthieu Ier (1397-1410). Un grand procès canonique à Byzance au début du XVe siècle," *REB* 1972 (30): 89-93.

¹⁰⁸ K. Smyrlis, "The State, the Land, and Private Property," *Church and State in Late Byzantium*, 66-67. Cf. the analysis of this document in Ostrogorskij, *Pour l'histoire de la féodalité byzantine*, Bruxelles: Institut de philologie Orientale, 1954, 161-163.

¹⁰⁹ Especially the documents concerning the monastery of Docheiariou. Cf. G. Ostrogorsky *Feodalité*, 131.

affairs.¹¹⁰ Not only did he negotiate the union of the Churches in several instances¹¹¹ defending the Orthodox position, but also intervene in the ecclesiastical life, challenging the episcopal authority on at least three known occasions. In the following, I will provide an overview of these episodes as they can further reveal both the arguments against imperial intervention in ecclesiastic affairs as well as the emperor's stance vis-à-vis the Church.

The earliest recorded instance of Manuel's involvement in Church affairs dates from 1397 when Manuel issued a *prostagma* by which, eluding the approval of the synod, demanded that the bishops celebrate a liturgy in commemoration of his mother, Helena, on the first anniversary of her death in 1397.¹¹² The *prostagma* caused dissatisfaction among the high ranking clergy. Under the influence of the metropolitan Matthew of Kyzikos, the Byzantine Church gave a trenchant response to Manuel's request that the emperor had no right to formulate such orders in ecclesiastical issues. Although we lack detailed information on the development of the affair, it is likely that, by this move, Manuel intended to demonstrate his authority in ecclesiastical affairs rather than to simply commemorate his mother. Thus, at the time of the request, in 1397, the patriarch's position was vacant after the death of Patriarch Kallistos II prior to the appointment of Matthew I. One can interpret this move as the emperor's intention to act at a moment when no patriarch was installed.

The second in chronological order and most documented instance of Manuel's engagement in Church affairs concerned his direct involvement in the controversy over the deposition and subsequent restoration of Patriarch Matthew I (1397-1402 and 1403-1410).¹¹³

¹¹⁰ In taking seriously his role of *defensor fidei*, Manuel echoed the mid-fourteenth century attempts of the Church to force the emperor to pronounce a confession of faith upon his coronation. Thus the book of Pseudo-Kodinos (253.22-254.3) mentions that the emperor had to write by his own hand a confession of orthodox faith, which he signed and deposited with the patriarch and the synod. A translation of this confession is provided in D. Angelov, *Imperial ideology and political thought in Byzantium (1204-1330)*, 411: "Likewise I promise to remain and constantly be a faithful and genuine son and servant of the holy church and, in addition, to be its defensor and vindicator, to be well-disposed and philanthropic toward the subjects in accordance with the principles of reason and propriety, to abstain as much as possible from murder, mutilation, and similar acts, and to incline always toward truth and peace." Furthermore, after 1403, Manuel's assumed role of defender of the Church emerges from a *typikon* for the monastery of Mount Athos with the purpose of reforming the monastic cenobitic life. Cf. J. Thomas and Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundations*, Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2000, 1613-1615.

¹¹¹ At the Council of Basel and the negotiations of 1422-1423.

¹¹² J. Darrouzès, *Les registes des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. I, fasc. VI, "Les registes de 1377 a 1410," Paris, 1979, no. 3058, 319. G.T. Dennis, "Official Documents of Manuel II Palaeologus," *B* 41, 1971. Edition of the text in V. Laurent, "La date de la mort d'Helene Cantacuzene, femme de Jean V Paleologue," *REB* 13 (1955): 135-38.

¹¹³ Matthew I was a Palamite and, according to Manuel Kalekas, the leader of this group: R.-J. Loenertz, *La correspondance de M. Calecas*, 315-344. On Matthew I see: G.T. Dennis, "Four Unknown Letters of Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus," *B* 36 (1966): 63-66; J. Darrouzès, *Les registes*, vol I, fasc VII (1410-1453), Paris, 1991, nos. 3284, 500-504; no. 3299, 478-480; no. 3267, 484-486; nos. 3270-3276, 487-493; P. Schreiner, *Chronica Byzantina Breviora*, vol. 1, 12.13-14, 114; Vienna, 1975; V. Laurent, "Le Trisépiscopat du patriarche Matthieu," p. 30, 52-53,

Upon assuming his office, Matthew was accused by a group of metropolitans that he held the position uncanonically, primarily because he was guilty of being τρισεπίσκοπος. This was a rare charge in the history of the Byzantine Church which incriminated clerics appointed bishops for three times in a row.¹¹⁴ Since Matthew had already been ordained metropolitan of Kyzikos and was appointed (*hypopsēphios*) bishop of Chalcedon, in 1397, the year when he became Patriarch, a large number of metropolitans opposed this appointment.¹¹⁵ Alongside this issue, Matthew's opponents elaborated an extensive list of other accusations which included charges against the involvement of the emperor's authority in ecclesiastical matters.¹¹⁶

The conflict which plagued Matthew's fifteen year long patriarchate involved the participation of numerous clerics and court officials as well as several Church councils.¹¹⁷ All these events and participating forces point to the gravity of the situation. Already in 1397, a hieromonk, Makarios, claimed that the appointment of Matthew I was illegal because during the election process the patriarch's name was fraudulently introduced among the candidates by the *megas chartophylax*, John Holobolos.¹¹⁸ The latter also took a solemn oath that Matthew had been only once appointed metropolitan of Kyzikos. Yet, the immediate consequence of the accusations regarding the validity of Matthew's appointment, was that the leader of the group of accusers, the hieromonk Makarios, was denied the right to vote in the synod following pressures from the emperor. For a time, although metropolitans continued to accuse the fact that the imperial power seriously interfered in the patriarch's election, the whole issue seemed

93-96, 132, 169-173. G.T. Dennis, "The Deposition and Restoration of Patriarch Matthew I, 1402-1403," *BF* 2 (1967): 100-106.

¹¹⁴ For a detailed discussion of this charge and further examples from the fifteenth century, see V. Laurent, "Le Trisépiscopat," 64-87.

¹¹⁵ For a complete list of the synods in this case see G.T. Dennis, "The Deposition and Restoration of Patriarch Matthew I," 102-104.

¹¹⁶ Makarios devoted several treatises to this issue. In his καθολική πραγματεία (Laurent, "Trisépiscopat," 20-22) as well as in several polemical treatises against Patriarch Matthew I (Πίναξ σὺν Θεῷ τῆς παρούσης πραγματείας, τοῦτ'ἔστι τίνες καὶ πόσαι αἰτίαι κανονικαὶ δι'ἄς κανονικῶς ἡμεῖς τε ἀποστρεφόμεθα τὸν νῦν πατριαρχεύοντα καὶ μᾶλλον οἱ ἱερατικοί, ἵνα μὴ ὦσιν ὑπ'αἰτίαισιν κανονικῆν (Paris. gr. 1379, f. 15) he exposed his arguments on the deposition of Patriarch Matthew, among which the most important were the following: he had been previously excommunicated on different grounds by a synod of eighteen bishops; because he was thrice bishop- Bishop of Chalcedon, of Kyzikos, and of Constantinople, and not only ordained as it had been decided by a synod at the palace organized by the Patriarch himself; due to the usurpation of the patriarchal throne with the secular help of the emperor; he made serious mistakes during his office, as in the case of Jeremiah of Moldavia; by condemning Makarios of Ankara's arguments he condemned the Church Fathers' texts which often mentioned the accusation of τρισεπίσκοπος; he had an immoral behavior, for Patriarch Matthew was accused of simony and organized prostitution (πορνοβοσκεῖν) in the monastery of Charsianites (Paris. gr. 1379, f.11r. Cf. Laurent, "Trisépiscopat," 37).

¹¹⁷ See the list of participating individuals in the *Synodal Tome of 1409*, N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between Ottomans and Latins*, 304.

¹¹⁸ Paris. gr. 1379, 12 Μηδενὸς γὰρ τῶν ἐν τῇ συνόδῳ ἐκέειν ἄρχιερέων ἀξιοῦντος τεθῆναι ἐν ταῖς ψήφοις. Cf. V. Laurent, "Le Trisépiscopat," 153.

definitively settled: Makarios, continued to take part in the Church councils, while in 1399 he left Constantinople together with the emperor in his long journey through Europe. It appears that the main reason for Manuel to take the turbulent hieromonk with him was that he wished to keep the ecclesiastical affairs in the capital free of any troubles.

During the absence of Makarios and of the emperor from the capital, the conflict between a part of the clergy and the patriarch continued despite the increase of the pressures of the Ottoman siege. In 1402, added to the previous and other accusations,¹¹⁹ rumors were spread that Matthew I had been negotiating the surrender of the City to the Ottomans.¹²⁰ Consequently, the four metropolitans present in Constantinople still under siege¹²¹ summoned a synod which deposed Matthew. John VII, the emperor in charge of the City at that time, directly intervened to impose the synodal decision as he was happy to remove a patriarch so close to his rival, Manuel. Several months later, immediately after the end of the siege, in order to confirm the previous decision, a new synod was summoned in which more metropolitans participated and validated the verdict.¹²²

The attachment of John VII to a certain part of the clergy opposed to the patriarch was visible in several other instances as well. In 1393, John Adeniatas, a priest in Constantinople and διδάσκαλος τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου, confronted both the patriarch and the emperor. Because of the offenses against him, Manuel forced him to stop officiating liturgy; thereafter he moved to Pera. Likely his transfer to the Genoese colony was caused by the fact that he could receive John VII's protection.¹²³

¹¹⁹ Matthew was accused of having allowed the monastery of Charsianites to degenerate into a place of ill-fame.

¹²⁰ In his testament, Patriarch Matthew mentioned the episode of his short deposition (1402-1403) as causing him great grief. He connected Emperor Manuel's activity to that of the Church and praised Manuel for his energetic intervention in the affairs of the Church and for his gifts to the Charsianites monastery. Cf. I. Konidares and C. Manaphes, "Επιτελεύτιος βούλησις καὶ διδασκαλία τοῦ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου Ματθαίου(1397-1410)," *ΕΕΒΣ* 45 (1981-1982): 472-510. T. Papademetriou argues that Patriarch Matthew's collaboration with the Ottomans is plausible, "The Turkish Conquests and Decline of the Church reconsidered," in *Church and Society in Late Byzantium*, ed. Dimiter Angelov, Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2009, 195.

¹²¹ Matthew of Medeia and the metropolitans of Kyzikos, Gothia, and Severin. According to the Church canons there was a need of at least four metropolitans to summon a synod. Due to the siege it was impossible for other metropolitans to enter the capital, Dennis, "The Deposition and Restoration of Patriarch Matthew I," 101.

¹²² Makarios, *Apology*, Paris. gr. 1378, f. 11: πατριάρχην ὑπὸ δύο συνόδων ἐκβληθέντα τοῦ τε θρόνου καὶ τῆς τιμῆς.

¹²³ *MM*, II, 172-174: CCCCXL- 1393, Synodal order of excommunication of John Adeniatas accused of plotting: ὁ παπᾶς Ἰωάννης ὁ Ἀθηνιάτης ὁ καὶ διδάσκαλος τοῦ εὐαγγελίου χρηματίσας, καταλιπὼν τὴν πολιτείαν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν τάξιν καὶ ἀνταρσίας καὶ συσκευὰς τινὰς μεθ' ἑτέρων ἀτασθάλων καὶ παρανόμων ἀνδρῶν μελετῶν καὶ ἐργασίας ἐργαζόμενος κατὰ τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν αὐθέντου καὶ βασιλέως καὶ σπουδάζων διαφθαρήναι τὴν βασιλίδα ταύτην τῶν πόλεων, τέλος ἀποτυχῶν τοῦ σκοποῦ, ἐπεὶ εἶδε τοὺς αὐτοῦ συνεργοὺς καὶ συμβούλους κρατηθέντας καὶ ἐξεταζομένους καὶ φοβηθεὶς τὴν φανέρωσιν ὧν αὐτὸς ἔπραττεν, εἰς μὲν τὸ πατριαρχεῖον καλούμενος εἰς τὸν μέγαν τοῦτον καὶ θεῖον ναὸν ἐλθεῖν οὐδόλως ἠθελήσεν, εἰς δὲ τὸν Γαλατᾶν ἀπιὼν ὥχεται, μήτινος ὄντος τοῦ τοῦτον διώκοντος.

Once he returned from Europe in 1403 and replaced John VII, Manuel pursued a plan to restore Matthew I in his position and attempted first to reconcile his favorite patriarch with the metropolitans who had previously rejected him. He issued a decree summoning another synod larger than the previous ones in order to discuss Matthew I's deposition.¹²⁴ Yet, the synod had an unexpected result: Matthew's deposition was not only confirmed but the former patriarch was also excommunicated and anathematized. The emperor did not accept the result and reinstated Matthew as patriarch.¹²⁵ Then, to confirm the decision, Manuel tried to form a majority among the Byzantine metropolitans who would cast their vote for Matthew. In one of his polemical texts Makarios recounts that even if the metropolitans were usually inclined to obey the ruler, this time, many of them opposed Manuel. Under such circumstances, Manuel was compelled to use forceful methods in order to persuade the members of the synod: thus, according to Makarios, the metropolitans who opposed Matthew were in fact either blackmailed to change their opinions, replaced, or sent into monasteries, while other metropolitan sees were created. By the end of Manuel's campaign to reinstall his favorite patriarch, only the metropolitans of Ankara, Kyzikos, and Severin maintained their previous position. Eventually, Manuel succeeded to restore Matthew as patriarch, and took the opportunity for a reconciliation with the rebellious clerics. Manuel organized a synod because of the fear of possible further rebellions.¹²⁶ Significantly, this time the synod took place in the imperial palace.¹²⁷ At the synod, Manuel accepted to forgive the rebellious metropolitans and reinforced all the decisions already taken in a chrysobull (1403-1404).¹²⁸

However, Manuel's involvement in this debate further infuriated Makarios and Matthew of Medeia who refused any reconciliation and circulated more pamphlets against the patriarch in which the emperor himself was ridiculed and criticized for his actions. In one of these “manifestos” it was plainly stated that the emperor acted like a tyrant ever since his coronation:

Whence, since our most divine emperor and lord considered that the zeal for making those accusations came from their envious disposition, he disregarded their reproaches and the insolent accusations which the metropolitan of Medeia

¹²⁴ The synod had eighteen participants. Cf. G. Dennis, “The Restoration and Deposition of Patriarch Matthew I,” *BF*, 2 (1967): 103.

¹²⁵ For the translation of the emperor's answer see *Ibid.*, 105.

¹²⁶ Laurent, “Trisépiscopat,” 41.

¹²⁷ In a text in Paris. gr. 1379, f. 49v.

¹²⁸ For the text of the chrysobull see Laurent, “Trisépiscopat,” 124, 56-59: οὔτε τὸν ἐκτεθέντα παρὰ τῆς ἱεράς συνόδου τόμον στέργω - ὄντινα πρότερον στέρξαντες ὡς ἔννομον καὶ κανονικὸν συνήνεσαν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ ὑπέγραψαν - οὔτε τὸ ἐπ' αὐτῷ προβὰν θεῖον καὶ προσκυνητὸν χρυσόβουλλον τοῦ **κραταιοῦ καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν ἀυθέντου βασιλέως**.

said against him in the Patriarchate in the very monastery of Stoudios in which he contended that the emperor acted like a tyrant against him for twelve years [...]; the emperor also overlooked their writings full of outrageous calumnies, false accusations, and unlawful statements. It was therefore necessary to bring those to a trial so that they would defend themselves and justify their actions. Nevertheless, the emperor rather wished to reconcile with them and he did not even make public the abusive letter so that they would not be covered in shame, and addressed them in a humane and gentle way [...]. Yet, they rather asked for the trial to be made so that they point out the innovations which generated a heresy in the Church, arguing that we introduced an innovation by saying that the candidate (*hypopsēphios*) is not a bishop [...]. Whence our most divine lord and emperor lay down the definitions. Ὅθεν κατὰ φθόνον εἶναι νομίσας ὁ θεϊότατος ἡμῶν αὐθέντης καὶ βασιλεὺς τὸν ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔλεγον ζῆλον ἐκεῖνοι, παρεῖδε μὲν τὰς τούτων λοιδορίας καὶ ὕβρεις, ἅς τε ἀπὸ στόματος εἶπε κατ' αὐτοῦ ὁ χρηματίσας Μηδείας ἔν τε τῷ Πατριαρχείῳ καὶ αὐτῇ τῇ τοῦ Στουδίου μονῇ, ἐν οἷς ἐπὶ δώδεκα ἔτεσι τυραννεῖσθαι παρ' αὐτοῦ διετείνετο [...]. παρεῖδε δὲ καὶ ἅπερ ἔγραψαν πανταχοῦ ὑβριστικῶς καὶ συκοφαντικῶς καὶ ἀθέσμως. Δέον οὖν ἀγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς κριτήριον ἀπολογηθησομένους καὶ δίκην δώσοντας ὧν περ ἔδρασαν, ὁ δὲ τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην μᾶλλον τούτων ἐπραγματεύετο καὶ οὔτε τὸ λοιδοριον ἐκεῖνο γράμμα ἐνεφάνισε πώποτε, ἵνα μὴ αἰσχυνθῶσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλανθρώπως ὠμίλει τούτοις καὶ προσηνῶς, [...]. Κριτήριον δὲ μᾶλλον ἐζήτησαν γενέσθαι καὶ ἐπὶ τούτου τὰ τῆς καινοτομίας δειχθῆναι, ἀφ' ἧς αἵρεσις τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ τίκτεται, καινοτομίαν ἡγούμενοι τὸ λέγειν ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ τόμῳ τὸν ὑποψήφιον μὴ εἶναι ἐπίσκοπον. [...] Ὅθεν καὶ περὶ τούτου μὲν διωρίσατο πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὁ θεϊότατος ἡμῶν αὐθέντης καὶ βασιλεὺς.¹²⁹

By circulating these pamphlets, Makarios expected an official reaction which nevertheless the emperor delayed. Only much later, Manuel proposed to the rebellious Makarios of Ankara and Matthew of Medeia to meet and listen to their demands. In 1409, in response to the accusations and invectives, Manuel elaborated a series of four letters which were probably delivered publicly. These letters constituted the preamble to another synod where the accusation of *Trisépiscopat* was discussed in the absence of Makarios and Matthew. At the synod, apart from members of the clergy an important number of the emperor's supporters and *oikeioi* were present.¹³⁰ The two accused, Makarios of Ankara and Matthew, sent a report detailing their two chief accusations: that the current patriarch was guilty of having been appointed bishop for the third time and that he had been restored with the emperor's support.¹³¹ The synod confirmed the definitive decision of condemnation of Makarios and Matthew. Despite this heated argument with the bishops, it appeared nevertheless that Manuel continued to look for

¹²⁹ Makarios of Ankara, in Laurent, "Trisépiscopat," 131.167-185.

¹³⁰ *Theioi*- Theodore Kantakouzenos, Constantine Asanes; other *exaderphoi*- Andreas Asanes and Demetrios Palaiologos Goudeles, Nicholas Notaras; other *oikeioi* Alexios Kaballarios Tzemplakon, Manuel Kantakouzenos Phakrases, Nicholas Sophianos, George Goudeles, Andronikos Tarchaniotes Philanthropenos, Demetrios Leontares, Demetrios Chrysoloras, Andronikos Melissenos, Matthew Lascaris Palaiologos, etc. For a list of the participants in the synod see Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 304.

¹³¹ Laurent, "Trisépiscopat," 60.

reconciliation with the opposing clergy for, after Patriarch Matthew's death in 1410, he appointed Euthymios II patriarch. Previously, Euthymios had been Makarios' teacher in the monastery of Stoudios, and during his trial he had agreed with the arguments against Matthew I.

Many of the arguments advanced by the metropolitans opposed to the deposition of Makarios and Matthew of Medeia attacked primarily the emperor's involvement in ecclesiastical affairs. In one of his treatises, Makarios specifically addressed the emperor's right to intervene in ecclesiastical affairs. The text divided in twenty-seven chapters was emphatically titled: ἐκλογή μερική περὶ τοῦ ὅτι ὀφείλει ὁ βασιλεὺς στοιχεῖν καὶ ἐμμένειν τοῖς κανονικῶς ὀρισθεῖσι, στέργειν τε καὶ δεφενδεύειν τοὺς κανόνας. Ὁ καὶ ὑπισχνεῖται χριόμενος, καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἐξάρχει ἢ ἐξουσιάζει τῶν κανονικῶν καὶ ἱερατικῶν, μόνων δὲ τῶν πολιτικῶν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἐφεῖται αὐτῷ παραλύειν κατάστασιν τινα ἐκκλησιαστικὴν, καὶ περὶ ἄλλων τοιούτων κεφαλαίων.¹³² In this treatise Makarios disparagingly labeled Matthew I with the term ἀρχοντοεπίσκοπος, that is a bishop appointed by a secular lord. Yet, Makarios' attacks against the emperor's interventions in the Church were rather indirect and more subtle since, as an expert in canon law, he surely was aware that Byzantine emperors often appointed patriarchs and bishops.¹³³ He must also have been aware of the fact that senators, i.e. lay people, participated in recent synods concerned with the election of patriarchs.¹³⁴ The first problem he identified resided in the fact that in the early fifteenth century an imperial *prostagma* for the nomination or transfer of a bishop equaled the validity of a synodal vote. Hence the problem seen by Makarios: the *cheirotonia* could be offered by the emperor himself, who, despite being anointed by the patriarch, had no attributes of a cleric. Second, according to Makarios who cited the authority of the Church Fathers, the clergy were not supposed to make recourse to imperial power in ecclesiastic matters, particularly in cases of promotions. In fact, this was also the prescription of the twelfth canon of the synod of Antioch.¹³⁵ Makarios further reinforced

¹³² This is by far the longest treatise in the series of Makarios' polemical texts (Paris.gr. 1379, f. 98-148). It makes several important statements with regard to the emperor's office (ch. 1-10): the emperors have to obey the canons of the Church; the clerics who ask for the help of the secular power and plot with the secular power should be deposed; the sacerdotal power is superior to imperial power; the emperor is a simple lay person to whom the entrance in the sanctuary is denied; he has no right to cancel the canonical decisions and prescriptions; that the power usurped by the emperors in questions of bishop transfer has no canonical foundation. Chs. 13-27 argue for the fact that only the bishop elected by a synod is fully a bishop.

¹³³ In their texts, Theodore Balsamon and Demetrios Chomatenos conferred absolute power to the emperor in ecclesiastical affairs.

¹³⁴ During the trial of John Bekkos, before his ascension to Patriarchate, the synod was supplemented with a group of Senators representing the emperor. Cf. D. Kyritses, *The Byzantine Aristocracy in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries*, PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 58 and 62-63.

¹³⁵ Theodore Balsamon who commented the validity of this norm concluded that, in juridical terms, the

this accusation with an example drawn from Neilos Kabasilas who made a clear distinction between the sovereign's arbitrary interventions and the solicited and authorized collaboration with the Church.¹³⁶ Thus, the *basileus* could preside over the synod, senators could take part in the transactions of the bishops only if the bishops previously agreed. Makarios noticed that this was not the case with Manuel II, who, in 1403 acted against the unanimous opinion of the bishops and reinstated Matthew I on the ecumenical throne. This was also the case in 1397 when Matthew I, with the emperor's support, became patriarch for the first time against the different vote of the majority of the synod. In both cases, according to Makarios, the emperor's action altered the election process, but especially in the second case the deposed patriarch's appeal to the ruler invalidated his position.

Makarios' allegations in his texts, dated to 1405, openly incriminated Matthew I and the emperor Manuel II. By accusing the emperor, he positioned himself in a series of ecclesiastics who contested the traditional view that the ruler was *isapostolos*, the supreme authority both civil and religious, placed above the ecclesiastical law.¹³⁷ Thus, earlier in the fourteenth century Philotheos Kokkinos took advantage of the civil discord and tried to escape the imperial tutelage, especially due to the rapprochement with Rome of John V. The latent conflict between the emperor and the Church exploded under Patriarch Neilos Kerameus (1380-1388). Then, the emperor faced with growing discontent, had to summon a synod at the monastery of Studios in order to draft a charter of his rights with regard to the Church.¹³⁸

Given these circumstances, it appears that since the metropolitans were aware that the patriarch was strongly backed by the emperor, a large number of clerics wanted to reduce the imperial authority over the Church. These intentions became clear already in 1397 when two metropolitans, of Nicomedia and of Corinth, were asked by the emperor to provide explanations for their support in favor of Makarios of Ankara in the latter's argument with

patriarch of Constantinople represented the supreme instance. All the appeals formulated in the Orthodox realm, could make final recourse to his authority. F. Lauchert, *Die Kanones der wichtigsten altkirchlichen Concilien, nebst den Apostolischen Kanones*, Freiburg: Mohr, 1896, 46.

¹³⁶ Paris. gr. 1378, f.3v-4r.

¹³⁷ This view contrasted the statements in the treatise against the Latins where Makarios admitted that the emperor had the right to summon a church council, Makarios, "Against the Latins," in *Tomos katallagēs*, ed. Patriarch Dositheos, Iasi, 1687, 49-51.

¹³⁸ The agreement of 1380/1382 regulated two important issues: the choice of new metropolitans and the transfer of a bishop from a see to another. On the second point the emperor obtained very extended power: all the movement of nominations, promotions, mutations within the Church was subordinated to his goodwill. The synodal decree noted that this was an ancient privilege of the emperor. Regarding the first point, it seems that he arrived at a compromise, necessary both according to the canons and to the circumstances. The synod of 1380 allowed the emperor only the right to regard over the synodal transactions and to veto. Cf. V. Laurent, "Les droits de l'empereur en matière ecclésiastique. L'accord de 1380-1382," *REB* 13, 1955: 5-20.

Patriarch Matthew. In response, they demanded a written canon for the emperor's right to delegate representatives in the synod to judge ecclesiastical matters. In a document dating from those years, the two metropolitans suggested that the emperor acted unlawfully for he did not have the approval of the Church.¹³⁹

The tensions between the emperor and the Church erupted again in 1416 upon the direct appointment of the metropolitan of Moldavia without a prior approval of the synod.¹⁴⁰ This case was to some extent similar to other instances of Manuel's involvement in ecclesiastical affairs. Like in other previous cases, important clergymen perceived the ruler's intervention as an abuse. Upon his arrival from the Peloponnese, Manuel identified in Poliaina, Macedonia, a bishop which he considered fit for the vacant metropolitan see of Moldavia. By the end of the fourteenth century this position in the far away regions of Christian Orthodoxy had acquired political importance. Yet, when Manuel sent his proposal to Constantinople, patriarch Euthymios refused to make the appointment and vehemently contested the emperor's right to appoint metropolitans. Moreover, he threatened to quit his position unless the emperor admitted his abusive intervention in Church affairs and a synod was summoned to discuss the appointment.¹⁴¹ Although, with the death of Euthymios in the same year 1416, the conflict stopped, eventually Manuel requested a synod to define more precisely his rights over the Church.¹⁴² In doing so, Manuel echoed a tendency observable in his father's, John V, approach to the relations with the Church. As mentioned above, John had also requested the elaboration of a document which would state more accurately his rights within the Church.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ MM, 2, 271-272: ἐρωτηθέντες οἱ ἱερώτατοι ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ ὑπέρτιμοι, ὃ τε Νικομηδείας καὶ ὁ Κορίνθου, [...] περὶ δὲ τοῦ ἵνα ἔχη ἄρχοντας ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὰ λαλούμενα ἐν τῇ ἱερᾷ συνόδῳ ἐπὶ ἐγκληματικῶν ὑποθέσεων, οὔτε γνώμην ἐδώκαμεν εἰς τοῦτο, οὔτε ἐγράψαμεν τοιοῦτό τι, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον μὲν οὖν λέγομεν νῦν, ὡς ὅταν ζητήσῃ αὐτὰ ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ ἅγιος μετὰ ἐξετάσεως, ἐὰν ἀποδειχθῇ, ὅτι ἔχει δίκαιον ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τοῦτο, μέλλομεν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀκολουθεῖν τῇ ἱερᾷ συνόδῳ καὶ τοῖς εὐρεθεῖσιν· ἐὰν δὲ οὐδὲν εὐρεθῇ, στέργομεν καὶ ἡμεῖς τοῦτο κατὰ πᾶσαν ἀνάγκην (ὁ μέγας σκευοφύλαξ διάκονος ὁ Βαλσαμών).

¹⁴⁰ M. Kalekas, *Letters*, 93-94, 314.215; J. Darrouzès, *Regestes*, I, fasc. VI, nos. 3025, 3027, p. 36; no 3031, p.37; V. Laurent, "Le Trisépiscopat," 9-11; J. Darrouzès, *Regestes*, vol. I, fasc. VII, no. 3296, 6; S. Runciman, "Manuel II and the See of Moldavia," in *Kathegetria, Essays presented to Joan Hussey for her 80th birthday*, ed. J. Chrysostomides, Camberley: Porphyrogenitus, 1988, 515-20. Laurent, "Le Trisépiscopat," 96; J. Darrouzes, *Regestes*, vol I, fasc. VII, no. 3299, 10 and V. Laurent, "Les droits de l'empereur en matière ecclésiastique," 5-20.

¹⁴¹ The conflict between Manuel and Euthymios is presented by J. Barker, *Manuel II*, 323.

¹⁴² Sylvester Syropoulos, *Memoirs*, ed. V. Laurent, Rome: Pontificium institutum orientalium studiorum, 1971, 49-55.

¹⁴³ V. Laurent, "Les droits de l'empereur en matière ecclésiastique," 1-8. The synod awarded the emperor the following rights: to oppose his veto to the election of a metropolitan whom he did not like; to reformulate the Patriarch's *charter* by creating, promoting, or downgrading episcopal sees, combining sees as reward, transfer of bishops; to be impossible for the Church to excommunicate the emperor or any other member of the senate; to maintain in Constantinople the bishops summoned in the capital for important affairs, without the patriarch's opposition; to ask from any new bishop to promise loyalty to the emperor and the empire; to ask that all the bishops approve and sign the synodal documents; to ask them not to elect a candidate hostile to the emperor.

Arguably, John V's and Manuel's attempts to define their relations with the Church remain singular in Byzantine history. In addition, scholars have long noticed that Manuel's attempt to regulate the relations between the emperor and the church constituted the foundation for his son, John, to successfully negotiate the Church union in 1439.¹⁴⁴

These three instances of ecclesiastical opposition to the emperor's interventions in the Church affairs allow us to draw two conclusions. First, by the end of the fourteenth century, it is noticeable that the Byzantine bishops claimed more independence in the process of election of the patriarch and metropolitans. Alongside Makarios' opposition to a patriarch appointed by the emperor, Symeon of Thessalonike emphasized that the emperor could participate in Church synods only as observer and judge, but never as elector. According to this view conveyed by the Byzantine specialists in liturgy and canon law, the emperor far from being the one who appointed the patriarch, was rather regarded as the patriarch's agent. Yet, it seems that Manuel II, just like his father John V and his son John VIII, successfully opposed this view and managed to impose his authority on Church affairs. Second, similar to the aristocracy discussed above, it appears that the high ranking Constantinopolitan clergy developed a stronger group conscience. Sylvester Syropoulos refers for instance to *our order* (*ἡμετέραν τάξιν*) which he considered that it should take care of ecclesiastical issues. In the same way, Syropoulos considered that the *archontes* formed a separate group defending the emperor's interests.¹⁴⁵ Ultimately Makarios' opposition to the involvement of laymen in the Church may be assimilated to an opposition not only to the emperor but also to the whole aristocratic class. This kind of opposition will be discussed in more detail in the last chapter of this dissertation.

1.2.2. The relations with the Ottomans before and after the Treaty of Gallipoli (1403)

The loss of Gallipoli to the Ottomans (1354) and the battle at the Maritsa river in which the Ottomans defeated the Serbs (1371) changed the political balance in the Balkans and considerably reduced the Byzantine influence in the region. After decades of negotiations with the Latin West, John V renounced the idea of an alliance with the Christians and turned his attention towards a more accommodationist policy with the Ottomans. Even if this new

¹⁴⁴ Sylvester Syropoulos, *Mémoires*, 52.

¹⁴⁵ Sylvester Syropoulos, *Mémoires*, 104: 'Ο μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς ἐκ τῆς Πελοποννήσου ἐπανεληθὼν καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, ὡς δεδήλωται, διαθέμενος καὶ τὸν εἰρημένον μητροπολίτην εἰς τὴν Μολδοβλαχίαν ἀπελθεῖν κατασκευάσας μετὰ καὶ πατριαρχικῶν γραμμάτων, τὰ τῆς βασιλείας διεξῆγε βασιλικῶς. Cf. also John Eugenikos who distinguished the position of his fellows from those πάντας μὲν ἤδη σχεδὸν τοὺς ἄρχοντας ἐκθύμως. [...] ὠρμημένους ἐπὶ τὴν κατεσχηματισμένην ἔνωσιν, σωζομένης, φασί, τῆς εὐσεβείας αὐτῶν, καὶ διὰ τριήρεις καὶ χρυσίνους καὶ δυτικὴν βοήθειαν καὶ λογισμοὺς ἀνθρωπίνους (John Eugenikos, *PP*, vol.1., 127).

situation caused widespread dissatisfaction,¹⁴⁶ John persisted in his new approach and eventually consented to become a vassal of the Ottomans and pay an annual tribute. In the following years, the Ottomans' involvement in Byzantine politics further increased, particularly during the dynastic conflicts which opposed Andronikos IV to the rest of the Palaiologan family in the 1370s.¹⁴⁷ At that moment, the intervention of the Ottoman emir, Murad I (1361-1389), was instrumental for both the deposition of John V and the restoration of his legitimacy.

The debut of Manuel's reign coincided with a change in the Ottoman attitudes toward Byzantium, a change which increased the tensions between the two sides. After the battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389, the Ottomans consolidated their position in the Balkans and under the new Sultan, Bayezid (1389-1402), pursued a more aggressive policy against the remaining Byzantine possessions in the region. As his energetic military actions indicated, unlike his father, Bayezid's plan was to render Constantinople into total submission. First, he tried to depose John V by supporting the emperor's usurper grandson, John VII, in 1390, and by opposing the rise of Manuel II to power in 1391. His plans of conquest were revealed in 1393 when Bayezid summoned at a meeting in Serres all the important local Christian chieftains: the newly installed emperor Manuel II, his brother, Theodore, Despot of Morea, John VII, the inheritor of his father's appanage in Selymbria, Constantine Dragaš, the Serbian prince and father of Manuel's wife, and Stefan Lazarević of Serbia.¹⁴⁸ According to various sources, Bayezid intended to assassinate all the Christian vassals at this meeting, but Manuel and his brother, Theodore, managed to return safely to their residences.¹⁴⁹ After the Serres episode, in 1394 Bayezid again summoned the Byzantine emperor to a meeting, yet, this time, Manuel refused to comply and, moreover, denied to pay further tribute. Subsequently, in an attempt to curb his vassal's disobedience, during the same year Bayezid imposed a blockade against Constantinople which was to last almost eight years.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ In the *Oratio de non reddenda Callipoli*, Demetrios Kydones showed awareness of the chief motives for the accelerated decline of the state. He evaluated the loss of Gallipoli, the first Ottoman possession on European soil in the following terms: *κᾶν τις τῆς παρούσης αἰσχύνης, καὶ τοῦ περὶ τῶν οὕτως ἀδόξων καὶ ταπεινῶν τῆν πόλιν βουλευέσθαι, αἰτίαν τὴν Καλλίπολιν καὶ τὴν ἐκείνης ἀπώλειαν εἶναι φῆ, οὐδένα ἂν ἔχοι τὸν ἀντιλέγοντα*, PG 155, 1000.

¹⁴⁷ 1373 and 1376-1379.

¹⁴⁸ Laonikos Chalkokondyles, *Historical Expositions*, vol.1, ed. E. Darkó, Budapest: Academia Litterarum Hungarica, 1923, 76-77.

¹⁴⁹ Manuel II, *Funeral oration*, 101.15-30.

¹⁵⁰ According to some sources, Manuel had defied Bayezid not just by secretly fleeing from his camp, but also by establishing himself as emperor on his own initiative without consulting the Sultan. Bayezid's reply to Manuel's defiance from the very beginning of his reign was to demand the installation of a *kadi*-a judge in an Ottoman quarter of Constantinople. His reply was recorded by the historian Doukas, *Historia*, XIII.5, p.77.

Bayezid aimed to create an empire that would extend on both sides of the Bosphorus; for this reason, the capturing of the City was meant to play a significant role in his plans for expansion. Although the Ottoman victory at Nicopolis in 1396 allowed the sultan to increase the pressure on Constantinople, the siege ended in an unexpected way for the Byzantines. In 1402 Bayezid's army confronted Tamerlane's Mongols in a battle close to Ankara.¹⁵¹ The defeat of the Ottomans combined with Bayezid's captivity and death had major repercussions on the course of events in the region. Not only that the Ottoman armies withdrew from Constantinople, but, with the disappearance of Bayezid, the Ottoman Sultanate plunged in a state of political chaos caused by the civil wars which opposed the Sultan's four sons: Süleyman, Isa Beg, Mehmed Çelebi, and later also Musa. They were fighting against each other over the provinces that still remained in Ottoman hands.

The Byzantines sought to draw the maximum benefit from these conflicts which lasted for almost a decade.¹⁵² In early 1403, John VII, still in charge of the defense of the City signed a peace treaty with Süleyman, following the negotiations conducted by the representatives of Venice, Genoa, Rhodes, and Stefan Lazarević, who acted in common as a sort of Christian league. The result of these negotiations was the so called *Treaty of Gallipoli*¹⁵³ which comprised numerous stipulations in favor of the Byzantines: Süleyman, who had previously secured Adrianople as his capital, relieved the *basileus* of the tribute, returned Thessalonike into Byzantine hands along with other territories on the Black Sea coast, north of Constantinople and several other Aegean islands. According to the treaty, Süleyman was obliged to ask for the emperor's permission when crossing the Hellespont or Bosphorus. Most importantly for Byzantium's ideological stance, he swore to serve the emperor not only as vassal but also as a *son would serve his father*.¹⁵⁴

The agreement between this Christian league and the Ottomans marked a turning point in the relations between the Byzantines and the Ottomans and constituted the first significant victory of the European forces who had been previously intimidated by the Turkish advance.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ The battle and its consequences have been thoroughly analyzed by M. Alexandrescu-Dersca, *La campagne de Timur en Anatolie (1402)*, Iasi: Institutul de Turcologie, 1942 (Reprinted in *Variorum Reprints*, 1977).

¹⁵² D. Kastritsis, *The Sons of Bayezid. Empire Building and Representation in the Ottoman Civil War of 1402-1413*, Leiden: Brill, 2007.

¹⁵³ The treaty was preserved in a Venetian translation of the Turkish version of the text. An English translation of the treaty is in G.T. Dennis, "The Byzantine-Turkish treaty of Gallipoli of 1403," *OCP* 33 (1967): 72-88 and D. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice: a study in diplomatic and cultural relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, 345; K.-M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1984, vol. 1, 377-379.

¹⁵⁴ The treaty was signed by John VII and Manuel II who returned later that year in Constantinople and approved it by issuing a chrysobull of confirmation.

¹⁵⁵ K.-P. Matschke, "Der Gallipoli-Vertrag von 1403. Die Entwicklung des türkisch-byzantinischen

Two factors mattered in Süleyman's signing of such an agreement with the Christians: first, the bellicose intentions of his brothers, each of whom had already occupied a section of the territory in the Ottoman state; and second, the ambiguity of Süleyman's position after his father's capture.¹⁵⁶

The treaty also constituted an attempt for the Byzantines to expand diplomatically and to secure politically the vital interests of the Byzantine Empire, for, in fact, Byzantium regained control of the sea passage between Anatolia and Rumeli.¹⁵⁷ This meant that, at least in the beginning of his reign, the Emir Süleyman was dependent on Byzantium and other Christian powers for his movement across the straits. Süleyman's subservient position is reflected by the fact that in the surviving text of the treaty he calls the emperor *his father*, a title with a heavy political significance in Byzantine political protocol.¹⁵⁸ For this reason, the Treaty of Gallipoli had wide ideological implications in the immediate period after signing. Although originally written in Turkish it expressed the Byzantines' desire to reestablish their influence in the eastern Mediterranean. This intention to restore the old world-order emerges in the use of a formula which expresses a Father-Son relation thereby underlying the Byzantine representation of the emperor as the *head of a gathering of regional rulers*.¹⁵⁹ As has been pointed out, the Emir Süleyman's concessions to the Byzantines and other Christian powers were necessary for the survival of the Ottomans in the region after the Ankara disaster.¹⁶⁰

On the other hand, sensing their enemy's weakness, the Byzantines became increasingly involved in the dynastic struggles between the sons of Bayezid. Thus, after 1403, for more than twenty years, the histories of the Byzantines and of the Ottomans became increasingly entangled. Whatever success Manuel was able to derive from this time of troubles, it was to come solely from his own diplomatic skills in handling the Turks' civil conflicts and not from any western help.

It was for these reasons that, in 1413 when Mehmed I emerged as the new sultan,¹⁶¹

Kräfteverhältnisses nach Ankara," in *Die Schlacht bei Ankara*, 40-102. Cf. further on the treaty of Gallipoli, Barker, *Manuel II*, 240.

¹⁵⁶ D. Kastritsis, *The Sons of Bayezid*, 78.

¹⁵⁷ The major port city of Gallipoli remained in Byzantine hands and Süleyman was allowed to keep eight galleys with which he could ferry his armies across the straits. Süleyman promised to use his ships outside the Dardanelles only with the permission of the emperor and the Christian league. Cf. D. Kastritsis, *The Sons of Bayezid*, 55.

¹⁵⁸ K.-P. Matschke, *Die Schlacht bei Ankara*, 51-56

¹⁵⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, and G.T. Dennis, "The Treaty of Gallipoli," 86.

¹⁶⁰ D. Kastritsis, *The Sons of Bayezid*, 55 and E. Zachariadou, "Süleyman Celebi in Rumili and the Ottoman chronicles," *Der Islam* 60 (1983): 268-96.

¹⁶¹ K. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204-1571)*, vol.1, 376 and Barker, *Manuel II*, 319.

Manuel sought to remain, and eventually succeeded doing so on good terms with the new Ottoman leader. Previously, Manuel had supported Mehmed in his conflict with his brother Musa, which in 1411 resulted in the sieges of Constantinople and Thessalonike.¹⁶² Mehmed I himself had sympathy for the Christians¹⁶³ and continued to recognize the stipulations of the previous treaty of Gallipoli, although probably both were aware of the differences of forces between the two states.¹⁶⁴ This image of a close relationship between Manuel and Mehmed after the latter's accession to the Ottomans' rule emerges from several sources. In a letter from 1415, the emperor mentions the high esteem in which the sultan held the Byzantine emperor:

Emperor worthy of the highest honor, natural source and foundation of imperial rule, dispenser and growth of all earthly powers and offices, sublime emperor of all the Romans and to me most translucent, purest, exceedingly sweet, and much beloved father of my lordship, receive, your imperial majesty from my imperial majesty, the appropriate greetings of your son, the great lord and emir Sultan, Mehmet. Τῆς ἀνωωτάτης τιμῆς ἠξιωμένε, φυσικὴ πηγὴ καὶ ρίζα τῆς βασιλείας, δοτὴρ τε καὶ αὐξήσις τῶν ἐπιγείων ἀπάντων ἀρχῶν καὶ ἀξιωμάτων καὶ ὑψηλότατε βασιλεῦ τῶν Ῥωμαίων πάντων κάμοι λίαν διαυγέστατον, ἀκριβέστατον, ὑπερήδιστον καὶ περιπόθητον πατέρα τῆς αὐθεντίας μου, τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς βασιλείας σου τοῦ μεγάλου αὐθεντοῦ καὶ ἀμοιρὰ σουλτὰν τοῦ Μεχμέτ ἀξιόπρεπον χαιρετισμὸν δεξάσθω ἢ βασιλεία σου παρὰ τῆς βασιλείας μου.¹⁶⁵

In 1415, the sultan even went to meet the emperor in Gallipoli on his return voyage from Morea. Manuel continued to fuel this connection with the Turks since he believed that any cessation of open hostilities with them was to the Byzantines' advantage.

Nonetheless, Manuel's dealings with the Ottomans met the opposition of other Byzantines. The historian Laonikos Chalkokondyles stated that Manuel and his son and co-emperor, John VIII, disagreed over the support the Byzantines should offer to one of the contenders for Ottoman rule after the death of Mehmed I, Murad or Mustafa.¹⁶⁶ John believed that by supporting one of the parties involved in the dynastic fights, the power of the Ottoman state would be significantly weakened.¹⁶⁷ Manuel, on the contrary, according to Laonikos

¹⁶² D. Kastritsis, *The Sons of Bayezid*, 106.

¹⁶³ Doukas praised the friendship between Manuel and Mehmed.

¹⁶⁴ Barker, *Manuel II*, 330.

¹⁶⁵ S. Lampros, *NE*, 10, 1913, 11, K.-P. Matschke, *Die Schlacht bei Ankara*, 54.

¹⁶⁶ On the divergences between John VIII and Manuel II with regard to the Ottoman prince to be supported after the death of Murad II Laonikos Chalkokondyles (*Historical Expositions*, II.2.15-2.3.2) wrote: ταῦτα μὲν διεκηρυκεύετο πρὸς τὸν τότε βασιλέα Ἑλλήνων Ἰωάννην, νέον τε ἔτι ὄντα καὶ οὐδὲν μικρὸν ἐπινοοῦντα αὐτῷ ἐς τὴν ἀρχὴν· ἐδόκει τε γὰρ αὐτῷ ἄμεινον ἔχειν ἐς σφᾶς αὐτοὺς περιπίπτοντας, καὶ δίχα γενομένης αὐτῷ τῆς ἀρχῆς τὰ πράγματα αὐτοῦ ἐν βελτίῳ τε ἔσοιτο τοῦ καθεστηκότος, καὶ ἐπὶ μείζον ἀφίζοιτο εὐδαιμονίας, δεομένων ἀμφοῖν, καὶ τῆς γε ἀρχῆς ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρα γινομένης πλέον τι περιγενέσθαι ἀπ' ἀμφοῖν, ὥστε μηδετέρῳ δὴ ταλαντεύεσθαι. τοῦτο δ' εἶναι, ἐπειδὴ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἄμφω ἐπιδιελομένοι σφίσι βασιλεύουσιν.

¹⁶⁷ I. Djuric, *Le crépuscule de Byzance*, Paris: Maisonneuve, 1996, 198.

Chalkokondyles, considered that the Byzantines should respect the treaties with the Ottomans as they had been previously signed:

His father, the emperor who was thinking the opposite from him, thought that it was better not to break the treatise, since nothing lasting and sound can occur to someone who breaks a treaty, and fearing that he would be destroyed by the one who had been previously forced to fall. Βασιλεύων δὲ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ, τάναντία τούτου φρονῶν, ἠξίου μὴ παραβαίνειν τὰς σπονδὰς, ὡς οὐδενὶ ὅτῳ παραβαίνοντι τὰς σπονδὰς ἔσοιτ' ἂν ὑγιᾶς ὅτιοῦν ἢ ἔμπεδον, ὥστε μὴ σφαλλομένῳ ἐπιτρέβασθαι.¹⁶⁸

Likewise, Sphrantzes recounts that in 1420, Manuel opposed strongly the faction which promoted the idea of a war with the Ottomans:

The emir Kyritzēs Mehmet came to ask permission to pass from Constantinople into Anatolia. And some people learned beforehand as if in secret from the emir's men that the emir would go forward in order to restore Anatolia to order, and upon his return had the intention to attack the City. Therefore, all the holy emperor's men, ecclesiastics and archontes, believing in this mystery, urged and exhorted the holy emperor to capture the emir. Yet, the emperor was by no means persuaded and said: "I would not break the oath which I made to that one even if I was certain that he would take us prisoners." Καὶ ἦλθεν ὁ ἀμηνῶν ὁ καὶ Κυρίτζης καὶ Μεχεμέτης, ἵνα ἀπὸ τῆς Πόλεως περάσῃ εἰς τὴν Ἀνατολήν· καὶ προμαθόντες ὡς ἐν μυστηρίῳ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐκείνου, ὅτι ὑπάγει, ἵνα τὰ τῆς Ἀνατολῆς διορθώσῃ, καί, ὡσάν ἐπιστρέψῃ, ἔχει σκοπὸν καὶ μελέτην ἐλθεῖν κατὰ τῆς Πόλεως, πάντες οἱ τοῦ βασιλέως τοῦ ἀγίου ἐμπιστευθέντες τὸ μυστήριον, ἄρχοντες καὶ τῶν ἱερωμένων παρῶτρυνον καὶ ἐβουλεύοντο τῷ ἀγίῳ βασιλεῖ, ἵνα πιάσῃ αὐτόν. Ἐκεῖνος δὲ οὐ κατεπίσθη ποτέ, λέγων. "Οὐκ ἀθετῶ τὸν ὄρκον, ὃν πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἐποίησάμην, ἂν ἐβεβαιούμην καὶ ἔτι, ὅτι, καὶ ἂν ἔλθῃ, μέλλει αἰχμαλωτεύσειν ἡμᾶς."¹⁶⁹

Previously, Manuel refused to enter an alliance against Mehmed who had handed the fortresses along the Black Sea coast and in Thessaly to the Byzantine emperor.¹⁷⁰ In 1416 Mehmed was nevertheless attacked by the Venetians who had an agreement with Manuel's son, John VIII, while the latter remained in Constantinople as sole ruler during his father's travel to Thessalonike. The Venetians formed an alliance with Mustafa, another alleged son of Bayezid, who stirred the local populations in a sort of social movement that would unite both the Ottomans and Christians. But, in his attempt to overthrow Mehmed, Mustafa was defeated by Mehmed's forces and eventually took refuge near Thessalonike. Although Mehmed demanded their surrender, Manuel II extended his protection over him and assured Mehmed

¹⁶⁸ Laonikos Chalkokondyles, *Historical Expositions*, 2.3.5.

¹⁶⁹ Sphrantzes, *Memoirs*, 7.1.

¹⁷⁰ Doukas, *Historia*, 22.

that he would stay there under guard. When in 1421 Mehmed died, his son Murad II, who became sultan, refused to come to an agreement with Manuel. Previously, the Byzantine emperor attempted to convince the new ruler to obey Mehmed's will which stipulated that his two younger sons be given to Manuel II as their guardian. As a result, Manuel installed Mustafa as ruler of Thrace.¹⁷¹ A new civil conflict erupted between the successors to Ottoman rule which opposed Murad II and Mustafa. This time, Manuel did not oppose his son, John, who supported Mustafa. Consequently, Murad initiated in 1422 a siege of Constantinople which ended nevertheless after only a month. Following Murad's attacks, before Manuel's death, John VIII negotiated a treaty with Murad surrendering the Byzantine lands along the Black Sea coast and pledging an annual tribute.

Despite this wealth of evidence regarding Manuel's approach to the Ottoman issue, it has often been argued that Manuel's intentions regarding the Ottomans and Mehmed constituted a mere façade behind which the Byzantine emperor sought to win time in his quest for western aid.¹⁷² While this view cannot be entirely discarded, arguably, Manuel's actions can be interpreted in a more nuanced way as elements of a strategy which took into consideration the situation on the ground and aimed at adjusting the Byzantine ideology to the given conditions. Thus, Manuel's approach to the Ottomans developed in two distinct periods: the period immediately following the treaty of Gallipoli (1403-1413) and the period after Mehmed I's accession to power (1413-1422). In the first period, Manuel pursued a more aggressive policy, claiming the preeminence over the Ottomans, a policy reflected also in some of his texts (*The first oration, Funeral oration, The Kanōn paraklētikos*). In the second period this tendency faded away, as the Ottoman Sultanate gained more stability and Mehmed I showed goodwill towards the Byzantines. This may well constitute a reason why Manuel ceased to elaborate public attacks against the Ottomans. In this second period, the Byzantine emperor was mostly preoccupied to ameliorate his relations with the Ottomans. Therefore, it is equally plausible that his parallel quest for help in the West was intended to serve as a means to win time in the negotiations with the Ottomans by showing them that Byzantium still had important allies. Manuel likely understood the limitations to his capacity to acquire western help and returned to the strategy of mutual accommodation with the Ottomans, a strategy used by his father in the last two decades of his reign.

From this point of view, his efforts to engage in negotiations with the papacy and the

¹⁷¹ Doukas, *Historia*, 51.20.

¹⁷² Doukas, *Historia*, 54.

western states might have been prompted by the aggressiveness of the party represented by John VIII. In addition strong support for a Church union came from his connections with the Venetians and the Byzantine businessmen. Yet, as J. Barker has pointed out, Manuel's involvement, in the last years of his life, in negotiations for Church union were little more than “calculated dabbling, diplomatic fencings, as opposed to the earnest and determined efforts on the part of John, then and thereafter.”¹⁷³ Furthermore, in his *Memoirs* George Sphrantzes claims that Manuel gave the following advice to his son John VIII: “by all means use the union of the churches as a ploy to discourage the Turks, but on no account ever allow its implementation, because of the divisions that would follow within Byzantium.”¹⁷⁴

It was indeed difficult to obtain western help, particularly because of the conflicts plaguing that part of Europe. If right after his return from the West, Manuel showed himself enthusiastic with regard to the possibility of acquiring financial support,¹⁷⁵ after his return from exile Manuel showed himself rather cautious. He continued negotiations with papacy, Venetians, and King Sigismund of Hungary (r. 1387-1438) probably at the bequest of other Byzantines, among whom there was his son John VIII.¹⁷⁶ Probably, his experience must have told him not to expect a decisive support from the West, especially considering the conflicts between the westerners as well as the previously failed crusades of Sigismund. He therefore took care of the election of moderate clerics as patriarchs in Constantinople and accepted the ascendancy of radical clerics like Joseph Bryennios in the Church. The latter's opposition to union suited the emperor rather well because his main concern was to extract concrete benefits from any engagement with the west. In addition, the Great Schism in western Europe (1378-1417) slightly modified the Catholic Church's priorities vis-à-vis the union with the Byzantines. In 1415, at the Council of Constance, the participants avoided the issue of the Church union despite the presence of a Byzantine delegation. Only with the accession of Pope Martin V (1417-1431) the Papacy became more inclined to offer concessions to the Byzantines and the negotiations were sped up. As John and Manuel needed the pope to preach a crusade against the Ottomans, the diplomatic efforts of the two sides intensified.¹⁷⁷ Still, during

¹⁷³ Barker, *Manuel II*, 220.

¹⁷⁴ Sphrantzes, *Memoirs*, 45.20-24.

¹⁷⁵ See Manuel, *Letters*, 38 and 39.

¹⁷⁶ D.I. Mureşan, “Une histoire de trois empereurs. Aspects des relations de Sigismund de Luxembourg avec Manuel II et Jean VIII Paléologue,” in E. Mitsiou et alii, eds, *Sigismund of Luxemburg and the Orthodox World*, Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010, 41-101.

¹⁷⁷ In 1422, Antonio de Massa arrived in Constantinople and met Patriarch Joseph II to whom he presented his conditions and proposed a council in Constantinople together with the Pope's delegates and the patriarchs of the East. Furthermore, in an attempt to gain western help Manuel sought to reconnect Venice with King Sigismund.

Manuel's reign there were no decisive steps towards a definitive alliance with the Latins against the Ottomans.

The very late fulfillment of the negotiations with the Latins over a Church union in the reign of John VIII (1438), was therefore caused primarily by Manuel's understanding that the Ottomans had to be approached as allies rather than as enemies. This understanding emerged particularly after 1413, when the Ottoman Sultanate was once more largely stabilized. If between 1403 and 1413, the Byzantine emperor could claim the title of *father* of the Ottoman Sultan, after 1413 he had to show much caution in the negotiations with Byzantium's powerful neighbor. However, this moderate imperial position continued to be heavily contested by the group of the western oriented Byzantines.

1.2.3. Dynastic strife and the years of dual rule in Byzantium (1399-1408)

The definition of the imperial role in late fourteenth century was considerably influenced by the actions of John VII Palaiologos (1370-1408), son of Andronikos IV Palaiologos.¹⁷⁸ In 1385 when Andronikos died, John inherited both his father's legal right to succeed the old emperor John V as well as a territorial appanage around Selymbria. The right to hold the title of *basileus* was stipulated by the treaty signed after the rebellion of 1376-1379 and confirmed by a synodal decision signed by Patriarch Neilos Kerameus.¹⁷⁹ This document confirmed the institution of co-rulership which, during the Palaiologan period acquired an increased importance, as indicated by the restoration of the co-emperors' coronations.¹⁸⁰ From this position of junior emperor he received the Ottomans' support (especially after Bayezid's rise into power in 1389)

¹⁷⁸ There are several studies on John VII's personality: F. Dölger, "Johannes VII, Kaiser der Rhomäer 1390-1408," *BZ* 31 (1937): 21-36. S. Mešanović, *Jovan VII Paleolog*, Belgrade: Vizantološki institut, 1996. G. Dennis, "John VII in Genoa: a problem in late Byzantine source confusion," *OCP* (1967): 213-238. P. Wirth, "Zum Geschichtsbild Kaiser Johannes VII. Palaiologos," *B* 35 (1965): 592-600. See also Th. Ganchou, "Autour de Jean VII: luttes dynastiques, interventions étrangères et résistance orthodoxe à Byzance (1373-1409)," in *Coloniser au Moyen Age*, ed. M. Balard and A. Ducellier (Paris, 1995), 367-385. S.W. Reinert, "The Palaiologoi, Yildirim Bayezid and Constantinople: June 1389-March 1391" in *ΤΟ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΝ. Studies in Honour of Robert Browning*, ed. C.N. Constantinides, N.M. Panagiotakes, E. Jeffreys, and A. Angelou, Venice, 1996, 377-389. G.T. Dennis, "John VII Palaiologos: 'A Holy and Just Man'," in *Βυζάντιο. Κράτος και Κοινωνία. Μνήμη Νίκου Οικονομίδη*, ed. Anna Avramea, Evangelos Chrysos and Angeliki Laiou, Athens 2003. G.T. Dennis, *The Reign of Manuel II in Thessalonica*, 156, idem, "Two Unknown Documents of Manuel II Palaeologus," *TM* 3 (1968): Paris, 397-404. J. Barker, *Manuel II*, passim.

¹⁷⁹ The synodal letter of Patriarch Neilos Kerameus dated to May 1381 (*MM* II, 344, 26): τὰς τοιαύτας πράξεις καὶ συμφωνίας καὶ καταστάσεις τὰς γενομένας ἐγγράφως τε καὶ ἐνόρκως μεταξύ τοῦ κρατίστου καὶ ἁγίου ἡμῶν αυτοκράτορος καὶ βασιλέως, κῦρ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Παλαιολόγου, καὶ τοῦ ἐρασιμιωτάτου υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, τοῦ κρατίστου καὶ ἁγίου βασιλέως ἡμῶν, κῦρ Ἀνδρονίκου τοῦ Παλαιολόγου, καὶ κατὰ τὴν αὐτῶν περίληψιν μὴ μόνον εἰρηνεύειν αὐτοὺς διὰ βίου παντός, ἀλλὰ καὶ μετὰ τὸ τὴν οὐράνιον βασιλείαν ἀλλάξασθαι τῆς ἐπιγείου καὶ πρὸς θεὸν ἐκδημῆσαι τὸν κράτιστον καὶ ἅγιον ἡμῶν βασιλέα, κῦρ Ἀνδρόνικον τὸν Παλαιολόγον, καὶ τὸν ἐρασιμιωτάτον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ, τὸν κράτιστον ἡμῶν βασιλέα, κῦρ Ἰωάννην τὸν Παλαιολόγον, καὶ μηδένα ἐξ αὐτῶν χωρῆσαι πρὸς ἀνατροπὴν ἢ κατάλυσιν τῆς εἰρήνης.

¹⁸⁰ Kantakouzenos, *Histories*, 1:196.8-204.3; cf. Pseudo-Kodinos, *Treatise on offices*, 252-272.

and of the Genoese who previously had established close relations with Andronikos. Naturally, John VII's main enemy in his attempt to assume full imperial power was Manuel, who, despite his rebellious actions in Thessalonike (1382-1387), remained John V's favorite for succession. In 1390, while Manuel was campaigning in Asia Minor, John VII seized the opportunity to overthrow his grandfather, John V, and to proclaim himself sole emperor.¹⁸¹ In June he signed a commercial treaty with Venice.¹⁸² This treaty, the *prostagmata* he issued during this period as well as his coins suggest that he saw himself as an established ruler with plans to remain in power for a long time.¹⁸³ Yet, in the same year 1390 his rule in Constantinople came to an end, because Manuel asked for the Hospitallers' support and restored John V's rule. A year later, when the old emperor John died, Manuel was quick enough to arrive in the capital and take his father's throne before his nephew could act into this direction.

Even after Manuel gained the full control of Constantinople, John VII continued to exert his authority over his inherited appanage of Selymbria and to reclaim his right to become legitimate emperor of Byzantium.¹⁸⁴ In the early 1390s he even sent emissaries to sell his right to rule in Constantinople to the French king Charles VI.¹⁸⁵ As legitimate successor, he received the support of Bayezid who regarded John as a more obedient ruler of Byzantium than the at that time anti-Ottoman Manuel.¹⁸⁶ By supporting John's claims to the Byzantine throne, Bayezid wished to create a vassal state, in a move resembling his father's, Murad, strategy to

¹⁸¹ The major source for the struggles between John V and John VII is Ignatios, the Russian traveler: G. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks studies, 1984, 49. The episode unveiled a strong current of opinion in favor of John VII and more importantly, in favor of a direct Ottoman intervention. Ignatios of Smolensk (100-3) states that, upon John VII's entrance in the city, a large group of inhabitants opened the Charisios Gate. Doukas narrates the episode in similar terms, pointing to the members of the δῆμος who were more inclined to surrender the City: Οἱ δὲ τῆς πόλεως τὸ παράπαν ἀπόκρισιν μὴ δόντες, ὡς ἔτυχεν, ἀλλὰ καταφρονοῦντες, ὕβρεις καὶ ἀτίμους λόγους οἱ τοῦ δήμου χυδαῖοι ἐκ τῶν προμαχώνων κατέχεον αὐτόν τε λοιδοροῦντες καὶ τὴν αὐτοῦ σύζυγον· (*Historia*, 9.4.2-4)

¹⁸² The Greek version of the treaty is in *MM* 3, xxxiii, 136-143. For a Latin version see *Diplomatarium veneto-levantinum*, 2, Venice, 1899, no. 135, 229.

¹⁸³ *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, Dumbarton Oaks catalogues, Washington, D.C: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992, vol. 5, part 2, plates 71-72. F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565-1453*, vol. 5, 3192-3223, 72-79. The formula of address in the treaty between John VII and Venice includes the titles of βασιλεύς, αὐτοκράτωρ and αὔγουστος, *MM* 3, xxxiii, 136 and 143.

¹⁸⁴ During the period between John V's death and the above mentioned arrangement of 1399, John VII persisted in his dynastic ambitions and directed his attacks against Manuel II. In 1391 Kydones, when describing the conflict between John VII and Manuel II, drew attention to how John VII strengthened the position of the Ottomans with respect to Byzantium: "for this they are forced to serve the barbarian; therefore the emperors by necessity become his slaves before the citizens and live according to his injunctions (letter 442, p.407)." Cf. N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 140.

¹⁸⁵ J. Barker, *Manuel II*, 254.

¹⁸⁶ Although Bayezid offered more support to John against Manuel, it is not entirely clear how their relation evolved after 1394, the first year of the Ottoman siege. According to Symeon of Thessalonike, John's possessions in Selymbria were attacked by the Ottomans. See D. Balfour, *The Politico-historical works of Symeon of Thessalonike*, Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979, 201-220.

drive John V into a state of vassalage.¹⁸⁷ In his turn, Manuel presented Bayezid's support for John as the main reason for fighting his nephew's claims as illegitimate. In some of his early texts, the emperor claimed that John VII's ultimate intention was to surrender Constantinople to the enemy.¹⁸⁸

Despite Manuel's public rejection of such claims to the Byzantine throne, as Andronikos' inheritor, John enjoyed a wide support both in Byzantium and among several of its allies. Apart from Bayezid whose vassal he was,¹⁸⁹ John had many commercial connections with the Genoese. Some of his associates, like George Goudeles, a former experienced *mesazōn* of John V, and Nicholas Notaras represented his interests in the relationship with the Genoese of Pera.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, John VII relied on a wide network of individuals from aristocratic families who were connected by economic relations or marriage.¹⁹¹ These advantageous commercial connections with prosperous individuals which contrasted with Manuel's poverty, provided him with a constant reservoir of resources that would allow him to fight against his uncle.

The tensions between the two rulers in Byzantium did not disappear but were further enhanced by John's main supporter, Bayezid, who threatened to conquer Constantinople. Yet, in 1399, John VII and Manuel arrived at a political agreement intended to put an end to this long dynastic feud and to increase Byzantium's capacity for defense.¹⁹² This agreement was promoted by Marshal Boucicaut, the person in charge of the military defense of the City, who was in good relations with both leaders. The agreement allowed Manuel to leave in a three year-long quest for aid to the West while John remained in Constantinople to govern the city.¹⁹³ According to the agreement, John was adopted by Manuel, while Manuel's sons and daughters were adopted by John.¹⁹⁴ Moreover, Manuel acknowledged John VII's as first co-emperor, and

¹⁸⁷ O. Halecki, *Un Empereur de Byzance à Rome*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1972, 43.

¹⁸⁸ Especially in his *Dialog with the empress mother on marriage*, ed. A. Angelou, Vienna: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991, and the *Letters*. See ch. 3.

¹⁸⁹ As a vassal, John VII was forced to participate in the Ottomans' military campaigns in Asia Minor.

¹⁹⁰ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 160.

¹⁹¹ George Goudeles, *mesazōn* and *oikeios* of John VII married his sister Anna Asanina to a Palaiologos. Cf. *MM*, II, no.557.

¹⁹² Symeon of Thessalonike mentions that John VII's change of attitude toward his uncle was due to the fact that Bayezid himself attacked Selymbria. According to Symeon (Symeon- Balfour, 45.22-23), Manuel offered military support to John.

¹⁹³ Marshal Boucicaut was both the officer in charge with the defense of the City and had good relations with Francesco Gattilusio, John's father in law.

¹⁹⁴ *MM*, II, 359-360: records the adoption in 1399 of John VII by Manuel II: ἠνώθησαν ὡσερ πατήρ καὶ υἱός. The adoption is mentioned by other documents as well from the beginning of the fifteenth century: N. Oikonomides, *Actes de Dionysiou*, Paris: Lethielleux, 1968, 90.

John VIII, Manuel's first born son, became second co-emperor. Due to the lack of evidence, it is not entirely clear under what circumstances John VII undertook and exercised power in Constantinople during Manuel's absence between 1399 and 1403.¹⁹⁵ It seems however that the agreement was only partially observed. Manuel showed mistrust with regard to John's intentions and sent his family to the Peloponnese under his brother's, Theodore, protection. In his turn, John VII maintained the connections with Bayezid and even participated as vassal in a military campaign in the Peloponnese. In addition, in 1402, John initiated negotiations with Bayezid for the surrender of Constantinople. Some sources even go as far as to argue that Manuel left Constantinople in 1399 in order to appease Bayezid's anger against the Byzantines.¹⁹⁶

The tensions between the two rulers, became visible once more in 1403 when, after Manuel's return from the West, a new dynastic conflict broke out. This time, since John could not rely anymore on Turkish support, Manuel tried to completely exclude him from the co-ruling hierarchy. The pretext for stripping John of his title of *basileus* was the rumor that during his absence he had negotiated the surrender of Constantinople to Bayezid. At the same time, the emperor's nephew was deprived of the promised appanages of Selymbria and Thessalonike. Owing to his uncle's hostility, John VII took refuge with his father-in-law, Francesco Gattilusio, on the island of Lesbos.¹⁹⁷ There, he approached Marshal Boucicaut who had previously mediated the dynastic agreement of 1399. With the military support of Gattilusio and Boucicaut, he proceeded to Constantinople in order to seize it by force. John VII's bellicose intentions called for an immediate dynastic agreement. Thus, in late 1403, a settlement was reached, almost identical to the one in 1399: John VII, as Manuel's adopted son, remained the first co-emperor, and John VIII the second co-emperor. In addition, John VII was given Thessalonike as an appanage, as part of the agreement of 1399.¹⁹⁸

John probably arrived there in late 1403, when his first official document was signed.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ For John VII's activities in Constantinople during the years 1399 and 1403, we have only several treaties with the Venetians and the Genoese, and the decision concerning the deposition of Patriarch Matthew (Dölger, *Regesten*, vol 5, 3192-3211).

¹⁹⁶ Symeon of Thessalonike (Symeon-Balfour, 45.35): καὶ ὁ μὲν προβεβηκῶς βασιλεύς, οἷα καὶ πείραν τῶν βασιλικῶν ἔργων μείζονα κεκτημένος καὶ τὴν μανιώδη καὶ βαρβαρικὴν ὥστε καταμαλάξει γνώμην, τῆς βασιλίδος ὑπεξέρχεται πόλεως καὶ τῶν τερμάτων ἄχρι τῆς γῆς.

¹⁹⁷ John married a daughter of Francesco II Gattilusi, lord of Lesbos, Irene.

¹⁹⁸ Symeon of Thessalonike (Symeon-Balfour, 48.4) gives a short account of this moment which supposed the existence of a treaty between them: καὶ ἦν ἐν εἰρήνῃ τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς καὶ τῶν μὲν βασιλέων ὁ πρῶτος τῷ τε χρόνῳ καὶ ταῖς ἀρεταῖς θεῖος Μανουὴλ τῆς βασιλίδος βασιλεύειν αὐθις ἄρχεται πόλεως, ὡς αἱ τε συνθήκαι αἱ πρὸς ἀλλήλους καὶ τὸ δίκαιον εἶχεν. Ὁ ἀδελφιδοῦς δ' ἐκείνου καὶ δεύτερος βασιλεὺς ἐκείνῳ καθάπαξ ταῖς ἀρεταῖς καὶ τῇ εὐσεβείᾳ ἐπόμενος, τὴν δευτέραν μετὰ τὴν πρώτην δικαίως ἀναδέχεται πόλιν.

¹⁹⁹ Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 1404.

Although he was accompanied by some of Manuel's loyal supporters like Demetrios Chrysoloras and Demetrios Laskaris Leontares, who were supposed to keep an eye on the *basileus'* nephew, from the very beginning John assumed complete autonomy from Constantinople.²⁰⁰ He created his own court and chancery which issued documents signed with his name and not by his uncle in Constantinople.²⁰¹ He also created his own treasury and struck coins with his portrait. Thus, during this period the Byzantine empire lived through a dual rule, as it was called in recent scholarship.²⁰² According to extant sources, mainly prostagmata and chrysobulls, during his rule which lasted until his death in 1408, John was mostly preoccupied with regulating monastic properties and with insuring the proper defense of the city.²⁰³

The public support for John VII continued even after his move to Thessalonike, as indicated by Symeon of Thessalonike who describes the popular manifestations in favor of John. Symeon notes that John VII was appreciated by the majority of Thessalonicans as an able ruler who “adorned the city with good regulations and institutions” and “fortified it on all sides with triremes and outer walls.”²⁰⁴ When John arrived in Thessalonike in 1403, the inhabitants of the city regarded John not only as their new leader, but also as a liberator: for, by participating in the negotiations for the Treaty of Gallipoli, he had actually given the city back to the Byzantines. In a eulogy from the *Synodikon* of the city of Thessalonike, a paragraph in praise of John VII's achievements was included:

For our emperor John Palaiologos fought almost on his knees fiercely and courageously in defense of the Romans at a time when foreign peoples were leaning towards us [...] and when an unspeakably most powerful billow which had been raised and was threatening to destroy everything, and released the emperor from slavery and secured our safety by all possible means. Ἰωάννου τοῦ βασιλέως ἡμῶν τοῦ Παλαιολόγου [...] στερρῶς δὲ καὶ γενναίως ὑπὲρ τῶν ῥωμαϊκῶν ἀγωνισαμένου πραγμάτων εἰς γόνυ σχεδὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀλλοφύλων κλινάντων, καὶ σφοδροτάτου μηδ' ὅσον εἰπεῖν τοῦ κλύδωνος ἀνεγερθέντος καὶ κατακλύσειν ἅπαντα

²⁰⁰ During his reign, John VII had given Leontares τὰ πρῶτα τῶν τιμῶν (Doukas, *Historia*, 175); but Symeon emphasized that he was “one of Manuel's elect” and his personal choice as mentor for his child (Symeon-Balfour, 48.18). Sources also mention some of John's courtiers: Gregory Laskaris Leontares, Tarchaneiotes Andronikos and Radoslav Sampija. The notary of the imperial chancery was Machetaris Alexios. Most probably, two courtiers of Latin origin, Philip Tzycandeles and Bryennios Leontares were not in the emperor's service when he arrived in Thessalonike. Bryennios Leontares was in charge of John's former appanage Selymbria, while sources reveal nothing of Tzycandeles' fate. Cf. S. Mešanović, *John VII Palaiologos*, 147.

²⁰¹ From the period of John VII's sojourn in Thessalonike, several surviving chrysobulls and prostagmata have survived in the Archives of Athonite monasteries, Dölger, *Regesten*, 3202-3224.

²⁰² S. Mešanović, *John VII*, 135-137.

²⁰³ Dölger, *Regesten*, 3213-3223.

²⁰⁴ Symeon of Thessalonike's attitude towards John was in general more favorable. He describes him as a θεῖος ἀνὴρ, δίκαιος ἀναφανείς, a man who made a great effort to prove himself worthy of the throne from which he had been ousted. Cf. Symeon-Balfour, 120-121.

ἀπειλοῦντος [...] καὶ τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν τῆς δουλείας χαρισαμένου, [...] πᾶσι τρόποις τὸ ἀσφαλὲς ἡμῖν περιποιησαμένου.²⁰⁵

John's authoritative and independent position in Thessalonike continued to generate tensions in his already strained relations with Manuel. The conflictual relation with the emperor in Constantinople is revealed by the representation of the two emperors on the ivory pyxis preserved in the Dumbarton Oaks Art Collection. The pyxis, dated and analyzed by N. Oikonomides,²⁰⁶ pictures both emperors, Manuel and John, together with their sons John VIII and Andronikos V respectively.²⁰⁷ John is receiving the model of the city of Thessalonike in the midst of a popular feast, probably in the moment of inauguration of his rule.²⁰⁸ Although we do not have much information about any concrete negotiations or conflicts between Manuel and John VII during the latter's rule in Thessalonike, the pyxis provides a glimpse in John's approach to the system of co-rule in Byzantium. Thus, while the pyxis representation dating from the beginning of John's rule, respects the political division of power, it emphasizes that the co-emperor and *autokrator* residing in Thessalonike had also a son. Andronikos V, born in 1400, was supposed to be regarded as a legitimate successor to imperial power: for this reason, he is represented slightly more prominent than John VIII.²⁰⁹ The pyxis therefore indicates John VII's pretensions to the Byzantine throne which up to a point were entirely legitimate. The fact that John VII considered his son as possible successor is also confirmed by the two monodies composed at the death of Andronikos V.²¹⁰

However, fortunately for Manuel the confrontation with his nephew's pretensions did not last for a long time. In 1407, young Andronikos V died and was followed by John VII a year later. The sudden disappearance of John's lineage was sensed by a large part of the

²⁰⁵ J. Gouillard, "Le synodicon de l'orthodoxie: Edition et commentaire," *TM* 2 (1967): 99.

²⁰⁶ N. Oikonomides, "John VII Palaiologos and the Ivory Pyxis at Dumbarton Oaks," *DOP* 31 (1977): 329-337. For a description of the pyxis accompanied by full bibliography and images see <http://museum.doaks.org/Obj27443?sid=5758&x=295118&port=2609> and Appendix 2.

²⁰⁷ John and his wife Irene had a son, Andronikos, born in 1400 as indicated by two documents edited by G.T. Dennis, "An Unknown Byzantine Emperor," 175-87. A monody on the death of the seven year old Emperor kyr Andronikos Palaiologos, son of kyr John, the nephew of the emperor kyr Manuel (*Ibid.*, 181). The second monody alludes to the fact that, at the time of Andronikos' death, John and Irene were alive.

²⁰⁸ N. Oikonomides, "The Ivory Pyxis," 336.

²⁰⁹ As it is attested by the *Monody on the death of Andronikos*, John VII wanted to have his own son, Andronikos V, as his successor. The pyxis made to commemorate John VII was conceived in a way that is complimentary to John but with full respect to the political rights of all reigning emperors. The lack of any inscription above John VIII seems to betray an intention on the part of John VII and of his partisans concerning the future succession to the throne- an intention that might have created additional problems in the future for the empire; but these problems did not materialize because of Andronikos' and John's deaths.

²¹⁰ G.T. Dennis, "An unknown Byzantine emperor, Andronikos V Palaeologus," *JÖBG* 16 (1967): 175-187.

Thessalonian population as a blow to their autonomy. According to Symeon, when in 1409 Manuel visited the city in order to install his son, Andronikos, as Despot of the city, he met not only with approving citizens but also with a numerous group of citizens opposed to the imposition of a ruler from Constantinople.²¹¹ Their resistance mirrored a tendency of some of the Thessalonian *archontes* to go their own way in the administration of a city state not wholly obedient to the empire. To have had for five years as ruler an independent emperor like John VII with a rebellious past, who was *basileus* just as Manuel was and the leader of an anti-Manuel faction in the capital, could only have stimulated their separatist intentions. Such men may well have felt their interests thwarted when the boy Andronikos was appointed. In some respects, the situation in Thessalonike resembled the state of affairs in Morea where a group of local *archontes* also opposed the imposition of a Despot from Constantinople.²¹²

This course of events indicates that, in spite of the efforts of reconciliation materialized in the agreements of 1399 and 1403, the relations between John VII and Manuel remained tense for a long period of time particularly in the first two decades of Manuel's reign. Gonzalez Clavijo who, in his travelogue, mentions the 1403 agreement stated clearly that, in his judgment, this dynastic agreement would not be respected by either of the two emperors. This attitude may have been characteristic of the general bitter atmosphere in Constantinople before and after 1403.²¹³

Noticeably, John VII never ceased to assert his rights as legitimate ruler. He bore the titles of *basileus* and *autokrator*, identical to Manuel's titles. Foreign sovereigns addressed him in the same way. In the treaty of Gallipoli from 1403, John is described as 'lo gran imperador Caloiani imperador di Griesi,' and further in the text 'imperador di Griesi.'²¹⁴ The strife over the legitimacy of succession intensified with the birth of John VII's son, Andronikos V, who, according to the previous agreements, was supposed to become Byzantine emperor in Constantinople. Further echoes of this dynastic conflict with his nephew can be detected in the short poem written by Makarios Makres and addressed to Manuel in 1416 upon his return from Thessalonike.²¹⁵ Half of this poem, in fact an *ekphrasis* of a portrait of the emperor with the representation of Thessalonike in the background, praised Manuel's youngest son, Andronikos,

²¹¹ Cf. Symeon-Balfour, 121 and 48. 17-20.

²¹² Both in the cases of Theodore I and Theodore II.

²¹³ "lo qual tengo que lo non gardarin el uno al otro." Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlan*, ed. F. Lopez Estrada (Madrid, 1943), 34-35.

²¹⁴ S. Mešanović, *John VII*, 146.

²¹⁵ "Verses on the portrait of Emperor Manuel" in S. Kapetanaki, *An annotated critical edition of Makarios Makres' texts*, PhD dissertation Royal Holloway, 2001, 254-255.

newly installed as Despot of Thessalonike. Despite the fact that the text was primarily addressed to the emperor, Makres emphasized Andronikos' virtues as ruler thus pointing to the legitimacy of his authority.²¹⁶

1.2.4. Morea

The Despotate of Morea²¹⁷ inherited the political problems incumbent to the dynastic conflict of mid fourteenth century. Early in 1348, John VI Kantakouzenos, having decided to put an end to the conflict in the region, gathered in a sole autonomous state the Byzantine possessions in the Peloponnese and appointed one of his sons, Manuel, as Despot of the region. The Despotate remained in Kantakouzenian hands even after the conclusion of the civil war in 1354 when John VI left the throne to the legitimate John V Palaiologos. The latter agreed to award the peninsula as appanage to the rich and politically influential family of Kantakouzenoi, in exchange for renouncing any claims to the Constantinopolitan throne. Under Manuel' s administration, successful diplomatic efforts led to a state of relative peace, significantly different from the previous times of continuous conflicts between local factions of Byzantines or Latin immigrants.

As Manuel II himself recounted in his *Funeral oration*, shortly after Manuel Kantakouzenos' death in 1380, his brother Theodore Palaiologos was appointed Despot. On this occasion, John V decided to reset the terms of the previous agreement with John VI. He did not award the Despotate to a member of the Kantakouzenian family, and instead appointed in this position his youngest son, Theodore, formerly Despot of Thessalonike, a position which he never undertook. However, until his arrival in the peninsula in 1382 and in the first years afterwards, the previous political stability came to an abrupt end. First, Matthew Kantakouzenos, Manuel' s brother loyal to the emperor in Constantinople, temporarily assumed power in the Despotate, but he was violently contested by one of his sons, John or Demetrios. As he gathered under his command many locals as well as Ottoman and Navarrese mercenaries, Matthew's son caused widespread havoc in the region. Theodore I represented the main target of these efforts. Even if Kantakouzenos' son died suddenly soon after

²¹⁶ Ibid., *Verses on the portrait of Emperor Manuel*, 18-23: ὁ γὰρ λέοντος τοῦδε γενναῖος σκύμνος,/ ρίζης ἀρίστης εὐκλεέστατος κλάδος,/ Παλαιολόγος Ἀνδρόνικος δεσπότης/ πρὸ τῆς Φιλίππου τὸν βασιλέα γράφει,/ σέβας πατρὶ νέμων τε καὶ πόλει κλέος,/ ἢ κόσμος οὐκ ἔλαττον αὐτὸς τυγχάνει/ ἢ πάντα λαμπρὰ ὅς ἔνεστιν ὀλβία, Ibid. 254.

²¹⁷ On the Despotate of Morea as a legal entity see T.P. Tzortzakes, *Η δικαιοσύνη των Παλαιολόγων στο Δεσποτάτο του Μυστρά (The Justice System of the Palaiologans in the Despotate of Mystras)*, Athens: Gregoris, 1980.

Theodore's arrival in the region, a deep feeling of discontent with the new Palaiologan ruler persisted in the mentality of the local Romans or immigrants.

This discontent took the form of a local strong allegiance to the Kantakouzenoi family against the ruling Palaiologoi, who were seen rather as intruders in the region. Apparently, in the fourteenth century there was a continuous struggle for political influence of the two families and the problem of succession in Morea constituted one of the episodes of this feud. By and large, these struggles had a strong economic motivation. On the one hand, the local *archontes* sought to elude the financial obligations incumbent to their status. On the other hand, due to the shortage of resources, the Byzantine elite based in Constantinople needed the taxes derived from the incomes of the Peloponnesians. The Palaiologoi inherited from the Kantakouzenoi a state which included today's Laconia and Arcadia while Achaia, Messenia, and Nauplion were held by Frankish or Venetian princes.²¹⁸ Eventually, following diplomatic and military efforts, the territories held by the Latins came under Byzantine rule during the first half of the fourteenth century until the Ottoman conquest of the peninsula in 1460.

The first obstacle in this process was coming to terms with the owners of large landed estates. Apart from the Kantakouzenoi, there were other influential families who shared the benefits drawn from the exploitation of the regional resources: the Melissenoi, the Sophianoï, the Raoul, the Phrankopouloi, or the Mamonades. The latter family who governed the important town of Monemvasia seems to have opposed Theodore's authority most fiercely. In 1384, in exchange for the services he received, Theodore handed over Monemvasia to the Venetians. N. Necipoğlu interpreted this move as an act by which Theodore intended to “curb the insubordination of his subjects.”²¹⁹ This interpretation is not far from reality since: in one of his letters (1391), Demetrios Kydones mentions that Theodore succeeded to assert his control over most of the territories which previously had been in possession of the landowning aristocracy.²²⁰

In opposing Theodore's assertions of political control, many Moreote landlords sought support from different sources. In 1391, in Serres, at the meeting between the Byzantine *archontes* and Bayezid, the help of the Ottomans was solicited. In doing so, the Byzantines were taking into consideration the Ottoman custom of offering a certain degree of economic and

²¹⁸ D. Zakynthinos, *Le Despotat Grec de Morée*, London: Variorum, vol. 1, 120.

²¹⁹ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 244.

²²⁰ Kydones, *Letters*, 442, 408.

religious autonomy in exchange for submission. In other instances, support was requested from the Latins as well. Some of the Mamonades sought the help of Venice or Genoa, on the ground that they were citizens of Peloponnesian cities that belonged to the two republics.²²¹

Theodore's response to these rebellious acts varied according to circumstances. First, he entered negotiations with the *archontes* by offering other pieces of land or cities in exchange for submission. Later, he allowed large communities of Albanians to settle in the peninsula. Despite causing suspicions among the locals, in the end these communities proved their loyalty to the Despot. Finally, since the problems still persisted, he called on the help of the Ottomans. According to an inscription found in the Peloponnesian village of Parori in 1387 Evrenos Beg marched through the Morea, at Theodore's express request.²²² In addition, not all the Byzantine families proved to be against the Palaiologoi. For instance, many members of the Phrankopoulos family served in Theodore's administration.²²³

Nevertheless, despite the initial alliance with the Ottomans, with regard to the external affairs, in general the Despot sought to oppose and resist the rising power of the Ottomans either by his own resources or by forming alliances with the Latins. Upon his arrival in the Peloponnese in 1382, the Despotate of Morea comprised a compact territory well defended by fortresses and with opportunities for further extension. Theodore inherited this fine situation from the former Despot, Manuel Kantakouzenos, who, between 1349 and 1380 ceased any attempts to conquer new territories and focused on consolidating the province. In 1379, however, the establishment in Achaia of the Navarrese mercenary company changed radically the political equilibrium in the region. The Navarrese operated frequent incursions into the Byzantine territories and, moreover, assisted the Kantakouzenoi against the Palaiologans' attempts to reinforce their authority. Theodore's immediate response was to associate with Neri Acciaiuoli, the Florentine ruler in Corinth. Together they formed a long-lasting alliance with the aim to unify territories in Attica, Boeotia, and the Peloponnese. After a failed attempt to secure Venice's help, in 1387 with the help of the Ottomans he regained the strongholds previously occupied by the Navarrese.

But the victory over the Navarrese caused an even greater dissatisfaction among the

²²¹ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 247.

²²² R.-J. Loenertz, "Res Gestae Theodori Ioanni F. Palaeologi. Titulus metricus A.D. 1389," *EEBS*, 25 (1955): 206-210. For the translation of the inscription see Appendix 1. Cf. P. Schreiner, *Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. 2, 1975, 335.

²²³ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 251-252.

Venetians who were particularly discontent with the fall of their two major cities in the region, Argos and Nauplion, in the hands of the Byzantine-Florentine troops. As a result, the conflict which broke out between the different Christian peoples inhabiting the Peloponnese thwarted any effort for an alliance against the Ottomans for a long period of time. The situation deteriorated with the rise into power in 1389 of Bayezid who increased the military pressure in the region. In 1394, the Navarrese entered an alliance with the Ottomans which considerably enhanced their influence. Still, Theodore succeeded in defending the Despotate's autonomy and by 1395, after he defeated the Navarrese, the Byzantines emerged as a powerful state in the Peloponnese for the first time in the past decade. While he subsequently tried to extend the Byzantine authority over other regions in the peninsula, Venice fiercely opposed these plans, as it traditionally favored the equilibrium of powers emerging from its efforts to entertain a certain degree of regional instability.

In 1397, after the victory at Nikopolis, the Ottomans returned with renewed strength against the Despotate. Previously, in 1391, at the meeting in Serres, Bayezid requested from Theodore the cession of the strategic fortress of Monemvasia and of several other strongholds, as part of an agreement with John V. Yet, Theodore, understanding the danger of offering too much power to the Turks, refused to comply to the request and managed to return safely to Morea. Later on, Yakub-paşa destroyed Venetian Argos and began the siege of Byzantine Corinth. In these circumstances, Theodore sold the city to the Hospitaller Knights who were keen to play a major role in the Mediterranean and had the means to defend it. In the first instance, their involvement in Peloponnesian affairs led to the deliverance of Corinth, but, as the Ottomans advanced, their defending role gradually increased. Consequently, early in 1400, Theodore sold the entire Despotate to the Hospitallers who promptly occupied all the fortresses in the region. However, following a revolt of the Peloponnesians, the Knights had to return some of their territories to Theodore, receiving back the money they spent for purchasing and defending them. The Order remained one of Theodore's strongest allies in the battle against the Ottomans. Moreover, the Despot seems to have strengthened his position in the conflict, especially after 1402, the year of Bayezid's defeat in the battle of Ankara. Taking into consideration the new coordinates of the balance of power in the region, the sultan, who by now was focusing on the approaching Tatars, made him a very favorable peace offer.

Bayezid's defeat by the Tatars in Ankara in 1402 constituted a momentous event for the regional rulers in the Peloponnese.²²⁴ With the retreat of the Ottomans from continental

²²⁴ N. Necipoğlu (*Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 258) dismisses Manuel's argumentation as

Greece, Theodore recovered other Peloponnesian territories including Corinth. In 1404 a treaty was signed in Constantinople between the Byzantines and the other political actors involved in the Moreote affairs. The treaty brought new opportunities for joint action against the Ottomans. Theodore succeeded to bring in an alliance Manuel II, John VII, the Hospitallers, and the duke of Cephallonia, Carlo Tocco, a coalition which aimed at defending Epiros and the Peloponnese, the last Byzantine outposts on the continent.

Theodore however could not take his plan to an end for he died in 1407 during the war with Achaia. Manuel appointed his son, Theodore, as his brother's successor. The new Despot, who in the first years of his reign received direct support from Manuel, continued the policies initiated by his uncle and, to some extent, succeeded in maintaining and strengthening the Byzantine position in the region. The emperor's interest in the region was underlined by his efforts to reconstruct the *Hexamilion* wall in 1415. This barrier wall across the Isthmus of Corinth from the Saronic Gulf to the Gulf of Corinth was intended to serve as the primary defense of the region. This episode of reconstructing of the *Hexamilion* nevertheless pointed to the problems of the region as many landlords refused to participate in funding this imperial venture, so that in 1423 the Ottomans managed to breach the wall.²²⁵

1.3. Becoming citizens with rights to vote: the court and other civic structures

The increased city autonomy, the emergence of a new entrepreneurial aristocracy, and the denial of imperial authority in certain aspects of political life resulted in a gradual weakening of the traditional state apparatus and the strengthening of already existing civic structures, known under different denominations, *dēmos*, *ekklēsia*, or *politeia*. Scholars have provided different explanations for this process: if A. Laiou considered that the empowering of the city institutions was an epiphenomenon of the growing pressures of first the Catalans and subsequently the Ottomans,²²⁶ A. Kioussopoulou connected it with the general developments in the Mediterranean and particularly the influence of the institutional transformations in the Italian city-states.²²⁷ Both interpretations emphasize that, in late Byzantium, the processes and

inconclusive and rather apologetic. Unlike his motivation (*Funeral oration*, 161-183), centered around the idea that Bayezid signed a peace treaty with Theodore because of his military power, Necipoğlu assigns the transaction following which Morea came back into Byzantine hands, to Bayezid's defeat at Ankara.

²²⁵ Ibid., 254. On the problems encountered in the reconstruction of the wall see also Manuel, *Letters*, 68.

²²⁶ Laiou-Morrisson, *The Byzantine Economy*, 195-196.

²²⁷ On these issues see E. Zachariadou, "Εφήμερες αποπειρές για αυτοδιοίκηση στις Ελληνικές πόλεις κατά τον 14ο και τον 15ο αιώνες," *Ariadne* 5 (1989), pp. 345-51; N. Oikonomides, "Pour une typologie des villes 'séparées' sous les Paléologues," in W. Seibt (ed.), *Geschichte und Kultur der Palaiologenzeit. Referate des Internationalen Symposions zu Ehren von Herbert Hunger (Wien, 30. November bis 3. Dezember 1994)*, Vienna: Verlag der

practices of asserting authority suffered several modifications in the sense that the political basis of decision making was extended to include other social groups. In this last section of the present chapter, my aim is to analyze the major late Byzantine political structures and institutions: the imperial court with its consultative bodies and the popular assemblies. This exercise is justified because these groups not only generated political messages identifiable in contemporary written sources, but also represented the enlarged audience of the emperor's political message.²²⁸

The place to begin the investigation of the late Palaiologan political processes is the imperial court, since, throughout the entire Byzantine history, the court fulfilled the role of an interface between the rulers and the ruled. P. Magdalino rightly asserted that the court “with its culture of ordered ritual, hierarchy, and display represented the main hub for the concentration and redistribution of wealth, for the performance and communication of government business, and for decision-making.”²²⁹ By and large, the court's central role in Byzantine society survived during Manuel's reign and, according to Pero Tafur, the Italian traveler to Constantinople in the 1430s, its ceremonial practices remained largely unaltered.²³⁰ Yet, the court's role suffered several significant limitations of its influence and adjustments which reflected the sociopolitical and economic conditions of the time.

Noticeably, in terms of its members, during Manuel's reign, the Constantinopolitan court included a mixture of individuals from different walks of life who often pursued conflicting interests. As mentioned above, the largest category of courtiers was represented by the entrepreneurial *archontes* of aristocratic origin in search of business opportunities that would secure their lifestyle and influence. Numerous examples of such individuals can be identified among the members of the Goudeles family, the Eudaimonioannes, the Philanthropenoi, the Asanes, the Sophianoï, or the Kantakouzenoi.²³¹ These *archontes* often

Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996, 160–7; K.-P. Matschke, “Bemerkungen zu ‘Stadtbürgertum’ und ‘stadtbürgerlichen Geist’ in Byzanz,” *Jahrbuch für Geschichte des Feudalismus* 8 (1984): 265–85; L. Maksimovic, “Charakter der sozial-wirtschaftlichen Struktur der spätbyzantinischen Stadt (13.–15. Jh),” *JÖB* 31 (1981): 149–188.

²²⁸ There have been various attempts to assess the extent of the political and administrative groups in late Byzantium. D. Kyritsis, I. Ševčenko, N. Necipoğlu, K.-P. Matschke and A. Kioussopoulou have given more or less detailed accounts, recording the movements of various people in the Byzantine realm and beyond. Yet there has been no attempt to analyze the various subgroups in emperor Manuel's service, and how they interacted with each other. One criterion of analysis has been the inclusion of an individual into a category like that of the income, or belonging to the ecclesiastical sphere or not.

²²⁹ Paul Magdalino, “Court,” in J. Haldon, ed., *A Social History of Byzantium*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2009, 212.

²³⁰ Pero Tafur, *Travels and adventures 1435-1439*, tr. M. Letts, London: Routledge, 1926, 145: “the emperor's state is as splendid as ever, for nothing is omitted from the ancient ceremonies.”

²³¹ *MM*, II, 385f, 421, 437, 560. Cf. Laiou, *History of Byzantine Economy*, 201, 204, K.-P. Matschke, *Die Schlacht bei Ankara*, 131, 188.

combined service for the emperor with the pursuit of their economic interests. From the late period, the most well known example of such an *archon* involved in both business and administration was that of Luke Notaras.²³² By and large, the entrepreneurial aristocracy created networks of economic support for both Manuel II and his rival, John VII. Due to the commercial ties with the Genoese, the Byzantine *archontes* brought about a political orientation towards the West, including pressures for a Church union.²³³ The *archontes'* expertise in the affairs conducted in the Mediterranean area²³⁴ prompted Manuel to recruit from among them the members of the consultative councils and of many of his embassies. For instance, in a letter addressed to Martin V, king of Aragon, issued by Manuel's chancellery, it was stated that the decision to send relics as a gift was taken after a council which included, in addition to the Patriarch, both noble aristocrats and wealthy individuals:

After a consultation has been held with our nobles and magnates, and especially with our Holiest Patriarch, whose opinion weighs heavily in such circumstances.

*habito cum nostris baronibus et magnatibus consilio et precipue cum Reverendissimo ac Sanctissimo in Christo Patre, Domino Patriarcha nostro, cuius in talibus deliberatio multum valet.*²³⁵

This dual position as members of the state administration and as individual businessmen is reflected by the fact that even after the fall of Constantinople, some of them, especially members of the Palaiologos and Goudeles families, were allowed to return to Ottoman-occupied Constantinople and to resume their commercial activities based on the foreign connections they had previously created.²³⁶

Normally, the *archontes* present at court established very close connections with the emperor, including marriage ties with members of the Palaiologoi family. George Goudeles, *mesazōn* and *oikeios* of John VII and Manuel II, was not only a wealthy businessman and

²³² E.g. the example of Luke Notaras discussed by A. Kioussopolou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 113-115.

²³³ If some members of the landowning aristocracy who felt vulnerable in the new political and economic landscape associated with the clergy, most of the members of the entrepreneurial aristocracy asserted their allegiance to the Latins and thus entered a conflict with Byzantine clergy, A. Kioussopolou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 75.

²³⁴ Although they had contacts with Ottoman businessmen, these aristocratic businessmen were clearly geared towards the West in their activities. Apart from the connections they could establish with the Greek businessmen established in the Genoese or Venetian colonies, another incentive for them to choose the Latins instead of the Ottomans was that the Catholic Church had already elaborated the role of money, providing them with a strong doctrinal support (A. Kioussopolou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 74-75).

²³⁵ C. Marinesco, "Manuel II Paleologue et les rois d'Aragon. Commentaire sur quatre lettres inedites en latin, expediees par la chancellerie byzantin," *Bulletin de la section historique de l'Academie Roumaine* 9 (1924): 199.

²³⁶ In 1460. Based on the commercial activities of individuals like Goudeles, A. Laiou argued that, for this period, one has to make a distinction between the political collapse of the Byzantine State and the wealth of some of its subjects, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System; Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," *DOP* 34 (1980): 222.

statesman, but also a relative of the Palaiologoi by marriage: his sister, Anna Asanina, who had married a Palaiologos, is described as the emperor's aunt. Other documents mention a certain Astras, a close family friend of the Goudeles family, who also belonged to a family with strong personal and political ties with John VII. These connections often led to the formation of economic ties between the members of different families, including the imperial family.²³⁷

A subgroup within the larger class of aristocratic archontes was represented by the bureaucrats who competed intensely over their positions. The origins of many of them can be traced back to the early Palaiologan elite.²³⁸ Sometimes these individuals acquired influence and a high ranking administrative position at court. If, for the first half of the fourteenth century we have the famous examples of Theodore Metochites, *megas logothetēs*, and Alexios Apokaukos, for the later periods cases of influential bureaucrats are those of Demetrios Chrysoloras, *mesazōn*, George Sphrantzes, *prōtovestiariētēs* and later *megas logothetēs*,²³⁹ or Luke Notaras, *megas doux*. The satirical depiction of Manuel's court by the anonymous author of *Mazaris' Journey to Hades* indicates that there was a strong rivalry between courtiers and envy (φθόνος) remained a major driving force behind the actions of those who held offices at the court.²⁴⁰ Kydones,²⁴¹ John Chortasmenos,²⁴² George Sphrantzes, as well as other fifteenth century panegyrists²⁴³ often alluded to the intrigues at the court. Mazaris tells the story of the *grammatikos* Manuel Holobolos who, despite his close relation to the emperor, was replaced by

²³⁷ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 160-161.

²³⁸ P. Charanis, "Internal strife in Byzantium during the fourteenth century," *B* 15 (1941): 208-230.

²³⁹ On the noble origins and the career of George Sphrantzes, *protovestiariētēs* under John VIII's reign and *megas logothetēs* during Constantine XI's reign see M. Nikolić, "Georgios Sphrantzes or how to become an *archon* in Byzantium in the fifteenth century," *ZRV*, 47 (2010): 277-289.

²⁴⁰ E.g. ὅπως κατὰ μικρὸν χωρήσας τοῖς τοῦ βασιλέως μυστηρίοις, ἐφαίνετο μὲν ὅμοιος τοῖς ἔνδον σὺναναστρεφομένοις, νύκτωρ δὲ καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν τῷ αὐτοκράτορι συνῶν καὶ διαλεγόμενος κατέπλευσε μετ' αὐτοῦ ἐς Βρετανίαν τε καὶ Γαλίαν καὶ μέχρις Ὀκεανοῦ· ὅπως διὰ ταῦτα μὲν γέγονεν, ὡς ἔλεγεν ὁ τοιοῦτος, ἐπέραστος, ὁ δὲ χρηστὸς Παδιάτης ἐκεῖνος κατὰ μικρὸν βδελυγμίας καὶ ἄχρηστος ὅπως τε ἦν μόνος κύριος τοῦ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ γράψαι ῥητῶν τινῶν καὶ ἀπορρήτων· ὅπως τε ἅμα γέγονε γραμματεὺς καὶ βουλευτὴς καὶ διακομιστὴς μυστηρίων καὶ ὑπομνημάτων ἐξαγγελεύς, *Mazaris' journey to Hades: or, Interviews with dead men about certain officials of the imperial court*, Buffalo: State University of New York at Buffalo, 1975, 12.17-25

²⁴¹ Kydones, *Letters*, 442, 51-6: "and within the City the citizens, not only the ordinary, but indeed also those who pass as the most influential in the imperial palace, revolt, quarrel with each other and strive to occupy the highest offices. Each one is eager to devour all by himself, and if he does not succeed, threatens to desert to the enemy and with him besiege his country and his friends." The corruption and intrigues of certain imperial officials were the subject of another letter Kydones wrote in 1386 on behalf of his friend Theodore Kaukadenos who would "not allow anyone to steal or embezzle public funds, as so many have been doing," yet who had lost his government post through "the negative influence of insolent people who seek to increase their own position at the expense of the empire." (Kydones, *Letters*, 357, p. 300-1). Cf. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 145.

²⁴² *Moral counsels* (Ἠθικὰ παραγγέλματα), Chortasmenos-Hunger, 238-242.

²⁴³ Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 236.25-27, τὸ γὰρ γένος οὔτε βασιλέως ὑπακοῦον οὔτε δικαίου λόγον εὐρίσκεται, ἀλλ' οὐδ' εὐνοίαν ἔχον εἰς τοὺς πλησίον οὐδὲ φιλίαν ἢ πίστιν ἐν οὐδενὶ τρόπῳ διατηροῦν.

Philommates, a younger official.²⁴⁴ On this occasion, he alludes to the corruption and scandalous behavior of many of the emperor's courtiers. Yet, if we look beyond the hyperbolic satirical content of the text we can identify the traces of a confrontation between the administrative elites present at Manuel's court before 1403 and the younger generation of 1414-1415.²⁴⁵ As he saw his position threatened by new courtiers like Philommates, *Mazaris* hoped to attach himself to the court of Theodore II after having been rejected by Manuel.²⁴⁶

Second, at Manuel's court we can identify individuals from non aristocratic background but with similar trading interests. Individuals like Andreas Argyropoulos, Thomas Kalokoures, John Melidones, or George Mamalis²⁴⁷ were involved in various trading activities, such as the lucrative commerce with fur from Wallachia.²⁴⁸ At the same time, they were integrated in the emperor's group of *oikeioi*. Sometimes, they fulfilled specific roles at the court as representatives of different social or interest groups. Although it remains unclear what these roles entailed it appears that they were the interface between the higher segments of the government and the rest of the population. In some official documents these individuals with no aristocratic pedigree are encountered with the following titles: official in charge of the affairs of the community (ὁ ἀπὸ τῆς πολιτείας ἄρχων),²⁴⁹ the official of the citizens (ὁ ἀπὸ τῶν πολιτῶν ἄρχων),²⁵⁰ or simply civic officials (πολιτικοὶ ἄρχοντες).²⁵¹

In a third category of courtiers, we find clerics particularly interested in promoting their vision against the Church union. It has already been pointed out that several synods concerning the election of the patriarch were held at the court and involved the participation of both clerics and the emperor's *oikeioi*.²⁵² Within the court, priests or monks preached on a regular basis. The presence of such court preachers may be explained not only by Manuel's intense preoccupation with theology but also by the growing influence of the Church in the foreign affairs of the state. In his homilies, Joseph Bryennios, who delivered thirty of his homilies at the court, often exposed the Byzantine point of view over theological issues in opposition to Catholic doctrine. Therewith he targeted the group of Byzantine courtiers

²⁴⁴ *Mazaris' journey to Hades*, 12.

²⁴⁵ *Mazaris'* satirical dialog suggested that, at the court, there were several groups of officials competing for a position closer to the emperor: Ὦν ὁ μὲν νεώτερος, ὁ ἐκ Πατροκλέους ἀφικόμενος Ἄλουσιάνος, ἐν τῷ χορῷ τῶν ἔνδον συναναστρεφομένων εὐρίσκεται, οἷον τοῦ τε Λουκίου ἢ ὄνου, τοῦ τῆς ὀπώρας Κυδωνίου (38.13-15).

²⁴⁶ The Berlin manuscript of *Mazaris'* journey includes a letter addressed to Theodore II.

²⁴⁷ *PLP* 16556.

²⁴⁸ Involved in fur trade: *Mazaris' journey to Hades*, 38.50 (ἀοιδός), *MM* 374f. 472.

²⁴⁹ *MM* II, 472: Andreas Argyropoulos (*PLP* 1255). On this individual see also E. Trapp, "Zur Identifizierung der Personen in der Hadesfahrt des *Mazaris'*," *JÖB* 18 (1969): 95-96.

²⁵⁰ *MM*, II, 493, 326-328, 380-382: Thomas Kalokyres (*PLP* 10640).

²⁵¹ *MM*, II, 495: Ioannes Melidones (*PLP* 17782).

²⁵² See the Synodal Tome of 1409.

represented by the co-emperor John VIII who pressed for a Church union.²⁵³ We also have the evidence of Manuel's relationship with several monks of Mount Athos, such as Makarios Makres, or the emperor's spiritual fathers, the hieromonks David and Damian, whom the emperor often invited to his court in Constantinople.²⁵⁴ Eventually, Makres, persuaded by the emperor, came to the capital where he became involved in the ecclesiastical affairs as *hegoumenos* of the Pantokrator monastery and in the political realm as ambassador to Pope Martin V.

In addition to these groups, other sources confirm the permanent presence at the court of foreign representatives, both Latins or Ottomans. Joseph Bryennios for instance mentions that he performed his sermons before an audience which included many such delegates from the West or from the East.²⁵⁵ This must not come as a surprise, since Manuel, due to the nature of his political international position, was forced to maintain continuous diplomatic connections with the Ottomans and the Latins alike. In the same category, one can include the military officers, like Marshal Boucicaut who offered assistance to the Byzantines. Such individuals often provided an interface between high ranking court officials and the active Latin businessmen.²⁵⁶

Having identified these various groups, I will now present several distinctive features of the court which can clarify its role in the political processes of late Byzantium. Chronologically, one can trace a certain evolution in the composition of the imperial court. If in the beginning, Manuel inherited some of his father's officials and supporters, towards the end of his reign the number of courtiers representing the interests of the Latins increased considerably. This growing influence of Latin oriented *archontes* triggered also the intensification of the ecclesiastics' activities at court towards the end of Manuel's reign.

Another major feature of the early fifteenth century court was its variety and flexibility.²⁵⁷ Mazaris' text, despite its satirical and sarcastic overtones, implies that Manuel's

²⁵³ The twenty one homilies on the Trinity performed in 1422-1423 on the occasion of the negotiations on Church union, *Ta heurethenta*, vol. 1.

²⁵⁴ S. Kapetanaki, *An annotated critical edition of Makarios Makres' Life of St. Maximos Kausokalyves, enkomion of the Fathers of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, Consolation to a sick person, or reflections for endurance, Verses on the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos, Letter to hieromonk Symeon, A supplication on barren olive trees*, PhD dissertation, University of London, 2001, 21-22.

²⁵⁵ Joseph Bryennios, *Ta heurethenta*, 135.

²⁵⁶ Not only Latin businessmen were promoted at this level but, likely, the Ottoman representatives at the Byzantine court pushed for more rights awarded to the Ottomans who lived in Constantinople, N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 200-208.

²⁵⁷ *Mazaris' journey to Hades* (20) presents a mixed image of the court with both people of humble origin as well as Latins. L. Garland also argues that this was a characteristic of Manuel's court: L. Garland, "Mazaris's Journey to Hades: Further Reflections and Reappraisal," *DOP* 61 (2007): 183-215.

court was not only a shelter of intrigues but also a place where hierarchies were flexible enough to allow the rapid social ascension of individuals from different social backgrounds. Such flexibility disappeared from John VIII's court which had a much more clearly defined aim of approaching the Latins and proceed to a union of the Churches.²⁵⁸

Flexibility among the membership of the court is also reflected by the circulation of individuals between the opposing political parties supporting competing rulers. Many of the emperor's close collaborators switched the political sides easily. Individuals like Nicholas Notaras or George Goudeles fulfilled important roles in John VII's plans up to 1390, and yet, in the following decade, we find them supporting Manuel II. Conversely, after 1403, Demetrios Chrysoloras and Demetrios Leontares, who previously served Manuel, went to Thessalonike to assist John VII during his reign. In 1408, following John's death they both returned into Manuel's service.²⁵⁹

Another feature of Manuel's court was the attitude towards court titles and title-holders. Since there is little information about the real function of the offices particularly during Manuel's reign, it is highly probable that many of them had lost their function and retained only an ornamental role.²⁶⁰ Based on the sources at our disposal, it appears that, during the last fifty years of Byzantine history only very few significant titles remained in use: the *mezas doux*, the chief of the army, the *mezas domestikos*, or the constable, *konostaulos*.²⁶¹ Likewise, following the trend set in the second half of the fourteenth century, the *mesazōn* continued to hold a chief position at the court.²⁶²

Evidence for the loss of significance of titles also comes from a passage of George Sphrantzes' *Memoirs* which also suggests that, at the same time, offices were also taken very seriously by their incumbents.²⁶³ He recounts that, during Manuel's rule, he was appointed *mezas logothetēs*, yet, in fact, the duties corresponding to this position were undertaken by

²⁵⁸ I. Djuric, *Le crepuscule*, 132-147.

²⁵⁹ See the *Synodal Tome* of 1409.

²⁶⁰ A short overview of the court titles in the fifteenth century is provided by A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 119-121 who distinguishes between several types of offices: offices connected to the functioning of the state: *mesazōn*, *mezas stratopedarchēs*, *mezas logothetēs*, *mezas domestikos*, *mezas doux*, *mezas kontostaulos*, *diarmeneutēs*, *logariastēs tēs aulēs*: ambassadors; offices connected to the function of the emperor: *protostratōr* (τοῦ μεγάλου δομestικoῦ ἀπόντος, φέρει τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως σπάθην); *protovestiaritēs* (ὕπηρετὴς τῆς παραστάσεως), *mezas primikērios*, *mezas hetaireiarchēs*, *palatophylax*; and offices for private service of the emperor: *epi tou kanikleiou*, *protobestiaris*, *epi tēs trapezēs*, *kelliotēs*, *grammatikos*.

²⁶¹ Only Sphrantzes refers to the role of the *konostaulos*, *Memoirs*, 128.

²⁶² A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 124-127.

²⁶³ Other offices mentioned by Sphrantzes throughout his text are *mezas doux*, *protostratōr*, *mezas logothetēs*, *mezas stratopedarchēs*, *mezas primikērios*, *mezas konostaulos*, Sphrantzes, *Memoirs*, 34.

another courtier of aristocratic origins.²⁶⁴ Sphrantzes thus implies that, unlike in the earlier periods, in the late Palaiologan period, it was possible to share offices and the emperor was no longer capable of changing the order of precedence. If most of the court titles gradually became void of their functions, the epithets suggesting a kinship relationship with the emperor proliferated. In fact this tendency was in place ever since the reign of Alexios I Komnenos.²⁶⁵ Many individuals, including the above-mentioned businessmen Sophianos, Mamalis, or Argyropoulos, who apparently were very close to the emperor did not hold any court title except for epithets such as *member of the family (oikeios)*, *cousin (exadelphos)*, or *joint father-in-law (sympentheros)*. As a result, the most important political positions, such as those of the *mesazōn* or ambassador, were distributed to the blood related relatives, members of aristocratic families. Theodore Palaiologos Kantakouzenos, Mark Palaiologos Iagaris, Demetrios Palaiologos Metochites, Demetrios Palaiologos Goudeles (*cousin - exadelphos*), Ilarion Doria (*son-in-law gambros*, married with Manuel's daughter Zampia, ambassador)²⁶⁶ handled important political issues.

This reduced significance of court titles can be explained by two reasons: on the one hand due to the territorial shrinkage and losses of resources to administer, many titles became obsolete. On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, due to the emergence of other possibilities of acquiring wealth and influence particularly through trade in the Mediterranean, the court lost much of its appeal and influence. The phenomenon of a decrease of the court's influence surfaced during the periods when Manuel's court moved along with the emperor during his many travels. For much of his reign the emperor did not reside in Constantinople, but traveled to other distant places: from 1399 to 1403 to western Europe, in 1407-1409 one finds him in Morea, and finally between 1414 and 1416 again in Morea and Thessalonike, a total of eight years out of the thirty years of effective rule. During these long journeys the emperor, while leaving representatives in Constantinople, was accompanied by large retinues of close collaborators. The sources tell us that in the journey to the West Manuel traveled with a comparatively large retinue of about forty individuals.²⁶⁷ These long periods of absence from Constantinople suggest that the Constantinopolitan administration could function without the

²⁶⁴ Sphrantzes, *Memoirs*, 128.

²⁶⁵ P. Magdalino, "Court and aristocracy," in J. Haldon, ed., *A Social History of Byzantium*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2009, 212-232.

²⁶⁶ T. Ganchou, "Ilario Doria, le gambros Génois de Manuel II Palaiologos: beau-frère ou gendre?" *Études Byzantines* 66: 71-94"

²⁶⁷ S. Mergiali, "A Byzantine ambassador to the West and his office during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: a profile," *BZ* 94 (2001): 588-604.

emperor who might have felt the increased insecurity of the capital. For instance, during Bayezid's siege of Constantinople, Symeon of Thessalonike recounts that, fearing that his opposition might further infuriate the sultan, the emperor left the leadership of the capital in the hands of his nephew, John VII, who had better relations with the Ottomans.

Within the imperial court the major assemblies responsible for taking the political decisions were constituted. Following a trend which started in the Komnenian period, during Manuel's reign the role of court councils increased.²⁶⁸ Even the emperor's rhetorical texts include allusions to such councils instrumental in solving difficult problems.²⁶⁹ One such assembly was the senate, encountered in the late sources under the terms *synklētos*, *boulē*, or *gerousia*.²⁷⁰ Although the role of senate and senators in the later periods cannot be established with precision, primarily due to the archaizing tendencies of the sources, senators appear in several important moments. In the synod of 1409 which confirmed Patriarch Matthew's position in the Church several senators took part. Their presence in this particular circumstance shows that their role in legal matters attested from the early fourteenth century persisted through the early fifteenth century.²⁷¹ Similarly, we encounter frequent references to the senate and senators in Thessalonike, where the senate retained a central role in the life of the city.²⁷²

A development noticeable in the last fifty years of Byzantine history concerned the

²⁶⁸ C. Tsirpanlis, "Byzantine Parliaments and Representative Assemblies from 1081 to 1351," *Kleronomia* 5 (1973): 68. A more detailed description of such a state council where individuals presented their opinions with regard to current situations is in John Kantakouzenos, *Histories*, 3, 295-300.

²⁶⁹ Manuel II, *Orations*, PG 156, 388: here Solon is openly praised for taking decisions after consulting with a council of the *best people* (ἄριστοι).

²⁷⁰ Kyritses, *Byzantine Aristocracy*, 66-75.

²⁷¹ Cf. Kyritses, *Byzantine Aristocracy*, 69-70.

²⁷² Evidence for the activity of the Senate or of the senators comes from different sources: e.g. the title of one of Scholarios' texts, Γενναδίου τοῦ Σχολαρίου ταύτη τῇ ἑορτῇ Εἰσοδίων προσφωνητικός. Ἀνεγνώσθη ἐν τῇ μονῇ τῆς Περιβλέπτου τὸ πρῶτον, παρόντος τοῦ βασιλέως Κωνσταντίνου καὶ πολλῶν τῆς συγκλήτου. The patriarchal register of October 1396 lists three members of the Senat, Alexios TzAMPLAKON Kaballarios, Andronikos Philanthropenos Tarchaniotes, and Andronikos Apokaukos Melissenos: συνόντων αὐτῇ καὶ τῶν τιμιωτάτων ἐκκλησιαστικῶν ἀρχόντων, παρόντων καὶ τῆς συγκλήτου (MM, vol 2, no. 686, p. 565.) These three are to be found in the list of senators participants in the debates on the legitimacy of Patriarch Matthew I, included in the Synodal tome of August 1409 which lists altogether nineteen members of the senate: Manuel Agathon, Andreas Asanes, Constantine Asanes, theios of Manuel II, Demetrios Chrysoloras, Demetrios Palaiologos Eirenikos, George Goudeles, Demetrios Palaiologos Goudeles *exadelphos* of Manuel II, Kantakouzenos (?), Theodore (Palaiologos) Kantakouzenos, θεῖος of Manuel II, Demetrios (Laskaris) Leontares, Manuel Bryennios Leontares, Andronikos (Apokaukos) Melissenos, Nicholas Notaras, Matthew Laskaris Palaiologos, Manuel Kantakouzenos Phakrases, Andronikos Tarchaniotes Philanthropenos, Sphrantzes Sebastopoulos, Nicholas Sophianos, and Alexios Kaballarios TzAMPLAKON. The evidence of Manuel's *Admonitory Oration to the Thessalonians* indicates that the role of the senate in Thessalonike could not be neglected. Manuel had to write an oration in order to persuade other opposing members of the senate not to sign a disadvantageous treaty with the Turks. In this case as well it seems that Manuel's authority was heavily contested.

increase of the influence of *popular assemblies* representing the interests of various social groups. On the one hand, this development can be explained by the necessity to insure a wider popular basis for political decisions that would have affected urban centers like Constantinople and Thessalonike, constantly threatened by Ottoman occupation. On the other hand, some scholars suggested that this phenomenon was influenced by the growing influence acquired by the popular governments in Italian cities.²⁷³ Beginning with the first half of the fourteenth century and especially in the decades preceding the fall of the empire multiple pieces of evidence point to the role of popular assemblies in the process of political decision making.²⁷⁴ Many contemporary sources mention that John VII both in the 1390s in Constantinople and in the 1400s in Thessalonike enjoyed the support of local popular assemblies.²⁷⁵ Towards the end of the empire, the role of popular assemblies in taking decisions with regard to Church union increased.²⁷⁶ During Manuel's reign several such instances of popular involvement in crucial state decisions can be recorded. According to the late Byzantine historians Doukas²⁷⁷ and Kritoboulos,²⁷⁸ in 1401-1402 several popular assemblies gathered and decided to surrender the City to Bayezid.²⁷⁹ The historian Doukas pointed to the role of such assemblies making a distinction between *dēmos*, the organized assembly, as opposed to the popular masses the (*χυδαῖος ὄχλος* or the *κοινὸς λαός*).²⁸⁰ In the Peloponnese, the pressures of the *dēmos* forced the Despot Theodore to renounce his plans to sell the Moreote strongholds to the Knights Hospitaller.²⁸¹ In Mystras, according to Isidore of Kiev, the *dēmos* together with the *gerousia* participated in the commemoration of Despot Theodore in 1409.²⁸² In Thessalonike, the antagonism between the *dēmos* who demanded the surrender of the city to the Ottomans, and the aristocracy defending its economic advantages was more visible.²⁸³ This antagonism was well reflected in 1411 when, during the Ottoman siege of Thessalonike by Musa's forces, the

²⁷³ A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 242.

²⁷⁴ See K.-P.Matschke, "Der Platz des Volkes und die Rolle des "demokratischen Elementes," in *Die Gesellschaft*, 62-81. G. Weiss, *Aristokraten, Staatsman, Kaiser und Monch Johannes Kantakouzenos*, Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1969, 70-100.

²⁷⁵ John VII's title and successful administration in Thessalonike are reported in Doukas, *Historia*, 113 and Symeon-Balfour, 48, 1-15.

²⁷⁶ A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 159-162.

²⁷⁷ Doukas, *Historia*, XIV.4, p. 85.

²⁷⁸ Kritoboulos, *Historiae*, I.16.10, 32-33, D.R. Reinsch, *Critobuli Imbriotae historiae*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1983.

²⁷⁹ *MM*, II, 626. Cf. also Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 100, Doukas, XXXIII.12. Cf. also Doukas, XXXIV.2,7.

²⁸⁰ Doukas, XXXVI.6 and XIV. 3-4.

²⁸¹ Manuel II, *Funeral oration on his brother Theodore, Despot of Morea*.

²⁸² Isidore of Kiev, Letter 5, ed. by W. Regel in *Analecta Byzantino-Russica*, Sankt Petersburg, 1891, 67.

²⁸³ In Constantinople this antagonism between *dēmos* and aristocracy is reflected in Chortasmenos' letter 51 (Chortasmenos-Hunger, 207) addressed to Melissenos, archon and senator, praised for his capacity to control these conflicts.

population asked for immediate surrender.²⁸⁴ As N. Necipoğlu argued, such instances suggest that another factor that might have triggered an increased role of the popular assemblies in late Byzantium was the increasing social and economic gap between the poorer and the richer social strata.²⁸⁵ Eventually, the role of the *dēmos* in the affairs of the state is also suggested by the fact that the people of Thessalonike together with the Senate created a fund to which the population had to contribute to the defense.²⁸⁶ Noticeably, this emerging wider political assembly maintained a certain degree of autonomy from the central government of Constantinople.²⁸⁷

More often, popular assemblies as distinguished from other more restricted assemblies like the senate, are mentioned under the term *politeia*.²⁸⁸ A decision of the Venetian Senate (1453) translates *politeia* as *civitas* and presents its members as *cives*.²⁸⁹ Scholars have noticed the similarities between this institution and the government of late medieval Italian city-states.²⁹⁰ Even if the pieces of information remain scarce and are spread throughout more than six decades, the presence of a larger body of decision making of citizens in Constantinople points to a change in the processes of decision making.

²⁸⁴ Quite a similar situation emerged in 1430 at the final surrender of the City in the hands of the Ottomans, Symeon-Balfour, 160-162.

²⁸⁵ See N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between Latins and Ottomans*, 71-72. A passage from Symeon of Thessalonike implies that the view predominant among the members of the lower classes was that the ruling elites were not contributing financially to the defense and were considering their own interests only and not those of the population at large: "Now on top of this the majority were shouting against and bitterly reproaching those in authority and me myself, accusing us of not striving to serve the welfare of the population as a whole. They actually declared that they were bent on handing the latter over to the infidel" (Symeon-Balfour, 55-56). On the same antagonism between the poor and the rich regarding the contribution to the defense see Isidore Glabas, *Homilies 33 and 37*, in V. Christophorides, "Ισιδώρου Γλαβᾶ περιστασιακές ὁμιλίες," *Ἐπιστημονική Ἐπετηρίδα Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς*, vol. 1, Thessalonike: Aristotelian University of Thessalonica, 1981, 120 and 137.

²⁸⁶ ἕκαστος τῶν τε τῆς συγκλήτου καὶ πολιτείας, Symeon-Balfour, 57; cf. 161-163.

²⁸⁷ Symeon-Balfour, 57.

²⁸⁸ Joseph Bryennios delivered a homily in front of the "Patriarch and of the entire Politeia, *Ta paraleipomena*, 243. Likewise, Mark Eugenikos delivered homilies in front of the senate and of the *politeia*, "Ἐπιτελεύτιοι ὁμιλίας παρουσίας τῆς τῶν ὀρθοδόξων συνάξεως καὶ πολλῶν τῆς συγκλήτου καὶ τῆς πολιτείας," in *PP*, vol. 2, 35. Cf. also A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ἢ οἰκονόμος*, 133 and 163.

²⁸⁹ For Constantinople various sources speak about *politeia* as larger assemblies of citizens: Γενναδίου τοῦ Σχολαρίου ταύτῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ διεδόθη εἰς ὅλην τὴν πόλιν εἰς ἴσα πολλὰ μεταγραφέν, πρὸ ἕξ μηνῶν τῆς ἀλώσεως, ἐν κθῆ τοῦ Μαΐου γενομένης (*Œuvres complètes*, 3, 179); *PP*, 2, 131: τοῖς εὐγενεστάτοις πολίταις τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἅπασιν ἱερωμένοις καὶ κοσμικοῖς. George Scholarios and Sylvester Syropoulos pointed out that large groups of the Constantinopolitan population refused to take part in the liturgy officiated by pro-union priests: καὶ οἱ τὴν πόλιν ταύτην οἰκοῦντες εὐσεβοῦσιν οἱ πάντες, πλὴν ὀλίγων τινῶν τῶν τοῖς παπικοῖς καὶ ἄλλῃν ἀνασχομένων τραφῆναι κακῶς χρήμασι, χεῖρον ἁμαρτανόντων τῶν συγχωρησάντων τοῦτο παθεῖν (*Œuvres complètes*, 4, 145). In a different passage Scholarios also indicated that other groups of the population agreed upon the union: οἱ πολλοὶ βασάνων ἄνευ δεχόμενοι (i.e. the Pope's legate), βῶσι μόνον ἄπερ ἄν τις ἐνηχίσειε καθάπερ οἱ πίθοι, κἀντεῦθεν ἀπειλαὶ καὶ βοαὶ καθ' ἡμῶν ἠγέρθησαν ἄρρητοι (*Œuvres complètes*, 3, 177).

²⁹⁰ A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ἢ οἰκονόμος*, 137. Due to the existence of this parallel political body of decision making, Kioussopoulou argued that in Constantinople two centers of power coexisted, one depending on the emperor and the other on the *dēmos*, which reflected the situation in the Italian city-states.

Conclusion

To conclude, for the period of Manuel's reign we can distinguish two major tendencies affecting late Byzantine political practices and processes. The first phenomenon concerns the enlargement of the basis of decision making by the inclusion of individuals from a variety of social backgrounds: aristocrats, businessmen, ecclesiastics, and at times Latins (Marshal Boucicaut, Gattilusio). Often they acted according to interests opposed to the emperor's political outlook, as became clear from the support which many courtiers together with co-emperor John VIII offered to the Ottoman princes contending for the sultanate. This change in Byzantine political structures, attested by many contemporary narrative accounts,²⁹¹ was initially caused by the pressures exerted by the *mesoi* on the old social and political order. This process of “*democratization*,” so to say, which started by the middle of the fourteenth century culminated in George Scholarios' proposal to discuss the political decision of Church union with the participation of three *orders*: senate, Church, and *politeia*.²⁹²

The second major tendency concerns the emperor's reactions to these changes. The increase of the aristocracy's role in the economy and, conversely, the decrease of the state's role triggered a weakening of the emperor's prestige who now remained with few prerogatives in hand. As the Italian traveler Pero Tafur put it, during the last decades of Empire, the Byzantine emperor resembled “a Bishop without a see.”²⁹³ The emperor's prerogatives were limited to solving matters of jurisdiction,²⁹⁴ and to formulating policies in matters of defense or of foreign relations. Most significantly, due to territorial losses, the emperor lost the prerogative of granting territories to aristocrats, as it was the case in the first half of the fourteenth century.²⁹⁵ The only area where the emperor's role appears to have increased was the economy where Manuel engaged in negotiations with the businessmen active in the region. Manuel's famous statement recorded by George Sphrantzes' *Memoirs*, that “the ruler ought to be rather a manager of current affairs (*oikonomos*) than an emperor” is well illustrated by several cases. Not only that he had to take care of basic administrative issues, as he complained,²⁹⁶ but, by the end of the fourteenth century, the emperor became directly involved

²⁹¹ Especially, Doukas, *Histories*, 14.1, 34.2, 14.3, and Laonikos Chalkokondyles, *Historical Expositions*, 2.57 and 7. 141.

²⁹² George Scholarios, “Τὸ προσηλωθὲν τῇ θύρᾳ τοῦ δωματίου μου, τῇ πρώτῃ νοεμβρίου,” in *Œuvres complètes de Georges (Gennadius) Scholarios*, vol. 3. Paris: Maison de la bonne presse, 1930: 165.

²⁹³ Pero Tafur, *Travels and adventures 1435-1439*, tr. M. Letts, London: Harper, 1926, 145.

²⁹⁴ The emperor's increased role in legal matters is noticeable from the beginnings of the Palaiologan rule. Cf. D. Kyritses, *Byzantine Aristocracy*, 70.

²⁹⁵ D. Kyritses, *Byzantine Aristocracy*, 393.

²⁹⁶ In one of his letters addressed to Demetrios Chrysoloras (44) Manuel complains about his administrative, time consuming activities at court: Manuel, *Letters*, 116-118.

in the trade with various goods.²⁹⁷ Especially John VII Palaiologos was active in commerce, but there are also indications that both John V and Manuel II also put the imperial ships at the disposal of the businessmen for the transportation of various goods.²⁹⁸

Naturally, faced with such challenges to imperial authority, Manuel attempted to extend his control over the different centrifugal factions active in the empire.²⁹⁹ One instrument to maintain the influence of the imperial family was to offer key positions in administration as well as offices like embassies either to *oikeioi* or to very close allies. In addition, faced with the growing influence of other wealthy individuals, Manuel also appears to have pursued a policy of reconciliation between different forces active within the empire. On one side stood the members of the older aristocracy who depended on the prestige and benefits which they could draw from the court and upon which the emperor still relied. On the other side there was the growing number of the new businessmen with ties into the old aristocracy who strove for a stronger alliance with the Latins. This tendency came naturally as they had previously established trade connections. Thus, it appears that the emperor used the all-inclusive court *milieu* to placate the conflicts between the factions, as it happened in the case of Makarios of Ankara whom he took with him in the long journey to the West, so that the turbulent hieromonk would stop attacking Patriarch Matthew I.³⁰⁰ In the same way, his friend, Demetrios Chrysoloras, was instrumental in the mediation between Manuel and his nephew, John VII.

Nevertheless, his strategies to reassert control over the centrifugal forces in the empire were not exclusively defensive and intended to bring peace among different factions, for Manuel also proved to be interested in conveying his political messages to as wide an audience. He thus attempted to create a kind of parallel court, populated not by traditional court-officials, but by *literati*. This was a court over which he could preside without being contested and which he could use to validate and disseminate his own political views. In the following chapter I will specifically deal with this literary court.

²⁹⁷ On the emperor's various economic activities in commerce see K.-P. Matschke, "Kaiser oder Verwalter? Die Wirtschaftspolitik Manuels zwischen 1403 und 1422 und ihre Effekte," in *Die Schlacht bei Ankara*, 220-235.

²⁹⁸ See the case of the Eudaimonioioannes. A. Laiou, "Byzantine economy in Mediterranean Trade System; Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," *DOP* 34 (1980): 219.

²⁹⁹ The observation that the Byzantine empire under the Palaiologoi knew strong centrifugal forces is not new. See J.W. Barker, "The Problem of Appanages in Byzantium during the Palaiologan Period," *Byzantina* 3 (1971), 103-122.

³⁰⁰ Cf. V. Laurent, "Le Trisépiscopat," 78.

Chapter 2:

The literary court of Manuel II

The survey undertaken in the previous chapter has attempted to trace the activity and limits of the late Byzantine political groups based on the analysis of several major social and economic phenomena. The sources allow us to distinguish several large distinctive groups active within late Byzantine society: aristocrats, businessmen, holders of court offices, all of whom had an institutionalized personal relationship to the emperor. If the preceding survey unveiled the main factors and reasons shaping the emperor's activity in the political sphere, in the following section I will investigate the late fourteenth century literary context in which the emperor's political writings were produced. The aim of this section will be to highlight the extent of the emperor's interactions with the primary audience of his texts and to provide background information for the discussion of the competing political discourses in the last chapter. In addition the chapter will provide an insight into the channels of circulation of his political texts. Several conceptual clarifications are necessary here. I use the terms *literary court*, *network*, and *circle* interchangeably to refer to a group of individuals who formed relations with each other on the basis of their common preoccupations. Furthermore, in terms of social network theory, within this group can be identified several *clusters* defined as “a set of persons that have a higher personal degree of acquaintance with other set members.³⁰¹” I will divide the present section in four parts: first, I will focus on the rhetorical practices current during Manuel's reign; and second, I will provide an account of the major groups of *literati* who constituted his audience; third, I will look into the connectivity of the network; and finally, I will deal with the uses of the network and Manuel's patronage activities.

2.1. *Theatra* and rhetorical practices

The Late Byzantine letter collections as well as the evidence drawn from manuscripts suggest that, even in this period of political troubles, between the members of a group of intellectuals a

³⁰¹ R. Niemeijer, “Some applications of the notion of density to network analysis,” in J. Boissevain and J. Mitchell, eds., *Network Analysis: Studies in Human Interaction*, The Hague: Mouton, 1973, 75.

continuous exchange of ideas and texts took place.³⁰² Among the members of this group one finds people upholding various religious or political persuasions mirroring the transformations discussed in the previous section: anti-unionists or supporters of the union, lay people or ecclesiastics, members of the old aristocracy or people of lower social status. Emperor Manuel himself had been a member of this *intellectual society* from an early stage of his career, and, over time, his connections and uses of the network multiplied. Furthermore, owing to his position of political authority, he played a decisive part in maintaining the connections between the members of this group and often in promoting them to high ranking administrative positions.

This group of individuals with similar literary preoccupations is attested not only at the level of their substantial extant correspondence but also by concrete meetings in the framework of the so-called *theatra*. These were organized gatherings with a long tradition in Byzantium which can be traced particularly in the late antique, the Komnenian, and the Palaiologan periods. As places of social performance they can be compared to other instances of ritualized practice in Constantinople such as court ceremonies or imperial triumphs.³⁰³ Some of these *theatra*³⁰⁴ were specifically designed for authors to read aloud their texts and, following such performances, to receive comments from their peers, *theatra* fulfilled both a social and literary function.³⁰⁵ For the Palaiologan period numerous pieces of evidence indicate that such meetings enjoyed a certain popularity among the authors and their patrons.³⁰⁶ More

³⁰² For the definition of late Byzantine intellectuals and further discussion of different intellectual groups see F. Tinnefeld, "Intellectuals in Late Byzantine Thessalonike," *DOP* 57 (2006): 153-172; I. Ševčenko, "Society and Intellectual life in Late Byzantium," in M. Berza and E. Stănescu (eds), *Actes du XIVe Congrès International des Études Byzantines, Bucarest, 6-12 Septembre, 1971*, Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1974, vol. 1, 65-92: "intellectual denotes Byzantine producers of preserved intellectual statements, whether original or not, in short, Byzantine writers;" S. Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés pendant l'époque des Paléologues (1261-1453)*, Athens: Hetaireia tōn philōn tou laou, 1996.

³⁰³ On *theatra* as one of the practices "structuring late Byzantine society" see N. Gaul, "Dancing with the Muses of Power and Subversion: Performative Communication in the Late Byzantine *Theatron*" (forthcoming).

³⁰⁴ The late Byzantine imperial oration were also delivered in a *theatron-like* setting. See. I. Toth, "Rhetorical *Theatron* in Late Byzantium: The example of Palaiologan imperial orations," in *Theatron: rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, ed. M. Grünbart, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007, 429-448.

³⁰⁵ On *theatra* in late Antiquity, see *Libanii Opera*, ed. R. Foerster, Vols.10-11, Leipzig 1921-1922, ep. 1259. For the same phenomenon in the twelfth c. see P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, 335-356 and M. Mullett, "Aristocracy and patronage in the literary circles of Komnenian Constantinople," in: *The Byzantine Aristocracy from IX to XIII Centuries*, ed. M. Angold, Oxford 1984, 173-201; P. Marciniak, "Byzantine *Theatron*-A Place of Performance?" in *Theatron: rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, ed. M. Grünbart, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007, 277-287. On *theatra* in the Palaiologan period see N. Gaul, "Schauplätze der Macht," in *Thomas Magistros und die spätbyzantinische Sophistik: Studien zum Humanismus urbaner Eliten der frühen Palaiologenzeit*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011, 17-61.

³⁰⁶ For the earlier periods we have evidence from scholars like Demetrios Kydones, John Kantakouzenos and Nikephoros Gregoras who often alluded to such meetings taking place either in the imperial palace or in private houses.

specifically, with regard to Manuel's reign, the evidence concerning *theatra* is frequent enough to allow us to conjecture that, at least during the first decades of his reign, the *theatra* represented regular occasions of meeting and performing literary texts. Although not so varied and numerous as for the earlier Palaiologan period,³⁰⁷ the extant sources dating from the late fourteenth century suggest that most of the *theatra* were chaired by the emperor himself, since there are actually no other mentions of such meetings during this period. Already during his stay in Thessalonike (1382-1387) Manuel organized *theatra* where the scholars of the city met regularly.³⁰⁸ In a letter addressed to Triboles, one of his supporters during the rebellion in the second city of the empire,³⁰⁹ Manuel offered a vivid image of the enthusiasm of the audience who listened to Triboles' text performed in the theater:

We made a serious effort to have your letter read before as many people as you would wish, and you surely wished a large number to hear it, confident in your literary skill and expecting to be praised for it. And this is just what happened. For the entire audience applauded and was full of admiration as the letter was read by its grandfather. Nor was he able to conceal his own pleasure as the theater was shaken by applause and by praise for the skilled craftsman whose teaching has led you to become such a great rhetorician. But this made him blush so much that he was scarcely able to continue. So it was that what you succeeded in producing struck even the master himself, along with everyone else, with admiration and pleasure, and made him look particularly radiant. But while others were expressing their wonderment, I seemed to be the only one who was not doing so. Someone asked me how it could be possible that among the entire group I alone appeared unaffected, that is, uninspired and lacking in admiration. "I too am greatly impressed," I replied, "for I cannot help being thoroughly amazed, not because a noble father brings forth noble children," referring to you and your writings, "but because the rest of you marvel at this as though you had unexpectedly come across something new." This is what I said, and I seemed to hit the mark, inasmuch as it brought the group to admire the very man whom I wanted to admire. Ἐπὶ τοσοῦτων σοὶ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀναγνωσθῆναι σπουδὴν πεποιήμεθα ἐφ' ὅσων γε καὶ ἐβούλου ἐπὶ πολλῶν δ' ἄρ' ἐβούλου τῇ λόγων τέχνῃ θαρρῶν καὶ ἐπαίνων τεύξεσθαι ταύτῃ γε προσδοκῶν, ὃ καὶ ἐξέβη. Τοσοῦτοι γὰρ αὐτὴν ἐκρότου καὶ διὰ θαύματος ἦγον ὅσοι περ ἀκηκόασιν ἀναγνωσκομένης παρὰ τοῦ ταύτης πάππου, ᾧ καὶ κρύπτειν μὲν τὴν ἡδονὴν οὐκ ἐξῆν τοῦ θεάτρου σειομένου καὶ εὐφημούντων τὸν σοφιστὴν παρ' ὃν φοιτῶν τοιόσδε ῥήτωρ γεγένησαι, ὑπὸ δὲ τοῦ ἄγαν ἐρυθριᾶν σχεδὸν χωρεῖν οὐχ οἶός τε ἦν. οὕτω μὲν οὖν συνάμα πᾶσι καὶ αὐτόν σοι τὸν σοφιστὴν ἐκπλήττεσθαι τε καὶ ἡδεσθαι κατεσκεύασεν ἐξαστράψαντα μόνον ἃ σὺ τίκτειν ἰσχύεις. Εἷς δὲ μόνος αὐτὸς ἐν θαυμάζουσιν οὐ τοῦτ' ἐφάνην ποιῶν, καὶ τινος ἐρομένου τί δή ποτ' ἂν εἶη τὸ μόνον με τῶν πάντων ποιῶν μὴ ταῦτά τοις ἅπασιν ἀσχεῖν· ἔνθου λέγω καθορᾶσθαι καὶ ἐκπλήξεως γέμοντα. «ἐκπλήττομαί γε,»

³⁰⁷ For a thorough discussion of the understandings of *theatron* as well as of its hierarchical variants in the early Palaiologan period see N. Gaul, "Die Praxis des Theatron im frühen 14. Jahrhundert" in *Thomas Magistros*, 18-38.

³⁰⁸ See F. Tinnefeld, "Intellectuals in Late Byzantine Thessalonike," *DOP* 57 (2003): 153-72.

³⁰⁹ G.T. Dennis, "Prosopography," in Manuel, *Letters*, liii.

ἔφην, «κάγώ· δεῖ με γάρ τῷ ὄντι ἐκπλήξει συνέχεσθαι, οὐχ ὡς γενναῖος γενναίους τέκοι παῖδας πατήρ,» σὲ δὴ λέγων καὶ ἄπερ γράφεις, «ἀλλ' ὅθ' ὑμεῖς ἀξιοῦτε τουτὶ θαυμάζειν ὡς δὴ παρὰ προσδοκίαν ἰδόντες τι καινόν.» Ταῦτ' ἔφην ἐγὼ καὶ ἔδοξά τι λέγειν, ἀνθ' ὧν θαυμάζειν μᾶλλον τούτοις ἐπήει ὃν θαυμάζεσθαι ἐβουλόμην.³¹⁰

Despite being couched in elaborate encomiastic terms, the above passage provides several interesting details with regard to the atmosphere and the activities taking place in a *theatron*: the audience comprised a large number of listeners who could understand and appreciate the intricacies of a sophisticated rhetorical text; the emperor seems to have played a leading role in the gathering; sometimes the response of the audience was very emphatic and the speaker had to engage in dialog with his audience; such public recitations could increase or decrease an author's reputation (τιμὴ); finally, the letter which was sent from Thessalonike during the time of Manuel's residence there also indicates that *theatra* were not taking place exclusively in Constantinople, but in other residencies as well.³¹¹

Still, in the imagination of most Byzantine intellectuals Constantinople remained the major hub of literary activity.³¹² These features emerge in other pieces of late Palaiologan texts as well, including the collection of Manuel's letters. Quite a similar description of a *theatron*, this time taking place in Constantinople, can be found in another of Manuel II's letters, addressed to the *protekdikos* Michael Balsamon:

Expectation of the letter, therefore, caused joy, but when it actually arrived it greatly exceeded our expectations and dimmed the joy that was in us, just as the sun hides the brightness of the stars so brilliantly did it shine. I will not speak of all the applause which came from those inspired by the Muses, nor will I mention Iagaris, acting in your stead and reading the letter, was so overjoyed that he was unable to continue. For the rules of letter writing do not permit me to stretch things out beyond measure. But one remark, I believe, will make everything clear. There was a certain person in the audience who did not know the source of the letter or its purpose. It struck him so forcibly that he was quite ready to believe it could not be a product of our present literary poverty, for he was reminded of some of the ancients whose names are preserved even after death by their writings. Εὐφρανε μὲν οὖν καὶ προσδοκώμενα, φανέντα δὲ μικρὰς τὰς προσδοκίας ἀπέφηνε καὶ τὴν ἐνοῦσαν εὐφροσύνην ἡμαύρωσεν, ἥλιος ἄστρων κρύπτων αὐγὴν οὕτως ἤστραπτε. Κρότους δ' ὅσοι παρὰ τῶν μουσολήπτων ἐγένοντο καὶ ὡς οὐδὲ χωρεῖν ὑφ' ἡδονῆς οἷός τε ἦν ὁ τὰς ἐπιστολάς ἀναγνοῦς τὰ σὰ οἰκεῖα ποιούμενος, Ἰάγαρις οὗτος ἦν, σιωπῶ. Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν μοι συγχωρεῖ νόμος ὑπερεκτείνεσθαι

³¹⁰ Manuel, *Letters*, 9, 3-17, tr. G.T. Dennis. The ensuing translations of the letters are from G. T. Dennis edition. The passage was also discussed by N. Gaul, "Die Hierarchie der *Theatra*" in *Thomas Magistros*, 27-28.

³¹¹ John Chortasmenos, *Letters* 44 and 47 (Chortasmenos - Hunger), On the circle of *literati* in Thessalonike see also Ch. Dendrinou, *An annotated edition of Emperor Manuel II's treatise On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, PhD dissertation Royal Holloway, p. IV. Also F. Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft*, 323.

³¹² Kydones, *Letters*, 188.16-17: ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἡ πόλις ποιητῶν ἐστὶ καὶ ῥητόρων πατρίς, καὶ πνευμά τι μουσικὸν ἄνωθεν δοκεῖ ταύτη συγκεκληρωῖσθαι.

ἐν δ', οἶμαι, φράσας τὸ πᾶν δηλώσω. ἦν τις τῶν ἀκροατῶν ἀγνοῶν ὅθεν τε τὰ γράμματα καὶ ἀνθ' ὅτου ταῦτα γέγραπται, ὃν τοσόνδε κατέπληξεν ὡς καὶ πείσαι πιστεύειν μὴ τῆς νῦν πενίας τῶν λόγων εἶναι ταῦτα φοράν, ἐμέμνητο δ' ἐνίων παλαιότερων οἷς τὸ λέγειν τοῦνομα καὶ μετὰ θάνατον συντηρεῖ.³¹³

When mentioning the *theatra* organized at court, the emperor is keen to stress that they represented occasions for discussing the literary achievements of certain authors, especially those close to the ruling family. This was the case with some of his addressees: Demetrios Kydones, the emperor's mentor,³¹⁴ Theodore Kaukadenos, the instructor of Manuel's sons,³¹⁵ Demetrios Chrysoloras,³¹⁶ Constantine Asanes,³¹⁷ or Phrangopoulos.³¹⁸ The echoes of such literary debates indicate that the *theatra* were not only occasions of praise but also of criticism: a letter addressed by the emperor to “a certain foolish person” shows that the *theatra* also involved debates with regard to the value and actions of certain authors.³¹⁹

Manuel was not the only late Palaiologan author who described *theatra* in the imperial palace. Other authors also provided evidence of such gatherings organized in the imperial palace where the emperor had a leading role. In a letter addressed to Eustathios, καθολικὸς κριτής, John Chortasmenos praised the emperor for the fact that, during his reign, rhetoric was highly valued in the imperial palace (ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις):

For now wisdom and virtue are held in high esteem, and education took on much space in the imperial palace. νῦν ἡ σοφία τιμᾶται μετὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς, καὶ λόγοι χώραν

³¹³ Manuel, *Letters*, 34. Other mentions of literary gatherings can be found in Manuel's letter 15.5-6 to Kabasilas: “the astonishment of the others when they saw me reading your letter was something to see. They looked at one another nudging all the way glancing sideways at me;” in letter 30 to Constantine Asanes, “everyone who listened to the letter made the observation that it was really sent not to you, but to me;” and in letter 28.18-19: “you always provide the audience (τὸ θέατρον) with a chance to jeer, inasmuch as you present yourself before all as a noble athlete.”

³¹⁴ As it happened often in the case of Demetrios Kydones, e.g. Manuel, *Letters*, 23.

³¹⁵ Manuel, *Letters*, 27 (1395) addressed to Theodore Kaukadenos gives a detailed description of a θέατρον in that period: Τὰ εἰρημένα σοι ἐν μικρῷ μὲν οὐ φαύλω δ' ἀνεγνώσθη θεάτρῳ. ἦσαν δ' οἱ καὶ λέγειν ἐν αὐτῷ σὺν ὥρᾳ ἠπίσταντο καὶ ὧν ἡ ψῆφος ἐν λόγῳ τοῖς περὶ λόγους σπουδάζουσιν· ὧν ὁ μὲν τὴν τάξιν, ὁ δὲ τὸ κάλλος τῶν ὀνομάτων διὰ θαύματος ἤγε, τοὺς δ' ἢ τῶν νοημάτων πυκνότης ἐξέπληττε καὶ τὸ ταῦτα ὄντα τοσαῦτα πάνυ τοι βράχεσιν ὀνόμασι περικλείεσθαι. καὶ ἄλλος ἄλλο τι ἐκρότει καὶ πάντες ἅπανθ' ὁμοῦ. ἐμοὶ δὲ καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ἀριστέ γε πάντα ἐφαίνετο οὐχ ἦττον σιωπῶντι καὶ καθημένῳ ἢ τοῖς ἄλλοις πηδῶσι σὺν ἡδονῇ καὶ βοῇ. ᾧ δὲ μᾶλλον καὶ ὅ μοι κρεῖττον ἔδοξε τῶν σῶν, ὅτι τὸ μέτρον ἐτίμησας. ὑπερβαλόντος γὰρ ἐρῶν οὐ γράψας ἦτου τυχεῖν· πῶς γὰρ οὐ· πᾶσαν ὁμῶς ὑπερβολὴν διαπέφευγας, Manuel, *Letters*, 27.

³¹⁶ In Letter 61.2-3 Manuel suggests that Chrysoloras' *Hundred Letters* were read aloud: “the hundred letters you recently sent to us brought much applause and many words of praise from those who do not know your abilities.”

³¹⁷ Manuel, *Letters*, 30, addressed to Constantine Asanes, includes another description of a *theatron*: “Everyone who listened to it (the letter) made the observation that it was really sent not to you, but to me.”

³¹⁸ Manuel, *Letters*, 24.

³¹⁹ Manuel, *Letters*, 28. 16-20: “falsehood is your ally, fighting along at your side, in your never-ending battle. You always employ it as your model, your trainer and your teacher in preparing you for combat. But then, you always provide the audience with a chance to jeer, inasmuch as you present yourself before all as a noble athlete.”

πολλήν ἐν βασιλείοις ἔχουσι.³²⁰

Another contemporary scholar, Manuel Kalekas, provided a detailed description of a *theatron* in which he participated and in which the emperor played the role of “literary judge” (ὁ βασιλεὺς κριτῆς ἐστι λόγων) of the texts recited there.³²¹

Manuel's role as chief convener of *theatra* during the late Palaiologan period contrasted sharply with his father's, John V, who does not appear to have shown a particular interest in court rhetoric.³²² Arguably, John V's lack of interest in cultivating rhetorical performances at court reflected a conscious choice and an important element of his style of government.³²³ For instance, significantly fewer panegyrics addressed to him survive from his five decade long reign, and there is little evidence about any sustained rhetorical activities at court.³²⁴ Rather, John's wife and Manuel's mother, Helena Kantakouzene, seems to have encouraged literary activities at court.³²⁵ On the contrary, based on the extensive reference to such meetings in his epistolary collection, it appears that Manuel rather wished his contemporaries to regard the *theatra* organized in the imperial palace as elements of his own style of government. As for the final decades of the Palaiologan period the evidence for such meetings also points to a decline: if John VIII seems to have continued his father's efforts and apparently encouraged the creation of a higher education school in Constantinople under the guidance of John Argyropoulos,³²⁶ towards the end of the empire, the *mezas doux* Luke Notaras tried to revive such meetings by gathering fellow intellectuals at his house. Despite exaggerations, on such

³²⁰ Letter 10, Chortasmenos- Hunger, 13-21.

³²¹ Cf. Kalekas, letter 47.32-40: θέατρον οὖν τούτοις καθίζεις ὡς ἀφεστηκῶς πάντων, καὶ νῦν μὲν λέγεις νῦν δὲ ἀκούεις, καὶ ὁ μείζων, ὅτι καὶ τοῖς συγγράμμασι τῶν εὐδοκιμηκότων ἐν λόγοις τὸν νοῦν ἐπιβάλλων ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι δύνη. Τοῦτο γὰρ δῆλον ὡς οὐκ ἄνευ πολλῆς ἔξεως τῆς περὶ τοὺς λόγους προβαίνει. οἷον δὴ καὶ νῦν συνέβη γενέσθαι. ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν ὅσα ἐπῆλθεν ἀποπειρωμένῳ τῆς τοῦ σοφοῦ διανοίας ἐνθυμηθῆναι τὸν τοῦ γράμματος νοῦν συμβιβάζοντι πέμπω. εἰ δ' οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἐπέβαλον, αὐτὸς κρινεῖς, πρὸς γὰρ αὐ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁ βασιλεὺς ἡμῖν καὶ κριτῆς ἐστι λόγων. In another letter addressed to the emperor (letter 34) Kalekas reasserted the emperor's function in the scholarly activities of his time and addressed him as emperor and rhetor: καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν βασιλέα καὶ ῥήτορα φαίνεσθαι, ταῦτά μοι πολλήν ἐν ψυχῇ τὴν εὐνοίαν αὔξει (26-27). See also the last chapter of this dissertation.

³²² Kydones, *Letters*, 340, 5-21. Cf. F. Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft*, 307.

³²³ J. Ryder argues that John V consciously emphasized his actions rather than his words, *The Career and Writings of Demetrius Kydones: A Study of Fourteenth-Century Byzantine Politics, Religion and Society*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, 111.

³²⁴ The panegyrics addressed by Demetrius Kydones are concerned primarily with the emperor's military efforts against the Ottomans. Unlike his predecessor, John Kantakouzenos, John V did not participate in such theological debates.

³²⁵ Kydones, *Letters*, 222.

³²⁶ Between 1425 and 1441 Argyropoulos taught philosophy in a *didaskaleion* sponsored by John VIII. See É. Legrand, *Cent-dix lettres grecques des Francois Filelfe*. Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1892: no.24, 50-51; S. Mergiali, “L'état intellectuel à Constantinople la veille de sa chute,” in *L'enseignement*, 232-234; F. Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft*, 309. Later, under the patronage of Constantine XI, in Constantinople Argyropoulos taught in a so-called *Mouseion* frequented by the descendants of aristocratic families, F. Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft*, 210-212, 309.

occasions, he deplored the general lack of education of his contemporaries.³²⁷

Viewed against the background of court ceremonial, it is not far fetched to assert that the *theatra* organized by Manuel could have constituted attempts to replace older court practices which included the periodical delivery of panegyrics or the presence of an officially appointed orator, a μαῖστωρ (ρήτωρ) τῶν ῥητόρων, a court position which disappeared in the beginning of the fourteenth century. Under Manuel II the situation changed and the emperor became more interested in promoting public literary debates. Thus, I wish to suggest that under the difficult circumstances of the late fourteenth century and early fifteenth century Manuel attempted to fulfill the role of court orator. This happened at least for a certain period of time and especially in the beginning of his reign when many intellectuals trained in rhetoric left Constantinople for Italy.

Therefore, with regard to the nature of rhetorical court activities during Manuel's reign, one can distinguish two major periods: in the first period starting from the 1390s until c.1415 there are no encomia or public addresses to the emperor, except for Manuel's own public orations such as *The seven ethico-political Orations*.³²⁸ In a second phase, particularly during the years 1415-1417, several panegyrics were addressed to the emperor: a panegyric upon the emperor's return from Thessalonike by John Chortasmenos, another panegyric-acclamation by John Chortasmenos in the name of Manuel Asanopoulos, a panegyric by George Gemistos Plethon, a panegyric in the form of a comparison between the present and the ancient rulers by Demetrios Chrysoloras, and an anonymous panegyric preserved in a manuscript comprising Isidore of Kiev's texts.³²⁹ This situation may be explained by several different factors: as I have pointed out in the previous chapter, during the first half of his reign, the Byzantine state faced the real danger of dissolution, both internal and external, and, as a result, the occasions for celebrations by public encomia were very few. It is hard to imagine that during the eight year siege of Constantinople, there could have been taking place any celebratory meetings at the court. Moreover, for half of this period the emperor was away from the capital. Therefore, arguably, during the first decade of Manuel's reign when we have strong evidence about literary meetings, the *theatron* fulfilled the role of public meetings where the

³²⁷ George Scholarios, Letter 5 addressed to Luke Notaras, 31-35, M. Jugie, *Œuvres complètes de Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios*, vol. 4. Paris: Maison de la bonne presse, 1935: 494.

³²⁸ There are indeed several very short speeches such as Manuel's *Psalms on Bayezid*, Demetrios Chrysoloras' *Oration for the Mother of God* or Joseph Bryennios' *Oration at the delivery of the City*, but their number and extent is rather limited and do not specifically address the emperor.

³²⁹ Vat. gr. 914. To these can be added Plethon's *Address on the situation in the Peloponnese* (1416), the three later funeral orations for the emperor by Makarios Makres and two further anonymous authors (1425).

emperor could receive the due praise. At the same time, as it will be pointed out later in this dissertation, he portrayed himself as public orator by delivering several orations.

After 1415 the extant written sources unveil a different picture. As several internal military and diplomatic successes were recorded, such as the rebuilding of the Hexamilion wall in Morea and the peace with the Ottomans under Mehmed I, the public rhetorical performances in the imperial palace became much more frequent. Many of Joseph Bryennios' texts, including his sermons, were performed in the palace, ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ, often in the emperor's presence.³³⁰ Among these public addresses, several texts by Joseph Bryennios, like his *Treatise on reason*³³¹ or some of his homilies,³³² were performed in the emperor's chamber.³³³

Evidence for the intense literary activities around the year 1415 at Manuel's court comes from other sources as well, for the official texts of court rhetoric were not the only texts performed. The satire *Mazaris' Journey to Hades* suggests that the court included a great many individuals who could read and appreciate such a satirical text.³³⁴ Apparently, the emperor himself was aware of Mazaris' satire.³³⁵ We also know of other such texts, like the already discussed pamphlets circulated by Makarios of Ankara during the dispute over Matthew I's patriarchate which mocked the emperor himself.³³⁶ Later on, the so-called *Comedy of Skatablattas* attacking one of the emperor's friends circulated in the court.³³⁷ These texts indicate that the literary circle presided over by Manuel included many court officials educated enough to be able to appreciate different levels of style.³³⁸

Based on such evidence, we can assume that in these instances of late Byzantine public oratory the audience included not only the *connoisseurs* of sophisticated rhetoric but also many individuals holding official positions. The court included not a single type of audience but

³³⁰ Likewise, later on during John VIII Palaiologos' reign, George Scholarios would perform several homilies in the *triklinos*: διδάσκων ἐν τῷ τρικλίνῳ τοῦ βασιλέως, παρουσίας τῆς συγκλήτου καὶ πάσης τῆς πόλεως, τὸν λόγον τὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, Gennadios Scholarios, *Œuvres complètes*, II, 2.1; and τῆς ἱερᾶς θεολογίας διδάσκαλος ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ κεχειροτονόμενος, *Ibid.*, VI, 178, 1.30.

³³¹ Bryennios, *Ta heurethenta*, p. 322.

³³² *Ibid.*, 343.

³³³ According to the *lemma* of many of his orations and homilies (ἐν τῷ βασιλικῷ κοιτῶνι).

³³⁴ See L. Garland, "Mazaris' Journey to Hades: Further Reflections and Reappraisals," *DOP* 61 (2007): 190-200; also, E. Trapp, "Zur Identifizierung der Personen in der Hadesfahrt des Mazaris," *JÖB*, 18 (1969): 95-99.

³³⁵ Like other works of the period, from the references to the audience it appears that *Mazaris' Journey* was intended for performance in a court circle in Constantinople and the Peloponnese. This circle surely included the emperor and the emperor's son, Theodore II, Despot of Morea, as suggested by the echoes of Manuel's own texts and the praise of the Despot's generosity. Cf. Lynda Garland, "Mazaris' Journey" 209.

³³⁶ G.T. Dennis, *The Letters of Manuel II*, 174-176.

³³⁷ N. Oikonomides, "La Comédie de Katablattas: Invective byzantine du XVe siècle," *Diptycha*, 3 (1982): 1-97.

³³⁸ Isidore of Kiev's letter addressed to Manuel lists the following individuals among the members of audience of the *Funeral oration* recited at the commemoration in Mystras in 1409: clerics, *gerousia*, the Despot and the *demos*. (Letter 5, ed. by W. Regel in *Analecta Byzantino-Russica*, Sankt Petersburg, 1891, 67.1-20).

many. This situation was partly reflected by the fact that the audience of *theatra* were divided in matters of literary taste, as testified by Manuel himself: some people preferred the order of the composition, others elegant wording, others brevity, and others measure.³³⁹

2.2. The profile of the literary court

Even if the *theatra* and other rhetorical performances attracted a wide range of participants with different social or cultural backgrounds, Manuel entertained closer relations with only a limited number of learned individuals.³⁴⁰ Epistolary and manuscript evidence indicate that these individuals formed a group which can be defined as a literary circle.³⁴¹ Even if the validity of this term in Byzantium has been questioned,³⁴² arguably, in this case the group of scholars which included Manuel himself can be described as a *circle* with tightly connected members. In the following section I will try to establish the configuration of this circle and, inasmuch as possible, its functions and the ways it was used by its members. This section is not intended to offer a prosopographical study, since such investigations had already been thoroughly carried out in previous scholarship.³⁴³ Instead, I will limit myself to first presenting several relevant aspects unveiling the status of the members of this scholarly network, the points where their biographies intersected, and the relations these individuals established with the emperor. These pieces of evidence will support the analysis of the degree of connectivity of the network and will help to better draw the contours of the self image the emperor fashioned for himself within this network and outside of it.

Certainly, there were many variations with regard to the configuration of this group in

³³⁹ Manuel's letter 24 addressed to Phrangopoulos.

³⁴⁰ Among the educated individuals contemporary with Manuel, yet not appearing to have been integrated in Manuel's circle can also be counted Makarios metropolitan of Ankara and Symeon of Thessalonike, who, until 1416, resided at the Byzantine court. They both expressed views that downplayed the emperor's authority (See ch. 7). In this category can further be included Matthew I, Patriarch of Constantinople, Bessarion, or George Scholarios, who started their careers towards the end of Manuel's life.

³⁴¹ The approach of the group of *literati* gathered around the emperor in terms of a cohesive literary circle was followed by several scholars: G.T. Dennis, *The Letters of Manuel II*, ix, I. Ševčenko, "Society and intellectual life in the fourteenth century," 3, H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, Munich: C. H. Beck, 1978, vol. 2, 157; S. Mergiali, "L'état intellectuel durant le regne de Manuel II Paleologue," in *L'enseignement et les lettrés pendant l'époque des Paleologues*; F. Tinnfeld, "Gelehrtenzirkel," in *Die Gesellschaft*, 307.

³⁴² M. Mullett, "Aristocracy and Patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople," in M. Angold, *Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII century*, Oxford: B.A.R., 1984, 174.

³⁴³ E.g. G.T. Dennis, "Prosopography," in *The Letters of Manuel II*, xxvii-lx. F. Tinnfeld discussed the structure and social position of different groups of late Byzantine scholars, "Die Gruppe der literarisch Gebildeten in der spätbyzantinischen Gesellschaft," in *Die Gesellschaft*, 221-384. However, for the purposes of the present dissertation, these discussions are insufficient because they neither take into account all the intellectuals with whom Manuel had contacts, nor do they investigate the different types of relations established among them.

terms of the social status of its members. Many of them belonged to the clergy while others were laymen; some held strong theological convictions, either in favor of the Latin Church, or defended an Orthodox position; some were members of the aristocracy while others came from not so well-off families and had to teach grammar and rhetoric in order to earn their living.³⁴⁴ Due to such variations in status, it is difficult to reconstruct a general portrait of the Byzantine scholar at the turn of the fourteenth century or to fully track the contours of the network they formed. However, it is noticeable that in general, despite the decrease of the emperor's influence, many scholars continued to depend exclusively on the ruler's benevolence.³⁴⁵ The evidence provided by the text of *Mazaris' journey to Hades* or John Chortasmenos' *Ethical counsels* (Ἠθικὰ παραγγέλματα) provides the picture of many learned individuals devoid of material resources and forced to participate in the political struggles of the court in order to maintain a certain social position.³⁴⁶

With regard to their strength of connection with the emperor, the members of Manuel's circle can be organized on different levels. On the one hand several contemporary individuals with intellectual preoccupations had close ties with the emperor and yet their connection with Manuel in matters of scholarly pursuits is not so well attested. Among the members of this category we can count the copyist Stephanos, *oikeios* of the emperor and later on appointed metropolitan of Medeia in Thrace, George Baiophoros, another copyist who resided in the monastery of Petra, and Demetrios Pepagomenos, the emperor's secretary and a good friend of John Chortasmenos and Theodore II Palaiologos.³⁴⁷ In this category can also be included Manuel Holobolos, *grammatikos*, who accompanied the emperor to the West and was a highly educated individual, addressed by Joseph Bryennios as philosopher and rhetorician.³⁴⁸ Since they had court-related positions, it can be assumed that they were aware of the emperor's literary activities at the court. Still, unlike in other cases, there is no evidence of their direct involvement in the production and circulation of his texts or in assuming a prominent role in the court literary activities of the time. In addition, unlike in other cases, there is no evidence, as for instance letters, to suggest that they could have belonged to the emperor's close circle of friends.

³⁴⁴ See the Appendix 3 of the chapter. Partial lists of Palaiologan *literati* were also compiled by I. Ševčenko, "Society and Intellectual Life," and F. Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft*, 371-386.

³⁴⁵ Ševčenko, "Society and Intellectual Life," 4.

³⁴⁶ *Mazaris' Journey*, 32 and Chortasmenos-Hunger, 238-242.

³⁴⁷ Chortasmenos-Hunger, letters 43, 44, 47, and 48.

³⁴⁸ Joseph Bryennios, *Letters*, 14. N. Tomadakes, "Ἐκ τῆς βυζαντινῆς ἐπιστολογραφίας. Ἰωσήφ μοναχοῦ τοῦ Βρυεννίου Ἐπιστολαὶ Δ' καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν Γ'," *ΕΕΒΣ* 46 (1983-1986).

On the other hand, many individuals corresponded intensely with the emperor and, based on epistolary evidence, it seems that they maintained stronger connections. These *literati* had a considerably more intense activity which involved the production and circulation of texts as well as an active participation in literary activities at the court. In terms of social status they were better positioned than those in the first category. Within this group we can distinguish two major subgroups, or, to use the social network analysis terminology, clusters whose members forged their ties among themselves based on the consensus over religious doctrinal issues: pro-Latin or strictly Orthodox.³⁴⁹ Although the debate over a Church union decreased in intensity in the second half of the fourteenth century, the dispute was far from settled.³⁵⁰ Sometimes this debate took acute forms, as in 1396, when, after a Church synod, most pro-Latin scholars were forced to go into exile or had to reaffirm their Orthodox faith.³⁵¹ Later on in 1422, during the negotiations for a council that would discuss a proposition of a union with Rome, another conflict broke out between the supporters of such a move led by the co-emperor John VIII and the Orthodox party grouped around the monastery of Charsianites.³⁵² Thus, within the imperial literary circle a cluster of individuals with a pro-Latin orientation acquired a strong profile especially in the first decade of Manuel's reign.³⁵³ They were connected by their tendency to participate in polemics with the Orthodox majority and by promoting on various channels the Catholic doctrine and a sympathy for Latins. Most of them were converts to Catholicism and, as a consequence, they were able to establish more easily connections in the West or with the Italians living in Constantinople.

This group consisted of several individuals most of whom had important administrative duties. By far the most prominent member of this group was **Demetrios Kydones** (1324-1396) whose political role in the second half of the fourteenth century can hardly be

³⁴⁹ In studying the different groups of late Byzantine *literati*, scholars have used as major criteria the social status and the dichotomy ecclesiastic vs. lay (I. Ševčenko, "Society and Intellectual Life" and Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft*, 365-373). However, these criteria of division among the members of Manuel's circle are not entirely operational here.

³⁵⁰ Especially after the Ottomans' siege which ended in 1403 when many aristocrats became more oriented towards the West. See previous chapter.

³⁵¹ On the intense debates and negotiations over Orthodoxy and Church union see G. Patacsi, 'Joseph Bryennios et les discussions sur un concile d'union (1414-1431)', *Kleronomia* 5.1 (1973), 73-96; M. Chivu, 'Η ένωση των ἐκκλησιῶν κατὰ τὸν Ἰωσήφ Βρυέννιον', PhD dissertation, University of Thessalonike, 1985; P. Gounaridis, "Επιλογές μιας κοινωνικής ομάδας," in Ch. Angelide, ed., *Το Βυζάντιο ώριμο για αλλαγές: επιλογές, ευαισθησίες και τρόποι έκφρασης από τον ενδέκατο στον δέκατο πέμπτο αιώνα*, Athens: Byzantine Research Institute, 2004.

³⁵² G. Patacsi, "Joseph Bryennios," 75.

³⁵³ The Latinophiles in Palaiologan Byzantium formed a strong group already in the second half of the fourteenth century. During the reign of John VIII they became even more influential. See F. Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft*, 330-344; I. Djuric, *Le crépuscule de Byzance*, 121-136.

overestimated.³⁵⁴ Owing to his expertise in diplomacy, which included the proficiency in Latin, his actions were essential during the years of John V's attempts to approach the western states and the papacy in order to acquire support against the Turks.³⁵⁵ Although he resigned from the imperial service in 1371 he continued to represent the Byzantine interests in Italy until his death in 1396.³⁵⁶ Kydones was not only an influential politician but also a prolific writer. His theological position favorable to the Catholic faith, and opposed to Hesychasts prompted him to translate assiduously theological texts from Latin into Greek.³⁵⁷ An important section of his rhetorical work consists of political, panegyric, and deliberative orations, in which he defended his pro-western stance with regard to the solutions of safeguarding Byzantium in the second half of the fourteenth century.³⁵⁸

Kydones' disciples, **Manuel Kalekas** (1360-1410), **Maximos Chrysoberges**, and **Manuel Chrysoloras** (1370-1415), followed closely in the steps of their mentor. The first one, a teacher of grammar and rhetoric in the 1380s, became increasingly involved in defending and promoting the Catholic faith in Constantinople.³⁵⁹ He composed several theological treatises including an apology addressed to the emperor Manuel II in which he defended his conversion. After a sojourn in Crete and Italy where he drafted theological treatises in favor of the Catholic faith, he retired to a Dominican monastery on the island of Lesbos. Likewise, Maximos

³⁵⁴ For much of his political career, owing to his family's connections, he held the position of *mesazōn* of emperors John VI and John V (1354-1370). A member of a Thessalonican family, he came to Constantinople at an early age and was employed by John Kantakouzenos, a friend of his father. See Demetrios Kydones, *First Oration addressed to John Kantakouzenos*, in R.-J. Loenertz, *Correspondence*, 6-7.

³⁵⁵ In the 1360s Kydones learned Latin with a Dominican monk and thus managed to create multiple connections among the Latins of the region. Kydones is credited with having decisively influenced John V to convert to Catholicism in 1370 while in Rome, O. Halecki, *Un empereur de Byzance à Rome*, 98.

³⁵⁶ In 1391 he received the Venetian citizenship, R.-J. Loenertz, "Demetrius Cydones, citoyen de Venise," *EO* 37 (1938): 125-126.

³⁵⁷ E.g. the letter addressed by Kydones to Empress Helena Kantakouzene presenting a translation from Augustin, Loenertz, *Correspondence*, letter 34. Kydones also translated from Rinaldo da Monte Croce and Thomas Aquinas.

³⁵⁸ *A Monody on the Dead of Thessalonike*, composed after the Zealot uprising of 1345 in Thessalonike (PG 109, 640-652); *Two Orations for John Kantakouzenos*- both dating to 1347, when Kantakouzenos established himself in Constantinople. The *First Oration* stands as a plea to Kantakouzenos for support based on Kydones family's association with Kantakouzenos, and the troubles they have endured. The *Second Oration* is more strictly an oration: it gives a short, selective review of the recent events of the civil war, framed within an encomium of Kantakouzenos as the new emperor; *Oratio pro subsidio Latinorum* (1366); *Oratio de non reddenda Callipoli* (1371); *Oratio ad Iohannem Palaeologum*, shortly after John V's return to Constantinople in October 1371: Demetrios is aware of John's disfavor, which he sees as the result of John's lending credence to Kydones' opponents. He asks to be released from his duties in imperial service, and for permission to travel to Italy, to continue his studies and represent John V's interests to the pope. The speech has several levels: it is framed around Kydones' scholarly interests but also discusses his career in John V's service and his theological stance; *Four Apologias*: I- discusses the development of Kydones' interest in Latin language and thought; II- defense of sincerity in adopting Catholic faith; III. *De contemnenda morte* (1371) a philosophical discourse; IV. *Defense of Thomas Aquinas against Nil Kabasilas* (1373). Cf. J. Ryder, *Kydones*, 42-47.

³⁵⁹ In 1396 after the synod organized by Patriarch Matthew I intended to reaffirm the Orthodox principles, Kalekas was forced to leave Constantinople and take refuge to Pera, Kalekas, *Letters*, 21.

Chrysoberges³⁶⁰ converted to Catholicism and entered the Dominican monastery of Pera in 1396. It was Kydones who first introduced him in the circle of Manuel Palaiologos whom Chrysoberges accompanied in exile on the island of Lemnos (1387-1389).³⁶¹ He was mostly active as theologian authoring several theological treatises.³⁶²

The activities of Manuel Chrysoloras, a well known late Byzantine scholar, were primarily tied to the Byzantine immigration in the West in the early fifteenth century.³⁶³ In 1396 he received a job offer from Florence where a teaching position of Greek language had been set up by Colluccio Salutati, a friend of Demetrios Kydones. Yet, after five years of teaching he entered the emperor's diplomatic service, and in the following decades he dedicated himself almost entirely to the activities of imperial emissary to European courts. In 1403, Manuel II replaced Ilario Doria with Manuel Chrysoloras in the diplomatic mission of recovering several sums of money which Western rulers owed to the Byzantine emperor.³⁶⁴ From this position he undertook long journeys to most western European countries: Italy, France, England, Spain, or Portugal. In time, he acquired a strong political reputation and became acquainted with important leaders of the time, such as King Sigismund; Chrysoloras even tried to mediate between the king and Venice, two of the key players in the fight against the Ottomans. He also had a significant role in the gathering of the council of Constance (1415) where he represented the Byzantine interests in a Church union.³⁶⁵

In addition to the above mentioned four individuals we can count two other, less prominent members of this particular cluster who interacted to some degree with the emperor. Chrysoloras' nephew, John,³⁶⁶ was also a teacher and a diplomat in the emperor's service. While in Constantinople, he taught Greek to Guarino of Verona (1403-1408) and afterwards took part in some of the emperor's diplomatic missions in Italy.³⁶⁷ Another learned

³⁶⁰ Giovanni Mercati, *Notizie Di Procoro E Demetrio Cidone, Manuele Caleca E Teodoro Meliteniota: Ed Altri Appunti Per La Storia Della Teologia E Della Letteratura Bizantina Del Secolo XIV*, Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1931, 480-483.

³⁶¹ Kydones, *Letters* 394, and 387.

³⁶² G. Mercati, *Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidone, Manuele Caleca e Teodoro Meliteniota*, 481-483.

³⁶³ Chrysoloras' career has so far been treated in several monographs and extensive studies: Cammelli, *I dotti bizantini e le origine dell'umanesimo*, R. Maisano, *Manuele Crisolora e il ritorno del Greco in Occidente*, and the recent monograph by L. T. Wickert, *Manuel Chrysoloras (ca. 1350-1415). Eine Biographie des byzantinischen Intellektuellen vor dem Hintergrund der hellenistischen Studien in der italienischen Renaissance*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2006.

³⁶⁴ Cf. the official letter issued by Manuel II when in Venice (March 1403) and edited by Th. Ganchou, "Ilario Doria, le gambros Génois de Manuel II Palaiologos: beau-frère ou gendre?" *Études Byzantines* 66 (2008): 90-93.

³⁶⁵ His direct involvement in the diplomatic attempts of Church union started in 1405 with his conversion to catholicism. At his death in 1415, his friend Pier Paolo Vergerio expressed the opinion that Manuel Chrysoloras was fit for the office of Pope, L.T. Wickert, *Manuel Chrysoloras. Eine biographie*, 118.

³⁶⁶ Mentioned in Manuel's letter 56.

³⁶⁷ In February 1410 he arrived at the papal court in Bologna as the emperor's envoy; then he had missions to Morea and to King Sigismund.

anti-Palamite, Demetrios Skaranos (1370s-1426),³⁶⁸ a member of the pro-Latin party also participated in various diplomatic missions. Especially after 1410 he traveled extensively to Rome and Florence where he finally settled.³⁶⁹

Several elements offered cohesion to this group of Latinophrones. They all regarded Kydones as their mentor, *didaskalos*, and protector due to his connections in the political and scholarly spheres.³⁷⁰ At the end of the fourteenth century, they participated in common diplomatic actions, such as the attempt to recover the assets of John Laskaris Kalopheros, an old friend of Kydones,³⁷¹ assets also claimed by Venice.³⁷² As a distinctive group in Constantinople they also enjoyed the protection of a highly positioned courtier, Constantine Asanes, *theios* (uncle), of the emperor.³⁷³ In 1396, due to his pro-Latin sympathies Asanes was forced to confirm his Orthodox faith at a synod dedicated to reasserting the particular doctrines of Orthodoxy. Asanes was the emperor's uncle and, according to Manuel's letters, was held in great respect by Manuel who also appreciated his literary achievements.³⁷⁴ At the same time, they all worked together on the long term project of translating the Dominican liturgy into Greek. It appears that in the framework of this project, each of them took the responsibility of translating a section of the text.³⁷⁵ Finally, they all enjoyed close relations with the Latins in Constantinople or with the humanists in Italy. Among Manuel Chrysoloras' students can be identified many of the most distinguished humanists of the early Quattrocento: Guarino of Verona, Leonardo Bruni, Palla Strozzi, Roberto Rossi, Jacopo Angelli da Scarperia, Uberto Decembrio, and Paolo Vergerio.³⁷⁶ For all these scholars Chrysoloras had become the *eruditissimus et suavissimus litterarum Graecarum praeceptor*, in the words of Jacopo Angelli.³⁷⁷ Some of them appear also among Manuel Kalekas' correspondents or John Chrysoloras' friends.³⁷⁸ Even Manuel himself regarded the Byzantine Latinophrones as a cohesive group, for in his treatise *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, the emperor specifically

³⁶⁸ Manuel's letter 49 suggests a close relation between Skaranos and Manuel Chrysoloras.

³⁶⁹ G.T. Dennis, "Prosopography," in *The Letters of Manuel II*, xxxvi.

³⁷⁰ Kalekas, *Letters*, 4. 14-15, σὺ <Κυδώνης> δὲ ἄρα τὰ λαμπρὰ τῶν ἄλλων εἰς σεαυτὸν κεράσας ἔχει καὶ πολλὰ πολλαχόθεν εὐδαιμονίας εἶδη προβάλλη, μαθητῆς μὲν κοινῇ τῶν παλαιῶν ἀπάντων γενόμενος, διδάσκαλος δὲ ἐκάστου, μηδενὸς αὐτῶν διὰ πάντων ἐλθόντος.

³⁷¹ Kydones, *Letters*, 37 and 73.

³⁷² D. Jacoby, "Jean Lascaris Calophéros, Chypre et la Morée," *REB* 26 (1978): 190-193.

³⁷³ Cf. Kydones' letter 71 addressed to Constantine Asanes, and Kalekas, *Letters*, 73-77.

³⁷⁴ Manuel, *Letters*, 30. On the contrary, Asanes is mocked for his verbiage in *Mazaris' Journey*, 115

³⁷⁵ T. Violante, *La Provincia Domenicana di Grecia*, Rome: Istituto Storico Domenicano, 1999, 202-205.

³⁷⁶ I. Thomson, "Manuel Chrysoloras and the Early Italian Renaissance," *GRBS* 7 (1966): 63-82.

³⁷⁷ Cf. G. Cammeli, *I dotti bizantini*, 180.

³⁷⁸ Demetrios Skaranos enjoyed the friendship of many Italians who offered him a shelter in Florence, Cammeli, *Manuele Crisolora*, 66.

dedicated two chapters to the discussion of attitudes of the Byzantine converts to Catholicism.³⁷⁹

Another distinctive cluster in Manuel's circle consisted of individuals who upheld a stricter Orthodox position in religious affairs. Several prominent figures stand out in this group. **Nicholas Kabasilas Chamaetos** (1323-1396) the theologian known for his writings inspired by Hesychasm which included sermons and theological treatises. Through his mother's family, Kabasilas was connected to the imperial dynasty, especially the emperors John VI and John V. **Patriarch Euthymios** (1340-1416), embraced the monastic life at an early age and, in the 1390s, became abbot of the Stoudios monastery. Upon the death of Matthew I in 1410, he was appointed patriarch, a position which he held until 1416, despite several disputes with the emperor.³⁸⁰ **Gabriel**, became metropolitan of Thessalonike after the death of Isidore Glabas in 1397 and succeeded in maintaining good relations with the Ottomans during the critical years of occupation. Previously, in 1384, he had left Thessalonike under Ottoman siege during Manuel's rebellion. In the 1390s he became involved in the controversy over the deposition of Patriarch Matthew but defended Makarios of Ankara's position. As metropolitan he was active in preaching, composing more than sixty homilies.³⁸¹ **Joseph Bryennios** (1350-1438), another member of the Orthodox group, began his ecclesiastical career in Crete as priest between 1382 and 1402 and then moved to Constantinople by the end of the Ottoman blockade. While living in Venetian held Crete he engaged in theological debates with the supporters of Catholicism. As a monk in the monastery of Stoudios, and later on in Charsianites, he acquired a high reputation as theologian and soon began to deliver homilies in the imperial palace in the presence of the emperor's officials and invited ambassadors. Towards 1420s, Bryennios³⁸² held a high position at Manuel's court, influencing the decisions affecting the ecclesiastical affairs.³⁸³ In 1422, due to his intransigent position vis-à-vis the union of the Churches, he convinced the emperor to reject an advantageous proposition of union from Pope Martin V.³⁸⁴

³⁷⁹ Ch. Dendrinos, *An annotated critical edition of the treatise On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, 111-112.

³⁸⁰ In 1397 he was candidate to patriarchate. He took sides with Makarios of Ankara in the dispute with Matthew I and opposed the Emperor when he wanted to install his favorite metropolitan.

³⁸¹ H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reiches*, Munich: Beck, 1959, 777. V. Laurent, "Le métropolitain de Thessalonique Gabriel (1397 - 1416/19) et le couvent de la Néα Μονή," in *Hellenika* 13(1954): 242-255.

³⁸² H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, 749-750.

³⁸³ Sphrantzes recounts that Bryennios was one of the three persons present when Manuel read his will: ἐπίτροποι δὲ ὄσιν ὁ πνευματικὸς αὐτοῦ ὁ εἰς τῶν Ξανθοπούλων Μακάριος ὁ ἐξ Ἰουδαίων, ὁ διδάσκαλος Ἰωσήφ ὁ εἰς τοῦ Χαρσιανίτου, καὶ ἐγώ. Sphrantzes, *Memoirs*, 15.2.

³⁸⁴ In 1419-1420 he vehemently opposed the attempts of Church union, when Antonio de Massa came to Constantinople for negotiations and Theodore Chrysoberges and Nicholas Eudaimonioiannes traveled to Pope Martin V, R.-J. Loenertz, "Pour la chronologie des oeuvres de Joseph Bryennios," *REB* 7 (1949): 73-75.

Bryennios' literary output consists mostly of homilies and apologetic theological treatises, some of them directed against the Latins or the Muslims.³⁸⁵ Yet, despite his inclinations for militant theology, he possessed a large collection of books³⁸⁶ and dealt with other rhetorical genres as well: he composed court orations, a monody on the emperor Manuel, and texts of moral admonition.³⁸⁷ **Makarios Makres** (1370-1431) came to Constantinople from Mt. Athos where he lived as a monk. In Constantinople he became abbot of the monastery of Pantokrator (1423), later on he was appointed to the position of *megas protosynkellos* (1430) and even participated in the negotiations for Church union. Like other contemporaries he was a prolific writer authoring sermons against Islam, theological treatises, as well as a funeral oration for his spiritual father, David, a *hieromonk* of Mt. Athos.³⁸⁸ The latter was also regarded by the emperor as his spiritual father. Manuel met him in Thessalonike in 1415 and portrayed him as a close confidant in both religious and political matters.³⁸⁹

Apart from these individuals, Manuel's epistolary collection records other individuals with strict Orthodox views. Manuel Pothos,³⁹⁰ a friend of Joseph Bryennios,³⁹¹ held the position of judge and high administrative official in Constantinople around 1400.³⁹² In 1408 he accompanied the emperor to the Peloponnese. Although there is not much information on his activities, Manuel appreciated his literary achievements, also known by Theodore Potamios, Demetrios Chrysoloras and Kydones.³⁹³ In his turn, Theodore Potamios was an old rhetorician and supporter of Hesychasm about whom little is known except for his literary skills displayed in a short epistolary collection (eleven letters) comprising letters addressed to various people in the emperor's literary circle.³⁹⁴

³⁸⁵ Most of his theological texts were reused in his homiletic pieces: H. Bazini, "Une première édition des œuvres de Joseph Bryennios: les Traités adressés aux Crétois," *REB* 62 (2004): 83-132. She differentiates between two editions of the author's texts: the corpus of texts written in Crete and the Constantinopolitan homilies.

³⁸⁶ In his testament preserved as letter 30 in his collection Joseph Bryennios lists the contents of his collection. It comprised books of grammar, rhetoric, philosophy (Aristotle), geography. N. Tomadakes, "Ἐκ τῆς βυζαντινῆς ἐπιστολογραφίας. Ἰωσήφ μοναχοῦ τοῦ Βρυεννίου Ἐπιστολαὶ Α' καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν Γ'," *ΕΕΒΣ* 46 (1983-1986): 283-360.

³⁸⁷ H. Bazini, "Une première édition des œuvres de Joseph Bryennios," 87-93.

³⁸⁸ A monody for hieromonk David by Makarios Makres is preserved, A. Argyriou, *Μακαρίου τοῦ Μακροῦ συγγράμματα*. Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Research, 1996: 227-234. See also S. Kapetanaki, *An annotated critical edition of Makarios Makres' Life of St. Maximos Kausokalyves, enkomion of the Fathers of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, Consolation to a sick person, or reflections for endurance, Verses on the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos, Letter to hieromonk Symeon, A supplication on barren olive trees*, PhD dissertation, University of London, 2001, 1-103.

³⁸⁹ See Manuel, *Letters*, 68 addressed to hieromonks David and Damianos.

³⁹⁰ Manuel, *Letters*, 35 and 42.

³⁹¹ Joseph Bryennios, *Letters*, 13.

³⁹² In a letter written in 1401 from Paris, Manuel Palaiologos suggested that Manuel Pothos held an administrative position in Constantinople (letter 42).

³⁹³ Theodore Potamios' letter 8, G.T. Dennis, "The Letters of Theodore Potamios," in G.T. Dennis ed., *Byzantium and the Franks 1350-1420*. London: Variorum Reprints, 1982: 9-10; Cf. Manuel's letter 35.

³⁹⁴ Letter 47: Potamios lived in Thessalonike about the same time with Demetrios Chrysoloras, 1403-1408. He

The members of this *Orthodox group* were connected mostly by friendship as their intense correspondence indicates. An example is the epistolary collection of Theodore Potamios. Their close relations are reflected by the fact that Gabriel of Thessalonike, Euthymios the Patriarch, Makarios Makres, and Joseph Bryennios collaborated in writing several texts, as suggested by the palaeographical analysis of contemporary manuscripts.³⁹⁵ They were also connected by the fact that most of them held ecclesiastical positions and were actively involved in preaching or elaborating theological treatises defending Orthodox principles against Latins or Muslims.³⁹⁶

Yet, even if the members of these two clusters were divided over their religious persuasions and even if the *Orthodox group* seems to have prevailed at the synod of 1396, they remained connected among themselves. In one of his letters, Bryennios alludes to the intense exchanges between Constantinopolitan intellectuals in the years following the end of the Ottoman siege: ὁμιλῶ μετὰ φιλοσόφων, οὐδεὶς τῶν βαρβάρων ἀνθρώπων εἰς πρόσωπόν με ὄρᾳ.³⁹⁷ Another letter addressed to Maximos Chrysoberges, part of their larger epistolary exchange, suggests that Bryennios and Chrysoberges had a friendly relationship despite their polemic reflected in several of their texts.³⁹⁸ Kydones also expressed admiration for Nicholas Kabasilas and Euthymios, the future patriarch. Moreover, although on many occasions the emperor expressed his Orthodox views, he equally admired the Latin doctrine and rites. In one of his letters Manuel describes the Catholic rites in positive terms,³⁹⁹ just as in his treatise *On the procession of the Holy Spirit*, addressed to a French theologian, he did not put forward a polemic against the Latins but rather produced an explanation of Orthodox principles.⁴⁰⁰

Alongside the members of these two distinct parties, Manuel's literary circle included other *literati* who held positions at the imperial court. One of them was **Demetrios Chrysoloras**, who, for much of his career served John VII: first, in the 1390s in Selymbria, afterwards in Constantinople when John moved to replace his uncle (1399-1403), and finally in Thessalonike (1403-1408) as *mesazōn*.⁴⁰¹ After John VII's death he moved back to Constantinople

corresponded with other members of Manuel's literary circle as well: Kydones (letter 1), Pothos (2, 3, 4, 5), Plethon (7), Isidore (9). Cf. G.T. Dennis, *Letters of Manuel*, Introduction, XLVIII-LII.

³⁹⁵ Ch. Dendrinios, "Co-operation and friendship among Byzantine scholars in the circle of Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus (1391-1425) as reflected in their autograph manuscripts," (<http://www.mml.cam.ac.uk/greek/grammarofmedievalgreek/unlocking/html/Dendrinios.html>) 13-17.

³⁹⁶ G. Patacsi, "Joseph Bryennios," 73-96.

³⁹⁷ Bryennios, *Letters* 23.10-11 addressed to a certain John.

³⁹⁸ Bryennios, *Letters*, 10.

³⁹⁹ See letter 55 addressed to Manuel Chrysoloras.

⁴⁰⁰ Ch. Dendrinios, "Introduction," in *An annotated critical edition of the treatise On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, 3-9.

⁴⁰¹ Not much is known about his office in Thessalonike. In 1407 we find him in a delegation sent by John VII from

to Manuel's court. In 1409 he also participated as member of the senate and the emperor's *oikeios* in the trial of Makarios of Ankara.⁴⁰² Finally, Chrysoloras took part as imperial delegate in the synod of April-May 1416 which elected a new patriarch and clarified the emperor's rights in the church.⁴⁰³ In religious matters, Chrysoloras held an anti-Latin position which he made known in several theological treatises including a dialog against Demetrios Kydones commented on by the emperor himself.⁴⁰⁴ His rhetorical skills were also highly praised by the contemporary *literati*,⁴⁰⁵ for he composed several homilies, a panegyric oration for emperor Manuel II titled *A comparison between the ancient rulers and the emperor of today* (Σύγκρισις παλαιῶν ἀρχόντων καὶ νέου, τοῦ νῦν αὐτοκράτορος), letters, and rhetorical exercises. He displayed his skills of court orator in 1403, a year after the battle of Ankara, when he performed an oration on the delivery of Constantinople.⁴⁰⁶

Like many of his educated contemporaries, **John Chortasmenos** (1370-1439), having no aristocratic origins, acted as a teacher and writer in Constantinople for a long time. He was also an active collector of manuscripts: twenty-four manuscripts copied or acquired by him survive from his library.⁴⁰⁷ Yet, unlike other scholars of his time, Chortasmenos, did not travel outside Constantinople, in search for a better life or for the company of humanists.⁴⁰⁸ Some of his pupils, like Mark Eugenikos and Bessarion received important positions at court. For much of his life, from 1391 until 1415, he held the position of notary at the patriarchal chancery.⁴⁰⁹ His literary preoccupations reflected the activity of a usual educated Byzantine author who tried to approach a large set of genres and topics: poems, *ekphraseis*, philosophy, logic, astronomy, panegyric orations, *epitaphioi*, hagiography, and gnomic literature.⁴¹⁰

Thessalonike to Constantinople, F. Dölger, *Regesten*, 77, no. 3207.

⁴⁰² During the synod discussing the accusations of Makarios of Ankara and Matthew of Medeia, Demetrios Chrysoloras spoke in favor of reconciliations between the different parties involved in the conflict. V. Laurent, *Trisépiscopat*, 134, 136.

⁴⁰³ Silvester Syropoulos, *Memoirs*, 134, 136.

⁴⁰⁴ *Dialogue on Demetrios Kydones' Antirrhetic against Neilos Kabasilas*: The dialog features as interlocutors Nicholas Kabasilas and Thomas Aquinas. The dialog is being edited by V. Pasiourtides (Royal Holloway). (<http://www.rhul.ac.uk/Hellenic-Institute/studying/Thesis.html>). The other text is "A Summarizing Oration against the Latins" in S. Lambros, "Die Werke des Demetrios Chrysoloras," *BZ* 3 (1894): 599-601.

⁴⁰⁵ John Chortasmenos, Theodore Potamios, and Manuel II: G. T. Dennis, *Manuel II. Letters. Appendices*, Potamios' letter 8, 226. Chortasmenos-Hunger, 90-94. Manuel, *Letters*, 45.

⁴⁰⁶ P. Gautier, "Action de grâces de Demetrios Chrysoloras à la Theotocos pour l'anniversaire de la bataille d'Ankara (28 juillet 1403)," *REB*, 19 (1961): 340-357.

⁴⁰⁷ H. Hunger, "Handschriftsammler und Kopist," in Chortasmenos-Hunger, 20-29. On Chortasmenos' scribal activity see also P. Schreiner, "Johannes Chortasmenos als Restaurator des Vat. gr. 2226," in *Scrittura e Civiltà* 7: (1983), 193-199.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 13-20.

⁴⁰⁹ In 1415 he entered a monastery and, in 1431, became metropolitan of Selymbria.

⁴¹⁰ In a letter addressed to Theodore, notary in Constantinople, Chortasmenos indicates his knowledge and interest in rhetoric and poetry: ῥητορικῆς μὲν σχημάτων ποικιλία καὶ νοημάτων ἐξαλλαγὴ πυκνότης τε

Manuel's epistolary collection records several other individuals with literary preoccupations who had close connections with the emperor as well. **Michael Balsamon** was *didaskalos tōn didaskalōn* who in the course of the second half of the fourteenth century acquired a high position at the patriarchate and became *protekdikos*. In June 1400 Balsamon was promoted to *megas chartophylax*,⁴¹¹ and at Patriarch Matthew I's request, Balsamon also instructed the notary John Chortasmenos in geometry. **Isidore**, later cardinal of Kiev (1390-1463), started his career in a monastery in the Peloponnese where he resided during most of Manuel's reign as metropolitan, after his studies in Constantinople. Much of the information concerning Isidore's activity dates from the period after Manuel's death and therefore is irrelevant for my purposes here.⁴¹² His written work consists mainly of theological treatises on the union of the Churches, but also of letters and panegyrics addressed to Manuel's son, John VIII.⁴¹³ **George Gemistos Plethon** spent several years in Constantinople before leaving for the Peloponnese where, apparently, he had connections with the Palaiologan family attested by the argyrobulls Theodore II Palaiologos issued in which the Despot awarded the scholar and his sons with pieces of land and villages in Morea: Kastron, Chōra Phanariou, and Vrysis.⁴¹⁴ **Constantine Ivankos**, probably a native of Thessalonike was Manuel's instructor in rhetoric during the 1360s and 1370s.⁴¹⁵ Ivankos was a respected rhetorician himself and prominent in legal and governmental circles. His extant writings are a monody on Isidore Glabas (1396) and a letter to Simon protos of Mt. Athos who criticized some of his writings; another student of Ivankos was Katadokeinos-Katablattas lampooned in a pamphlet composed between 1423 and 1430. **Triboles** belonged with certitude to the literary circle of the emperor while residing in Thessalonike (1382-1387), as indicated by Manuel's letter 9. He also appears in the letters of Kydones as secretary at the Court of Theodore I in Mystras.⁴¹⁶

ἐνθυμημάτων μετὰ ῥυθμοῦ τε καὶ ἀναπαύσεως ἐκάστῳ μέρει προσηκούσης τὰ οἷον οὕτωςί πως εἰπεῖν χαρακτηριστικά τε καὶ ἰδιαίτατα, ποιητικὴ δὲ ὀρίζεται μάλιστα μέτρῳ καὶ ταῖς τούτου διαφοραῖς (Letter 13, Chortasmenos-Hunger, 164).

⁴¹¹ MM II, no 579, 396.

⁴¹² He traveled to Russia, as cardinal (1436-1463), participated in the Council of Ferrara-Florence as Byzantine representative, and was appointed Latin Patriarch of Constantinople.

⁴¹³ G. Mercati, *Scritti d'Isidoro il Cardinale Ruteno e codici a lui appartenuti che si conservano nella Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, Roma: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1926, 130.

⁴¹⁴ PP 4, 104-109.

⁴¹⁵ Manuel, *Letters*, 45, 64-70: "In addition, you had the most beautiful manner of planting the flower of literature, as one might say, in the souls of youth with great gentleness by a concise method which you yourself had discovered after much toil. Furthermore, you were involved in other matters you knew would benefit our country, defending the laws whenever they were attacked, giving advice whenever it was needed."

⁴¹⁶ For a complete list of Manuel's literary circle see the Appendix 3.

2.3. Connectivity among the members of the literary court

Having identified the members of the scholarly network I will now turn to the main parameters which define its type and extension: *connectivity* understood as the ability to maintain relations between the members of the same group⁴¹⁷ and *usage* of the network by its members.

First, I will try to ascertain the extent to which the scholars in Manuel's proximity formed an intellectual community by sharing similar preoccupations or pursuing common interests.⁴¹⁸ Noticeably there are multiple similarities between the types of texts and subjects which the late Palaiologan authors cultivated in the period. Most members of the emperor's circle wrote theological treatises on very similar topics (especially on issues like the procession of the Holy Spirit and the nature of the Trinity against the Catholic faith, or polemics against Islam);⁴¹⁹ they also showed a special interest in gnomic literature,⁴²⁰ comparisons (*synkriseis*),⁴²¹ contemporary events such as the end of the siege in 1403,⁴²² or deliberative pieces of rhetoric.⁴²³ Here it can be noticed that the members of the Latin oriented group were more inclined to address specific problems of political nature revealing the decline of Byzantium,⁴²⁴ whereas the *Orthodox* were more interested in defending the doctrinal tenets of their faith. The production of these similar texts indicates that writers debated a limited set of topics which

⁴¹⁷ On the connectivity of the elite scholarly groups of late Byzantium see Ševčenko "Society and Intellectual life in the Fourteenth Century," N. Gaul, "The Twitching Shroud: collective construction of paideia in the circle of Thomas Magistros," *Segno e Testo* 5 (2007): 263–340. G. Cavallo, "Sodalizi eruditi e pratiche di scrittura a Bisanzio," in *Bilan et perspectives des études médiévales (1993-1998)* ed. by J. Hamesse, Turnhout: Brepols, 2004, 645–665.) These studies emphasize the transfer of information and knowledge from one group to another.

⁴¹⁸ As theoretical starting points I take here S. Fish's theory of interpretive communities according to which a text has no meaning outside a set of cultural assumptions, S. Fish, *Is There A Text in This Class*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1980, 147–174.

⁴¹⁹ The following authors wrote texts on the procession of the Holy Spirit: Manuel II, Makarios Makres, Joseph Bryennios, Demetrios Chrysoloras; polemics against Islam: Makarios Makres, Joseph Bryennios, Manuel II, Gabriel; on Trinity: Bryennios, Manuel II.

⁴²⁰ Manuel II, Joseph Bryennios, John Chortasmenos.

⁴²¹ Demetrios and Manuel Chrysoloras.

⁴²² Joseph Bryennios, John Chortasmenos, Demetrios Chrysoloras, Manuel II, Gabriel of Thessalonike.

⁴²³ The contents of the manuscripts belonging to the scholars of Manuel's circle can offer a glimpse into the literary preoccupations of the late Byzantine learned men. P. Schreiner analyzed the contents of Vat.gr. 914, a manuscript which belonged to Isidore of Kiev and comprised texts of rhetoric, poetry, satire, gnomologies, grammar: P. Schreiner, "Literarische Interessen in der Palaiologenzeit anhand von Gehrtexten: Das Beispiel des Vaticanus gr. 914," in W. Seibt (ed.), *Geschichte und Kultur der Palaiologenzeit: Referate des Internationalen Symposions zu Ehren von Herbert*, Vienna, 1996, 207. See also Ch. Dendrinou, "The Manuscripts of Makarios Makres and Joseph Bryennios," in A. Giannouli and E. Schiffer (Eds.), *From Manuscripts to Books - Vom Codex zur Edition, Proceedings of the International Workshop on Textual Criticism and Editorial Practice for Byzantine Texts (Vienna, 10-11 December 2009)*, Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2011.

⁴²⁴ See especially the letters of Demetrios Kydones and Manuel Kalekas and Manuel Chrysoloras' *Comparison of the Old and New Rome*.

reflected the theological polemics of the day and, connected to them, the concerns with regard to the social and political changes in Constantinople. A testimony to this situation is the large number of late fourteenth century texts of polemics with Islam and treatises dealing with doctrinal issues like the procession of the Holy Spirit or the Trinity. The common preoccupations of the late Byzantine scholars are also reflected in their concerns for collecting and exchanging books as suggested by the extant lists of John Chortasmenos and Joseph Bryennios' book collections.⁴²⁵ The correspondence between Kydones and Manuel also provides an instance of the extent of book circulation in the late fourteenth century.⁴²⁶

Literary experiments with rhetorical genres were also common among the authors of this period: for instance, John Chortasmenos mixed dialog, poetry and prose in his *Ἐπιτάφιος Ἐρῆνος* for Andreas Asanes while Demetrios Chrysoloras combined the epistolary genre with the so-called princely mirrors in the *Hundred letters addressed to Emperor Manuel*. One might also add as a major characteristic of the rhetoric of this period the narrativization of encomia, encountered in the panegyrics of Isidore of Kiev, Demetrios Chrysoloras or Manuel II. Such literary features will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.⁴²⁷

Most of the evidence regarding the connectivity of Manuel's network can be drawn through the analysis of the relationships established between the members of the circle gathered around Manuel. In this case, the letters constitute an instrument for measuring the quality and efficiency of these relations. Surely, the problems involved in the study of this particular genre always remains in the background: selection of letters for the creation of a collection, the utilization of specific formulas of address characteristic to the language of friendship etc.⁴²⁸ Yet, they can support the detection of the political usages of the literary network and the place of the *literati* in Byzantine society.

Thus, frequently, late Palaiologan letters indicate that the members of the circle were connected by teacher-student relations. It was the case presented above with Kydones and other scholars who saw themselves as his disciples: Manuel Kalekas,⁴²⁹ Manuel Chrysoloras,

⁴²⁵ Bryennios' letter 30, Chortasmenos-Hunger, 20-29.

⁴²⁶ See Manuel, *Letters*, 3 on book exchange: ὁ φιλῶν ἐζήτεις, ἔχεις, τὸν Πλάτωνα. Manuel sent the required volume of Plato's dialogs as a gift, Letter 3.4, ἀλλὰ τὸ τὸν ἄνδρα σοι δῶρον γενέσθαι οὐκ ἄτοπον ἀξιούμεν ἡγεῖσθαι, μάλιστα δὲ καὶ χάριτας αὐτὸν ἀνομολογεῖν ἡμῖν δίκαιον οὐχ ἦττον ἢ σέ γε τοῦτον δεξάμενον. See also letters addressed to Demetrios Chrysoloras.

⁴²⁷ See "Introduction" of *Unit 2* in the present dissertation.

⁴²⁸ Cf. G. Dennis, "Introduction" in *The Letters of Manuel II*, and R.-J. Loenertz, "Introduction," *Correspondance de Manuel Calecas*, Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1950, 16-46.

⁴²⁹ Kalekas, *Letters* 25. See also F. Kianka, *Demetrius Cydones (c. 1324 - c. 1397): intellectual and diplomatic relations between Byzantium and the West in the fourteenth century*, PhD dissertation, Fordham University, 1981, 213.

Maximos Chrysoberges;⁴³⁰ in this group can be included the emperor Manuel himself. Makarios Makres also considered himself the disciple of the hieromonk David to whom he addressed a funeral oration.⁴³¹ Emperor Manuel regarded Constantine Ivankos as his teacher while similar connections of the teacher-student type were established between many Italian humanists and Manuel Chrysoloras or his nephew John. Leonardo Bruni, Manuel Chrysoloras' most celebrated student, as well as other Italian humanists like Guarino of Verona often commented in their letters on their teachers' pedagogical aptitudes and activities. Their connections with the Byzantine teacher is indicated by their awareness of the political situation in Byzantium in which Chrysoloras was involve.⁴³²

Likewise, Manuel Kalekas learned Latin from Jacopo Angeli, as indicated in several letters, while the humanist resided in Constantinople or Florence.⁴³³ The letters disclose the Byzantine's knowledge of Latin and the Italian's knowledge of Greek.

In most other instances the extant correspondence among the members of this circle reflects a spirit of friendship and respect, even when the correspondents had different political or religious opinions.⁴³⁴ The analysis of several of the best documented cases can help us better understand the strength of the relationship established between scholars and the emperor as well as their connections with the wider Palaiologan literary circle and the imperial household.

⁴³⁰ Ibid, 213-214.

⁴³¹ A. Sideras, *Die byzantinischen Grabreden: Prosopographie, Datierung, Überlieferung, 142 Epitaphien und Monodien aus dem byzantinischen Jahrtausend*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1994, 344-347.

⁴³² Cf. *Epistolario Di Guarino Veronese*, Torino: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1959, vol 1, letter 94 addressed to Nicolaus, 172-173: *Hae nuper Adriatici sinus triremes, quae praeaesidiarias appellant, ex Peloponneso rediere, ex quibus litteras accepi a suavissimo praeceptore meo d. Iohanne Chrysolora. Is ad me scribit omnino "transfretaturum" horsum fuisse, nisi ex Byzantio missus esset ab imperatore, ut cum nonnullis aliis res illas peloponesiacas resarciret. Nam cum imperatoris filius nescio quo graeculorum hominum grege verius quam exercitu Patras et quaedam alia ex improvise adortus esset oppida, magnam in desperationem et archiepiscopus Patrensis et princeps Achaiae frater deciderant, nisi confestim sibi cavissent et subsidia contraxissent, adeo ut iam "rerum facta vicissitudine" agros et loca imperatoris pervastent ac dissipent. Has ob res Chrysoloras noster eo missus est, quem tamen vere novo horsum adventurum exspecto. Ita enim mihi suae pollicentur litterae; est praeterea longe propinquior, ita ut minus incommodum illi fiat hoc iter et navigatio. Ipse etiam imperator humanissimam quandam ad me misit epistulam et funebrem pro eius fratre orationem quam ipse confecit; oratio est persuavis copiosa et miro contexta verborum et sententiarum ornatu. Quid prae eos nostros Italiae, immo et Galliae et Germaniae principes nominem, quos ab omni doctrinae et humanitatis genere vel abhorrentes vel alienos dixerim no iniuria, vel si "summis, ut aiunt, labellis" litteras gustarint, tantae fiunt praedicationes 'ut nihil supra?' Hanc ipsam orationem ad fratrem Ambrosium nostrum mittam.* Further on the teacher-student relations in the Italian Humanism see, W. Caferro, "Humanism: Renovation or Innovation? Transmission or Reception," in *Contesting the Renaissance*, Oxford: Blackwell, 98-125.

⁴³³ Kalekas, *Letters* 33, 64.

⁴³⁴ Representations of friendship in Manuel's letters are to be found in 5.5-8, "granted that our friendship has reached perfection, and that you are right in saying that nothing further can be added, is it not likely that this friendship will of necessity decline?" Several of Manuel's addressees were explicitly addressed by the emperor as friends: Demetrios Kydones, Nicholas Kabasilas (letter 15), Demetrios Chrysoloras, hieromonk David, or Makarios Makres. In other cases Manuel mentions an intense letter exchange with the addressee, letter 17.4-5 to Pothos: "your snowfall of letters has enabled you to surpass many of those to whom we have personally written."

Demetrios Kydones' case stands out as the extent of his letter exchange suggests that Kydones had a privileged relationship with Emperor Manuel.⁴³⁵ Almost eighty letters in the *mesazōn*'s collection (of 450 pieces) were addressed to Manuel II, attesting a strong connection spanning over a period of several decades. The relationship with Kydones indicates Kydones' influence in both the emperor's literary choices and his approach of foreign relations.⁴³⁶ Several earlier letters indicate that during the emperor's youth, Kydones guided the emperor's studies acting as his teacher of rhetoric.⁴³⁷ In many letters, the *mesazōn* expressed gratitude for the co-emperor's generosity and support in his transactions with John V, following Kydones' retirement from the official position in 1373.⁴³⁸ Many of these letters (almost 20) were sent while Manuel lived in Thessalonike from 1382 to 1387, highlighting Kydones' concern for the empire's fate in general and for Manuel's political career in particular.⁴³⁹ Often, the former *mesazōn* informed him of what was going on in Constantinople and advised him as to how to act during the years of exile following Manuel's capitulation of Thessalonike.⁴⁴⁰ In his turn, Manuel addressed more than ten of his letters to Kydones whom he portrayed as an appreciated teacher interested in intellectual pursuits.⁴⁴¹ However, the letters dating from around the time of Manuel's rise to power show that the emperor continued to appreciate Kydones for his political experience and ask for his support in certain matters.⁴⁴²

Owing to his influential position at court, Kydones maintained wide ranging connections at court, including the emperors John VI Kantakouzenos and John V.⁴⁴³ Several

⁴³⁵ On the letter exchange between Kydones and Manuel see R.-J. Loenertz, "Manuel Paléologue et Demetrius Cydones. Remarques sur leurs correspondances," in: *EO* 36 (1937): 271-287; 474-487 and 37 (1938): 107-129.

⁴³⁶ Manuel often acknowledged Kydones' influence: "after all, on many occasions you thought it worthwhile to place your writings in my hands, even though I was younger and understandably less experienced in literature than now," Manuel, *Letters*, 5. 10-12. That Kydones had a significant influence on the emperor's literary education is made clear later on as well: "pluck then the sweet fruit for yourself, you who are the cause of it, for it was you who provided us with the seed and it was by you that the plant was abundantly watered. If, on the other hand, it seems a work fit to be cast into fire, do not expect to incur any penalty from us [...] inasmuch as you sowed the seed of literature in us and irrigated and cultivated it" (Kydones, *Letters*, 11.22-29).

⁴³⁷ E.g. Kydones, *Letters*, 80.

⁴³⁸ E.g. Kydones, *Letters* 218. ταῦτά σοι, βασιλεῦ, ἀντεισφέρω τῶν δεδομένων, μικρὰ μὲν ὑπὲρ μεγίστων, *Letters*, 192. 53-54.

⁴³⁹ E.g. Kydones, *Letters*, 348.

⁴⁴⁰ R.-J. Loenertz, "L'exil de Manuel Paleologue à Lemnos 1387-1389," *OCP* 38 (1972): 116-140; G. Dennis, *The Reign of Manuel II in Thessalonica*, 34-37.

⁴⁴¹ The book exchange between the two as well as the exchange of their own texts is attested in their correspondence. In one of his letters dating from 1383-1385, Manuel speaks about his refusal to return one of Kydones' texts which was considered by its author as inappropriate, Dennis, *Letters*, 5.

⁴⁴² *Letters* 25 and 26.

⁴⁴³ His connections with the imperial family partly depended on the relation between his father and John VI Kantakouzenos: *Oration to John VI Kantakouzenos*, in *Démétrius Cydonès: Correspondance*, ed. R.-J. Loenertz, 2 vols., Vatican: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1956-60, vol. 1, 4-6.

letters addressed to Helena Palaiologina, the emperor's mother, show that their relationship went beyond a mere literary camaraderie, as he received an important donation from her upon her entrance in a monastery in 1396.⁴⁴⁴ Other letters also attest for the relations with members of the ruling family, such as Theodore Kantakouzenos, Despot of Morea, or Matthew Kantakouzenos. Moreover, due to his knowledge of Latin as well as the ties with Italy and the West, he entertained relations based on common intellectual interests with Italian humanists like Coluccio Salutati.⁴⁴⁵

Manuel Kalekas' relationship with Manuel is attested by four letters Kalekas addressed to the emperor.⁴⁴⁶ Certainly, their correspondence was more extensive, as Kalekas implies in one of these letters.⁴⁴⁷ Also the *Apology* which he addressed to Manuel suggests that their scholarly exchanges were substantial. In three of these letters, Kalekas refers to their common intellectual pursuits: Manuel II was asking for a manuscript which Kalekas possessed and was ready to lend.⁴⁴⁸ Letter 47 was intended to accompany a literary work Kalekas sent to the emperor. Kalekas was also mentioned by the emperor in a letter addressed to Constantine Asanes.⁴⁴⁹ Apart from Kydones, Kalekas' epistolary corpus indicates that he was acquainted with many other members of Manuel's circle of *literati* such as Maximos Chrysoberges, Jacopo Angeli de Scarperia,⁴⁵⁰ Joseph Bryennios, Manuel Chrysoloras,⁴⁵¹ or Constantine Asanes.⁴⁵² Kalekas was also on good terms with other members of the ruling family, like Theodore, Manuel's brother and Despot of Morea with whom he corresponded.⁴⁵³ He was also popular among the Italian humanists, as is shown by Ambrogio Traversari's translation of Kalekas' *Adversus Graecos*.⁴⁵⁴

The exchange of texts and diplomatic services between Manuel Chrysoloras and the emperor also testifies to a close relationship.⁴⁵⁵ Part of these efforts concerned the advertising

⁴⁴⁴ F. Kianka, "The letters of Demetrios Kydones to Empress Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina," *DOP* 46 (1992): 160-164.

⁴⁴⁵ Coluccio Salutati, *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati*, Florence: Forzani, 1905, vol. 3, letter 13, 105-119.

⁴⁴⁶ Kalekas, *Letters*, 14, 26, 47, and 71. Letters 34 and 39, also addressed to the emperor and dated to 1397-1401 were written in the name of other individuals who were asking favors from the emperor.

⁴⁴⁷ Kalekas, *Letters*, 14.

⁴⁴⁸ Kalekas, *Letters*, 26, 47, and 71.

⁴⁴⁹ Manuel, *Letters*, 30.

⁴⁵⁰ Kalekas, *Letters*, 18, 22, 33, 64, 81.

⁴⁵¹ Kalekas, *Letters*, 48, 59, 62.

⁴⁵² His correspondence and activities show that Kalekas was more active in this circle of *literati* in the last decade of the fourteenth century, for after 1403, he remained in the Dominican monastery in Lesbos.

⁴⁵³ Kalekas, *Letters*, 15, 16 and 49.

⁴⁵⁴ Kalekas, *Letters*, 9, 86-89. Dennis, *The Letters of Manuel II*, LVII.

⁴⁵⁵ In the *Epistolary discourse* Manuel Chrysoloras recalls the intense correspondence with the emperor: ἐν Φλωρεντία μὲν ὄντι, γράμματα ἐμοὶ πέμψας πολλάκις πολλοῦ φίλτρου καὶ φιλανθρωπίας γέμοντα, ἐκάλει με παρ' ἑαυτὸν, καὶ οὐκ ἐμὲ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν ἀδελφιδοῦν, εἰ καὶ τοῦτον βουλοίμην ἄγειν σὺν ἐμαυτῷ

of the emperor's literary talent in the humanist intellectual circles, as indicated by Manuel's letter asking Chrysoloras to read, and comment on, the *Funeral oration for brother Theodore*. In return, Chrysoloras wrote an epistolary discourse praising the emperor's achievements and addressed him another text which compared the old and the new Rome.⁴⁵⁶ As the emperor's agent in the West, Chrysoloras often received gifts and other kinds of benefits from the emperor, as he himself admitted.⁴⁵⁷

Chrysoloras was one of the most prominent members of the group of Byzantine Latinophiles.⁴⁵⁸ He translated the Dominican liturgy upon Maximos Chrysoberges' request for the convent of Candia and continued the efforts of Demetrios Kydones who translated the *ordo missae*.⁴⁵⁹ Due to his early conversion to Catholicism and since he resided for most of his life in several places in the Latin West as teacher and diplomat, he was attached to the humanist Italian scholarly circles. Doubtless, he was a popular figure among the intellectuals of early fifteenth century Italy. Chrysoloras' name emerges frequently in the epistolary collections of Colluccio Salutati,⁴⁶⁰ Guarino of Verona, or Ambrogio Traversari with all of whom he often corresponded and entertained friendly relations.⁴⁶¹ In their turn, humanists praised him for his intellectual quality,⁴⁶² and promoted him by translating his Greek texts.⁴⁶³

While it is not entirely clear how close a relationship Chortasmenos had with the emperor, his epistolary collection reveals that he was connected with several other members

(Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 98).

⁴⁵⁶ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Comparison between the Old and the New Rome*, ed. C. Billo *Medioevo Greco*, 0 (2000): 1-26.

⁴⁵⁷ δίκαιον δ' ἂν εἶη τὸν ἐμὲ εἰς τὰ σὰ μιμούμενον, καὶ αὐτὸν παρὰ τοῦ σοῦ κράτους ἀπολαύειν καὶ τῶν πρὸς ἐμὲ καὶ οὐχ ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ τῆς σῆς εὐνοίας καὶ τῶν σῶν εὐεργεσιῶν τυγχάνειν [...] Δέδωκας γὰρ ἡμῖν ταῦτα πρὸς σε τολμᾶν φθέγγεσθαι, οὐ δεσπότης μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ πατήρ ἡμῖν γινόμενος, Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 130.8-14.

⁴⁵⁸ He was introduced in this group by Kydones in 1386. Cf. Kydones' *Letters*, 358.301-302.

⁴⁵⁹ R.-J. Loenertz, *Correspondence de Manuel Calecas*, 14.

⁴⁶⁰ Coluccio Salutati, *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati*, vol. 3, letter 14, 119-125.

⁴⁶¹ I. Thomson, "Manuel Chrysoloras and the Early Italian Renaissance," *GRBS* 7 (1966): 63-82.

⁴⁶² *Epistolario Di Guarino Veronese*, vol 1, Torino: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1959, letter 7, p. 20-21: *Cui enim plus quam tibi debam habeo neminem, qui et studiorum quicquid sunt meorum praeceptor et optimus vitae master extitisti. Itaque ad te semper aspicio, ad te oculos ad te animum cogitationemque converto et ut te si non aspicere, saltem audire liceat, indagine cuncta perlustro si quam aut orationem aut ullum commentarium edideris, unde pro magna eruditione tua iocundissima lectionis amoenitate ac fructu animus alatur vegetetur exornetur expleatur; sicuti nuper utriusque urbis laudationem, hinc primariae parentis inde filiae, in qua adeo eleganti magnifico et generoso dicendi genere aurea sese attollit oratio, ut in ea nihil quod ad oratorium munus attineat praetermissum existat: hinc ingenii suavitas, hinc ordo rerum aptissimus, hinc crebra sententiarum acumina, hinc elegantissimus verborum ornatus; tametsi multum ei deesse non ignorem, quod dulci illa et cygnea pronuntiatione tua non effertur, quemadmodum ad Rhodios Aeschines de suo dixisse fertur adversario, quibus hoominis eloquentiam admirantibus "quid si ipsum sua verba resonantem audissetis?" inquit. Non mediocrem vero fructum inter legendum assequor, quod non modo te audire videor sed ipsam Byzantii urbem, dulce mihi spectaculum nutricemque benignissimam te duce lustro, omnia te narrante recenseo, non minus tua luculenta oratione et aedificiorum structura, magnificentissima templa regias circos aquaeductus columnas obeliscos portum, urbis ambitum.*

⁴⁶³ His *Synkrisis* was translated into Latin. F. Niutta, "La traduzione latina di Francesco Aleardi della *Synkrisis* di Crisolora," R. Maisano (ed.), *Manuele Crisolora e il ritorno del greco in occidente*, Napoli, 2002, 223-249

of Manuel's circle of close acquaintances. Manuel's appreciation of Chortasmenos might have originated from the fact that the latter was the disciple of Michael Balsamon, *megas chartophylax* in 1400, praised by Manuel in one of his letters for the rhetorical skills.⁴⁶⁴ Balsamon can also be found among Demetrios Kydones' addressees. Other of Chortasmenos' acquaintances among the intellectuals of the time were Demetrios Chrysoloras, Manuel Chrysoloras, Theodore Antiochites, the monk-scribe Joasaph, and Joseph Bryennios with whom he corresponded.⁴⁶⁵ Chortasmenos was also well connected with other members of the court as well: he was the teacher of several members of the ruling family, like a certain Kantakouzenos and another George Palaiologos. He knew well Theodore Antiochites, the teacher of Manuel's sons, for whom he wrote a monody at his death and an epistolary oration.⁴⁶⁶ On many occasions he composed encomia, such as those on the palace of Theodore Kantakouzenos Palaiologos, or a funeral oration for Theodore Asanopoulos, another aristocrat. The letter collection indicates that he was also connected with other high-ranking members of the court in Constantinople, such as Manuel Tarchaneiotes Boullotes, the emperor's *oikeios*, Melissenos, *archōn* and *senator*,⁴⁶⁷ or George Goudeles, *mesazōn*.

The eight letters which survived in Manuel's collection point to the high esteem in which Demetrios Chrysoloras was held.⁴⁶⁸ Despite the hostility between the two emperors (Manuel II and John VII), Demetrios remained on friendly terms with Manuel. Moreover, even when he seems to have mocked the emperor in a pamphlet, the latter was appeased by Chrysoloras' series of a hundred short letters which praised the emperor's virtues.⁴⁶⁹ The letter exchange between the emperor and Chrysoloras indicates that in their relationship the common literary interests played an important part. Since he served as *mesazōn*, it is plausible that Chrysoloras entertained relations with other members of the court. He was also connected with other Byzantine *literati*, especially members of the anti-Latin group, like John Chortasmenos and Theodore Potamios, but his name also appears in the correspondence of Manuel Chrysoloras.

While the relation between Joseph Bryennios and Manuel is not well attested by the surviving evidence such as letters, this situation may be explained by the fact that they

⁴⁶⁴ Manuel, *Letters*, 34. Chortasmenos addressed Balsamon in one letter, 47 (Chortasmenos-Hunger).

⁴⁶⁵ See Chortasmenos' letters and the *Monody on Theodore Antiochites*, Chortasmenos-Hunger, 139-143.

⁴⁶⁶ See Chortasmenos' *Monody* and Letter 16.

⁴⁶⁷ In his letter 51 Chortasmenos depicts the strifes and unrest taking place in the city and praises Melissenos for taking important steps in maintaining the situation under control. Cf. N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between Latins and Ottomans*, 196.

⁴⁶⁸ Manuel, *Letters* 33, 41, 43, 44, 46, 48, 50, 61.

⁴⁶⁹ M. Treu, "Demetrius Chrysoloras und seine hundert Briefe," *BZ* 20 (1911): 106-128.

probably had daily contacts at court. The only surviving letter to Manuel was sent by Bryennios when he resided in Morea in 1407. However, during the long years spent at the imperial court, Bryennios' position in relation to Manuel seems to have improved considerably, for, by 1420, Sphrantzes counted Bryennios among the three individuals to whom the emperor entrusted his last will.⁴⁷⁰

Bryennios' collection of letters provides more information about his connections with other members of the emperor's close circle of friends.⁴⁷¹ Many of his addressees can be found among Manuel's correspondents or had a court position: letter 1 (1382-1397) was addressed to Theodore Meliteniotes, *megas sakellarios* and *didaskalos*, letter 4 was addressed to Demetrios Kydones and testifies to a friendly relationship between the two despite their theological differences; letter 6 was addressed to Nicholas Kabasilas whom Bryennios praised for his orthodoxy; and letter 7 to Euthymios, abbot of the monastery of Studios, and future patriarch.⁴⁷² One letter was addressed to Manuel Pothos, one of Manuel's closest friends while others had as addressees important ecclesiastical officials such as patriarchs (Anthony IV) or metropolitans. His letters as well as other texts, such as apologetic treatises show him well integrated in the group of ecclesiastics militating against the union with the Church of Rome. However, he had also relations among the group of Byzantine converts to Catholicism. The letter addressed to Maximos Chrysoberges, the Dominican friar, despite its polemical nature, retains a rather friendly tone.⁴⁷³

The relationship between Isidore and the emperor is illustrated by the two letters which the ecclesiastic sent the emperor from the Peloponnese, and by the fact that Isidore helped him in the process of elaborating and copying a significant number of manuscripts. In 1409 Isidore recited Manuel II's *Funeral oration on his brother Theodore, Despot of Morea*, at a ceremony of commemoration in Mystras.⁴⁷⁴ It has been argued that Isidore copied the two versions of the *Funeral oration*⁴⁷⁵ and added further emendations and corrections to the text.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ The small size of his letter collection can be explained by the fact that the letters were collected rather for educational purposes. R.-J. Loenertz, "Pour la chronologie des oeuvres de Joseph Bryennios," *REB* 7 (1949): 51-75.

⁴⁷² Ibid.

⁴⁷³ Joseph Bryennios, *Letters*, 10.

⁴⁷⁴ Isidore of Kiev, "Lettres du hieromonaque Isidore, dans la suite metropolitain de Kiev," *Analecta Byzantino-Russica*, ed. W. Regel, Petropoli, 1891, letter 5, 66.24-67.17.

⁴⁷⁵ Both the first version in Scorialensis gr.14 and in Paris. suppl. gr. 309. Cf. J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction," in J. Chrysostomides, ed. *The Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*, Thessalonike, 1985.

⁴⁷⁶ G. Mercati, *Scritti d'Isidoro, Il Cardinale Ruteno: e codici a lui appartenuti che si conservano nella Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, Rome: Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1926. Also see J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction" in *Funeral oration*, 33-34 and 37.

Moreover, Isidore copied the final version of many of Manuel's texts which he arranged together in several luxurious codices, most probably dedicated to emperor John VIII.⁴⁷⁷ While there is no evidence that their relation extended beyond literary activities, the lengthy court panegyrics addressed to emperor John VIII feature an unusually extended praise for Manuel II. This praise indicates Isidore's involvement with the entourage of the emperor's *literati*. Information about Isidore's involvement in Manuel's intellectual pursuits comes from his copyist's activity, for Isidore's hand has been identified in the four manuscripts which constituted the emperor's official final version of his literary work: Vat. gr. 1619, Vat. Barber. gr. 219, Vindob. phil. gr. 98, and Crypten. Z δ 1 161.⁴⁷⁸

If, from the preserved evidence it is easier to grasp the relationship with Manuel, it is more difficult to establish Isidore's attachment to the larger circle of *literati*. Certainly he had connections with the pro-Latin party, since he managed to acquire a high position in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. From his epistolary collection we know that he corresponded with Guarino of Verona, the Italian humanist who came to Constantinople to learn Greek. Codicological evidence suggests that he also collaborated with Makarios Makres on the transcription of Manuel's texts.⁴⁷⁹

The emperor's letters also reveal the relations established with less prominent individuals members of the circle. Such examples were those of Manuel Raoul and Triboles. The latter, praised by the emperor for his literary achievements,⁴⁸⁰ became Theodore I Palaiologos' secretary.⁴⁸¹ Triboles was supported by Kydones who mentioned his role in elaborating the peace treatise between John V and Andronikos IV (1380).⁴⁸²

Finally, the texts dedicated to the emperor point not only to the emperor's position within this network but also to the type of relationship established between the *literati* and the ruler-literatus. John Chortasmenos, Demetrios Chrysoloras, Manuel Chrysoloras, George Gemistos Plethon, or Makarios Makres dedicated to him orations or poems, thus positioning themselves in a close relation with the emperor.⁴⁸³

⁴⁷⁷ Ch. Dendrinios, "Co-operation and friendship in the circle of Manuel II," 3 and Idem, *An annotated edition of the treatise On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, LX-LXV.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid. The more official character of these manuscripts is underlined by their elaborate script with decorations as well as by the presence of the original binding with the monogram of the Palaiologos family on the Cryptensis MS. See J. Irigoin, "Une reliure de l'Athos au monogramme des Paléologues (Stavronikita 14)," *Paleoslavica* 10 (2002): 175-179.

⁴⁷⁹ Ch. Dendrinios, "Co-operation and friendship in the circle of Manuel II," 10-16.

⁴⁸⁰ Letter 9.

⁴⁸¹ Kydones, *Letters*, 293.75-79 and Letter 421.8- both addressed to Theodore.

⁴⁸² Kydones, *Letters*, 198. 21-29 to Rhadenos.

⁴⁸³ See Appendix 4 for a diagram of the connections between the *literati*.

2.4. Uses of the network

This literary network served a variety of purposes both for the emperor and for its members. First, at the most basic level, it had a practical function, since some of its members used their acquaintance with the emperor to acquire material benefits. In their letters addressed to the emperor, Kydones, Manuel Chrysoloras, or Demetrios Chrysoloras, show gratitude to the emperor for the gifts they received. To a large extent most of the scholars who participated in the *theatra* still depended on the emperor's goodwill. As pointed out by I. Ševčenko, other contemporary centers of artistic patronage had limited resources to dispose of in favor of scholars. Thus, in a letter addressed to the emperor, John Chortasmenos made a request for financial support from the emperor for his mother.⁴⁸⁴ Reflecting the same kind of network usage, Manuel Kalekas, Kydones, and Chortasmenos also wrote in the name of other individuals who were looking for administrative positions or various other benefits. In several letters, Demetrios Kydones promoted a friend, Theodore Kaukadenos, who was searching for a position at court⁴⁸⁵ and who sent a literary text to the emperor in order to be performed in the *theatron*.⁴⁸⁶ The emperor appreciated Kaukadenos' text and, according to his own statements, he indeed delivered it in public. Eventually, he appointed Kaukadenos as his sons' preceptor.⁴⁸⁷

Second, a further important function of this network was to provide a platform for cooperation among *literati* in the process of writing. The emperor not only delivered most of his texts in public but he also constantly circulated them among his fellow authors. Often, Manuel sent versions of his texts together with cover letters in which he requested opinions regarding their literary level. Such letters were sent together with the *Admonitory Oration*, the *Dialog on marriage*, the *Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*, and the *Foundations of imperial education*, *The prayers*, *The homily on the Mother of God*. Several of the addressees of such cover

⁴⁸⁴ πένης μὲν εἶναι ὁμολογῶ καὶ λέγων οὐ ψεύδομαι. [...] δεήσομαί σου περὶ τῆς σῆς δούλης, τῆς ἐμῆς μητρός (Chortasmenos, letter 35). Chortasmenos repeated his request for financial help in a poem addressed to John VIII Palaiologos: γενοῦ μοι σωτῆρ σύμμαχος τ' αἰτουμένω/ καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ συντυχῶν, ὡσπερ οἶδας,/ τῷ παμμεγίστῳ καὶ σοφῷ καὶ πατρί σου,/ δὸς ἐν τάχει μοι τὴν χάριν πτωχεύοντι (Hortatory Poem to emperor John the younger, 5-9). Chortasmenos also addressed several poems to another patron of *literati* and collector of manuscripts, Theodore Kantakouzenos Laskaris. Another scholar, Manuel Chrysoloras, acknowledged to have received gifts from the emperor (Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 54).

⁴⁸⁵ In letter 215, Kydones mentions that Kaukadenos received a position at the court by the imperial order (πρόσταγμα) of John V (Cf. G. Dennis, *The Letters of Manuel II*, p. xlvi). Kaukadenos lost however his position in 1386 and asked Kydones to intervene for him to John's mesazōn, Goudeles, because some of the courtiers were plotting against him, see Kydones, *Letters*, 357.

⁴⁸⁶ Kydones, *Letters*, 210.

⁴⁸⁷ Manuel, *Letters*, 27.

letters answered the emperor's demands: Demetrios Kydones,⁴⁸⁸ Manuel Chrysoloras,⁴⁸⁹ Demetrios Chrysoloras,⁴⁹⁰ Gabriel of Thessalonike,⁴⁹¹ or the Italian humanist Guarino of Verona.⁴⁹² The process was mutual, for Manuel himself read and commented on texts of his friends.⁴⁹³ More often than not, these comments were laudatory and positive, yet sometimes they included criticisms as well, as revealed by a letter addressed “to a certain foolish person:”

Your rhetorical efforts have been even more forceful than those of Thucydides, particularly when you wrote that noble and lengthy letter of yours in which you omitted none of the usual examples, but not even you seemed to have any idea of what you were saying. How then, can anyone go about putting together a systematic answer to your letter when what you said followed no order and was full of contradictions. Ἐοικας δι' ὧν καὶ Θουκυδίδου δεινότερον ἐρρητόρευσας, τὴν γενναίαν καὶ μακρὰν ἐκείνην γράψας ἐπιστολὴν οὐδενὸς τῶν εἰς ἐπίδειξιν ἠκόντων φεισάμενος, μηδὲ αὐτὸς σὺ εἰδέναι αὐτὰ ταῦθ' ἃ νῦν λέγεις. Πῶς οὖν ῥάδιον ἄλλον ἀμειβόμενον σοῦ τοῖς γράμμασι πρὸς ἕπος ἀποκριθῆναι ὅτε μηδὲ τάξιν εἶχε τὰ εἰρημμένα ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀλλήλοις ἐμάχετο,⁴⁹⁴

Often the feedback addressed to the emperor took the form of lengthy and detailed interpretations. An example of the echo which the emperor's texts found among contemporary authors is the *Funeral oration*, commented extensively by Manuel Chrysoloras and George Gemistos Plethon.⁴⁹⁵ Each of them praised different rhetorical aspects. On the one

⁴⁸⁸ Manuel, *Letters*, 62 to Demetrios Kydones, asking for feedback on the *Dialogue on marriage*. In his turn, Kydones answered in another letter. Manuel's Letter 11 addressed to Kydones is a cover letter for his *Admonitory Oration to the Thessalonians*. Again the mesazōn's answer came in the form of a letter.

⁴⁸⁹ Manuel, *Letters*, 56 addressed to Manuel Chrysoloras on the *Funeral oration*.

⁴⁹⁰ Manuel, *Letters*, 61 (1417): in response to Chrysoloras' *Hundred letters* Manuel sent him an Oration to the Mother of God, for revision and feedback: “But just now I have composed an oration to the Mother of God which I am sending you in place of the reply I was planning to write. You will not, I am sure, take it ill and assume that your letters have been surpassed by this oration, for the preeminence of the Immaculate does not allow you to feel that way. Rather, on reading through the work, add to it if something necessary is missing and remove whatever is superfluous.”

⁴⁹¹ Manuel, *Letters*, 57 addressed to Gabriel, accompanied the text of the *Kanon Paraklētikos* written in the aftermath of the Ottoman siege of Constantinople of 1411.

⁴⁹² Manuel, *Letters*, 60 addressed to Guarino of Verona. Evidence for Guarino's involvement in the emperor's literary endeavors comes from the manuscript Vat. gr. 2239, the very copy which the Italian humanist received from Manuel II. This codex bears the marginal notes of Guarino and of his friend, Nicolo Barbaro who both read the text. See A. Rollo, “A proposito del Vat. gr. 2239: Manuele II e Guarino,” *Νέα Ρώμη*, 3 (2006): 375-378.

⁴⁹³ Manuel, *Letters*, 5. 10-12: “on many occasions you thought it worthwhile to place your writings in my hands even though I was younger and understandably less experienced in literature than now.” Letter 15 to Kabasilas: “first of all then, I can give no higher opinion about your most recent letter to us than that which you know we have already given about your previous ones.” The letter to Demetrios Chrysoloras on his *hundred letters*. Letter 10 to Kydones shows that often texts from contemporary authors were collected by their peers: “your letter arrived here bearing an indictment that what you had previously written was nonsense and at the same time accusing us of compiling these letters of yours into a book [...] Since all of your writings are above reproach.”

⁴⁹⁴ Manuel, *Letters*, 28, 2-5.

⁴⁹⁵ Shorter comments on the same text were written by Manuel Chrysokephalos and Joasaph, the monk: J. Chrysostomides, ed., Manuel II Palaiologos. *The Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*, 70-71.

hand, Plethon, following the ancient theories of rhetorical composition, praised the right division of the various parts of the oration, while Manuel Chrysoloras in the *Epistolary discourse* commented upon different theoretical aspects like justice, virtue, or education.⁴⁹⁶ There were other instances of differences of opinion regarding the literary value of certain texts. As the chair of a *theatron*, the emperor noticed that at one of the scholarly meetings different groups appreciated different merits of the performed texts. Despite the fact that these remarks were also meant to flatter an interlocutor they are telling for the attitude which the emperor sought to cultivate at the court.

Some marveled at their number (i.e. the hundred letters of Demetrios Chrysoloras addressed to Manuel), some at the rapidity of movement in each letter, some at the properties, and everyone at their richness. But for me all the letters were cause for wonder, both on account of what impressed the other people and for other reasons as well. Τῶν μὲν τὸ πλῆθος, τῶν δὲ τὴν ἐν ἐκάστη ταχυτῆτα θαυμαζόντων, καὶ ἄλλων ἄλλα καὶ τὴν εὐπορίαν ἀπάντων. ἐμοὶ δὲ πᾶσαι καὶ ὧν τοὺς ἄλλους ἐξέπληττον καὶ ἐτέρων ἐθαυμάζοντο.⁴⁹⁷

In many cases, the collaboration between authors went beyond the mere sharing of commentaries on different texts, for they elaborated together certain writings. When addressing Euthymios, Manuel acknowledged his friend's role in writing a theological text, a clarification (σαφήνεια) following a debate between Demetrios Chrysoloras and the Italian Antonio d' Ascoli:

The present work is the child of both of us, it is yours and mine, not only because "friends share their possessions," but also because it belongs almost as much to you as it does to me. While I gave birth to it, it was you who helped it grow by adding your ideas. You may therefore do what seems best for it just as I would. At your discretion add or remove whatever you wish. Ὁ λόγος οὗτος παῖς ἀμφοτέροις, ἐμοὶ τε λέγω καὶ σοί, οὐ μόνον ὅτι «τὰ τῶν φίλων κοινά,» ἀλλ' ὅτι σοὶ καὶ διαφέρει μικροῦ δεῖν ὡς ἐμοί. ἐγέννησα μὲν γὰρ ἐγὼ ἔθρεψας δὲ αὐτὸς ταῖς τῶν νοημάτων προσθήκαις. Ὡστε ἔξεστί σοι ποιεῖν ἐπ' αὐτῷ τὰ δοκοῦντα καθάπερ ἐμοί, καὶ δὴ προστίθει καὶ ἀφαίρει κατ' ἐξουσίαν πᾶν ὅ τι βούλει.⁴⁹⁸

In a similar way, Gabriel, metropolitan of Thessalonike, cooperated with Manuel in writing the *Homily on Sin and Penance or on Mary of Egypt*,⁴⁹⁹ while in the process of composing the *Funeral oration*, Manuel collaborated with Isidore of Kiev who also delivered it two years later on a

⁴⁹⁶ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 81.21.

⁴⁹⁷ Manuel, *Letters*, 61, 2-4.

⁴⁹⁸ Letter 54, 2-4. The answer of Euthymios (Dennis, *The Letters of Manuel II*, Appendix p. 221) praises the emperor's text for its power, clarity and charm.

⁴⁹⁹ This collaboration is recorded in letter 20 and 52. 35-37: "from then, an offering from the fruit of our labors comes to you. And if something worthwhile should be found in it (i.e. The Oration on St. Mary of Egypt), you may show it to the right people and not keep it for yourself."

commemoration in Morea.⁵⁰⁰

The evidence drawn from late Palaiologan manuscripts which have been analyzed in the past few decades, indicates that the scholars gathered around Manuel have often worked on copying and improving the emperor's texts. Ms. Vat. gr. 1619 provides evidence for contacts between the members of Manuel's learned circle in late fourteenth century.⁵⁰¹ The same type of collaboration is detectable in other manuscripts as well: in manuscripts Vat. Barb. gr. 219 and Vat. gr. 1107, containing the texts of Manuel, the hands of Makarios Makres, and Isidore of Kiev have been identified both of whom corrected the emperor's texts.⁵⁰² In Paris.gr. 3041 and Vindob. phil. gr. 98 have been detected the hands of several scribes who corrected the emperor's texts, some of them, arguably, upon Manuel's request.⁵⁰³ Also, the final version of the *Funeral oration* included in Paris. Suppl. gr. 309 included no less than five hands that added commentaries and corrections.⁵⁰⁴ In addition, there is also strong evidence that Joseph Bryennios, Makarios Makres,⁵⁰⁵ and Manuel Chrysoloras collaborated in writing their own texts.⁵⁰⁶

Third, Manuel actively sought to engage his literary friends into his political endeavors. Despite the predominant literary topics, the emperor's letters addressed to his literary friends often allude to the political situation of the empire. He was in constant contact with Manuel Chrysoloras, his ambassador, to whom he transmitted his thoughts on the progress of negotiations with the western leaders. At other times, in letters addressed to friends, he alluded to his daily activities or the problems he encountered in establishing order in the empire.⁵⁰⁷ In a letter addressed to Kydones, Manuel summoned his mentor to take a more active part in the state affairs.⁵⁰⁸ The same request to Kydones was made in the lengthy letter 31 sent while he resided in Venice. Manuel complained of the hardships of the Byzantines and invited his friend to come back and provide the support of his expertise: "certainly, our endeavors for the common good would have proceeded far better if you were here to help with

⁵⁰⁰ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 42; J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction."

⁵⁰¹ Ch. Dendrinis, "Co-operation and friendship among Byzantine scholars in the circle of Emperor Manuel II."

⁵⁰² See also Ch. Dendrinis, "Palaiologan scholars at work: Makarios Makres and Joseph Bryennios' autograph" *Vom Codex zur Edition-From Manuscripts to Books*, ed. A. Giannouli and E. Schiffer, Vienna: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2011, 25-55.

⁵⁰³ A. Angelou, "Introduction," *Dialogue on marriage with the empress-mother*, 14-20.

⁵⁰⁴ J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction" in *Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*, Thessalonike: Association for Byzantine Research, 1985, 36.

⁵⁰⁵ R.J. Loenertz, "Écrits de Macaire Macres et de Manuel Paleologue dans les mss. Vat. gr. 1107 et Crypten. 161," in *OCP* 15 (1949): 185-192.

⁵⁰⁶ Dendrinis, "Co-operation and friendship," 12.

⁵⁰⁷ Manuel, *Letters*, 44 addressed to Demetrios Chrysoloras.

⁵⁰⁸ Manuel, *Letters*, 3 and 4.

your linguistic ability, your understanding and everything else.” The literary circle also provided the emperor with intellectual and political contacts beyond the Byzantine realm, especially in the Latin world where it had multiple ramifications. Many Byzantine *literati* were proficient in Latin and integrated in the humanist intellectual milieu.⁵⁰⁹ The emperor's friendship with the Byzantines active in Italy who used their Hellenic education in building up their relationships⁵¹⁰ helped Manuel establish closer political relations and advertise his need for support. The cases of Manuel Chrysoloras, John Chrysoloras, and Demetrios Skaranos⁵¹¹ indicate that the emperor used his literary connections as agents in the West, alongside court ambassadors like Nicholas Eudaimonoioannes who came from aristocratic pro-western families.⁵¹²

The case of Chrysoloras' diplomatic service in the West is telling for the general use of the scholarly network by its members. Chrysoloras was active in the West at a time when Manuel needed to show that he was willing to continue negotiations with the Latin Church for a future union. Later on, especially after 1415, Manuel accepted the preeminence of Joseph Bryennios, another member of his literary circle, in religious matters at the court. He also recruited the patriarch Euthymios from among his literary friends. These cases indicate that the relations established previously on the basis of literary preoccupations served later on other purposes determined by the emperor's changing interests.⁵¹³

⁵⁰⁹ Plethon was aware of the philosophical debates in Italy ‘Τοὺς δὲ νῦν Πλάτωνος ἠττωμένους ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ, οἷς φησι χαριζόμενος τὴν τοιαύτην πραγματείαν λαβεῖν ἐπὶ νοῦν, ἴσμεν τίνες εἰσὶ καὶ ἐώρων πολλοὶ τῷ ἀνδρὶ συγγιγνομένους αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ, οἷς τοσοῦτον μέτεστι φιλοσοφίας, ὅσον αὐτῷ Πλήθωνι ὀρχηστικῆς. [...] “Ὅσοι δὲ ἐν Ἑσπέρα γνησίως τῶν φιλοσοφίας δογμάτων ἐπεμελήθησαν, οὐχ ὁμοίως τὰ τοιαῦτα κρίνουσι· κρεῖττους δὲ ἀριθμοῦ σχεδόν εἰσιν οἱ γε τοιοῦτοι, ὧν αὐτὸς οὐκ ὀλίγοις ἐνέτυχον.’ Καὶ πότε σὺ ἦ τίσι τῶν γε ἐν Ἑσπέρα ἐνέτυχες σοφῶν; George Gemistos, *Against Scholarios in favor of Aristotle's objections*, 2.14-17

⁵¹⁰ I. Thompson argued that teaching Greek to the leading men of Florence, Venice and Milan was for Chrysoloras a means to attach the educated elites of Italy to the cause of the Greek empire. In proof of his contention Thomson cited Andrea Zulian's funeral oration for Chrysoloras, which claimed “his true task was to save his country from danger rather than give delight to Italy.” I. Thompson, “Manuel Chrysoloras and the Early Italian Renaissance,” *GRBS* 7 (1966): 63-82;

⁵¹¹ Manuel's letter 49 addressed to Manuel Chrysoloras suggests that Demetrios Skaranos was instrumental for the promotion of the emperor's interests in Italy.

⁵¹² Relationships with the Latin West are attested by the significant number of Latin letters issued from Manuel's chancery and often conveyed by his ambassador, Manuel Chrysoloras: letters were sent to the kings of England, France, and to Sigismund (some of them translated by J. Barker, “Appendices” in *Manuel II*); Manuel's letter to the Siennese (*PP* 3, 120-121); four letters addressed by the Byzantine chancellery in Manuel's name to Martin V and Ferdinand I of Aragon. Manuel's Letter 38. 26-28 addressed to Manuel Chrysoloras speaks of the English King: “this ruler (Henry IV of England) is most illustrious because of his position, most illustrious too, because of his intelligence; his might amazes everyone; he extends his hands to all and in every way he places himself at the service of those who need help.”

⁵¹³ In fact, in Manuel Chrysoloras' case it has been pointed out that the pedagogical activities of the Byzantine scholar in Italy might have been determined by several underlying political factors such as the emperor's strategy to promote proper relations with the papacy (I. Thomson, “Chrysoloras and the Early Italian Renaissance” and J. Haskins, “Chrysoloras and the Greek Studies of Bruni,” in *Manuele Crisolora. Il ritorno del greco in Occidente*, Napoli, 2002, 175-205).

Based on these functions, in the absence of established rhetorical services such as the regular performance of imperial orations on designated dates by designated people (e.g. a μαΐστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων), the emperor used this scholarly circle as a platform to advertise an image of his authority. As mentioned above, in the difficult political circumstances of the last decade of the fourteenth century, there were few occasions for panegyric celebrations. If before 1403 the *theatra* offered the opportunity for the emperor to show off his literary skills, with the stabilization of the situation in the empire the emperor could rely on several members of this network, such as Demetrios Chrysoloras, Manuel Chrysoloras, Makarios Makres, and John Chortasmenos, to write panegyrics or pieces of public oratory which extolled his military and political merits in pacifying the state. This tendency is particularly noticeable in the period after 1415 when he succeeded to assert his control over the Peloponnese or other Byzantine territories in continental Greece.

2.5. Final discussion and conclusions

The extent of the emperor's letter collection and the constant concern for advertising his literary compositions suggest that the emperor maintained, and presided over a separate group of individuals with literary interests. Manuel played both the role of a literary patron, supporting various *literati*, and of a patron of a literary salon, chairing meetings where texts of his literary peers were performed.⁵¹⁴ While the late fourteenth century scholars established many connections among them, it was the emperor who played the major role in providing them with support in their intellectual endeavors. More often than not, these individuals created close relations with the ruler or with the ruling family of the Palaiologoi. At the same time, according to his own statements, Manuel constantly presented himself as their peer and not as their patron. This happened not only because they had common preoccupations but, I would also suggest, because thus it was easier for him to advertise the political messages embedded in most of his texts.

One of the tasks of this chapter has been to identify the configuration of the literary circle gathered around Manuel and the functions it fulfilled at different moments in the emperor's career. I. Ševčenko's statement that in the Palaiologan period everybody knew everybody reflects the situation of Manuel's circle of intellectuals during the late fourteenth

⁵¹⁴ On this dichotomy, see M. Mullett, "Aristocracy and Patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople," *Byzantine Aristocracy. IX to XIII century*, ed. M. Angold, Edinburgh, 1984, 173-201.

and early fifteenth centuries.⁵¹⁵ A parallel with the contemporary humanist intellectual groups emerges since, based on evidence drawn from epistolary collections and manuscripts, both the circles of Italian learned individuals and the Byzantine circles seem to have cultivated assiduously the personality and the activities of teachers and friends.⁵¹⁶ Furthermore, the evidence presented here indicates a revival of court rhetoric during Manuel's reign in comparison with the previous reign of John V Palaiologos. We also have no information of systematic rhetorical activities at the parallel imperial court of John VII either in Constantinople or in Thessalonike. During his reign, Manuel played an active role in gathering rhetoricians to whom he gave the opportunity to perform their texts in *theatra* organized at his court. Based on the evidence of his epistolary collection, we may assume that the emperor wished to portray himself as an *arbiter elegantiae* of courtly literary productions and encouraged his friends to consider him as a kind of a *first among equals* rather than an emperor. In doing so, it is possible that he wished to follow the model of his mentor, Demetrios Kydones, who also gathered around him a circle of friends with literary preoccupations.

Several observations can be made regarding the composition and chronological development of this group which constituted the primary learned audience of Manuel's texts. First, it was not restricted geographically to Constantinople since the emperor had many connections among *litterati* in Cyprus, Morea, Thessalonike, and even Italy. Second, it comprised individuals with different social status: with very few exceptions (e.g. Maximos Chrysoberges) all the members in the emperor's literary circle held a position in the administrative or ecclesiastical hierarchy. Third, most of them were divided with regard to their religious or political opinions and even at the level of literary aesthetics, as the members of this group seemingly had different preferences in terms of the literary merits of a text.

The differences between the members of the same literary circle might have forced the emperor to tune his discourse according to the views characteristic to each of these different groups. From this point of view we can understand the fact that the emperor did not confine himself to a single genre but approached a multitude of rhetorical forms which he tried to adapt to given situations, as it will be argued in the following chapter. At a different level, since the emperor was much interested in prolonging negotiations with the Latin West, the

⁵¹⁵ I. Ševčenko, 'the criss-crossing of the lines of correspondence shows that everybody was in touch with everybody at some time, either directly or through a potential intermediary and that literary traditions ran in some families,' in "Society and Intellectual Life," 72.

⁵¹⁶ In his letters, Guarino often reminded his fellow scholars of their debt to Manuel Chrysoloras. Cf. Thomson, "Chrysoloras," 70.

multifaceted literary circle offered him the possibility of entertaining the role of mediator between the Orthodox and the western oriented Byzantine groups.

In chronological terms, this literary circle knew several transformations throughout Manuel's reign. The group to which he belonged was also active before his reign, as the many letters dating from the period before 1391 testify to.⁵¹⁷ In the beginning, due to his mentor, Demetrios Kydones, Manuel maintained closer relations with several Byzantines who upheld pro-western views or who converted to Catholicism. In the second half of his reign the number of people with strict Orthodox views, especially members of the clergy, like Makarios Makres, Joseph Bryennios, or the hieromonk David, increased. This change in the group configuration can be explained on the one hand by the fact that many members of the pro-Latin group gradually left Constantinople for Italy while the influence of several Orthodox ecclesiastics increased. The chronological evolution of the circle is also reflected in the literary preoccupations cultivated at court: if in the first decade of his reign the discussion of literary aspects prevailed in Manuel's letters, later on he appeared more concerned to approach political and religious topics.

The significance of Manuel's activity as convener of a literary circle becomes clearer when compared with similar contemporary activities. In fact we know of only three other contemporary patrons of literature and artistic endeavors in Constantinople: Theodore Palaiologos Kantakouzenos to whom John Chortasmenos addressed several poems-ekphraseis on his palace,⁵¹⁸ Constantine Asanes who offered protection to the pro-Latin group in Constantinople although, later on, he had to reaffirm his Orthodox position; and Matthew Palaiologos Laskaris, an active collector of manuscripts.⁵¹⁹ To these may be added Theodore II Palaiologos in the Peloponnese: *literati* like the *grammatikos* Manuel Holobolos, Demetrios Pepagomenos, author of a monody for Cleope Malatesta, Plethon, and Isidore, future cardinal of Kiev seem to have found shelter in Mystras at different points of their careers.⁵²⁰ All three patrons were prominent members of the imperial court and *oikeioi* of the emperor: Theodore Palaiologos Kantakouzenos was a rich businessman with many Latin business connections, and

⁵¹⁷ Letters addressed to Kydones, Kabasilas, Tribolios.

⁵¹⁸ Chortasmenos- Hunger, *Poems* b, d, e.

⁵¹⁹ Cf. *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten*: Laskaris commissioned to two scribes Stephanos of Medeia and George Baiophoros several manuscripts. Cf. also N. Gaul "The Partridge's Purple Stockings Observations on the Historical, Literary and Manuscript Context of Pseudo-Kodinos' Handbook on Court Ceremonial" in *Theatron*, p. 100, discussed in connection with manuscript Paris. gr. 2991A, a miscellaneous manuscript copied for Matthew Laskaris which included both older and more recent texts.

⁵²⁰ See the poems addressed to him. The dedicatory letter addressed by Mazaris: S. Mergiali, "Attitudes intellectuelles et contexte social dans le despotat de Morée au XVe siècle," D. Zakythinis, *Le Despotat grec de Morée*, vol. II, 245-250.

a senator in Constantinople;⁵²¹ Constantine Asanes was *theios* of the emperor and of John V; and Matthew Palaiologos was a member of the ruling family.

Apart from these Byzantine patrons, Italian humanists residing temporarily in Constantinople also played a role in attracting Greek scholars into their service. Cristoforo Garatone, an Italian humanist and student of Guarino, who around 1420 lived in Constantinople as *cancellarius* of a Venetian businessman, commissioned several scribes to copy manuscripts for him or for his wealthier master.⁵²²

Some members of Manuel's circle also maintained their own smaller but effective networks. John Chortasmenos was able to collect almost thirty manuscripts and was well acquainted with Constantinopolitan scribes, such as Joasaph.⁵²³ At the same time, monasteries remained important centers of ecclesiastical manuscript production. In the beginning of the fifteenth century particularly the Petra monastery housed an important collection of manuscripts and prolific scribes like Stephanos or George Baiophoros were actively involved in copying texts both ancient and modern.⁵²⁴ Stephanos who later on was to be appointed metropolitan became one of the emperor's *oikeioi*, while Baiophoros was a teacher. John Chrysoloras and Matthew Palaiologos Laskaris commissioned several manuscripts comprising both ancient and contemporary texts. Among the texts copied were *Mazaris' journey* and *Demetrios Chrysoloras' Refutation of Demetrios Kydones' treatise against Nil Cabasilas*.⁵²⁵

Still, despite the fact that in the Palaiologan period such places of patronage emerged and offered incentives for literary or artistic endeavors, there was no other center comparable to Manuel's imperial court.⁵²⁶ Not only that it managed to offer shelter to numerous *literati*, but even in terms of book collections, the imperial palace housed a library such as the one described by Pero Tafur who traveled in Constantinople around 1430s.⁵²⁷ In addition, it seems

⁵²¹ Synodal tome of 1409.

⁵²² On the activities of Cristoforo Garatone in Constantinople and Italy see Th. Ganchou, "Géorgios Scholarios, 'secrétaire' du patriarche unioniste Gregorios III Mammas? Le mystère résolu," in *Le patriarcat oecuménique de Constantinople aux XIVe-XVIe siècles: Rupture et continuité*. Paris: Centre d'études byzantines, neo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, 2007, 173-175. L. Pesce, "Cristoforo Garatone, Trevigiano nunzio di Eugenio IV," *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia* 28 (1974) 23-93.

⁵²³ John Chortasmenos, *Monody for scribe Joasaph* in Chortasmenos- Hunger, 194.

⁵²⁴ E.D. Kakulide, 'Η βιβλιοθήκη τῆς Μονῆς Προδρόμου-Πέτρας στὴν Κωνσταντινούπολη, *Hellenika* 21 (1968), 26-28.

⁵²⁵ See *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten*, Vaticanus, 584.

⁵²⁶ Cf. also Ševčenko, "Society and Intellectual Life," 71.

⁵²⁷ "The emperor's palace must have been very magnificent, but now it is in such a state that both it and the city show well the evils which the people suffered and still endure. At the entrance to the Palace, beneath certain chambers, is an open loggia of marble with stone benches around it, and stones, like tables, raised on pillars in front of them, placed end to end. Here are many books and ancient writings and histories, and on one side are gaming boards so that the Emperor's house may be well supplied. Inside, the house is badly kept, except certain parts where the Emperor, the Empress, and attendants can live, although cramped for space" (Pero Tafur, *Travels and adventures 1435-1439*, tr. M. Letts, London, 1926, 145).

that the emperor encouraged the copying of manuscripts with different ancient texts, rhetorical or scientific. A recent study suggests that the emperor sponsored a workshop of manuscript production in Constantinople where Isidore of Kiev and Demetrios Pepagomenos, two copyists connected to the imperial family, were active. This workshop was most probably functioning in the first three decades of the fifteenth century. Five manuscripts seem to have survived from this workshop and one of them, the Paris. Suppl. gr. 309, has an official character as it opens with the emperor's portrait and it includes only Manuel's *Funeral oration*.⁵²⁸ Based on these observations, I would like to suggest that Manuel made a conscious effort to enforce the imperial court's role of a preeminent center of literary patronage, given the fact that previously during the Palaiologan period other local centers of patronage had multiplied: Thessalonike, Mystras, Italy, Trebizond.

Manuel's circle served a variety of functions and had a wide extension within the late Byzantine intellectual sphere. It served both the emperor's needs to receive some kind of feedback from other fellow authors as well as his need to advertise his political messages. From this point of view texts were often regarded as objects in the wider political negotiations of the period and intellectuals were frequently integrated in the emperor's efforts to insure stability and support for his actions. Arguably, by attaching himself to the scholarly circles of Byzantium and beyond and by constantly seeking recognition for his literary achievements Manuel attempted to legitimize himself as a different kind of ruler. At the same time, the scholarly network he gathered around himself appears to have played the role of a parallel court especially in those moments when he lacked full support for his political actions. In order to gain the authority over this parallel court of *literati* as well as its support he had to become one of its most active members by composing and publicly presenting his literary productions. In the following section of my dissertation I will focus on the texts the emperor wrote both in order to present himself as a member of this *literary court* and in order shape his vision of imperial authority.

⁵²⁸ D. Grosdidier de Matons and C. Förstel, "Quelques manuscrits grecs liés à Manuel II Paléologue," in B. Atsalos and N. Tsironis (eds), *Proceedings of the 6th International Symposium on Greek Palaeography, Drama, Greece, 21-27 September 2003*, vol. 1, Athens, 2008, 375-86.

Unit two: Shifting Political Voices in Manuel's Texts

Introduction

Aims and methodological considerations

This second unit will provide an analysis of the rhetorical aspects of several texts which treated political issues and challenges from Manuel's reign, such as the dynastic conflicts of the late fourteenth century, the education of the appointed successor to the throne, or the political situation of the Peloponnese. The focus of my inquiry will be about the practice of rhetoric, and more specifically the strategies whereby he made rhetorical writings an ideologically effective tool to disseminate political messages. The rationale for this unit is twofold: on the one hand, one has to confront the striking prominence of political rhetoric among the emperor's writings; and, on the other hand, the scholarship on Manuel's reign and literary activity has been dominated so far by historical approaches that privileged biographical and source studies.

In the attempt to map the emperor's strategies of persuasion at several key moments of his rule, I argue that, in so far as these political texts are concerned, Manuel operated changes within the tradition of literary genres and to a certain extent subverted them; in this way his texts served his efforts to project the image of a different kind of ruler concerned with the cultivation of learning among his subjects. As it will be argued in the last unit of my dissertation this image reflected a shift in the understanding of politics not as a means of ameliorating an individual's situation but rather as civic engagement for the community's benefit. I will focus therefore on those writings which arose from the preoccupations for the political situation of the empire during his reign (1391-1425): *The dialog with the empress mother on marriage* (Ἠθικὸς διάλογος περὶ γάμου); *The foundations of imperial conduct* (Ἐπιτομὴ βασιλικῆς ἀγωγῆς); *The seven ethico-political orations* (Λόγοι); and *The funeral oration on his brother Theodore* (Ἐπιτάφιος λόγος). Each of these four texts is unique in its genre or approach and each illustrated a particular moment in Manuel's career as emperor. To these can be added another three very short pieces: a psalm, an ethopoia, and an oration to his subjects, which,

nevertheless, have a far more limited extent. In selecting these texts from the emperor's considerable and varied *œuvre* I operated with two criteria: their topic and their degree of public dissemination.¹

The analysis of each of the texts will proceed on two levels. First, I will deal with formal and structural issues by looking into their contents and genre; and second, I will be concerned with the rhetorical strategies employed by the author in adjusting the rhetorical templates used in conveying his messages. This analysis will help me in turn to determine the typology and the different modulations of the authorial voice.

Such an analysis which takes account of the texts' conventions and functions requires preliminary clarifications of two major notions essential for the construction of political messages: genre and authorial voice. While many modern scholars dismissed *genre* and *author* as obsolete categories of interpretation, I would rather agree here with J. Culler that they remain fundamental for the creation of meaning since they offer “a set of literary norms to which texts may be related and by virtue of which they become meaningful and coherent.”² In particular, the concept of genre underwent significant changes and re-evaluations over the time. More often than not, genres have been conceived in terms of literary forms, such as dialog, letter, oration, chronicle, etc. Yet, as M. Mullett noticed, in the case of Byzantine literature, the system of genres cannot be regarded exclusively as a system of *forms* transmitted from Antiquity but there also have to be taken into consideration the “rhetorical *types* which provide the occasion, function, status, and transactional relationship between the implied speaker and the implied recipient.” These *types* represent the literary expression of the great human occasions such as birth, death, power, career, education.³ Taking into consideration these two components, Mullett argues that in Byzantium genres were created when “the rhetorical types met the axis of forms.” Following this model, in the present unit I understand genre as a literary category reflecting both a social function such as teaching or deliberating in political issues, and the form of a text; it is the latter aspect which also signals its relation to a body of other writings. Such a definition of genre will necessarily include echoes from reader-response criticism, and particularly from H.-R. Jauss' notion of horizon of

¹ It is the reason why I eliminated from this list the letter collection which nevertheless will often serve as background material.

² J. Culler, 'Towards a Theory of Non-Genre Literature', in R. Federman (ed.), *Surfiction*, Chicago: Swallow, 1975, 255-62. Similarly, E.D. Hirsch stated that it is “generic boundaries which in fact make the critical reading of a work possible by providing a matrix against which to set an interpretation,” *Validity in Interpretation*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967, 68-126.

³ M. Mullett, “The Madness of Genre,” *DOP* 46 (1992): 236.

expectation defined as “the objectifiable system of expectations that arises for each work in the historical moment of its appearance, from a pre-understanding of the genre, from the form and themes of already familiar works, and from the opposition between poetic and practical language.”⁴

In addition, my discussion of the genre of the four texts that will be analyzed here also draws on P. Roilos' concept of genre modulation used to explain the incorporation of several elements from various literary genres and applied to the Byzantine narrative fiction.⁵ The concept of genre modulation offers a more convenient tool for the analysis of the emperor's multilayered texts. It can account for the author's strategies better than concepts such as generic hybrid because the incorporation of different generic elements in the text of the orations does not result in the creation of a generic hybrid. Because of its emphasis on generic fluctuations and interconnections, this notion helps to identify the innovations occurring at the point where texts of one genre cross discursive boundaries and enter the territory of another genre. An interweaving of different textures drawn from a number of genres takes place so that these genre innovations and modulations are further reflected at the level of political discourse.

In line with these considerations on how to approach genre, it is not always easy to assess the genre identity of Manuel's texts. The *Orations*, for instance, is made of seven successive texts of different types connected in a sort of a pedagogical set of lectures that resemble a *diatribe* with a clear educational purpose. While each of the orations can be read independently, this series of texts is also unitary and meaningful. Furthermore, apart from the influence of the performative conditions, the *Orations* is tightly connected with the *Foundations*, another text that draws on the traditions of *gnomologia* and *centuria*.

Another important concept which will underpin my analysis is that of authorial voice. I understand authorial voice as an overarching literary construct which reveals the author's one or more standpoints mediated not only by his own statements, but also by the ways (s)he organizes the rhetorical material or by the text's most conspicuous stylistic choices. As a combination of representational codes the authorial voice has the function of an agent within the text, responsible for imparting judgments on situations, events, or ethical values. Thus, the

⁴ H.-R. Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982, 22.

⁵ P. Roilos, “Towards a poetics of amphoteroglossia,” in *Amphoteroglossia: a poetics of the twelfth-century medieval Greek novel*, Washington DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2005, 17. On generic mixtures in Byzantium see P. A. Agapitos, “Mischung der Gattungen und Überschreitung der Gesetze: Die Grabrede des Eustathios von Thessalonike auf Nikolaos Hagiotheodorites,” *JÖB* 48 (1998): 119-146.

scope of my inquiry will be broadened by asking how the “author function” strengthened the emperor's arguments and conversely how in some cases the speech functioned in fact primarily as a vehicle to support a particular authorial profile. The notion of authorial voice will be understood in a post-structuralist theoretical frame as a non-stable and changing aspect across the texts of the same author.⁶ To that extent, it will appear that Manuel II strove to construct for himself multiple shifting authorial voices which he alternatively used in order to further produce and convey political messages.

Finally, concerning the rhetorical strategies employed in these texts, the principles of Byzantine rhetoric will, to a certain extent, serve as a hermeneutic tool since categories such as the invention or disposition of arguments can influence textual meaning. From this point of view the question of the rhetorician's adaptation of his subject matter to accepted or widespread rhetorical practices cannot be ignored. The understanding of rhetorical practices and their adaptations, that is of the form and style of a text, will further support the understanding of its meaning. More significantly, the analysis of rhetorical strategies will help to understand the unstated, unaddressed concerns. As rhetoric in Byzantium was a shifting landscape, like many other rhetoricians, Manuel was concerned not only with saying something, but also with repositioning it. And, by being repositioned, rhetoric came to provide new ways of interpreting political realities.

The literary landscape in the late Palaiologan period

One of the underlying assumptions of my investigation is that viewing the emperor's political rhetoric in its full context enables us to better understand two key issues: first, it helps us appreciate how the emperor adapted rhetorical norms to current circumstances. It is only by comparing a literary text to its context, that we can appreciate its position in the political and aesthetical systems of its period. Thus we can answer questions regarding its relation to preexisting assumptions and whether it meets or extends the contemporaries' horizons of expectation. Second, such an investigation helps us acquire the picture of what those adaptations suggest regarding the intellectual milieu of the late Palaiologan period. Noticeably, rhetoric began to reflect the changing needs of its contexts that is a society where a class of businessmen recruited from within the aristocracy was emerging.⁷ Accordingly, rhetoricians responded by inventing new formulas of praising the imperial excellence, such as in the

⁶ Such post-structuralist approaches interrogated the correlated elements of the notion of *authorial voice*, such as author, reader, or text. See E.D. Harvey, *Ventriloquized Voices*, New York: Routledge, 1992, 5-6.

⁷ See ch. 1.

comparisons (*Συγκρίσεις*) that glorified a new kind of ruler and of polity.

Before beginning the analysis proper of these texts, it is necessary to stress that this investigation will highlight not only their particularities but also their formal characteristics common to other similar contemporary texts. Thus, in the remainder of this introduction I will briefly deal with the literary background of Manuel's political texts by investigating two aspects, which will facilitate a comparison between Manuel's techniques and widespread literary practices in the Palaiologan period: first, the literary landscape at the turn of the fifteenth century; and second, I will offer an overview of the emperor's writings.

As far as the Byzantine literary context is concerned, the contours of Manuel's literary *œuvre* were adjusted to several developments noticeable in late fourteenth century literary landscape: the conditions in Constantinople determined by the extreme social and economic situation before 1402; and, after that date, a revival in literary activities characterized by a phenomenon of experimentation with various genres and literary forms. As I have pointed out in the previous chapter, the intellectual life in the capital continued to flourish during Manuel's reign, despite a setback in the last decade of the fourteenth century.⁸ After the end of the Ottoman siege in 1402, the number of texts such as orations, homilies, or verse compositions increased, possibly also under the pressure of the new political conditions that saw a number of changes in the Byzantine political institutions.⁹ Discussions of specific political conditions such as the conflicts in the Peloponnese or the union of the Churches regularly emerged in the admonitory orations produced during this period.¹⁰ Owing to its cultural and political prestige, Constantinople continued to attract many of the educated elites from the provinces for even if some authors left Constantinople, others continued to move into the capital. Upon his return from Crete, Joseph Bryennios remarked the difference in terms of intellectual activities between the poverty of the southern island and the capital:

Instead of the conversation with the Cretans we have the Constantinopolitans and instead of the many villages we have the monasteries, and instead of fear we have

⁸ On the situation before 1402 see Manuel, *Letters*, 34 addressed to Balsamon: "There was a certain person in the audience who did not know the source of the letter or its purpose. It struck him so forcibly that he was quite ready to believe it could not be a product of our present literary poverty, for he was reminded of some of the ancients whose names are preserved even after death by their writings."

⁹ At the same time it is noticeable the increase of pieces of demonstrative rhetoric like *encomia* or *psogoi*, while the admonitory orations popular in the later decades of John V's reign are noticeably fewer during Manuel's reign. Many historians have looked at the *encomia* and *epitaphioi* for their historical information (A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 163-181). A. Kioussopoulou, (*Ibid.*, 181) argued that the high number of encomiastic texts from the Palaiologan period attested that they were necessary in a political system that included not only the *archontes* but also the *demos*.

¹⁰ Gemistos Plethon, *Deliberative Oration on the Situation in the Peloponnese* and Joseph Bryennios, *Deliberative Oration on the Union of the Churches*.

courage, instead of barbarians we have learned people. And let me say what is more important: instead of death we found life, and instead of turmoils we found serenity, and instead of slavery we found the greatest freedom. ἀντὶ τῆς ὀμιλίας τῶν Κρητικῶν ἔχομεν τοὺς πολίτας καὶ ἀντὶ πολλῶν χωρίων τὰ μοναστήρια, ἀντὶ φόβου τὴν ἀφοβίαν, ἀντὶ βαρβάρων λογίους. Νὰ εἰπῶ τὸ μεγαλῶτερον· ἀντὶ θανάτου εὐρήκαμεν ζωὴν, καὶ ἀντὶ φουρτούνας ἐπετύχαμεν γαλήνην, καὶ ἀντὶ δουλείας μεγίστην ἐλευθερίαν.¹¹

In spite of the difficult social and economic conditions, the authors of this period continued to write on a variety of topics¹² and displayed a high familiarity of the rhetorical canons.¹³ Thus, in the hitherto unedited encyclopedic text titled *The Garden* (Τὸ Κήπος), the same Joseph Bryennios included a chapter on definitions of different rhetorical genres and tropes.¹⁴ In another text he provided a definition of rhetoric as central element of political life: ῥητορικὴ ἐστὶ δύναμις τεχνικοῦ λόγου πιθανοῦ, ἐν πράγμασι πολιτικοῖς, τέλος ἔχουσα τὸ καλῶς εἰπεῖν κατὰ τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον.¹⁵ Many other late Palaiologan authors showed familiarity with rhetorical theory. In the preamble of his *prosphōnētikos logos* for emperor Manuel II, John Chortasmenos defined his oration in a threefold manner, κατὰ γένος ἰδέας, κατὰ τύπον, κατ' εἶδος.¹⁶ For his part, Manuel Chrysoloras praised the emperor for having applied correctly these norms to his texts.¹⁷ Isidore of Kiev also showed acquaintance with the rules of the different genres when he described the different kinds of texts of praise or when he set up his views on how an oratorical piece should look.¹⁸

¹¹ Bryennios, *Letters*, 27: Εἰς τὰς χεῖρας τοῦ κύριου Γιαννούλη Δὲ Σπίγα. Bryennios' return to Constantinople may be counted as part of the tendency noticeable especially among the rich families living in the Italian insular possessions, like Crete or Chios, to move from these territories into the capital of the empire where they had better business opportunities or contacts, Th. Ganchou, "La famille Koumoussis à Constantinople et Négorpont, avant et après 1453," in Βενετία-Ευβοία ἀπὸ τὸν Ἐγριπο στο Νεγροπόντε, Venice: Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies, 2006, 48-49.

¹² On the literary interests of Palaiologan authors see P. Schreiner, "Literarische Interessen in der Palaiologenzeit anhand von Gelehrtencodices: Das Beispiel des Vaticanus gr. 914," in *Geschichte und Kultur der Palaiologenzeit*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996, 205-221.

¹³ S. Wahlgren, "Byzantine Literature and the Classical Past:" "the highest registers are strained towards the extreme in accordance with general rules derived from the ancient language system. This has been compared to the development of Classical Sanskrit where texts are written which respect Panini's standard grammar to the letter but display a language very different from that of Panini. This kind of Greek has seldom appealed to readers of later generations – Browning speaks of a 'mandarin-like' classicism – and sometimes did not do so even to contemporaries: Theodore Metochites was already the target of criticism during his lifetime," in A. Bakker, ed., *A Companion to the Ancient Greek Language*, Malden: Blackwell, 2010, 536.

¹⁴ Vindob. theol. gr. 235, f 88v: the chapter titled περὶ ῥητορικῶν discusses categories such as μῦθος, διήγημά, χρεία, etc.

¹⁵ Joseph Bryennios, *Ta heurethenta*, 326.

¹⁶ Chortasmenos-Hunger, 217: ὁ παρῶν οὐτοσι λόγος πανηγυρικῆς μὲν ἐστὶ κατὰ γένος ἰδέας, τοῦ ἐγκωμιαστικοῦ δὲ τύπου, κατ'εἶδος προσφωνητικὸς δὲ διὰ τὸ βραχὺ τε καὶ σύμμετρον.

¹⁷ Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse* 75.28-30: σὺ δὲ ἐν τούτοις ἀκριβῶς τὸν τεχνίτην καὶ νομοθέτην ἔδειξας. In addition, in the same passage, he praised the emperor for not mixing monodies and epitaphioi.

¹⁸ *PP*, 3, 135.25: τριχῆ τοίνυν τοῦ τῶν ἐγκωμίων θεσμοῦ τοῖς ἡρημένοις καθόλου λέγειν προαναφωνοῦντος, ἔργα, γένος, καὶ πατρίδα ταύτην κρηπίδα τῶν ὄλων ἐκεῖνος ὑποθεῖναι. Cf. 135.11 ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐκεῖναι βασιλῆιοι

As part of their acquaintance with rhetorical rules, authors of Manuel's reign also practiced a sort of literary criticism and privileged a limited set of rhetorical qualities drawn from the handbooks of rhetorical theory, especially Hermogenes': clarity, vigor, intensity, the composition, and the density of the arguments (τὸ σαφές, δύναμις, δεινότης τῶν λόγων, ὀνομάτων συνθήκη, καὶ ἡ τῶν ἐνθυμημάτων πυκνότης),¹⁹ the importance of the thoughts combined with clarity (τὸ τοῦ νοῦ μέγεθος μετὰ τοῦ σαφοῦς).²⁰ In one of his letters, for instance, Manuel Kalekas praises clarity,²¹ while, later, Manuel Chrysoloras also praised other literary qualities as well: τὴν γε μὴν ἐν σοὶ δύναμιν καὶ δεινότητα τῶν λόγων δείκνυσι.²²

Owing to this awareness of rhetorical norms, court authors of the Palaiologan period took the freedom to innovate.²³ The increased literary activity of the post-1402 period can be accounted for a tendency to experiment with different literary forms in their texts, a phenomenon observable ever since the Komnenian period. Within this tendency toward

<Μοῦσαι> καὶ διὰ πάντων ὑψηλαὶ καὶ γενναῖαι τὸ δραστικὸν μετὰ χαρίτων τινῶν ὑποφαίνουσαι καὶ τινα λαμπρότητα τῶν ἔργων προπέμπουσαι, οὕτω καὶ τοὺς λόγους διατόρους τινὰς καὶ ποικίλους καὶ χαρίεντας καὶ μετὰ τινος εὐρύθμου καὶ λαμπρᾶς τῆς συνθήκης καὶ τῆς προσηκούσης αὐτοῖς δεινότητος ὑπηρεῖν τε καὶ ἐφιζάνειν μᾶλλον τῆς ἐκείνων διανοίας, ἵνα τινὰ συμφωνίαν καὶ ἀναλογίαν ἐκείνοις πορίσαιντο, καὶ οὕτω γενέσθαι τὸ τοῦ λόγου σῶμα, μᾶλλον δὲ οὕτως ἐξυφανθῆναι τὸ πᾶν, ὡς μήτε λόγων ἀρμοζόντων τὴν ὕλην ἐνδεῖν, μήτ' ἐκείνου εἶδος περιθεῖναι ταύτη συμφωνοῦν καὶ συναδόν τὸ παράπαν οὐδαμῶς, ἀλλ' εἰ οἶόν τε καὶ χρυσέοις ἔπεισι τὰς χρυσὰς καὶ λαμπρὰς τῶν ὑποθέσεων καὶ βασιλικὰς κατασκευασθῆναι.

¹⁹ πυκνότης τῶν νοημάτων was a literary feature widely praised: Manuel mentions it in letters 24.3 (to Frangoroulos) and 27.5 (to Theodore Kaukadenos) as well as Manuel Chrysoloras in the *Epistolary discourse* 75.5. Also Joseph Bryennios' letter 2.1 addressed to Nicetas Myrsiniotes: τῆς ἐπιστολῆς ἥσθη μὲν καὶ τῷ κάλλει τῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ τῇ τῶν ἐννοιῶν πυκνότητι καὶ τῇ διὰ πάντων εὖ καλῶς ἐχούσῃ συνθήκῃ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις, οἷς τὰς καλὰς ἐπιστολὰς κοσμοῦσιν οἱ καλῶς ἐπιστέλλειν εἰδότες. On the resilience of this Hermogenian series of literary virtues in Byzantium see G. L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric*, Thessalonike: Patriarchikon Idryma Meleton, 1973, 13.

²⁰ Demetrios Chrysoloras commented on Manuel's ability to express many ideas in few words, *Synkrisis*, 81.9: καὶ πολλάκις ἀπὸ μιᾶς λέξεως σωρὸν νοημάτων ἀνακινεῖς, ὃν αὐτὸς ἐκὼν ἐσώρευσας καὶ ἐνέκλεισας ἐν ἐκείνῃ. Isidore of Kiev (Letter 5 to the emperor Manuel) distinguished in the audience of the *Funeral Oration* separate groups of people who appreciated different aspects of the oration: ὅθεν καὶ οἱ μὲν ἐβδῶν, μετὰ κρότων καὶ λαμπρῶν τῶν ἐπαίνων, τὴν τῶν ὀνομάτων ὥραν, τὴν συνθήκην τῶν λέξεων, τὸ τῆς φράσεως κάλλος, τὴν τάξιν τῶν ἐπιχειρημάτων, καὶ ὅλως τὴν διὰ παντὸς τοῦ λόγου ἀγάμενοι τὴν διὰ πασῶν, εἶπεν ἄν τις μουσικός. Οἱ δὲ αὐτὸν ἐδόκουν τὸν κείμενον ὄραν ἐκεῖνα τῶν ἔργων πράττοντα, ἃ τοῖς τῶν παλαιῶν ἦν ἐφάμιλλα, καὶ σε φθεγγόμενον, ἃ τῷ μακαρίτῃ πραττόμενα τὴν Πέλοπος ἔσωξεν ἢ μᾶλλον τῆς βαρβαρικῆς ἐρρύετο δυναστείας. (67.17-22)

²¹ Kalekas, *Letters*, 10.31-32: ἐπεὶ καὶ ὁ μικρὸς σοὶ λόγος ἐκεῖνος, τὸ σαφές ἐν οἷς γράφω τιμᾶν παραγγείλας. The same string of qualities was used by Constantine Ivankos in the letter to Simon the Athonite Monk: ἢ τε γὰρ ὀνομάτων συνθήκη, καὶ ἡ τῶν ἐνθυμημάτων πυκνότης, καὶ τὸ τοῦ νοῦ μέγεθος μετὰ τοῦ σαφοῦς, καὶ προσέτι τὸ μηδὲν τραχὺ παρεῖναι τοῖς γράμμασι, ταῦτα πάντα πανηγυρὶς ἀτεχνῶς. E. Legrand, *Lettres de l'empereur Manuel Paleologue*, Paris, 1893, 9-12.

²² Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 74.17-18; and further on διὰ τῆς ἐν αὐτοῖς πειθοῦς καὶ τῆς διαμονῆς τῶν λόγων κατορουσύντες, καὶ χωρὶς δὲ ὑποψίας τινός, χάριτος ἢ κολακείας (81.33).

²³ I. Toth (*Imperial orations*, 183): "although we know that these compositions (i.e. imperial orations) continued to be written for and delivered at various public events, such as the great church feasts, coronations, arrivals of the emperor, etc., their contents and composition do not seem to have depended on those events. Here, once again, we encounter difficulties when taking Menander as a guide: while in connection with some other periods the range of his encomiastic types seems limited, in late Byzantium he loses contemporary relevance on account of being too extensive."

experimentation can be counted several contemporary texts such as John Chortasmenos' *Funeral lament* (*Θρήνος ἐπιτάφιος*) for a member of the Asanes family or Demetrios Chrysoloras' *Hundred letters addressed to the Emperor Manuel Palaiologos on "a certain matter"* (*Εἰς τὸν ὄντως αὐτοκράτορα κῦριν Μανουήλ τὸν Παλαιολόγον Δημητρίου τοῦ Χρυσολωρᾶ ἐπιστολαὶ ἑκατὸν ἐφ' ἐνὶ πράγματι*).²⁴ In the first mentioned text, Chortasmenos combined verses with prose and dialog. The choice of a *thrēnos* instead of a monody or an *epitaphios logos* is even more surprising for, in Byzantium, *thrēnoi* have been almost exclusively used to relate unfortunate historical events.²⁵ Such *thrēnoi* became a popular genre especially after the fall of Constantinople.²⁶ However, Chortasmenos' text was addressed to a person in the imperial milieu, member of the Asanes clan and adopted the major features of this genre, as they can be identified in later texts: the use of political verse (vv. 1-130), of an *ekphrasis* on the beauty of the deceased youth,²⁷ and of a dialog between the mother and the son in both prose and verse (vv. 233-247).

The second text by the contemporary author and emperor's *oikeios*, Demetrios Chrysoloras, also has a unique form resulting from the learned combination of the tradition of advisory texts for rulers with epistolography.²⁸ They were not intended as letters *per se* but as an exercise to prove that the author was able to write in a concise form, after the emperor accused him of excessive wordiness.²⁹ As M. Treu has pointed out, the *Hundred Letters* may also have constituted an attempt to emulate Manuel's *Foundations* and it is akin to another text by Chrysoloras, *The Comparison between the ancient rulers and the emperor of today*, written in the manner of a panegyric for the emperor Manuel II.³⁰ No less than twenty three *letters* were included in both texts (letters 15-41).³¹ Chrysoloras aimed at outlining the contours of an ideal ruler, by combining arguments of political thought, and theology, in a highly elaborated text.³²

²⁴ To these texts can be added further contemporary writings such as M. Chrysoloras' *Epistolary discourse*, in fact a panegyric disguised in the form of a letter.

²⁵ H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, vol 1, Munich: Beck, 1978, 159 and H.-G. Beck, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Volksliteratur*, Munich: Beck, 1971, 161-169.

²⁶ Earlier on, Alexios Makrembolites wrote a *thrēnos* on the collapse of the Dome of Hagia Sophia, S. Kourouzes, "Αἱ ἀντιλήψεις περὶ τῶν ἐσχάτων τοῦ κόσμου καὶ ἡ κατὰ τὸ ἔτος 1346 πτώσις τοῦ τρούλλου τῆς Ἁγίας Σοφίας," *ΕΕΒΣ* 37 (1969-1970): 235-240.

²⁷ *Ekphrasis on the beauty of the child* ("Ἐκφρασις τῆς ὠραιότητος τοῦ παιδός), Chortasmenos- Hunger, 106-131.

²⁸ H. Hunger designated this strategy with the term «Raffinement der variatio» for it combined arguments of political thought, theology, and private life.

²⁹ Manuel, *Letters*, 46 and 48.

³⁰ The form of the text (one hundred letters or rather paragraphs) echoed to a large extent Manuel's hundred *Foundations*, a text which treated the same range of topics in a similar fragmentary manner. In letter 75, Demetrios even alluded to the emperor's text: κεφάλαια δὲ τὰς ἐπιστολάς ὑπερβαίνοντα. The text has a *paraenetic* character and it is possible that, since the date of the text has been established in 1417, its composition was connected with the beginnings of John VIII's effective rule in the Byzantine empire.

³¹ M. Treu, "Demetrios Chrysoloras und seine hundred Briefe," *BZ* 3 (1894): 599-601.

³² A. Garzya, "Introduction," in Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Cento Epistole a Manuele II Paleologo*, Napoli: M. D'Auria, 1984, 21.

All the letters were written according to a template that opened with the formula ἄριστε βασιλεῦ and ended with the greeting χαίροις. The *Hundred Letters* approached various topics: the opposition truth-falsity (letters 8, 69, 90); voluntary and involuntary acts (letters 42-47); theory and practice (letters 48-49); faith (letters 40, 55); physical phenomena and astronomy (letters 82-90); Christ's nature (letter 100). Yet, despite the apparent randomness, the text provides a unitary frame for it begins with an apology and then proceeds to grouping the topics according to broader themes.³³

Arguably, following a similar tendency to experiment with different literary forms several late Palaiologan authors introduced extensive narratives into their pieces of epideictic rhetoric which transform these texts into some of the lengthiest oratorical writings in Byzantine literature. As a matter of fact, in the absence of grand historical narratives, previously popular among many Byzantine writers,³⁴ it is noticeable that the epideictic oratory of this period underwent a process of *narrativization*. Authors of public oratorical texts were often preoccupied by ways to depict the rulers' deeds in words.³⁵ Along these lines, D. Angelov has recently noticed that “in Palaiologan court oratory the fantastic stories of the childhood of earlier emperors, such as Basil I and Manuel I, gave way to historical episodes serving as divine omens.”³⁶ Indeed, although panegyrists continued to constantly remind the ruler's conventional virtues, many late Palaiologan texts which belonged to the epideictic genre reflected this tendency in court oratory. Symeon of Thessalonike's *Encomium of Saint Demetrios*, despite fitting into a well defined tradition of religious encomia of which the author was certainly aware,³⁷ replaced the account of the saint's miracles with a lengthy account of the regional relations of Thessalonike in the early fifteenth century. Likewise, John Chortasmenos' *Oration on the miracles of the Theotokos* featuring a description of the Battle of Ankara in 1402,

³³ The first group of letters (1-21) deals with the “certain matter” which caused Chrysoloras to ask the emperor for forgiveness, the second group, 22-28 is an explicit praise for the emperor as forgiver; the third group 28-50, focuses on the emperor's qualities in the manner of a princely mirror; 51-60, returns to the topic of apology, 72-100 praises the emperor's virtues. Letters 15-41 and 64-68 take the form of an integrated princely mirror and borrow heavily from Chrysoloras' *Synkrisis*.

³⁴ G. Dennis designated it as “the great gap” of Byzantine historiography which lasted for about a hundred years, *The Reign of Manuel II Palaeologus in Thessalonica*, Rome, 1960, 18.

³⁵ E.g. Isidore, *Panegyric*, 133: οὐ μὴν διὰ τοῦτο γε ἄξιον σιωπᾶν διὰ τέλους καὶ μὴ τολμᾶν ἐγχειρεῖν τοῖς τῶν πραγμάτων λόγοις, οἵπερ ἐκείνων τὰ δευτέρα πάντῃ φέρουσιν, ὥσπερ ἀνωμολογεῖται πᾶσιν· οὐ γὰρ οἱ λόγοι τὰς πράξεις, ἀλλ'οἱ πράξεις ποιοῦσι τοὺς λόγους· διὰ ταύτας γὰρ καὶ ἀκοῆς ἀξιοῦνται καὶ τῶν εἰκότων πάντων δι'ἐκεῖνας τυγχάνουσι, καὶ τούτοις αὐτὸ γίνεταί τῳ μὴ χρῆσθαι τῇ τῶν πραγμάτων αἰσθήσει, ἀλλ'ὑποπίπτειν ἐκάτερα μᾶλλον καὶ τούτω χωρεῖν ἐκείνων κατόπιν αὐτούς.

³⁶ D. Angelov, “Emperors and Patriarchs as Ideal Children and Adolescents. Literary Conventions and Cultural Expectations,” in *Becoming Byzantine: children and childhood in Byzantium*, A. Papaconstantinou and A.-M. Talbot, Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, 2009, 123.

³⁷ D. Balfour, *Politico-Historical Works of Symeon, Archbishop of Thessalonica (1417 to 1429)*, Vienna, 1979, 104.

Demetrios Chrysoloras' *Comparison between the Ancient Rulers and the Emperor of Today* and Isidore of Kiev' *Panegyric for John VIII* used detailed narratives of events, in fact micro-histories of Manuel II's reign.³⁸ Thus, in their imperial orations, both Demetrios Chrysoloras and Isidore of Kiev integrated the emperor's achievements into larger historical accounts.³⁹ The process of *narrativization* of public oratory might have emerged also as a result of the fact that the court panegyrists, confronted with military disasters, were compelled to point out that there were still military deeds to be extolled. Consequently, orators were forced to present actions and campaigns of defense in more detail. For instance, in Isidore's panegyric Manuel's return from the West and the activities in the Peloponnese were recorded with minute details.⁴⁰

Moreover, Isidore's *proem* to his imperial oration gives an insight into the author's strategies which might very well have expressed a general trend in the Palaiologan period. Despite his initial declaration that the panegyric would be brief,⁴¹ his aesthetics emphasized a kind of public rhetoric based on close observation of reality:

Among all the senses, seeing is the only one which sets clearly before one's mind the force and the truth of reality as it is. The one who perceives what he sees clearly and undoubtedly through the doors of his eyes sends to the soul the clear impressions of the reality. For their part, the words send judgment to the sense of hearing. Τῶν γάρ τοι γιγνομένων τὴν δύναμιν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν οὐδεμία τις τῶν ἐτέρων αἰσθήσεων οὕτω σαφῶς ὡς ἔχει παρίστησιν ὡσπερ ὄρασις. ἀντιλαμβανόμενος γὰρ τῶν ὀρατῶν καθαρὰ καὶ ἀναμφίλεκτα καὶ διὰ θυρίων τινῶν τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν παραπέμπει τῇ ψυχῇ τοὺς τύπους ἐκείνων σαφεῖς [...]. Οἱ δὲ λόγοι, τὴν κρίσιν ταῖς ἀκοαῖς τῆς ψυχῆς παραπέμποντες.⁴²

As it will be pointed out in a subsequent chapter in this unit (ch. II.4), the narrative features which characterized Palaiologan public oratory and which are understood in the wider framework of experimentation with rhetorical genres in the Palaiologan period, can be

³⁸ For a discussion of these texts and their historical narratives see O.J. Schmitt, "Kaiserrede und Zeitgeschichte im späten Byzanz: ein panēgyrikos Isidors von Kiew aus dem Jahre 1429," *JÖB* 48: 1998, 209-242 and I. Toth, *Imperial orations in late Byzantium (1261-1453)*, PhD Dissertation, University of Oxford, 2003, 197. I Toth (*Ibid*, 160) had already remarked that Isidore of Kiev's encomium for John VIII presented several unconventional features: first, the extended encomium of the father which partially reflected Maximos Planoudes' speech on Michael IX's coronation; and second the praise of Constantinople largely reflecting a historical approach ("one of the most outstanding characteristics of this text is its historical nature and its explicitness in naming people, places, and events. As a result, this oration has been defined as a hybrid between history and encomium").

³⁹ Cf. the narratives in Demetrios Chrysoloras' *Synkrisis*, 239-244 and Isidore, *Panegyric*, 157.23-199.30.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 163.26-164.23. From this point of view, it is noticeable the detailed and the rapid succession of events: ἄρας τοῖνον ἐκέιθεν, πάντων ἐς τὴν βασιλῖδα παλινοστήσαι, πρύμναν ἐξαίφνης κρουσάμενος, καταλαμβάνει τὴν Πέλοπος, μηδὲ τῶν ἐν τέλει τί καὶ δράσαι βούλεται γινωσκόντων.

⁴¹ In the account of Manuel's deeds, Isidore begins by exhibiting his method intended to follow an as short as possible path: ἀλλ' ἐπιλείψει με λέγοντα τὴν χρῆσιν καὶ βασιλικὴν ὄλην τοῦ γένους σειρὰν ὁ χρόνος καὶ τὰς βασιλείους ἐκείνων πράξεις καὶ ὡς ἐν κεφαλαίῳ διηγούμενον καὶ τὸ τῶν λόγων μῆκος τὸ προσκορὲς ἐκφεύγων ὡς οἶόν τε καὶ τὰ πάντων ἐκείνων τῶν μεταξύ παραδραμῶν, ἐφ' οἷς προσήκει καταστήσω τὸν λόγον.

⁴² Isidore, *Panegyric*, 133. 9-15.

detected in the *Funeral Oration* as well. It is therefore not far fetched to say that the emperor tried to respond to the expectations of the literary community of which he was a member.

An overview of the emperor's rhetorical *œuvre*

Phenomena like experimentation with genres or narrativization exerted a considerable influence on Manuel's compositions. In addition to this general outline of the literary context of Byzantium in this era, the understanding of his political texts also relies on the general traits of his literary activity. A brief overview and discussion of all his texts is of relevance here since often, the earlier writings provided the material and themes for his later, more extensive texts. Moreover, so far the overviews of Manuel's works fell short of giving an appropriate account of his corpus of texts. With few exceptions,⁴³ scholars tended to emphasize the “useless” rhetorical sophistication of the emperor's texts understood only by an educated elite and considered that most of them were devoid of historical information.⁴⁴ Thus, in his monograph, J. Barker dismissed Manuel's literary activity as lacking substance⁴⁵ whereas G.T. Dennis' statement regarding the emperor's letters, despite the later retractions, echoed the views on Byzantine literature of a past generation of scholars.⁴⁶

A look at the emperor's *œuvre* reveals that the list of his works resembles the writings of his contemporary fellow authors who approached a similarly wide range of genres.⁴⁷ The early letters sent by Demetrios Kydones, his mentor, suggest that the emperor benefited from a complete rhetorical education which, at a first stage, entailed the production of several rhetorical exercises that reflected the prescriptions found in the handbooks of rhetoric circulating in later Byzantium. Indeed, his first literary attempts which have been preserved can be regarded rather as rhetorical exercises. This is the case with the essay *On drunkenness* in the form of an *ekphrasis*,⁴⁸ preceded by a preface on a hypothetical situation and drawing on

⁴³ Th. Khoury remarked the emperor's care to write in an elaborated and embellished style: “Introduction,” in *Manuel II Paléologue. Entretiens avec un Musulman. 7e controverse*, Paris: Cerf, 1966, 14-15.

⁴⁴ An exception is Ch. Dendrinis' unpublished PhD dissertation which tries to contextualize two of Manuel's theological texts by looking into the circulation of books and ideas in the late Palaiologan period. Also E. Trapp's discussion of the *Dialogs with a Muslim* in historical context and the context of doctrinary polemics: *Manuel II. Palaiologos. Dialoge mit einem Perser*. Vienna: Böhlau, 1966, 11-62.

⁴⁵ Barker, *Manuel II*, 402.

⁴⁶ G. Dennis, “Introduction,” *The Letters of Manuel II Palaiologos*, xviii: “There is a fundamental dishonesty: while living in one world, they speak from another.”

⁴⁷ A complete list of Manuel's texts (including the uncertain and the spurious ones) was provided by Ch. Dendrinis, *An annotated edition of the On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, 430-446.

⁴⁸ Edited by J. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca*, vol 2, Paris, 1830, 308-309.

numerous hyperboles.⁴⁹ Similar to this text were his *Ulysses' response to Antenor*,⁵⁰ the *Epistolary essay on dreams*, and another *ekphrasis* titled *A depiction of spring on a dyed, woven hanging*.⁵¹ The latter text which attracted more scholarly attention than other rhetorical exercises dates from the time of his trip to Paris (1399-1400)⁵² and draws on a topic popular among the ancient and the Byzantine rhetoricians.⁵³

A substantial part of Manuel's literary production was theological in nature, which prompted H.-G. Beck to label the emperor as a *Theologe auf dem Thron*.⁵⁴ Manuel was attached to the orthodox teachings despite his close friendship with Latin converts like Kydones or Manuel Chrysoloras. In his *Letter to Alexios Iagoup*, when commenting on the place of theology among his preoccupations he stated: "I would not cease to discuss theology, answer and act against those men who attack our spiritual Mother, even if it be necessary to sacrifice my own life a thousand times."⁵⁵ Manuel authored three lengthy apologetic texts in which he defended the positions of the Byzantine Church: *The dialogs with a Muslim*, *The treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, and the above mentioned letter addressed to Alexios Iagoup also on the procession of the Holy Spirit. Among these, *The dialogs with a Muslim* is the most extensive and complex composition.⁵⁶ Completed in the beginning of his reign, it was divided into twenty six polemical and apologetic sections, each dealing with an issue of Orthodox faith. The dialogs purportedly took place in the Turkish camp between the emperor and his interlocutor, the *mouterizis* of Ankara who, in the end, was convinced of the truth of the Christian faith. The background of the interlocutors in this debate, and the topics discussed, reflected the

⁴⁹ καὶ εἶπερ ἔδει λούσασθαι μου μόνην τὴν κεφαλὴν (οὐδὲ γὰρ εἴσω θυρῶν γέγονα βαλανείου) ἢ πρὸς θεραπείαν τοῦ σώματος ἢ πρὸς κάθαρσιν <οἶνος> ἀνθ' ὕδατος μοι τοῦτο τὴν χρεῖαν ἐξυπηρετεῖ, *Anecdota graeca*, vol. 2.285.

⁵⁰ *Anecdota Graeca*, vol 2, 310.

⁵¹ J. Davis, "Manuel II Palaeologus' A Depiction of Spring in a Dyed, Woven Hanging," in *Porphyrogenita. Essays on the History and Literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in Honour of Julian Chrysostomides*. Edited by Ch. Dendrinos, J. Harris, J. Herrin, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003, 411-423.

⁵² Manuscript Parisinus gr. 3041 indicates that the text was written in Paris, information which places the date of the text between 1400 and 1402, during Manuel's journey to Paris as a guest of Charles VI.

⁵³ Hermogenes and Libanios included spring among the compulsory subjects for the exercise of *ekphrasis*, R. Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination, and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009, 56. From the Palaiologan period we have another rhetorical exercise by Maximos Planoudes who wrote a Comparison between spring and summer: Σύγκρισις χειμῶνος καὶ ἑαρός, J. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca*, Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1962, vol. 2, 310-339. The ekphraseis of spring were in fact a preferred theme for it occurred in other of the emperor's texts as well: it can be found in Manuel's letter 45 addressed to Ivankos (ποταμούς ἀγρίους καὶ ναυσιπόρους νυκί σοι πράους αὐτὴ παρέξεται ἵπποις συγχωροῦντας τὴν διάβασιν ἄνευ τοῦ δεῖσθαι νήχεσθαι, τρίβον τελεμάτων ἀπηλλαγμένην καὶ κονιορτοῦ καὶ ψύχους καὶ καύσωνος καὶ πηλοῦ ποιοῦντος ὄλισθον μέση γὰρ οὕσα τῇ κράσει φεύγει τὰ παρὰ τῶν λυπεῖν δυναμένων ἔξεων. ποῦ δὲ καὶ θήσεις, εἶπέ μοι, ἀνθέων ποικιλίαν τὴν πολλήν, ἰωνίων, κρινωνίων καὶ ῥοδωνίων, πολλῶν ἐτέρων τοιούτων, χαριζομένων ὁσφρήσεσιν ὁδμὴν αὐτόματον καὶ ἀμίμητον;

⁵⁴ H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Raum*, Munich: Beck, 1959, 789.

⁵⁵ Ch. Dendrinos, *An annotated edition of the treatise On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, VI, 364. 9-10.

⁵⁶ E. Voordeckers, "Les Entretiens avec un Perse de l' empereur Manuel II Paléologue," *B 36*, 1966: 311-317.

processes of transformation in Asia Minor which took place at the turn of the fifteenth century when the Ottomans had completely expelled the Byzantines from the region.⁵⁷

By and large, the dialog reflected contemporary preoccupations. Ever since the eighth century, the polemic against Islam has represented a major topic in Byzantine literature.⁵⁸ Especially in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries such polemical texts emerged more often and had a marked political content. Polemics against Islam found their place in various genres, as for instance in the historical works of Nikephoros Gregoras,⁵⁹ Laonikos Chalkokondyles,⁶⁰ John Kananos (*The siege of Constantinople*),⁶¹ or Doukas.⁶² Theologians and scholars were dealing intensely with the topic: Makarios Makres authored four orations against “those scandalized by the success of the impious ones.”⁶³ Symeon of Thessalonike wrote a treatise entitled *Κατὰ ἔθνῶν* as part of his *Dialog against heresies* and a *Letter for the strengthening of faith, that is against the Muslims*.⁶⁴ John Chortasmenos and Joseph Bryennios also wrote at least several short treatises on the polemic.⁶⁵

The other major theological composition, *The treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*,⁶⁶ written as a response addressed to an unidentified Latin theologian in Paris, is a text divided into a hundred fifty-six chapters and a preface intended to present the arguments for the validity of the Byzantines' position in a matter that had divided the Church for centuries. A similar topic is further discussed in his letter addressed to Alexios Iagoup.⁶⁷

Another category of texts with religious content is represented by his liturgical texts: prayers and homilies. Most of them were delivered on various religious feasts or upon important occasions such as the delivery of the city from the Ottoman siege. The prayers

⁵⁷ The mousterizis and his sons were recent immigrants to Anatolia from the Islamic heartlands, and Manuel was of course from Constantinople. As the latter spoke only Greek and the former Persian, Arabic and Turkish, the debate was carried out through an interpreter. Fittingly, the interpreter was a young Anatolian Greek converted to Islam (Trapp, *Dialogue*, 23). The interpreter a Greek Christian by birth and a Muslim by choice, individualizes in concrete form the process of change. He is in a sense not only bilingual but also bireligious.

⁵⁸ E. Trapp, “Quelques textes peu connus illustrent les relations entre le Christianisme et l'Islam,” *BF* 29 (2007): 437-450.

⁵⁹ Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina historia*, II, 202.

⁶⁰ Laonikos Chalkokondyles, *Historical Expositions*, ed. E. Darkó, Budapest: Hungarian Academy, 1922, 112-118.

⁶¹ Ioannes Kananos, *L'assedio di Costantinopoli*, ed. E. Pinto, Messina: Edas, 1977, 10 and 16.

⁶² Doukas, *Historia*, 39.

⁶³ *Πρὸς τοὺς σκανδαλιζομένους ἐπὶ τῇ εὐπραγίᾳ τῶν ἀσεβῶν* in A. Argyriou, *Macaire Makrès et la polémique contre l'Islam*, Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1986: 239-251, 258-265, 270-280, 286-300.

⁶⁴ PG 155, 77-81.

⁶⁵ Vaticanus gr. 1325, f. 318r-v and f. 324r in Chortasmenos-Hunger, 22. Joseph Bryennios wrote a *Διάλογος μετὰ τινὸς Ἰσμηλίτου*. From the same period we also have an anonymous *Διάλεξις Χριστιανοῦ καὶ Ἰσμηλίτου δι' ἐρωταποκρίσεων περὶ τῆς ἀμωμήτου πίστεως τῶν Χριστιανῶν*, in PG 131. 37-40.

⁶⁶ The critical edition of this treatise by Ch. Dendrinos is under preparation in the *Corpus Christianorum* series.

⁶⁷ The texts were discussed and edited by Ch. Dendrinos, *An annotated edition of the treatise On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*.

represented instances of public display of Orthodoxy as in the *Morning prayers*, a confession of faith dedicated to his son, or of encouragement in difficult situations addressed to the Mother of God (Κανὼν παρακλητικός). The homilies represent a significant part of his literary output, as Manuel is one of the very few Byzantine emperors whose sermons have been preserved.⁶⁸ We have four homilies preserved under his name: *On the Dormition of the Theotokos*, *On Saint Mary of Egypt*, *On Saint John the Baptist*, and *On the Nativity of Christ*. The first one in chronological order was written and delivered after the emperor's recovery from an illness some time at the beginning of his reign, according to its editor, M. Jugie. The other three are much later and date from the second decade of the fifteenth century. The second one had a rather moralizing aim as it did not deal with Saint Mary of Egypt but was concerned with the “greatest sin of all, despair.” The other two homilies, still unedited, were concerned with the feasts at which they were performed.

Like many other contemporary authors Manuel engaged in an intense letter exchange especially with a group of peer scholars. His correspondence comprising sixty eight letters was gathered with the help of Isidore of Kiev in one manuscript, Vat. gr. 632. Manuel's letters have been previously dismissed for their “rhetorical verbiage” and for their lack of concrete information.⁶⁹ Yet, a careful investigation indicates that they display a different kind of evidence not only on the emperor's actions but also on his literary activities and aesthetics. The letters which span over a period of forty years of his career deal mostly with literary matters: opinions on texts delivered in the framework of *theatra*, book exchanges, or simply favorable assessments of his friends' rhetorical skills.⁷⁰ The letter collection cultivates the image of a *litteratus* capable of appreciating and enjoying the subtleties of elaborate rhetorical compositions. Often, the emperor expressed his view on the importance of practicing literature as both pleasure and benefit:

Moreover, the study of literature is more advantageous for one who is not completely ignorant of writing than it would be either for rustics or for the expert writers. A lamp, in order to be of any use, must be given to one who is still capable of seeing, but is not in the direct sunlight. ἄλλως θ' ἡ τῶν λόγων τριβὴ τῶ μὴ παντελῶς λόγους ἀγνοοῦντι μᾶλλον προσῆκεν ἢπερ ἀγροίκοις καὶ τοῖς τούτους ἐξησημένοις εἶ γε δοτέον ὡς χρήσιμον εἶναι τὸν λύχνον τοῖς τε μὴ τοὺς

⁶⁸ Apart from Manuel II, we have extant homilies only from Leo VI and Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos in the tenth and the eleventh centuries.

⁶⁹ Barker analyzed only one letter (68) which he considered to have offered sufficient information on the history of Byzantium, Barker, *Manuel II*, 309: *at the same time by keeping in mind this letter- for all its exaggerations and disorganized hyperbole.*

⁷⁰ Manuel, *Letters*. See ch. 2.

ὄφθαλμούς ἐκκοπεῖσι καὶ τοῖς μὴ πρὸς ἥλιον ἰσταμένοις.⁷¹

Less frequent are the letters dealing with matters of state governance or daily administration: recommendations of individuals, the exile in the Turkish camp, or the letters on the promised western financial aid. As I have pointed out in the previous chapter, it appears that his correspondents were his closest friends and relatives: many of his letters were addressed to his mentor, Demetrios Kydones, his close friend, Demetrios Chrysoloras, his ambassador, Manuel Chrysoloras, his mother, Helena Kantakouzene, his *theios*, Constantine Asanes, or his brother, Theodore. In one case, the controversy over the patriarchate of Matthew I, he used the epistolary form in four texts intended to answer the pamphlets of Makarios of Ankara.

Owing to his involvement in the dynastic conflicts of succession to his father John V, Manuel authored several texts with political content in the decades preceding his access to the throne. In chronological order, the first one was an *Admonitory oration to the Thessalonians during the Ottoman siege*.⁷² It was delivered in 1383, when the pressures of the Ottomans during the siege of Thessalonike were mounting and the Byzantines faced a choice between freedom in resistance and conditional surrender. Manuel put forward arguments drawn from the past history of the city as well as arguments that had to do with the Thessalonians' freedom.⁷³ The *Admonitory Oration* mirrors the preoccupations of fourteenth century authors of deliberative orations, such as Demetrios Kydones' *De non reddenda Callipoli*.⁷⁴ In addressing the popular assembly (ἐκκλησία τοῦ δήμου) of the Thessalonians gathered in the Church of Saint Demetrios,⁷⁵ the future emperor used a highly elaborated style despite the fact that probably most educated individuals did not remain in the city during the siege.⁷⁶ Demetrios Kydones praised the author's refined Demosthenic expression in this oration.⁷⁷ This text, although

⁷¹ Manuel, *Letters*, 5.12-15. Aesthetic pleasure and moral benefit, 83.5: καὶ ἡδεῖς δὲ καὶ τέρπειν σφόδρα δυναμένους, πρὸς τῷ λυσιτελεῖς εἶναι τοῖς ἀκούουσιν (Manuel's letters or Manuel Chrysoloras on the *Funeral oration*).

⁷² Συμβουλευτικὸς λόγος πρὸς Θεσσαλονικεῖς ἡνίκα ἐπολιορκοῦντο, ed. B. Laourdas, *Makedonia*, 3 (1955): 290-307.

⁷³ A summary of the main points of the oration is available in Laourdas' edition (302-305) as well as in G.T. Dennis, *The Reign of Manuel II Palaeologus in Thessalonica, 1382-1387*, Rome: Pontificium Institutum, 1960, 81-84. On a contextualization of Manuel's ideas of freedom in this speech see D. Angelov, "Three kinds of liberty as political ideals in Byzantium, twelfth to fifteenth centuries," *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies. Plenary Papers*, Sofia, 2011, 320-322.

⁷⁴ On Kydones' deliberative orations see J. Ryder, "Ideas and Preoccupations," in *The Career and Writings of Demetrius Kydones*, Leiden: Brill, 41-49.

⁷⁵ Most probably the archontes of the city, the members of the Senate, and other representatives of the population in the city, B. Laourdas, "Admonitory Oration," 303-304.

⁷⁶ As noticed by F. Tinnefeld who lists only Constantine Ivankos living as a rhetorician, lawyer and teacher in the city, and seems to have provided moral support and counsel to the emperor during those years, "Intellectuals in Late Byzantine Thessalonike," *DOP* 57 (2003): 157.

⁷⁷ οὕτω καὶ τῇ δεινότητι καὶ τῇ ὥρᾳ καὶ τῷ μέτρῳ καὶ τῷ τῶν πραγμάτων τυγχάνειν καὶ τῷ πανταχοῦ παρρησίαν

cognate with the emperor's political writings during his reign, remains different with regard to two major aspects: first, its plain deliberative character, which suggests that it was performed following intense debates about the conditions for signing a peace treaty with the Ottomans. This renders the oration an important testimony to the limits of Manuel's authority in Thessalonike. He had to deal with the strong opposition of the local magnates unsatisfied by the length of the siege. Second, the oration throws light on the relation between the city of Thessalonike and the central authority in Constantinople which, at that point in his political career, Manuel defied. His rebellion which came against John V's attempts to improve relations with the Ottomans was punished by his father with exile in Bayezid's camp.

The other text, *A panegyric for emperor John V upon his recovery from an illness*, delivered in 1389 was intended as a way to ask forgiveness for his multiple instances of disobedience and attempts to gain preeminence in the succession contest.⁷⁸ In terms of genre, Manuel's panegyric is one of the very few instances of an oration with such a title in late Byzantium. As has been noticed “it is not entirely clear whether Manuel follows Hermogenes and refers to the genre of the oration, or simply implies that the oration was pronounced in public, before an official gathering.”⁷⁹ In any case, it was possible that it reflected an attempt to resuscitate Byzantine imperial rhetoric of the Palaiologan period.⁸⁰ After describing the miracle of the emperor's recovery, Manuel turns to John's role in defending the state from the barbarian Ottomans. Here, Manuel's aim was obvious: to underline the Ottoman threat at a time when emperor John was trying to reach a favorable peace with them.⁸¹

The above enumeration of the emperor's texts indicates that Manuel's literary output was not only vast but also varied. In addition, the emperor took care to collect and circulate his writings in a coherent and unitary form. With the help of several of his acquaintances, Isidore of Kiev, Makarios Makres or Joseph Bryennios he revised most of his texts and attempted to

ἐπιεικεία μινγύναι ὡσπερ τινὰ Δημοσθένους ἠχῶ τοῖς ἀκούσουσιν ἐπιπέμπεις, Kydones, *Letters*, 262.22-25.

⁷⁸ Manuel II Palaiologos, “Λόγος πανηγυρικός περὶ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως ὑγείας,” ed. J.-F. Boissonade, *Anecdota Nova*, Paris: Dumont, 1844, 223-238.

⁷⁹ Ida Toth, *Imperial orations*, 179.

⁸⁰ As stated, the aim of the oration was threefold: τρία δὴ τάγαθὰ τοῖς γράμμασι γίνεταί τουτοισίν· ὑμνεῖται σφόδρα Θεός, συστέλλονταί δὲ αὐτῆς οἱ δυσμενεῖς, φίλοι δὲ ἀληθεῖς, συνάμα πᾶσι Ῥωμαίοις, εἰς τὴν προτέραν αὐτῆς καταστάντες ἀσφάλειαν παρὰ πᾶσαν ἐλπίδα, οὐκ ἔχουσιν ὅ τι καὶ γένοιτο, *Panegyric*, 226.

⁸¹ *Panegyric*, p. 231-232: δι' αὐτοῦ Ῥωμαίους τῆς τῶν προγόνων τύχης αὐτῆς τυχεῖν, ἢ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἐχθίστους βαρβάρους ὡσπερ αὐτομολήσασα, ὡς μὴ ὠφελε, χρόνον ἤδη συχνὸν νικητὰς ἀναδείκνυσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσα ἂν ἡμῖν ἐλπίς ἀγαθὴ τῷ βασιλεῖ συναπέπτῃ. Καὶ οὐδὲν οὐκ ἔτι ἂν περιῆν ἢ τὸ στένειν πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ὀρώσι τοὺς κινδύνους. Εἰ δυοῖν τοίνυν εἴνεκα ταῖς εὐχαῖς ἐχρησάμεθα πρὸς Θεόν, ἐνὸς μὲν τοῦ μὴ γενέσθαι πασσοῦδι τοῖς ἐχθροῖς εἰς βορράν, ὡστ' ἀλόγου θρέμματος δίκην ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἐκείνους ἔχειν πιαίνεσθαι, ἐτέρου δὲ τοῦ δεῖξαι τούτους ὑπὸ ζυγὸν ὑφ' ὃν ἐτύχανον ὄντες, καὶ ταύτη τούτοις ἐπεξελεθεῖν ὧν εἷς τε τὰς πόλεις καὶ τὰ ἱερά καὶ τοὺς νεῶς ἐξύβρισαν τοῦ Θεοῦ.

produce definitive editions of his compositions which he included in four manuscripts similar in layout and decoration and dedicated to his son: Vindob. phil. gr. 98, Cryptensis Z δ 1, Barb. gr. 219, and Vat. gr. 1619.⁸²

The emperor's political texts

Having briefly outlined the late Byzantine literary landscape, the contemporaries' *horizons of expectation*, and Manuel's *œuvre*, I will now turn to the analysis of the emperor's political texts written during his reign. From the outset it should be noted that this group of texts can be divided into two broad categories. The first one included texts with an official character: letters issued by the emperor's chancellery addressed to various states and often concerned with issues of foreign policy and regional trade;⁸³ and official documents such as *prostigmata* or *chrysobulls* granting different rights to various people or the Church. All these texts, most probably elaborated by the emperor's officials,⁸⁴ in addition to references to the current state of affairs, comprised references to the emperor's profile in accordance with the ideological tenets of Byzantine propaganda. A summary of these ideas can also be encountered in a brief note added at the end of codex Vindob. phil. gr. 42, a fifteenth-century manuscript including the political texts of Manuel II.⁸⁵ This notice summarized several principles regarding the imperial office drawn from law collections of emperors Basil I, Constantine, and Leo: the emperor as embodiment of law, his generosity, and the necessity for the emperor to respect Orthodoxy and synodal decisions.⁸⁶

This official approach to political matters emerging from statements of official nature was considerably enhanced and refined by several texts which dealt with a related set of ideological issues. Unlike other texts of his which often alluded to political issues, such as several of his letters, the fifth section in the *Dialogs with a Muslim*, or some of the prayers, these texts were constructed around a political meaning. They can be differentiated from the emperor's literary production and from the body of official documents on the basis of further criteria: their elaboration in a highbrow literary style and their circulation not only in public

⁸² See Ch. Dendrinos, *An annotated edition of the treatise On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, lx. After 1420s these manuscripts reached Bessarion's library. For a list with the contents of the manuscripts see Appendix 11.

⁸³ For instance the letter addressed to the Senate of Venice in which Manuel requested that Venetian merchants stop giving support to local traders who evaded the custom duties (*kommerkion*), see J. Chrysostoimides, "Venetian commercial privileges under the Paleologi," *Studi Veneziani* 12 (1970): 354-355.

⁸⁴ We know only that Manuel Chrysoloras wrote the diplomatic letters addressed to the King of Spain. See C. Marinesco, "Manuel Paléologue et les rois d'Aragon. Commentaire sur quatre lettres inédites en Latin, expédiées par la chancellerie Byzantine," *Bulletin de la Section Historique. Academie Roumaine*, 11 (1924): 192-202.

⁸⁵ See Appendix 5.

⁸⁶ See Appendix 11.

performances but also within a restricted circle of *literati*. In addition, they were later on collected in a single manuscript, the Vindob. phil. gr. 98, dedicated to John VIII, the emperor's son and successor. This luxurious codex written on vellum and produced in the imperial milieu belonged to the above mentioned series of four manuscripts that included all of the emperor's writings.⁸⁷ This attempt to collect revised editions of his texts indicate the emperor's wish not only to underline the idea of the legitimacy of his successor but also to provide his son with the theoretical tools necessary for the act of governing. As a matter of fact, the heading of the contemporary manuscript Vindob. phil. gr. 42, which reproduced the Vindob. phil. gr. 98 and included all these texts, points to the overall conception of the manuscript as an advisory book for his son:

Admonitory book of the most pious Manuel Palaiologos addressed to his most beloved son and emperor, John Palaiologos. It includes the following: epistolary preface of the ensuing chapters, a hundred chapters with an acrostich, a protreptic speech on the study of literature, etc [...]. Βιβλίον παραινετικόν τοῦ εὐσεβεστάτου καὶ φιλοχρίστου Μανουὴλ τοῦ Παλαιολόγου, πρὸς τὸν ἐρασιμώτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα, Ἰωάννην τὸν Παλαιολόγον. Ἐν ᾧ περιέχεται τάδε· ἐπιστολὴ προοιμιακὴ τῶν ἐφεξῆς κεφαλαίων, κεφάλαια ἑκατὸν δι' ἀκροστίχιδος, λόγος προτρεπτικὸς εἰς λόγους [...].⁸⁸

In this category can be included first three very short texts that touch on political matters: *A Psalm on Bayezid*, condemning the Sultan's attacks against Constantinople,⁸⁹ a *Prosopopoiia* (*What the lord of Persians and Scythians Timur may have said to the tyrant of the Turks*),⁹⁰ and an *Oration addressed to his loyal subjects*. The first two which could be considered as a pair mark the fall of his archenemy, Bayezid.⁹¹ The *Psalm* was written in the manner of a Biblical text and parallels to a large extent the language of the Old Testament's psalms. Yet, these parallels also show the freedom which the emperor took in using his prototypes. Thus, while he took several passages from the Psalms he was also keen to elaborate on them under the new political circumstances.⁹² The other short poem is essentially a learned *psogos*, that heaps scorns against

⁸⁷ MSS Vindob phil. gr. 98 and 42 were analyzed and dated by H. Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Teil 1: Codices historici, Codices philosophici et philologici*, Vienna: Prachner, 1961, 205-207, and O. Mazal, *Byzanz und das Abendland*, Vienna: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 1981, 117-118. The tables of contents of the codices include apart from these texts other texts as well, although they have not been preserved.

⁸⁸ See Appendix 6.

⁸⁹ Ed. E. Legrand, *Lettres de l'empereur Manuel Paléologue*, Paris: Maisonneuve, 1893, 140

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 141.

⁹¹ Both were dated to the time of Manuel's return travel in Constantinople after his journey to Paris, J. Barker, *Manuel II*, 517 and B. de Xivrey, *Mémoire*, 127.

⁹² οἱ πεποιθότες εἰς αὐτόν (l. 24- Legrand edition) and οἱ πεποιθοτες ἐπὶ κύριον (Psalm 124); δότω δόξαν ὁ λαὸς αὐτοῦ (l. 23) and δότε δόξαν τῷ Θεῷ (Psalm 67) // εἶδοσαν πάντες οἱ λαοὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ (Psalm 96); ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν εἰς αἰῶνα αἰῶνος (l. 4-5) and ὁ δὲ Θεὸς βασιλεὺς ἡμῶν πρὸ αἰῶνος (Psalm 73).

Bayezid. Furthermore, the *Oration addressed to his subjects* is another very short deliberative text in which the emperor combined both moral and political advice. There he used a string of imperatives (φεῦγε, δίωκε, μίσει) thereby exhorting his subjects to fight for their people, the fatherland, and the emperor.⁹³

Yet, apart from these three short pieces of writing, four other texts deal extensively with questions of ideology in a form and style far more elaborated. Since these four texts pose numerous problems of form and content, I consider that it is worthwhile to investigate them not only in terms of their historical and ideological content but also in terms of their form and strategies of constructing political messages; this is what the following chapters attempt to do.

⁹³ τούτους δὲ γενναίους ἄνδρας αὐτοὺς δεικνύναι ὑπὲρ γένους, ὑπὲρ πατρίδος, ὑπὲρ τοῦ κρατοῦντος αὐτοῦ, *PG* 156, 561-562.

Chapter 3:

The deliberative voice: *The dialog with the empress mother on marriage*

Introduction

The first text in chronological order, the *Dialog on marriage*, corresponds to a strategy of conveying political messages that is characterized by a sense of conversationalism and intimacy between the two interlocutors, the emperor Manuel II and his mother Helena. Despite its apparently domestic topic and its careful rhetorical construction, a political message of dynastic succession on the Byzantine throne underpins the meaning of this text. In the present chapter I will deal with the literary strategies involved in the construction of this message: Manuel's approach to the genre of dialog and the interplay of demonstrative and deliberative topics in forging his authorial voice.

The dialog was written around 1396, during the first years of the long Ottoman blockade of Constantinople which was to last until 1402.¹ The manuscript evidence analyzed by A. Angelou, the editor of the text, indicates that it was thoroughly revised by the author himself and included in the already mentioned manuscript Vindob. phil. gr. 98 dated after 1417.² The revised version, purged by the overly negative statements against his then enemies was most probably intended to serve as an encouragement addressed to his successor, John VIII (r. 1425-1448), to marry and procreate. This hypothesis is confirmed not only by the fact that, by the time of this final revision, John VIII assumed full power in Byzantium as co-emperor, but also by the fact that the codex Vindob. phil. gr. 98 also comprised other texts specifically dedicated to John VIII, such as the *Foundations* and the *Seven ethico-political orations*.³

¹ 1396 is the *terminus ante quem* of the dialog, the date of the letter which Manuel sent to Demetrius Kydones together with the text. However, 1394 seems also a plausible date as Manuel refers to the sudden break of the treaty with Bayazid occurring in 1394. More details are provided by A. Angelou, "Introduction" *Dialog with the Empress-Mother on Marriage by Manuel II Palaiologos*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991, 20.

² MS Parisinus gr. 3041; in addition to the revised *dialog*, the Parisinus comprises other texts by Manuel together with revisions: letters, prayers and various rhetorical short exercises. For a discussion on this manuscript see G. Dennis, "Introduction," in *The Letters of Manuel II Palaiologos*, xx-xxvi.

³ For a detailed discussion of the political context of the dialog see M. Dąbrowska, "Ought One to Marry? Manuel II Palaiologos' Point of view," *BMGS* 31 (2007): 146-156.

Owing to its vividness of expression, the dialog seemingly reflects a real and rather less formal dispute between the emperor and his mother concerning marriage.⁴ Helena's uneasiness regarding Manuel's reluctance to marry was probably real since her son married very late in 1392, at the age of forty-two and only after he became emperor.⁵ For Byzantine standards of imperial marriages, this was at a very late age.⁶ In addition, other pieces of evidence suggest that such a dialog might have taken place. The image of a well cultivated woman ascribed to the character of his mother corresponds to reality. Helena Palaiologina Kantakouzene, the daughter of John VI Kantakouzenos (r. 1347-54) and the wife of John V Palaiologos, was a writer herself. In one of his letters dated to the early 1350s, Demetrios Kydones, praised the young princess for the ἐπινίκιοι λόγοι she composed in honor of her father's victories.⁷ Her role in organizing meetings of the circles of late fourteenth-century Byzantine *literati* can hardly be underestimated. On the one hand she participated in the debates related to the hesychastic movement supporting Gregory Palamas, and especially his close friend, the Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos (1300-1378).⁸ On the other hand she patronized and sponsored the activity of antihesychast scholars like Nikephoros Gregoras and Demetrios Kydones. The latter, who openly opposed Patriarch Philotheos and became Manuel's tutor, documented Helena's patronage in six letters addressed to her, in which he acknowledged the material and intellectual benefits he had received from her.⁹

These biographical elements indicate that the dialog might not have been intended exclusively for the entertainment of a gathering of *connoisseurs* from the imperial court, since its contents involve the highest ranking individuals in the Byzantine state and pertain to aspects of state administration which had serious political implications for the late Byzantine Empire. Certainly, there was a touch of courtly pleasantries: the dialog begins and ends in a

⁴ A. Angelou, "Introduction", in *Dialog on marriage*, 56-57.

⁵ Reinert has put forth a similar conjecture. See S. W. Reinert, "Political Dimensions of Manuel II Palaiologos' 1392 Marriage and Coronation," in *Novum Millennium. Studies on Byzantine History and Culture dedicated to Paul Speck*, eds C. Sode, S. A. Takács, P. Speck, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001, 291-302.

⁶ Since many of them served as pawns in political exchanges, the members of the imperial family married usually at a very young age. For instance, John V Palaiologos married at the age of sixteen, while Helena, his wife, and Manuel's mother, married even earlier at the age of twelve.

⁷ Kydones, *Letters*, 389, dated to the period between 1347-1352.

⁸ Philotheos Kokkinos dedicated a theological treatise to her, *On Beatitudes*, most probably in order to acknowledge Helena's efforts to promote hesychasm. However, her attitude regarding the Union of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches must have been more moderate, since Paul of Thebes, the Latin archbishop of Thebes and Athens, praised her in a letter for being favourable to the union of the two Churches. In O. Halecki, *Un empereur Byzance de à Rome*, London: Variorum Reprints, 1972, 117.

⁹ In Letter 222, while praising Helena's deeds, Demetrius says that he received many gifts and positions in the imperial court. He acknowledges her action in his letters (nos. 25, 256, 134, and 143). For a discussion of Kydones' letters to Helena see F. Kianka, "The Letters of Demetrius Kydones to Empress Helena," *DOP* 46 (1992): 155-165.

playful manner while it frequently alludes to the private lives of the dialogists. However, beyond this surface playfulness, the characters involved in the dialog show awareness and concern regarding the political and social problems of Byzantium under the attacks of Bayezid.

Manuel dedicated the *Dialog on marriage* to his mentor, Demetrios Kydones, to whom the emperor sent it together with a letter in which he asked for further comments, as he did in the case of his other texts.¹⁰ But in 1396, by the time Manuel finished and sent the text, Kydones was very old, and, unlike in other cases, there is no reaction from him. Although we do not have sufficient information regarding the performance of the dialog in a *theatron*-like gathering, several allusions to an audience indicate that the dialog was read publicly.¹¹ On the other hand, the fact that Manuel revised and recopied the text after 1417 in a different manuscript indicates that he envisaged its significance beyond the immediate purpose of a recitation in a courtly gathering.

3.1. Contents and Structure

The debate of the *Dialog on marriage* concerns the question whether marriage is necessary and useful for rulers. Manuel argues against his mother that marriage does not necessarily bring benefit into an emperor's career, and, moreover, in times of political turmoil, it can even become burdensome. In spite of his reasoning based on his experience accumulated during the turbulent second half of the fourteenth century, in the end, the emperor accepts his mother's arguments regarding the political advantages of a married ruler and concedes defeat as if in an athletic contest.¹²

Roughly, the dialog can be divided into an introductory conversation (ll. 1-300), and the discussion proper on the utility of marriage in an emperor's life. In the beginning of the conversation Manuel entices his mother into the discussion by alluding to the past instances of deceit he sometimes used in the conversations with her. She responds to the challenge and a short exchange of opinions on the morality of deceit in given situations follows. This rhetorically elaborated introduction of the dialog, which seems to reflect a set of courtly conversational habits, contrasts with the author's other conversational text titled *The dialogs*

¹⁰ Manuel, *Letters*, 62. Manuel wrote the letter in 1396 while in Constantinople; he urged Demetrios, who was in Northern Italy, to return to the capital. The letter echoes the difficult moments of the Ottoman blockade (1394-1402).

¹¹ For instance in *Dialog*, 102: ἥδιστον γὰρ φαίνεται πᾶσι τὸ θεατὰς καθεζομένους ἢ πραγματικῶς ἢ λογικῶς πολεμοῦντας οὐστινασοῦν καθορᾶν.

¹² *Dialog*, 116.

with a Muslim. There, in the first section he included a dedication to his brother, Theodore, Despot of Morea, and several preliminary paragraphs explaining the rationale of the dialog (τὸ λαμπρὸν καὶ βέβαιον παρρησιάζεται τῆς ἡμετέρας εὐσεβείας καὶ πίστεως) and the circumstances of the dialog (the place: in Ankara, and the interlocutor: a certain mouterizis).¹³

After the introductory exchange of sophisticated questions and replies, Manuel arrives at the main topic of discussion and ironically blames Helena of deceit when admonishing him to get married.

I believe you recall, Mother, how you used to praise the bond of marriage, whilst sometimes I took the opposite line [...] I confess it was not without suspicion that I listened to your words. Nevertheless I was persuaded: I did get married and quickly looked upon children. But I was not able to eliminate with the blessings of marriage all the everyday cares of a married life. Οἶμαι σε μεμνήσθαι ὦ μήτερ, ὡς αἰεὶ σύ μὲν τὴν συζυγίαν ἐπῆνεις· ἐμοὶ δ' ἐνίστε μὲν τούναντίον ἅπαν ἐδόκει [...] Οὐ γὰρ χωρὶς ὑποψίας, ὁμολογῶ, ἤκουόν σου τῶν λόγων· ἀλλ' ἐπέισθην· καὶ ἔγνημα· καὶ παῖδας ἤδη εἶδον. Εὕρισκον δ' ἑμαυτὸν αἰεὶ, οὐδενὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ γῆμαι καλῶν δυνάμενον τελείως ἐκκρούσασθαι τὰς ὁσημέραι φροντίδας.¹⁴

Skeptical regarding the benefits of matrimony, the son then demands further explanations stating that Helena's arguments resided mostly in all mothers' desire to see their grandsons grow up.¹⁵ In order to clarify his position he suggests to discuss the issue of marriage on the basis of twelve rhetorical topics, six final and six circumstantial.¹⁶ The final ones were Right (τὸ δίκαιον), Legitimacy (τὸ νόμιμον), Honour (τὸ ἔνδοξον), Benefit (τὸ συμφέρον), Possibility (τὸ δυνατόν), Consequence (τὸ ἐκβησόμενον). The circumstantial were Person (τὸ πρόσωπον), Matter (τὸ πράγμα), Time (ὁ χρόνος), Place (ὁ τόπος), Manner (ὁ τρόπος), and Cause (ἡ αἰτία). In addition, Helena establishes the rule of the game, according to which, the winner of the debate had to be able to advance more arguments than the interlocutor in most of the topics.¹⁷ Such topics were indeed well known to any late Byzantine student educated in the spirit of the ancient rhetorical handbooks. For instance, in their *Progymnasmata* Aphthonius and Hermogenes, the two widely known rhetoricians, discussed exactly these twelve topics as a basis of any literary

¹³ Cf. the preface of the dialog, *Dialogs with a Muslim*, ed. E. Trapp, 6-7. Other occasional dialogs in Manuel's work, like the one between Croesus and Solon in the *First Ethico-Political Oration* (PG 156: 388.) and another in the *Funeral Oration*, (Manuel II Palaiologos, *Funeral Oration*, 235-239) have no introduction whatsoever but are integrated into larger textual units.

¹⁴ *Dialog*, 70. In this chapter I will use the translation provided by A. Angelou in his edition of the *Dialog*.

¹⁵ *Dialog*, 72: τῷ δὲ κοινῇ πάσαις τοῦτο πάθος εἶναι μητράσι προὔργου ποιεῖσθαι υἱέων παιδας ἰδεῖν.

¹⁶ *Dialog*, ll. 315-319—Emperor. Mother you must somehow have heard of the famous Topics of the rhetoricians—about six of them; I think they call them Final Topics (τελικὰ κεφάλαια) and besides, six more which are called Circumstantial Topics (περιστατικά κεφάλαια). Mother: Well then, my dear, are you going to have all of them as your future advocates and allies? (συνηγορήσοντά σοι καὶ συμμαχήσοντα)

¹⁷ *Dialog*, 349.

education.¹⁸ Based on this set of debate topics, the discussion follows strictly these twelve issues, until the emperor concedes defeat.

3.2. Genre

In terms of form, the choice of a dialog with a rather domestic topic for conveying a political message may seem unusual. Unlike for many other literary genres, the Byzantines had no handbook with prescriptions on how to write a dialog.¹⁹ The only functional distinction that seem to have operated among the Byzantine writers of dialogs was the one between *Platonizing/ philosophical* and *Lucianic/ satirical*.²⁰ Although a connection with the new kinds of dialog developed by humanist writers in western Europe cannot be established by any means, Manuel's text reveals several interesting parallels. Just like the humanists, the emperor skillfully combined rhetorical art with political matters, while the private sphere takes up considerable space in the dialog.²¹ In doing so, Manuel came closer to dialogs such as those inserted in the contemporary satirical text *Mazaris' journey to Hades*, where issues like negotiations of court positions are mixed with matters of the dialogists' private lives. Yet, what makes the *Dialog on marriage* stand out is the disposition of its arguments slightly different in comparison to other late Byzantine learned dialogs, as for instance the theological ones. Manuel's characters frequently use rather short interventions; they address the arguments pertaining to the utility of marriage without many embellishments or excurses and their remarks follow a predefined line of argumentation. In contrast, the author's other dialogic text, *The dialogs with a Muslim*, stages very long interventions where the discussants give full accounts of their theological views to the extent that this composition resemble rather an apologetic treatise of Christian theology. Likewise, in the mid-fourteenth-century *Dialog between the rich and the poor*, the author, Alexios Makrembolites, leaves almost no room for dramatization. His preoccupation with maximizing the "poor's" argumentation turns the "rich" into a bogus interlocutor. One would also expect an approach more oriented towards *orality* in the Palaiologan vernacular dialogs like the *Poulologos* or the *Entertaining tale of*

¹⁸ Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata*, 41-46.

¹⁹ It is not mentioned for instance in the list of Joseph Bryennios' *Περὶ Ῥητορικῶν* in his encyclopedic *Kēpos* along the other literary forms, MS Vindob. theol. gr. 235, f. 88v-88r.

²⁰ A. Kazhdan, "Dialogue," in *ODB*, vol. 1, 618.

²¹ This was usually identified as a central feature of humanist dialogs. For a general discussion of the main features in the humanist dialog, see F. Rigolot, "Problematizing Renaissance Exemplarity: The Inward Turn of dialog from Petrarch to Montaigne," in *Printed Voices: The Renaissance Culture of dialog*, ed. Dorothea B. Heitsch and Jean- François Vallée, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004, 3-23.

quadrupeds; however, these popular texts too rather juxtapose long discourses displaying their authors' political views.

Manuel's *Dialog on marriage* also differed from other literary attempts on similar topics. Earlier, Theodore II Laskaris wrote a dialog on the importance of marriage (*Defense of celibacy*).²² Contemporary with the emperor's text were Isidore Glabas' homilies against marriage between Christians and Muslims.²³ About the same time, between 1385 and 1395, Philippe de Mezières, a writer from the Lusignans' milieu in Cyprus authored a so-called *Livre de la vertu du sacrement de mariage*. The purported function of the treatise was to provide a kind of consolation for the married women ('réconfort des Dames mariées') unsatisfied with their marriage life. There Philippe de Mezières envisaged marriage exclusively in a religious framework of Christian passion, promoted the understanding and submission to the husband, and emphasized the Christic model of patience and suffering.²⁴

3.3. Constructing dialogic authority

The contents of the dialog as well as the author's choices vis-à-vis the adopted form of his text suggest that the emperor not only mastered the skills of rhetorical composition but, by explicitly relying on the twelve above-mentioned rhetorical topics for conveying his message, he credited rhetoric with the power to exert a significant amount of political influence. This reliance on rhetoric, as it will be pointed out in the subsequent chapters of the dissertation, emerges in most of his subsequent writings. In the following section I will deal with aspects of the rhetorical composition in the *Dialog* and try to analyze how Manuel combined deliberative and demonstrative rhetorical strategies that pertained to advice and criticism regarding different acts of ruling in order to convey his message of legitimate dynastic succession.

Manuel's declared acquaintance with the disposition of arguments according to a predefined set of topics indicates that rhetoric provided the scaffolding of the entire dialog. By this account, Manuel emphasized the role of rhetorical topics in understanding and representing human activity in general:

And do they (i.e. rhetorical topics) in one way or another, govern our entire life!

²² Theodoros II Ducas Laskaris, "To his friends who were exhorting him to get married," in *Opuscula rhetorica*, ed. A. Tartaglia, Munich: Beck, 2000, 109–18.

²³ V. Christophorides, *Ἰσιδώρου Γλαβᾶ περιστασιακῆς ὁμιλίης*, Thessalonike: Aristotelian University of Thessalonike, 1981, 37–50.

²⁴ The treatise was written with Isabelle de Bavière, the wife of king of France, Charles VI the Fool, in mind. Her marriage to the insane Charles was unhappy. There were rumors that she was comforted by the king's brother, Louis of Orleans.

Often we may see, for instance, just two people working at the same project and the one getting all the praise, the other nothing at all, and another one even being punished for the same thing; and yet projects and works are always what they are and the way they are, but all the same they do give the impression that they change and fluctuate; sometimes they seem good, sometimes otherwise, *and this simply proclaims the power of the advocates mentioned before. On the Lydian touchstone gold is normally tested; and on them the works of men.* Καὶ γάρτοι ἀμηγέπη τὸν ἀνθρώπινον ταῦτα πάντ' ἰθύνουσι βίον· πολλάκις γάρ ἔστιν ἰδεῖν ἐν ἐργασαμένους πρᾶγμα καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, δύο δὴ τινὰς, ἢ πλείους εἰ τύχοι καὶ τὸν μὲν, ἐπαίνων τυχόντα· τὸν δ' οὐδαμῶς ἄλλον δέ, καὶ τίνοντα δίκην· καίτοι τὰ μὲν ἐπιτηδεύματα καὶ τὰ ἔργα, καταταυτὰ αἰεὶ τοι ἔχει πάντως γε καὶ ὡσαύτως δοκεῖ δ' οὖν ὅμως κινεῖσθαι τέ καὶ μεταβάλλεσθαι· τοτέ μὲν γάρ καλά· τοτέ δ' ἄλλως ἔχοντα φαίνεται· τοῦτο δέ ἀτεχνῶς, τὴν τῶν εἰρημένων συνηγόρων ἀνακηρύττει δύναμιν· Λυδία μὲν γὰρ λίθω, χρυσὸς· τούτοις δέ, τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔργα δοκιμάζεσθαι πέφυκε.²⁵

Nonetheless, despite the avowed dependence on rhetorical topics, both interlocutors agree that, in addition to the twelve topics, the debate on the benefits of marriage needs further clarification. Helena hesitated about exclusively using these topics suggesting that a lot more is needed in order to be persuaded,²⁶ and Manuel implied that one needs another more efficient method in order to prove the benefits of marriage.²⁷ Yet, even if the discussants do not specify what they mean by this additional method, the way in which the twelve rhetorical topics were treated in the *Dialog* might shed more light on this issue. Thus, contrary to the purported reliance on the treatment of each of these topics, the proposed systematic debate of them only partially guides the discussion. Some of the twelve topics are dealt with far more extensively than others and often arguments are replaced by long vituperations or emotional outcries which fall short of the requirements of a debate purportedly conducted in rigorous terms. The final topics, i.e. Right, Legitimacy, Honor, Possibility, and Consequence are hastily treated each in a paragraph,²⁸ while the circumstantial ones, i.e. Person, Matter, Manner, and Cause receive a single paragraph altogether.²⁹ The result is that most of the topics are forthwith dismissed as irrelevant to the matter. Moreover, in spite of initially accepting them as a scaffolding for the discussion, Helena suggests that elaborating upon all possible implications of these topics would rather bring confusion (λαβυρίνθους λόγων) than truthfulness (τὸ σαφές).³⁰

²⁵ *Dialog*, 78.

²⁶ *Dialog*, 78: ἀλλὰ καὶ πολλῶν ἂν δέοιο τῶν βοηθησόντων σοι λόγων.

²⁷ *Dialog*, 78: συντομωτέρα μέθοδος.

²⁸ The topic of *Right*: 80; the topic of *Legitimacy*: 81; the topic of *Honor*: 81; the topics of *Possibility* and *Consequence*: 84.

²⁹ At on point, Helena does not hide her rush to get over any collateral discussion: “Well, let us dispense as quickly as possible with the other hexad,” *Dialog*, 84.

³⁰ *Dialog*, 80: ἵνα μὴ εἰς λαβυρίνθους ὅπερ ἔφης ἐμπίπτωμεν.

Following this separate treatment of the twelve topics, only two of them, the final one, i.e. Benefit, and the circumstantial one, i.e. Time, remain to be thoroughly discussed in the rest of the dialog. As a matter of fact, in this part of the dialog which covers almost half of it, Manuel and Helena disclose their arguments for rejecting or accepting marriage. Their argumentation draws heavily on deliberative and demonstrative themes by which they try to formulate their vision on the political situation of the last decade of the fourteenth century.

First, in terms of Benefit, Manuel states repeatedly that marriage brings additional worries to a statesman for, as he claims, it is known that a ruler's craft already entails a long series of troubles.³¹ While Helena agrees on the idea of the contemporary extreme conditions for the management of state affairs under which Byzantium became weaker, she also stresses the benefits of family life, arguing that having children as a result of a legitimate marriage,³² i.e. successors on the Byzantine throne, would thwart any attempts of usurpation to a significant degree. Having admitted that in terms of *Benefit* a ruler should accept the political advantages of being married,³³ Manuel then proceeds to the consideration of the last circumstantial topic of Time. He begins by stressing that the current circumstances of the Byzantine state were exceptionally difficult:

But if a ruler's affairs are not going well, if his days seem doomed, if everything is against him, if he is being tossed about by anarchy, not by winds - which is the sort of thing that has happened to myself - a person like this, mother, would have done better not to marry and give himself up to endless anxieties. Πράττοντι δέ κακῶς, καὶ πολὺ δυσημεροῦντι, πολλαχόθεν βαλλομένῳ, καὶ τρικυμιζομένῳ, ἀντὶ πνευμάτων ὑπὸ πραγμάτων ἄγαν ἀτάκτων, ὥσπερ αὐτῷ μοι τύχη συνέπεσέ τις, τὸν δὴ τοιοῦτον, ὦ μητέρα, φαίην ἂν ἔγωγε ὡς ἦν ὄν κρεῖττον μὴ γήμαντα φροντίσιν ἀμυθήτοις ἑαυτὸν ἐκδοῦναι.³⁴

It is in this unit that the author makes use of demonstrative themes when unveiling his claims to legitimate rule against his nephew, John VII. Manuel's lengthy intervention on the topic of Time is constructed around the representation of John VII Palaiologos as a highly destabilizing factor of Byzantine affairs.³⁵ The details of this dynastic conflict have been treated

³¹ Not only in the section dedicated to the *Benefit* (*Dialog*, 86) but also in the introductory discussion Manuel complains about the difficulties brought about by marriage; see, "But, I was not able to eliminate with the blessings of marriage all the everyday cares of married life. These cares come one after another, and there is never an end in sight. On the other hand, to tell the truth, being a bachelor was a bit of a storm; only being married has not been a calm either," (*Dialog*, 201).

³² Manuel had an illegitimate daughter from a previous relationship. M. Dabrowska, "Ought one to marry? Manuel Palaiologos' point of view," *BMGS* 31 (2007): 149

³³ *Dialog*, 94: I would not go so far as to say that it is to the advantage of rulers and their subjects not to marry.

³⁴ *Dialog*, 94.

³⁵ For a detailed account of John VII's life and his political action, see S. Mešanovič, *John VII Palaiologos*, Belgrade: Institute for Byzantine Studies, 1996; G. T. Dennis, "John VII Palaiologos: 'A holy and just man,'" in *Byzantium State and Society: In memory of Nikos Oikonomides*, ed. Anna Avramea, Angeliki Laiou and E. Chrysos Athens:

earlier in this dissertation.³⁶

The interventions under the headings of Benefits and Time of marriage avail Manuel of the opportunity to spell out his view on the general situation of the Byzantine state, and in particular, on John's attacks against the legitimate authority in Byzantium. This intervention focused on his nephew is by far the longest reply in the text which makes it resemble a fully fledged harangue.³⁷ It is worthwhile to look more in depth at this philippic-like passage, for Manuel's embedded speech against John VII deviates from the main course of the text both thematically and stylistically: in this section the conversation avoids the previous exchanges of mutual flatteries, rhetorical technicalities, or clear-cut arguments pertaining to the rulers' ethics and social responsibility. On the contrary, here the emperor's attitude is completely reversed: the author reveals an emotional and tense mood while he paints a gloomy and dispirited picture of his personal situation as ruler of a crumbling state.³⁸ And while the depiction is triggered by the representation of the hardships which a marriage adds to an already dire condition, this paragraph is silent as regards the issue of matrimony. Particularly at the stylistic level, his *logos* comprises comparisons, metaphors and allusions to past events. Several powerful images inspired by the rhetoric of panegyrics are noticeable. An example of such an image is the representation of the state as a ship cracked and torn by violent winds.³⁹ The 'ship' metaphor was a well known rhetorical *topos* capitalized on by many authors of the so-called *princely mirrors* including the emperor himself in his *Foundations*. Manuel seems to have chosen it here on purpose, partly for the contrast with the consecrated meaning, and partly to accommodate the image of his enemies as pirates. Accordingly, John VII is likened to one of the fierce pirates who attacked the ship and also to the savage Cyclops living in cages, more dangerous than the mythical one, in Manuel's wording.⁴⁰ The emperor accuses his nephew of trying to replace him on the Byzantine throne with the help of the Ottomans and,

Institute of Byzantine Studies, 2003, 205-217.

³⁶ See I.1 John VII was Andronikos IV's legitimate son, and became legitimate successor of the Byzantine throne with the agreement from 1382 between his father and grandfather, John V (1354-1391). Consequently, in the last years of John V's reign, by the time Manuel was away from Constantinople and the emperor himself was very old, he made all efforts to turn his claims into practice. But after an ephemeral success, Manuel came back to the capital and crowned himself emperor. Despite the fact that in 1391 the two reached an agreement, Manuel apparently still suspected John of treason because of his close connections with the Ottomans. The second agreement made before the long siege of the Ottomans between 1398 and 1402, and mentioned by Helena in the dialog, stipulated that John adopted his first born son, the future John VIII. But, when Manuel left for the four-year diplomatic mission in the West he sent his family to the Peloponnese fearing that they could be taken hostages

³⁷ *Dialog*, 96.

³⁸ *Dialog*, 94.

³⁹ *Dialog*, 97.

⁴⁰ *Dialog*, 98: εἰσὶ δὲ ἄρα νῦν πολλοὶ κύκλωπες ἐν τῷ βίῳ, ἀγριώτεροί γε ἐκείνου πολλῶ.

for this purpose, Manuel reminds his audience that, previously, John VII had been caught with a contractual letter signed by the Ottomans. In addition to this proof of his nephew's treason, the emperor further develops the passage by piling up a long list of negative epithets and statements. Thus, apart from being a *Cyclop* and a *pirate*, John stands also as a multifarious enemy (παντοδαπὸς ἐχθρὸς), his fury is terrible as he gnashes his teeth and breathes murder;⁴¹ he is a despicable person (ἔχθιστος) and a disastrous threat to the people; he does whatever he thinks appropriate to bring him to power, he is the man who destroys everybody with his oaths, etc. According to this lengthy portrayal, the attention which John receives exceeds by far the attention Manuel pays to Bayezid, the Ottoman ruler who reduced Constantinople to the status of a vassal state.⁴²

In light of these elements included in the construction of the message, it is not far fetched to say that this passage was written not simply as a reply in a conversation on marriage, but rather as a piece of demonstrative rhetoric drawing on the genre of *psogos*. Manuel seemingly used the *psogos* in order to present the reversed image of his own political choices and administration. He chose this strategy as he probably also wanted to stress the differences of approach concerning the question of an alliance with the Ottomans. It was his father and predecessor, John V Palaiologos (r. 1354-1391), who, after failing to secure sufficient help from the papacy, oriented himself toward closer ties with the Ottoman Sultan Murad.⁴³ The Ottoman ruler offered support to John when he had to tackle Andronikos IV's rebellion in 1376-79. But the consequences of the collaboration with this threatening neighbor were dire for Byzantium, which became a vassal state and was forced to pay an annual tribute. In contrast, Manuel had a different position and, as pointed out in the first chapter, he continued to seek ways to establish contacts with the western Christian powers.

The denunciation and criticism of John VII's claims of imperial rule suited a more general attitude toward imperial authority reflected in the lack of praise for the emperor in the course of the dialog. Noticeably, praise for the emperor's deeds does not emerge from his mother's interventions either. If, on the one hand, the dialog represents the ruler in negative terms - Manuel in denial of the benefits of marriage and John VII as rejecting the legitimate succession - Helena, on the other hand, is pictured as a close and outspoken counselor rather than as her son's panegyrist. To a certain extent, this picture was coterminous with the real

⁴¹ Homer, *Odyssey* 9, 369-370.

⁴² Bayezid is only once referred to as "the drunken satrap" (σατράπης μεθύων) and then in connection with John's betrayal.

⁴³ See ch. 1.

Helena since she belonged to a series of Palaiologan princesses or empresses who became involved in the politics of their time.⁴⁴ Moreover, significantly, in the first years of Manuel's reign she stood by him and acted as his close counselor and supporter. In the dialog, Helena conceived married life as a central feature of social and political activity.⁴⁵ In her view, the main reason for urging her son to marry was that in this way he would avoid quarrels over succession on the Byzantine throne. It was usual for Byzantine emperors to appoint co-emperors from among their progeny at some stage in their lives. Hence, Helena seems rather inclined to stress that a successor would strengthen Manuel's position in power by rallying even more supporters for his rule. If otherwise, John VII would easily allure the courtiers to follow him, a much younger ruler. As a result of his mother's political stance, in the dialog the author frequently referred to the instances when he received advice from Helena. This deliberative stance was reflected at the level of word-choice as well: thus, terms from the semantic sphere of exhortation, such as *παραίνεσις*, *παραινέω*, *συμβουλή*, *σύμβουλος*, or *συμβουλεύω* frequently surface in this relatively short text.

Furthermore, the advisory character of this text is underpinned by several other elements as well. The interlocutors discuss topics which define deliberative rhetoric, such as *benefit* (*τὸ συμφέρον*) arguably one of the central topics in the theory of deliberative oratory.⁴⁶ Noticeably, the entire conversation starts from the half-serious interrogation of the value of Helena's advice for marriage. The empress' answer strengthens the deliberative turn of the dialog:

It should be said that, as far as I am concerned, I have never given you any wrong *advice* whatsoever: only the advice which is right for you at the right time. And I will do my best to demonstrate that I was not at all to blame for urging you to marry; that heeding me has been a source of many blessings to you and that I should not be reproached for this advice. Ῥητέον τοίνυν ὧ φίλτατε, ὅπως κακοῦ

⁴⁴ Participation in the political arena was not an uncommon pursuit for late Byzantine imperial mothers either. John V's mother, Anna of Savoy, acted as regent for him and fought against the usurper John VI. The preserved evidence indicates Helena's involvement in the state's affairs. In one of the letters addressed to her, Demetrios Kydones gave an account of her involvement in the same rebellion led by her son Andronikos IV between 1376-1379. Then, she was imprisoned together with her sons, husband and sisters who succeeded however to escape. After their escape she was accused of having favored her son Andronikos (Kydones, *Letters*, 222, 103-110). Another instance that attests to her role as political advisor is documented in Manuel's *Funeral Oration* for his Brother Theodore. The emperor suggests that when Theodore escaped the meeting summoned by Bayazid in Serres, his mother knew and approved of his gesture (Manuel II Palaiologos, *Funeral Oration*, 133, Οἱ δὲ σχολῆ βαδίζοντες - οὕτω γὰρ ἦν αὐτοῖς ἐπιτεταγμένον - οὐκ ἔφθησαν ἰδόντες, οἶμαι, τὴν Κόρινθον, καὶ ὀρώσι τὸν γενναῖον παρὰ τὰς τῆς μητρὸς καὶ τὰς ἡμετέρας).

⁴⁵ *Dialog*, 76. "There are two ways to lead a social life (*πολιτικός βίος*): alone or with a wife. So what you say about each of these you say about social life in general, and if you denounce social life, tell me, do you not patently denounce yourself too?"

⁴⁶ In his influential division of rhetorical genres from *Rhetoric* 1358b-1359a Aristotle asserted that deliberative rhetoric deals primarily with benefit, sometimes also translated as expediency.

μὲν οὐτινοσοῦν οὐδαμῶς ὡς γε ἡμῖν φαίνεται, τῷ σῷ δὲ βίῳ καὶ τῷ καιρῷ συμβαίνοντος ἄγαν πράγματος σύμβουλοί σοι γεγόναμεν· καὶ πειρατέον εἰς δύναμιν δεικνύναι, ὡς καθαρῆς μὲν εὐθύνης ἢ περὶ τοῦ γῆμαι παραίνεσις, πολλῶν δ' ἐκ περιουσίας σοι καλῶν προσγέγονεν αἴτιον, τὸ πεπεῖσθαι.⁴⁷

Helena's hortatory attitude permeates the entire dialog. Even if she agreed on Manuel's complaints of the multifarious menaces against him and against the empire, the empress continued to support the view that marriage was instrumental for maintaining stability and by no means detrimental to state affairs. Having always a reply to Manuel's complaints, at times her role in the conversation seems to outweigh the emperor's and, ultimately, it is from within this advisory standpoint that the image of the ideal ruler is developed. On the basis of her advice for marriage, Helena makes several suggestions as to the political action, such as that the ruler should stand as the model for the social conduct of his subjects.

But you, my dear, as it happens, you are a statesman and not just that - you are a ruler, too, and you ought to be the model and standard for those who live as citizens under you. Dancers will step behind their leader. Σὺ δ' ἄρ' ὦ φίλτατε, πολιτικός τις ὢν τυγχάνεις ἀνὴρ· οὐ μὴν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄρχων ὢν, κανῶν ὀφείλεις εἶναι καὶ στάθμη τοῖς ὑπὸ σέ πολιτευομένοις βαδιῶνται γὰρ οἱ χορευταί, τοῦ κορυφαίου κατόπιν.⁴⁸

Instead of admonishing his subjects, she claims, a ruler should rather act decisively when necessary in order to have his subjects act themselves in the same way:

One may have all the military experience in the world and one may be the very best orator; one may be wiser and more brave than Alexander and Cyrus; one may surpass all others of the older generations, themselves distinguished for their practical advice; but once a person judges best to stay at home, not sharing risks and hard work with those he advises, he is unlikely to gain any advantage for himself at all: you know at least as well as I do- you can certainly argue from experience! What we would do is to destroy the zeal of the army. Κἂν τις πείραν ἔχη πᾶσαν στρατηγικήν, καὶ δεινότατος τυγχάνη ὢν εἰπεῖν, κἂν Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ Κύρου σοφώτερον τε χρηματίζη καὶ γενναϊότερον, κἂν πάντας ἄλλους παρέλθοι τοὺς παλαιούς, οἷς ἀπὸ τοῦ τὰ δέοντα παραινῆναι, εὐδοκιμεῖν ὡς τὰ πολλὰ περιέγονεν, οἴκοι δὲ κρίνας μένειν, τῶν γε κινδύνων καὶ πόνων τοῖς πρὸς οὓς ταῖς παραινέσει χρῆται μὴ κοινωνεῖ, οἷσθ' ἂν κάλλιον πάντως αὐτός, ἐκ γὰρ δὴ τῶν σῶν σοι διαλεκτέον, ὡς οὔτε κέρδος ἑαυτῷ προὔξενησεν ἂν οὐδέν, καὶ τὸ τοῦ στρατοῦ προσελυμήνατο πρόθυμον.⁴⁹

Along these lines, according to Helena, the emperor's subjects play an important role in outlining the emperor's identity. All throughout the dialog and even in the introductory

⁴⁷ *Dialog*, 86.

⁴⁸ *Dialog*, 88.

⁴⁹ *Dialog*, 88-90.

conversation she refers to the role of the body of citizens:

You see, you cannot be in a position to regulate well the lives of your subjects, unless you show yourself as though having been all shaped up before, giving no foothold anywhere to people who have nothing better to do than exert themselves hunting around for a chance to incriminate rulers - and as it seems many such men our country produces. Ὡς οὐκ ἔστι τοὺς ὑπὸ σοὶ τεταγμένους δύνασθαί σε καλῶς ῥυθμίζειν, μὴ πρότερόν σε σαυτὸν ὥσπερ ἔντορνον ὅλον ἐπιδεικνύντα, μηδαμόθεν παρέχοντα λαβὴν τοῖς εἰς οὐδὲν ἕτερον εὐκαιροῦσιν, ἢ τῷ παντὶ σθένει ζητεῖν, ὅθεν ἂν τῶν ἀρχόντων καθάψαιτο, πολλοὺς δ' ἄρα τοιούτους οἴσθα τρέφειν τὴν ἡμετέραν.⁵⁰

Nonetheless, at this point, Manuel questions this model and thereby subverts the ruler's ideal image which Helena carefully constructs in the dialog. While he accepts many of his mother's suggestions, he further broadens this theoretical perspective on the statesman's agency, according to his own political experience. In particular, the discussion of virtue in leadership and the degree to which rulers represent models for their subjects allows him to put forward a view with a somewhat Machiavellian touch:

Men who themselves are very far from being virtuous, through some form of violence and through terror and trickery, do try to lead all their subjects to virtue; they know that this way it will be better for their authority and they will enhance it. Still they are going to meet their doom for what they have done, but with a milder penalty, nevertheless in view of what they have not neglected. And indeed we can see not a few who have achieved their aim- But hold on! I have been talking nonsense without realizing it at all. I am not interested in tyrants. *Take a look at the rulers who strain after virtue: all, you may observe, prescribe rather more than they themselves would appear to be doing.* Ἐνιοὶ γὰρ ἐπεικῶς μακρὰν ἀφεστηκότες ἀρετῆς, βία γέ τι νι πρὸς ταύτην καὶ φόβῳ καὶ μεθόδοις ἄγειν πειρῶνται πάντας ὧν ἄρχουσιν. ἴσασι γὰρ ὡς καλλίῳ τῆδε τούτοις ἕξει καὶ μείζῳ τὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ δίκην τίσουσι μὲν ὅσαγε τὰ καθ' αὐτοὺς κουφοτέραν δ' οὖν ὁμως, οἷς οὐ κατημέλουν καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν καὶ μὴν, ἴδοι τις ἂν οὐκ ὀλίγους τοῦ σκοποῦ τετυχηκότας, μᾶλλον δὲ τελείως ἑμαυτὸν λέληθα μηδὲν εἰπὼν. ἕα γὰρ χαίρειν τυράννους τέ ἅμα, καὶ οἷς οὐδὲν τι τοῦ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐμέλησε χρήματος καὶ τοὺς ταύτης ἀντιποιουμένους ἄρχοντας ἀνερεῦνα· καὶ πάντας ἂν ἴδοις ὡς πλείῳ τινὰ προστάττουσι πράττειν, ἢ αὐτοὶ φαίνονται δρῶντες.⁵¹

Essentially, Manuel asserts that the ruler needs not be very virtuous, for he can even act like a tyrant (τύρρανος, l. 562), but he must only urge his subjects to exercise virtues, since the subjects' virtues and not the emperor's bring prosperity to the empire. For the author, who, in this passage, connected the cultivation of virtues to political expediency, being truly virtuous and only appearing virtuous in front of the subjects were two equally legitimate states.

⁵⁰ *Dialog*, 68.

⁵¹ *Dialog*, 90.

Thus, presumably based on his more substantial political experience, throughout the discussion on virtue the emperor's stance, unlike his mother's, was dictated less by theoretical and general issues. Virtue, Manuel argues, is a perfect aspect of the moral life but humans are imperfect beings and they can only attempt to attain it:

Virtue, you see, is something perfect (τελεώτατον); whilst perfect is nobody among men [...] Steep is the path leading to virtue like the root of education which is very bitter. Ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀρετή, τελεώτατον· τέλειος δ' ἄρ' ἐν ἀνθρώποις οὐδεὶς [...] προσάντης γὰρ ἢ πρὸς τὴν ἀρετὴν ἀτραπὸς καὶ ταύτης ὥσπερ καὶ τῆς παιδείας ἡ ρίζα, πάνυ πικρὰ.⁵²

These differences between Helena's more theoretical view on the ruler's craft and Manuel's position inspired by the late fourteenth-century situation of Byzantium suggest that, in fact, by subtly playing against each other demonstrative and deliberative topics, the *Dialog* set in opposition two roles of authority in matters of political government. The interlocutors' two distinct views on how to construct a socially viable representation of a ruler are further reflected at the level of *dialogic authority*. If in the beginning Manuel appeared to control the discussion (ll. 1-65), after the preamble, it is actually his mother who checks the flow of the debate and further asks the questions (ll. 66-651). Still, at the end of the text, the emperor arrives at the point when he voices his concern with the present circumstances and with the function a ruler is expected to fulfill (652-1009). Eventually, in his last intervention, even if he admits defeat, he does so rather ironically by alluding to the economic downturn and its effects even on the imperial court:

Come on, then, as the winning argument is on your side, let us present the prize. It will not be, though, a golden award as we said earlier. Golden crowns are at present in short supply: but everybody is eager for one and there is danger it might be stolen during the ceremony. Let the award, then, be of roses and branches, so that the victor may go home with the prize still in his possession. Ἄγε οὖν, στεφάνω σοὶ τὸν νικητὴν ἀναδήσωμεν λόγον· πλὴν γε οὐ χρυσῶ, ὡς πρόσθεν εἴρηται μοι· σπάνις γὰρ νῦν τούτου γε· καὶ μέγα τοι τούτου πάντες ἐρῶσι· καὶ ἐστὶ δέος, μήποτε πομπεύοντος τίς τοῦτον ἀφέληται· ῥόδοις δὲ ἢ θαλλῶ, ἴν' οἴκαδ' ἀπέλθοι, τὸ γέρας ἔχων.

Thus, in effect, in the *Dialog* the author's voice emerges from the confrontation between two distinct dialogic voices which the emperor tries to harmonize so that the message of dynastic legitimacy emerge more clearly. The authorial voice is further modulated at the level of style by bridging the intimacy of orality and highbrow literacy expressed in the use of the circumstantial and the final topics (ll. 463-753). He combines the elements of a day-to-day

⁵² *Dialog*, 92.

conversation with the technicalities of rhetorical argumentation. The allusions to familiar situations, the mutual flatteries between a mother and her son, or Manuel's playful attitude from the beginning and from the epilogue reveal a vivid conversation. And while highbrow literacy surfaces in the interlocutors' learned allusions,⁵³ orality is also perceivable in the ways the author constructs large sections of the dialog in the form of a rapid succession of interventions of questions and answers.

Conclusion

The *Dialog on marriage* features a rather informal approach to the problems of dynastic succession during a period of a prolonged Ottoman blockade. Noticeably, when one would have expected more praises addressed to the emperor in a text performed publicly, the author combined deliberative and demonstrative topics on the basis of which he outlined several traits of the representation of imperial power in late Byzantium. Thus, here he presented a dramatized version of his political messages whereby the emperor pictured himself as defending his choices and arguing against possible criticisms regarding his social responsibility. The analysis of the demonstrative and the deliberative approaches in the text allows for a partial reconstruction of Manuel's political strategies and, ultimately, of his style of government. Praise for decisive action or for the political design was left aside in favor of a deliberative stance and a more applied discussion of concrete situations that provide suggestions for future action, even in the form of criticism of his own actions. This early approach to the ruler's conduct, as it will be shown in the following chapters, was to be further elaborated in other more extensive texts.

⁵³ E.g. references to Plato (520, 547 and 671), Homer (618, 682), or Euripides (653).

Chapter 4:

The didactic voice: the Ὑποθῆκαι βασιλικῆς ἀγωγῆς (*Foundations of imperial conduct*)

Another type of authorial voice used for conveying political messages arises from the *didacticism* which can be associated with two of the emperor's most extensive texts: the Ὑποθῆκαι βασιλικῆς ἀγωγῆς (henceforth *Foundations*) and the so-called *Seven ethico-political orations* (henceforth *Oration*s). On the one hand, the two texts are connected in multiple ways, particularly on account that both writings appear to construct a didactic-authoritative voice as the central element of the authorial voice which Manuel developed in order to advertise his political preeminence over other political brokers. As a matter of fact, the two writings explain each other very well. In both the *Foundations* and the *Oration*s Manuel dealt with a multifaceted tradition of ethical writing whose different separate pieces he strove to assemble together in a continuous text. In terms of their contents, the two texts complement each other, as for instance, in the case of the discussion of physics in the *Foundations*, which served as background for elaborating further notions in the *Oration*s. The connection between the two texts is also indicated at a formal level: if the *Foundations* opens with a prefatory letter which alludes to the *Oration*s as well, the seven orations are followed by an epistolary epilogue which covers the problematics raised in both writings. In addition, both compositions include allusions to each other: the prefatory letter mentions together the *kephalaia* and the paraineses of the seven *Oration*s, while in the *Oration*s the contents of the *Foundations* are referred back several times. Thus, in the *Oration*s, the emperor explicitly quotes chapter 62 of the *Foundations*:

You heard something about these things which I said in a clearer way in the sixty second of my chapters addressed to you. Ἀκήκοας δέ τι καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν περὶ τούτων σαφέστερον εἰρηκότων ἐν τῷ ἑξηκοστῷ δευτέρῳ τῶν πρὸς σε μοι κεφαλαίων.¹

Likewise, in the prooimion of the seventh oration he states that he envisaged the *Foundations* and the seven different λόγοι as a continuum possibly part of a fully-fledged project of political and ethical education for his son.

The last of the chapters which I addressed you for the pursuit of important ethical

¹ 425a.

values, discussed the issue of humility. Thus, let this last of my orations which is intended to converse with that <chapter>, glorify this virtue. But indeed, even in the oration in which I exhorted you to pursue the study of rhetoric [i.e. first oration] I mentioned something about moderation for I was carried beyond by the subject of the oration. Τῶν κεφαλαίων τὸ ὕστατον, ἃ σοι παρ' ἡμῶν ἀποδέδοται εἰς ἡθῶν σπουδαίων ἐπιμέλειαν, περὶ ταπεινοφροσύνης διελέγετο. Εἰκότως ἄν οὖν γένοιτο καὶ ὁ τελευταῖος ἡμῖν λόγος οὗτος, ἐκείνῳ συμφθεγγόμενος, τῷ τὴν αὐτὴν ἐκείνῳ ἀρετὴν ἐξυμνεῖν. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ πρὸς λόγους σε προτρέποντι λόγῳ εἶπόν τι ὡς ἐν παρέργῳ περὶ μετριότητος, βία τοῦ λόγου παρενεχθεῖς.²

As suggested several times by the emperor himself, within this project, the *Foundations* were regarded as a preliminary stage of moral education meant to entice him to further moral perfection:

This affection of mine generated these many orations as well as the chapters together with the letters. Τοῦτό μοι τὸ φίλτρον εἰργάσατο τοὺς τε λόγους τουτουοὺ τοὺς πολλοὺς, καὶ τὰ πρὸς σὲ κεφάλαια σὺν ἐπιστολαῖς.³

For, since in those chapters I strove to shape your personality, as one might say, <here> I stirred up your mind to strive for the better and, in all the possible ways, I carved up the love for good deeds in your soul. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς κεφαλαίοις ἐκείνοις ἔπλαττον μὲν σου τὴν φύσιν, ὡς ἄν τις εἴποι, ἐπήλειφον δὲ τὴν γνώμην πρὸς τὰ βελτίω καὶ τὸν ἔρωτα τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργων ἐνετύπουν διὰ πάντων ἐν ταῖς τῆς ψυχῆς σου δυνάμεσιν.⁴

These two passages show that the function of both the *Foundations* and the *Orations* was to provide a systematic instruction to the young son and co-emperor John in various moral problems. In this form, the *Orations* and the *Foundations* resemble another contemporary writing by Joseph Bryennios: this hitherto unedited writing of didactic nature, titled *The Garden* (Ὁ Κῆπος) was also divided into two distinct sections, one theological, and another practical-theoretical, which had both a preface and an epilogue in the form of letters.⁵

On the other hand, the two texts also present significant differences of form: the first one, the *Foundations*, is divided in a hundred short paragraphs-*kephalaia*, whereas the second one takes the form of seven successive moral and philosophical lectures. This difference as well as each text's peculiarities of content and approach necessitate a separate discussion for each of the two texts.

The present chapter dealing with the *Foundations* proposes to reflect on two broad

² 528d.

³ 528e.

⁴ 529a.

⁵ Cod. Vindob. theol. gr. 235 f 2r-3r.

questions: whether the text of the *Foundations* was conceived as a collection of pieces of advice on moral conduct which was structured in a peculiar way that differed from other kindred texts, be they “*princely mirrors*,” *centuria*, *kephalaia* or *gnomologies*; and how to understand the ways in which arguments, imagery, and abstract analogies of the gnomic utterances were combined in order to reflect a didactic authoritative voice. In pursuing an answer to these questions, I will try to document and classify the techniques and elements of persuasive speech used in Manuel's *Foundations* and argue that they proceed from more general moral-philosophical aspects to the exposition of particular elements of demeanor. The chapter is divided into three parts: first, I will present the text's context of production, summarize the contents, and discuss the structure, since so far scholars have almost entirely overlooked it; second, I will discuss the various generic strands that served the author as source of inspiration; and third, I will look into the author's concern with counseling and paternal affection, on the one hand, and Byzantine kingship, on the other hand, as fundamental for his understanding of the idea of rulership. Such a strategy of the emperor was intended to give meaning to the treatment of paternal affection in a public context as public voice.

4.1. Context of production and contents

The *Foundations* have come down to us in seven manuscripts that contain other of Manuel's writings as well.⁶ Like most of Manuel's texts there is no doubt that the *Foundations* circulated among the emperor's friends. MS Vaticanus gr. 1619, fols. 188v-210v comprises several marginal notes by Guarino of Verona, the humanist to whom the emperor sent a letter together with his *Funeral Oration*.⁷ The notes in the margins of the *Foundations* suggest that, at some point, the text has been sent for examination and commentaries to Guarino, whom Manuel knew from John Chrysoloras.⁸ Later the manuscript came into the hands of Francesco Barbaro, Guarino's disciple, collector of Greek manuscripts and patron of George of Trebizond.

So far, no definite date for the composition of the text has been suggested, despite the

⁶ In some of the manuscripts the text is followed by the *Orations*, as is the case with the Vindob. phil. gr. 98 (ff. 3-30) and its later copy Vindob. phil. gr. 42 (7-39). The manuscripts that contain the *Foundations* are the following: Moscow Sinod. 458 (Vlad. 437) ff. 005-124 (fifteenth century); Monacensis gr. 411 (ff. 118-175) (sixteenth century); Vat. gr. 0016 ff. 362-390 (fourteenth- fifteenth century); Vaticanus gr. 1619 ff. 188v-210 v (fifteenth century); Vindobonensis phil. gr. 042 ff. 001v-40 (fifteenth-sixteenth century). Cf. http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/rech_oeuvre/resultoeuvre/filter_auteur/4512/filter_oeuvre/7876 . For the present dissertation I consulted three of the manuscripts: Vindob. phil. gr. 98, phil. gr. 42, and Vat. gr. 1619.

⁷ Vat. gr. 1619 ff. 188v-210v. Cf. also Manuel-Dennis, Letter 56. To these should be added the remarks on the *Foundations* by Demetrios Chrysoloras in his *Hundred Letters*.

⁸ Manuel, *Letters*, 60.

fact that this piece of information can offer important hints as to the text's form and content that allows for a direct interaction with a younger individual, less acquainted with elaborate arguments. Scholars proposed widely varying dates. I. Ševčenko dated the text between 1406 and 1413⁹ while G. Prinzing dates the text after 1392.¹⁰ H. Hunger, followed by Ch. Dendrinos, seems to connect erroneously the journey to the Peloponnese in 1414-1417 with the composition of the text.¹¹ A. Angelou dated the text to 1408, the same year as the *Orations*.¹² In the only monograph on Manuel II (1969) J. Barker established the *terminus post quem* in 1406 on the basis of the reference to John's age of a μειράκιον.¹³ I would like to suggest that this date is more plausible because the *Foundations* preceded the *Orations* (1408),¹⁴ and between the two texts there must have passed several years. Further allusions in the text may help us date it: the beginning of the prefatory letter¹⁵ and the dedicatory text¹⁶ indicate that by the time of composition, John VIII (b. 1392) had already been appointed co-emperor, an event which, although we do not know its precise date, happened before 1408, as it has been argued.¹⁷ Another passage indicative of the date surfaces in ch. 4 of the *Foundations* where the emperor notices that time has arrived for his son to choose a proper way of life:

Know that now it is the appropriate time for you who are *in full bloom*, to choose the best way of life, and show yourself steady in your choice. Ἴσθι καιρὸν ἐπιτήδειον ὄντα σοι τὴν ἡλικίαν ἀκμάζοντι, βίον ἐλέσθαι τὸν ἄριστον [...] καὶ ἀμετάστατον δεῖξαι.¹⁸

If the year 1406 is the correct date for the composition of the *Foundations*, then the text was written at a time of relative political calm, after the defeat of the Ottomans in the battle of Ankara in 1402 and the increased Byzantine meddling in the eastern affairs. Thus, the political situation in this period was very different from the time of the composition of the *Dialog on marriage* (1396). Several explanations for the emperor's choice to address his son at this particular moment can be advanced: first, Manuel had the intention to offer his son a

⁹ I. Ševčenko, "Agapetos East and West: the Fate of a Byzantine 'Mirror of Princes'," *RESEE* 16 (1978): 8.

¹⁰ G. Prinzing, "Beobachtungen zu "integrierten" Fürstenspiegeln der Byzantiner," *JÖB* 38 (1988): 31.

¹¹ Chortasmenos-Hunger, 126.

¹² A. Angelou, "Introduction," in *Manuel Palaiologos Dialogue with the Empress-Mother on Marriage: Introduction, Text and Translation*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991, 46.

¹³ Barker, *Manuel II*, 344-45, 494 n.84. The same date was accepted by I. Leontiadis, "Untersuchungen zum Staatsverständnis der Byzantiner aufgrund der Fürsten- bzw. Untertanenspiegel (13. bis 15. Jahrhundert)," *PhD Dissertation*, University of Vienna, 1997, 40.

¹⁴ See the following chapter on the *Orations*.

¹⁵ The opening of the prefatory letter mentions the emperor's journey to the Peloponnese: ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ σε λπῶν, ἐξ Ἰταλίας ἐρχόμενος, ἦσθα δὲ παιδίον ἔτι.

¹⁶ *PG* 156, 320a: Βασιλεὺς βασιλεῖ, Μανουὴλ Ἰωάννη, πατὴρ υἱῶ.

¹⁷ I. Djuric, *Le crépuscule de Byzance*, 45.

¹⁸ Ch. 4.

handbook of moral conduct, since, often, he speaks to his son as if to a young disciple;¹⁹ due to John's age, his son is presented as a pupil who had to learn the basic norms of acting and living in a community.²⁰ A second rationale for the composition of this text has to do with the ongoing dynastic conflicts that plagued Byzantine rule in the beginning of the fifteenth century.²¹ As the text assumed that John would be Manuel's successor at a certain point in the future,²² it is highly probable that thereby he intended to mark and endorse the appointment of his son as co-emperor. In particular, this attempt to advertise his son's position came at a time when his nephew, John VII, was also trying to advertise his son's, Andronikos V, position as legitimate successor.²³

As in the case of other texts by Manuel, ever since the first printed edition in the sixteenth century,²⁴ researchers of late Byzantine history have paid little heed to Manuel's strategies of creating didactic meaning in a text produced in a political milieu. The few scholars who dealt with the *Foundations* were eager to point out that the emperor included fragments of previous authors. However, they overlooked other more important issues of literary construction such as the ways the author arranged this material and the conception behind the resulting one hundred chapters. So far only a few brief comments have appeared in connection with the *Foundations*: the first one in chronological order belongs to the French nineteenth century scholar, B. de Xivrey, who, in his survey of Manuel's works, considered Manuel's *Foundations* “the best known and the most interesting of the emperor's texts.”²⁵ Certainly, de Xivrey's evaluation was based largely on the popularity of Leunclavius' sixteenth century edition of the *Foundations* which was reproduced in Migne's *Patrologia*. More recently several descriptive accounts have been produced which nevertheless fall short of explaining the implications of the text or the techniques used. Such are K. Païdas' book on late Byzantine

¹⁹ See below.

²⁰ See the prefatory letter (ἐπιστολή προοιμιακή) of the *Foundations*, PG 156, 316-318.

²¹ See ch. 1.

²² John is presented as co-emperor in the dedicatory title of the *Foundations*: Βασιλεὺς βασιλεῖ.

²³ See ch. 1.

²⁴ *Imperatoris Caesaris Manuelis Palaeologi Augusti Praecepta Educationis Regiae: Ad Ioannem Filium*, ed. Ioannes Leunclavius. Basel: 1578. Leunclavius followed the text of Ms. Vindob. 98 and dedicated this very first edition to Francesco de Medici, Lord of Tuscany. The dedicatory preface of the volume offers a brief overview of the history of the Palaiologan dynasty, starting with Michael VIII (p.1-7) and insists on Manuel's travel to France and his meeting with Charles VI in search for aid (p. 5). The announced new edition by Ch. Dendrinos has not been published yet.

²⁵ B. de Xivrey, *Mémoire Sur La Vie Et Les Ouvrages De l'Empereur Manuel Paléologue*, Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1853, 32.

princely mirrors²⁶ or I. Leontiades' unpublished doctoral dissertation which summarized the hundred chapters and focused on the central themes of political thought: the relation between the earthly and the spiritual power, imperial justice, or the role of the courtiers in the emperor's activity.²⁷ While these two studies of the *Foundations* investigated the political-ideological content, they overlooked other equally important aspects such as the more general didactic model they proposed. Taking into consideration these previous studies, my approach here will assume that this writing should not be understood exclusively within the tradition of princely mirrors, a term that has to do more with western medieval productions, but in the wider literary and rhetorical context of late Byzantine didactic literature.

4.1.1. Contents and structure

Let us now look into the contents of the *Foundations*. According to its preface, the text aimed to provide a comprehensive image of human life and lead the addressee through different stages of physical, spiritual, and intellectual formation. As such, the *Foundations* dealt with a wide variety of topics, most of which were common to Byzantine texts addressed to rulers: from general philosophical observations about the kind of moral life one should adopt, to counsel about how to relax after long hectic periods of time.²⁸

4.1.1.1 Themes of deliberation

Like most texts of advice, the *Foundations* were meant to deliberate on issues of proper conduct or reasoning. Two broad types of *kephalaia* can be identified: on the one hand, those concerned with practical advice such as the internal and the external affairs of the state and court, and on the other hand *kephalaia* which had to do with moral and theoretical definitions.²⁹ In the first category can be included for instance ch. 89 which describes the strategy to lead an army on the battlefield; yet, according to Manuel, even military tactics had to be grounded on moral commandments:

The sign of a bad army is that it is ready to run when the soldiers hide during the

²⁶ K. Páidas, *Τα βυζαντινά κάτοπτρα ηγεμόνος της ύστερης περιόδου (1254-1303): εκφράσεις τοῦ Βυζαντινοῦ βασιλικού ιδεώδους (The Byzantine "Princely Mirrors" of the later period (1254-1403): expressions of the Byzantine imperial ideal)*, Athens: Gregores, 2006.

²⁷ I. Leontiades, *Untersuchungen zum Staatsverständnis der Byzantiner aufgrund der Fürsten- bzw. Untertanenspiegel (13. bis 15. Jahrhundert)*, PhD Dissertation, University of Vienna, 1997.

²⁸ For a table with the contents and structure of the *Foundations* see also Appendix 7.

²⁹ Apart from these two categories few other chapters of the *Foundations* are placed outside the sphere of practical advice or definition of moral categories. It is especially the case with the chapters drawing on religious themes, like the divine power, ch. 57 : Πάντες γὰρ ἐνὸς ἕκγονα, κὰν διαλέκτω διαφερώμεθα, κὰν οἰστισοῦν, κὰν αὐτῷ σεβάσματι. ch.25: ὧν δὲ τελέσαι Κύριος μόνος ὁ Θεός ἐστι, ταυτὶ δὲ ἐκείνω καταλιμπάνωμεν μετ' ἐλπίδων ἀγαθῶν: καὶ ὅπερ ἂν αὐτὸς διδῶ, εὐχαρίστως φέρωμεν.

day, and to attack the enemies during the night. Because they hope to defeat the enemy with the help of darkness, noises, and clamors, and not by their nobility of mind, nor by their perseverance, and, because their hopes do not reflect their undertaking and resources, they rather run away even if nobody chases them away. Therefore, you must bring everything that pertains to your plans of victory, in front of your army, so that, because the soldiers will share your plans, they will be more eager to fight together with you. Σημεῖον στρατιᾶς κακῆς, καὶ φεύγειν οὔσης ἐτοίμου, τὸ μεθήμεραν ἑαυτοὺς ἀφανίζοντας, νύκτωρ ἐπιφύεσθαι τοῖς ἐχθροῖς. [...] Σκότῳ γὰρ, καὶ ψόφῳ, καὶ φωναῖς ἐλπίζοντες τρέψειν, οὐ γενναιότητι ψυχῆς, οὐδὲ καρτερίᾳ, ἐπειδὴν αὐτοῖς οὐ κατ' ἐλπίδας χωρήσει τὸ ὑγχείρημα, μηδενὸς διώκοντος μάλα φεύγουσι. Δεῖ δὲ πᾶν, ὃ δίδωσι περιγενήσεσθαι ποσοδοκᾶν, εἰς τοῦμφανές ἄγειν τῇ στρατιᾷ ὅπως ἂν σοι κοινωνοῦντες τῆς δόξης, ἀδεέστερον καὶ τοῦ πολέμου κοινωνήσαιεν.

In another similar instance of more concrete advice in the *Foundations*, Manuel alluded to contemporary circumstances of conflict with both Latins and Ottomans, exhorting his son to avoid to fight Christians or other nations:

Do not fight against Christian brothers, neither with any other people, nor with a barbarian nation which has a treaty with you and desires to keep that. Μηδὲ πολέμει πρὸς ἀδελφοὺς τοὺς ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ, μήτε μὴν πρὸς ὄντινοῦν, ἢ βαρβάρων ἔθνος, ἐν σπουδαῖς σοι καταστάν, καὶ τηρεῖν αὐτὰς ἔθελον.³⁰

Noticeably however, in comparison to other popular texts of moral advice addressed to rulers, such as Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor* (*Ἐκθεσις κεφαλαίων παραινετικῶν*, sixth century) or Nikephoros Blemmydes' *Imperial statue* (*Ἀνδριὰς βασιλικός*, twelfth century), which strove to add luster to the emperor's ideal image, Manuel considerably extended the scope of his chapters of counsel. Thus, in the *Foundations*, common themes of advice, like the emperor's relation to divinity, the emperor's relation to his subjects, or the emperor and the law, were underpinned by explanations of moral principles and opinions on the role of reason, responsibility, and human nature in an individual's life. As a matter of fact, in this case, it appears that the constant appeal to a set of moral notions central to the ethical systems of ancient philosophy represents an innovation. Like other similar pieces of didactic literature, the *Foundations* preached prudence and ideal ways of living in society, but, at the same time, its flow was often interrupted by expressions of a sense of the inevitability of fate and misfortunes of life. The result is a mosaic of chapters where, despite the passages with a political character and a sense of immediacy, the passages dealing with moral principles are predominant.³¹

³⁰ Ch. 56.

³¹ Apart from the above mentioned definitions of moral characters, Manuel brings in many other abstract definitions: e.g. ch. 21 defines truth, ch. 78 discusses the difficulty to distinguish clearly between good and bad, or ch. 44 defines ἔξις as a significant moral category.

The different deliberative topics have already been remarked by H. Hunger who noticed that Manuel's *Foundations*, in contrast to other paraenetic texts like Kekaumenos' *Strategikon* (Στρατηγικόν), Blemmydes' *Imperial statue* (Ἀνδριάς βασιλικός), or Thomas Magistros' *Imperial oration* (Βασιλικὸς λόγος), lacked the substantial pieces of advice for practical matters of day to day administration, present in other texts.³² Practical counsel emerges only in a few chapters, especially those regarding the military matters of the ruler's craft.³³ More often, advice concerning practical issues regards matters of behavior in every day life,³⁴ or is driven by the definition of the beneficial (τὸ συμφέρον) and the harmful (τὸ βλάπτον).³⁵ H. Hunger also noticed a substantial increase in the treatment of philosophical and theological notions,³⁶ apart from the reminders of concepts like moderation (μεσότης), commonly used in advisory texts.³⁷ This situation is slightly different from the post 1204 advisory texts which, as argued, tended to deal more with practical matters.³⁸

On the contrary, references to ethical notions drawn from classical philosophy and integrated in the emperor's program of education addressed to his son form the basis for the further conclusions and recommendations of proper demeanor.³⁹ Manuel inaugurates his moral account with several overarching remarks and definitions which echo the *incipit* of the theological *centuria*⁴⁰ and in the first two chapters he addresses the problem of defining the best way of life:

³² H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, vol. 1, Munich: C.H. Beck, 1978, 164-165.

³³ Ch. 87, 88 and 89.

³⁴ For instance ἕξις in ch. 44.

³⁵ Ch. 34 and 35.

³⁶ In Ch. 52 he uses theological notions in order to indicate how an emperor should imitate God: πρὸς τὴν αὐτοῦ μετουσίαν, καὶ πρὸς σωτηρίαν ὀδηγήσαι. On the notion of original sin, ἡ προπατορικὴ ἁμαρτία, see ch. 27.

³⁷ Ch. 83.

³⁸ D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium (1204-1330)*, 116-182. Traditionally, in addition to subjects one would study, the education of an imperial offspring included history and advisory literature, both topics more oriented to the practice of government. It has been argued that in the court literature between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries authors increasingly emphasized the physical and military training as opposed to the intellectual values (Angelov, "Childhood"). Yet, in my opinion, there cannot be given a conclusive answer to this issue: in the case of the *Foundations* it is true that several passages offer advice in military topics (especially chs. 87 and 88), but if we consider the rest of the text and the ensuing *Orations*, there is little room for counsel pertaining to physical or military prowess.

³⁹ Ch. 50 reveals the way in which Manuel understands to integrate his moral advice into a larger philosophical framework. The paragraph starts from the observation that people tend to forget the main purpose of an action and approach *secondary purposes* (ὑπάλληλα τέλη). The author's argumentation leads to the notion of τελικώτατον τέλος: ὁ γοῦν διακρίνειν ὀρθῶς δυνάμενος τὰ τέλη τε καὶ τὰ πρὸς αὐτά, καὶ ἔτι γε τὸ ἐν ἐκείνῳ τελικώτατον τέλος, πρὸς ὃ γε πάντα φύσει κινεῖται, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὁ πάντων ἐπέκεινα, καὶ ποιεῖν ἐθέλων ὅπερ ἐπίσταται βέλτιον ὄν. In ch. 63, the Aristotelian view on τέλος is especially highlighted: ἡ ἐπίκηρος οὐσία εἰς τὸ ἴδιον ἐπιέγεται τέλος. In other paragraphs Manuel offers an insight into the different parts of the soul: ἐπεὶ γε τὸ ζηλότυπον ψιλῶς ἐμπεφυκὸς τῇ ψυχῇ δι' ἐπαίνων ἔρωτα (ch. 24) and its movements: ἥς μὲν οὐκ ἐρᾷς ψυχῆς, ὡς οὐκ ἐρώσης τῶν καλῶν, ταύτης μὴ μίμου τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα (ch. 83).

⁴⁰ Cf. for instance, A. Ceresa-Gastaldo, *Massimo confessore. Capitoli sulla carita*. Rome: Editrice Studium, 1963: 48-238 and Symeon the New Theologian, *Chapitres théologiques, gnostiques et pratiques*, ed. J. Darrouzès, Paris, 1957.

People have different ways of life: some have wisdom, education, and kindness, while others foolishness, ignorance, and cowardice. Βίοι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις διάφοροι· οἱ μὲν φρονήσει, καὶ παιδεύσει, καὶ χρηστότητι, οἱ δὲ ἀβελτερίᾳ, καὶ ἀπαιδευσίᾳ, καὶ πονηρίᾳ γιγνόμενοι τε καὶ μεριζόμενοι.⁴¹

This wide theoretical scope of the introductory statements underlines the construction of the subsequent topics and shapes the framework of the entire text. In contrast, other similar texts which provided a model for the *Foundations*, such as Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor*, begin in a very different manner, by exhorting the emperor to honor God,⁴² an *incipit* which rather resembles the opening of a panegyric. Instead, broad abstract notions like life (βίος) and nature (φύσις), or common human nature represent recurrent notions in the *Foundations* and often stand as the background for the discussion of further topics.⁴³ Apart from such central notions, other theoretical concepts are introduced right in the beginning of the text: choice (προαίρεσις) of a certain way of life - connected to the notion of nature,⁴⁴ individual responsibility,⁴⁵ or voluntary and involuntary acts.⁴⁶ Manuel often allows for more detailed discussions of such concepts, as in the case of choice (προαίρεσις) which, according to his account, makes individuals responsible for the correctness of their actions. Interestingly, it is only after providing these theoretical definitions in the first part of his *Foundations*, that the author proceeds to the definition of notions such as the good and the wrong, as for instance, in chs. 13 and 14. This definition is then repeated several times.⁴⁷ In addition, in order to provide further details on the theoretical background of his advice, Manuel discusses two other central notions for deliberative rhetoric: the profitable and useful (τὸ ὠφέλιμον, ch. 6, and τὸ

⁴¹ Ch. 1. Definitions of βίος represent a recurrent theme throughout the *Foundations*, resurfacing also in chs. 2 (ἄριστος μὲν βίος, the best (way of) life), 54 and 55.

⁴² Agapetos, *Advice to the emperor*, ch. 1: τιμῆς ἀπάσης ὑπέρτερον ἔχων ἀξίωμα, βασιλεῦ, τίμα ὑπὲρ ἅπαντας τὸν τοῦτου σε ἀξιώσαντα Θεὸν (Since you possess an office that is higher than any other dignity, above everything, emperor, honor God who gave you this office). Ed. R. Riedinger, *Agapetos Diakonos. Der Fürstenspiegel für Kaiser Iustinianos*. Athens: Hetairia ton filon tou laou 1995.

⁴³ The limits of nature in ch. 40: ἡ φύσις ὡσπερ ὄρους ἑαυτῇ καὶ τοῖς πράγμασι τέθεικε, καὶ δεῖ τὸν ἄριστα ζῆν ἐθέλοντα τὴν τῶνδε γνῶσιν θηρᾶν, καὶ φιλεῖν ταύτην τὴν θήραν, καὶ ζεῖν ἐθέλειν ἐντὸς τῶν ὄρων. The same idea of common nature emerges in ch. 57: κοινὴ γὰρ ἡ φύσις καὶ πᾶσιν ἔδαφος ἓν, καὶ ὀροφὴ μία, καὶ ἓν τι φῶς, καὶ εἷς ἀὴρ ἐφήπλωται παρὰ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ. Ch. 68: ἡ μὲν γὰρ κοινὴ ἡ φύσις δούλοις, δεσπόταις, πᾶσιν ἐξῆς ἀνθρώποις, μία τις ἀπαραλλήκτος. Ch. 3 and 27: κοινὴ γὰρ ἡ φύσις.

⁴⁴ Especially in chs. 3 and 4. Cf. ch. 68 on προαίρεσις and φύσις. Towards the end of the *Foundations*, ch. 99 also deals with human nature: people are made from both matter and spirit. The notions of nature and individual choice in acting is also present in the *Orations* 2 and 3 where they are treated extensively. Furthermore, these notions are present as well in *Dialogues with a Muslim*, 4.

⁴⁵ Ch. 30 ἅπαντα μὲν τῆς ἑαυτῶν ἀρχῆς ἦρτηται, καὶ δὴ καὶ ταῦτα τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς. Οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν, ἐκείνης οὐσῆς σαθρᾶς, τὰ μετ' ἐκείνην ἰδρῦσθαι. εἴη δ' ἂν τῶν ἡμετέρων πραγμάτων ἀρχή, καὶ βάσις, καὶ ρίζα, καὶ εἴ τι τοιοῦτον, ἢ πρώτη κίνησις τῆς τύχης.

⁴⁶ Ch. 25.

⁴⁷ E.g. in the last chapter.

λυσιτελές ch. 13).⁴⁸

The peculiar treatment of the topics of deliberation in the *Foundations* is further instantiated by the absence of a more detailed discussion of different virtues, a topic commonly held as central in most texts of advice for rulers. Yet here arguably, imperial virtues do not seem to come into the author's focus, for, surprisingly, the four Menandrian cardinal virtues specific to the imperial office (prudence, justice, temperance, and courage) did not receive much space. They are mentioned in only one chapter which, moreover, does not limit the discussion to the four qualities, but adds two other virtues on the list: love (ἀγάπη) and moderation (μετριότης).⁴⁹ The reason for this conspicuous absence seems to reside in the author's general attitude towards the topics of deliberation: the emperor is more preoccupied to discuss the distinctions between good and wrong actions rather than to provide illustrations of the different types of virtues.

All these basic theoretical delimitations and moral themes treated especially in the first part of the *Foundations* and typical of moral philosophy converge in the definition of the ideal moral human character, the ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ,⁵⁰ constantly in search of the supreme good⁵¹ and opposed to the evil one (πονηρὸς or κακός).⁵² Significantly, in very few cases, the representation of the ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ was juxtaposed to explanations of the nature of the imperial office and to the manner in which an emperor should act in given circumstances.⁵³ Instead, we are generally left with a black and white picture that opposes different moral characters. The ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ is recognizable from a series of ideal attributes: the continuous

⁴⁸ These two notions ὠφέλιμον καὶ λυσιτελές- the beneficial and the profitable surface also in ch 18: ὅπερ ὠφέλιμον ἄρχουσι μάλιστα πάντων ἐστί. The related pair of notions τὸ συμφέρον καὶ τὸ βλαπτὸν- *the expedient and the damaging*, emerges in ch.34.

⁴⁹ Ch. 73. On the contrary, in Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor*, these virtues received an extensive treatment.

⁵⁰ Cf. also ἄριστος βίος (ch.1-2) and ch. 4: ἴσθι καιρὸν ἐπιτήδειον ὄντα σοι τὴν ἡλικίαν ἀκμάζοντι, βίον ἐλέσθαι τὸν ἄριστον.

⁵¹ Ch. 86: τὸ ἔσχατον τῶν καλῶν.

⁵² The ἄριστος/ ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ (chs. 32, 70). He is not to be recognized by his good fate (τύχη) but by behavior: (ἀγαθὸς οὐκ ἐκ τῆς τύχης, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν τρόπων κρινέσθω σοι, "you should judge the good man not according to his fortune, but by his way of life"). In ch. 18 the portrait of the ἄριστος ἀνὴρ is further outlined: διεξετάσας τὰς τούτων σχέσεις, τὰς πρὸς τοὺς φίλους, τὰς εἰς τοὺς καθ' αἶμα προσήκοντας, καὶ εἰς τοὺς πολίτας καὶ ξένους, καὶ ὡς αὐτοῖς γε σφίσι τὰ καθ' αὐτοὺς ὠκονόμητο, καὶ τίσι μὲν χαίρουσιν, ἐφ' οἷς δὲ ἀσχάλλουσι, τὰς τῶν δε φύσεις εὐρήσεις.

⁵³ Ch. 71 explains the meaning of (happiness) εὐδαιμονία, a condition for becoming ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ and shows how Manuel weaves issues of ethics into the formulation of an imperial ideal: he argues that a ruler does not attain εὐδαιμονία if he is just wealthy and just have authority over large territories or populations, a theme that foreshadows the topic of first of the *Orations*, on the ruler's *eudaimonia*.

effort to acquire knowledge for practical reasons,⁵⁴ wisdom doubled by natural goodness,⁵⁵ and a proper attitude with regard to situations and individuals.

Owing to this penchant for the representation of ideal moral characters, the advice for John was limited to only few statements. To some extent, the rather shadowy representation of the emperor's son, John, was in line with the late Byzantine sources where the characteristics of childhood and adolescence were, as D. Angelov noticed, “reduced to a canvas on which adult characteristics and values are painted.”⁵⁶ If the early years of the emperors' lives were habitually depicted as a period of precocious physical and intellectual virtues sometimes doubled by divine charisma, in John's case there is no mention of such values. Likewise, in contrast to the authors of panegyrics or imperial biographies who carefully selected the images of childhood such as portentous signs, Manuel's short biographical insight in his son's life offers only neutral details like his hunting games. This attitude towards childhood-related literary *topoi* which played a central role in Byzantine conventions of panegyric writing was also the result of a tendency in the Palaiologan court oratory to make more use of historical episodes instead of divine omens.⁵⁷

The *Foundations'* less contoured image of the ruler appears thus to derive from the emperor's preoccupation for moral theorizing. Even if, like with most advisory texts addressed to rulers, the *Foundations* aimed to project the image of a changing world in which the emperor was required to remain unchanged, due to the increased preoccupation with other theoretical matters, the ruler's well-being (εὐδαιμονία)⁵⁸ does not seem to acquire significant weight in the economy of the text. Common notions used in texts of advice striving to create the representation of an ideal prince, like order and hierarchy⁵⁹ are overshadowed by the multitude of remarks on the individual's behavior in society and at court. The only instance

⁵⁴ Chs. 94, 95, 96, and especially 97 on knowledge and practice: ὡσθ' ὁ τὸν καλὸν καλῶς εἰδῶς, καλῶς δὲ τοῦτο μὴ πράξας, ἐζημίωσαι τῷ γνῶναι. Καὶ ταύτην τὴν γνώμην οὐκ ἔνι παραλογίσασθαι, οὐδ' ἦν συνέλθῃ τῇ σοφίᾳ τῆς γῆς ἀπάσης ἢ τῶν ἀγγέλων ἀπάντων. Θεόθεν γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐστὶν ἐξενηγεμένη, ὄλω καὶ παντὶ τῷ γιγνομένῳ κεκοσμημένη (ch. 97).

⁵⁵ Ch. 94: οὐδὲν σοφίας ἀντάξιον, εὐφροσύνη συγκραθείσης. οὐδ' εὐφροσύνης ἄμεινον σοφία λελαμπρυσμένης.

⁵⁶ D. Angelov, “Emperors and Patriarchs as Ideal Children and Adolescents. Literary and Cultural Expectations,” in *Becoming Byzantine: children and childhood in Byzantium*, ed. by A. Papaconstantinou, A.-M. Talbot, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Center, 2010, 123.

⁵⁷ D. Angelov, (Ibid.) noticed that the fantastic stories and divine omens of Basil I or Manuel I disappeared almost completely from Palaiologan panegyrics. Indeed, looking at Isidore's panegyrics to John, narrative history plays a significant role. See also O. J. Schmitt, “Kaiserrede und Zeitgeschichte im späten Byzanz: ein panegyrikos Isidors von Kiev aus dem Jahre 1429,” *JÖB* 48 (1998): 209-242.

⁵⁸ Ch. 5: τῶν κρατούντων εὐδαιμονία.

⁵⁹ Ch. 30: ἅπαντα μὲν τῆς ἑαυτῶν ἀρχῆς ἡρτηται, καὶ δὴ καὶ ταῦτα τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς and μέγα γὰρ ἰσχύει τάξις, καὶ τὸ μὴ χαίρειν ἀναβολαῖς, καὶ πολλοὺς γε τάναντία καθεῖλε, τᾶλλα βελτίστους ὑπάρχοντας.

when a hierarchic mode is deemed functional for his addressee surfaces in chs. 11 and 12 in which Manuel speaks of the emperor's submissiveness to the Church. Most often, advice for the emperor is embedded in the above mentioned philosophical and general moral advice that shapes the idea of the *best man* (ἄριστος ἀνὴρ). Thus, *blind fortune* (τύχη) is dismissed as a force behind the emperor's actions⁶⁰ while an emperor needs to be naturally endowed with a soul fit for rule:

The real fruit of a soul fit for ruling is the aspiration towards good things, the departure from evil, the pursuit of common benefits. Ψυχῆς καρπὸς ἀληθῆς ἡγεμονία πρεπούσης ἢ πρὸς τὰγαθὸν κίνησις, ἢ πρὸς τὸ κακὸν ἀλλοτρίωσις, ἢ πρὸς τὸ κοινῇ συνοῖσον ἐπιμέλεια.⁶¹

According to these elements of imperial representation, the contours of the ruler's image become rather general and conventional: the emperor should stand as model for others,⁶² an imitator of God,⁶³ he should be a lawgiver and not a tyrant,⁶⁴ or should keep focused on his daily tasks.⁶⁵ In addition to these pieces of advice pertaining to an ideal image, Manuel also recounted several errors which a young prince such as John was likely to commit in relation to other individuals:

You should detest hypocrisy and the insincere one and never you should let yourself cheated by wolves and pirates who pretend to be shepherds and steersmen. Ὑπόκρισις ἔστω σοι μισητὸν καὶ μακρὰν ὁ ταύτην ἐργαζόμενος, μὴ ποτε λάθῃς πιστεύσας λύκῳ καὶ πειράτῃ ἀντὶ ποιμένου καὶ κυβερνήτου.⁶⁶

Furthermore, the ruler to be is seen as part of a community⁶⁷ and for this reason John is asked to show politeness and outward grace (ἀστειότης and χάρις) in the relations with other courtiers:

It should be necessary for you and for all rulers to mix politeness with gifts and to take care to offer those in a timely manner, inasmuch as possible. Σὸν ἂν εἶη [...] καὶ παντὸς ἐθέλοντος ἄρχειν, κερνᾶν ταῖς δωρεαῖς ἀστειότητα καὶ ταχύτητι συνάπτειν αὐταῖς τὸ πέρασ ὅσῃ δυνατή.⁶⁸

⁶⁰ Ch. 47: Τὸ προθυμεῖσθαι γὰρ ἀνδρὸς. Τὸ δὲ σφαλῆναι καὶ τύχης.

⁶¹ Ch. 37.

⁶² Ch. 47: Πάντες γὰρ ἐς τοῦτον ὁρῶσι, μᾶλλον πρὸς τοὺς ὑπὲρ τούτων ἄθλους ἀποδυσάμενον ἢ τοὺς ὑπὲρ δόξης ποτὲ ἐν Παναθηναίοις ἡγωνισμένους. On how the emperor acts as a teacher, ch.31: τὰς δ'ἐναντίας φανείσας σφῶν αὐτῶν διδασκάλους ποιοῦσιν, ὥστε μὴ περιπεσεῖν τοῖς ὁμοίοις κακοῖς.

⁶³ Ch. 42: καὶ Θεὸν μιμούμενος, καὶ σαυτὸν τοῖς σεαυτοῦ μίμημα ταύτη παρέχων.

⁶⁴ Ch. 51. For a further discussion of the conventional traits of the emperor's image in the *Foundations* see K. Païdas, *Τὰ Βυζαντινὰ κάτοπτρα ἡγεμόνων*, 109-238 and I. Leontiadis, *Untersuchungen*, 120-150.

⁶⁵ Ch. 79: ζημία μεγίστη τοῖς πράγμασιν τὸ διαχεῖσθαι τὸν νοῦν τοῖς ἄρχουσιν.

⁶⁶ Ch. 81.

⁶⁷ Ch. 19: πάντες γὰρ ἀλλήλων δεόμεθα, εἰ μέλλει διαρκέσειν ἡμῖν τὸ ζῆν.

⁶⁸ Ch. 61.

The emperor's magnificence (μεγαλοπρέπεια) and character (σχῆμα) implies that he should treat wisely those ranking lower in court hierarchy,⁶⁹ without irony or mendacity.⁷⁰ John is specifically advised to keep silent when necessary,⁷¹ reject flatterers, and consult with his friends,⁷² for, like in other court admonitory texts, so in the *Foundations* friendship features as an important instrument of acquiring political consensus.⁷³

In addition to these rather conventional pieces of advice identifiable in other texts of advice for rulers as well, Manuel slightly nuanced this image. First, he often exhorted his son to keep track of the benefits and losses of each day, a statement that echoes Sphrantzes' statement that the ruler should also act as an administrator.⁷⁴ Then, in two chapters, he recounts how the emperor should relax after accomplishing his stressful administrative tasks. A frequent topic in his letters,⁷⁵ the emperor's walks in the garden are described in ch. 79 and 80,⁷⁶ prompting scholars like I. Ševčenko to compare the *Foundations* to Renaissance texts exhorting princes to proceed to similar leisurely activities.⁷⁷

A conspicuous absence in the *Foundations* pertains to the use of models of ancient heroic rulers, particularly if one considers that such texts of advice were often conceived also as encomia for rulers.⁷⁸ Instead, throughout the *Foundations*, Manuel either proposes models of extreme humbleness, like the Biblical Job or attempts to integrate the emperor's office in a court life populated by both friends and enemies. It is for this reason that Manuel often draws then the attention to calumnies (διαβολαί), and presents different ways to treat those who circulate calumnies about the emperor.⁷⁹

⁶⁹ Chs. 8 and 10: θεραπεύειν τοὺς ὑπὸ σε πάντας φίλτρῳ καὶ φόβῳ

⁷⁰ Ch. 77: μήτε εἰρωνεῖα συνεῖναι θέλε, μήτε ἀλαζονεῖα συνέστω σοι.

⁷¹ Ch. 92: ἡ σιωπὴ κόσμος λαμπρός, πύργος ἰσχυρός κεκτημένοις. Προσῆκει δὲ νεωτέροις μᾶλλον ἢ τοῖς εἰς ἀκμὴν ἀφιγμένοις.

⁷² Ch. 78: τὰς γνώμας τῶν φιλοῦντων.

⁷³ Ch. 18: οὕτω καὶ κοσμίως φιλήσεις, καὶ ἐν τῷ φιλεῖν καὶ φιλεῖσθαι διαμένεις.

⁷⁴ Ch. 41: οὕτω τοι καὶ ἔμπορος, καὶ πᾶς πρὸς κέρδος ἀγωνιζόμενος. Λογίζου δὲ καθημερινὰν ζημίαν τε καὶ τὰ κέρδη.

⁷⁵ Pleasantry and the combination of pleasantry with more serious activities is a frequent theme emerging in his letters, e.g. in letter 67 (lines 71-77) addressed to Kabasilas: "But let them tell - and I would be happy to ask them - whether it is their judgment that pleasantry must once and for all be censured, or that there is a certain time for lightness and that it should not be excluded from all those matters for which the most wise Solomon apportions a time. But I do not suppose we need a spoken answer from them, for they are answering by their deeds, in which they show themselves more playful than serious."

⁷⁶ Cf. ch. 80: οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεὶς ἐν ἀνθρώποις, ὃς ἂν σπουδῆ διηνεκῶς χρῆσαιτο· ἀλλ' ἡ φύσις ἐκάστῳ σπουδάζοντι καὶ παραμυθίας τινὸς ἐφέταται.

⁷⁷ On the dichotomy *vita activa* - *vita contemplativa* see Y. Hersant, "Vie active et Vie contemplative à la Renaissance," 263-271. P. Odorico, *L' éducation au gouvernement et à la vie: La tradition des 'régles de vie' de l'antiquité au Moyen Âge*, Paris: Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 2009, 98-104.

⁷⁸ Ch. 24: εἴη γὰρ ἂν δήπουθεν φρονήματος καρπός, παρακαλοῦντος εἰς ἀρετὴν. Εἴ γε διδῶς εἶναι τοιοῦτον τὸ μὴ καθεύδειν δύνασθαι τὸν Θεμιστοκλέα τῷ Μιλτιάδου τροπαίῳ δακνόμενον.

⁷⁹ Ch. 38.

4.1.1.2 Structure⁸⁰

Despite the variety of topics approached and the division in a hundred distinct chapters,⁸¹ the *Foundations*, unlike other writings of its kind, stands as a structurally coherent text. Understanding how the material was organized in an orderly manner is important for understanding Manuel's approach to the tradition of moral advice for young rulers whereby he tried to reshape traditional genres. At a notional level, the text achieved unity by reworking on the one hand philosophical conceptions drawn from ancient philosophers like Aristotle or Plato and, on the other hand, commonplaces taken from the basic matrix provided by the many Byzantine texts of advice for rulers. Yet, in comparison with other earlier texts of advice, Manuel also strove to achieve structural unity of his text at the formal level. An indication of this unity is that, in general, passages designed to explain moral or philosophical notions were grouped together and separated from the commandments on how to lead a good life as a ruler in difficult times. Thus, strikingly, Manuel's moral snippets were grouped in thematic clusters of two or more paragraphs of equal length. Most of the hundred *kephalaia*, despite the fact that they individually display an elaborate craftsmanship, do not exist independently of each other but a certain order is impressed upon them.

The *Foundations* appear to have been conceived as a more coherent moral text rather than as a *florilegium* of independent wise statements. Since an analysis of methods of organizing topics, that is of *inventio* specific to collections of gnomic *kephalaia* in the Byzantine rhetorical handbooks, is lacking from contemporary accounts⁸² the *Foundations* become an even more interesting case. Moreover, the perceivable influence of gnomic anthologies, which in general followed no particular rule of arranging their material, hinders us from evaluating the sequence of topics and place them in an elaborated coherent scheme. By their nature, gnomes and maxims stand as autonomous statements, they are principles and axioms that do not need to be connected to a larger conceptual or discursive background. Yet, on the contrary, arguably, the elaborate construction of most chapters in the *Foundations* suggests that the author attempted to systematize the different topics of advice. Unlike previous admonitory texts divided into short paragraphs, Manuel's *Foundations* are not just a list of rules for conduct, a well of wisdom where each norm is autonomous of each other, but the author appears to

⁸⁰ For a synoptic list with the contents and the structure of the *Foundations* see also Appendix 7.

⁸¹ The chapters were arranged in an acrostic similar to the dedicatory inscription: Βασιλεὺς Βασιλεῖ Μανουήλ Ιωάννη Πατῆρ Ὑιῶ ψυχῆς ψυχῆ καρπὸν τροφῆν ἐμῆς τῆ σῆ ὀποιασοῦν ἀκμαζούση ἧ ὁ Θεὸς εἶη κοσμήτωρ.

⁸² Joseph Rhakendytes' *Synopsis rhetorikē* in the fourteenth century or George of Trebizond's *Rhetoric* in the fifteenth century do not approach this topic.

strive to provide a unitary frame.

One basic mark of this structural coherence is that, in most cases, connections between successive chapters emerge. The concatenation of paragraphs into thematic groups is observable in all sections of the text. The first six chapters deal solely with abstract notions of moral philosophy. Within this first group, as I pointed out above, chs. 1 and 2 were tightly connected by dealing with a similar topic: the different types of life an individual can pursue. If ch. 1 asserts the existence of three types of life, one aiming for the good, one for pleasure, and the third combining both good and pleasure, ch. 2 follows up on a similar topic and deals with the best kinds of life (ἄριστος βίος). Chs. 3 and 4 are coterminous with the theme of the first two paragraphs and discuss the best ways of life in connection with the Aristotelian notions of common human nature and of individual choice. In equally theoretical terms, chs. 5 and 6 further the discussion and deal with good fortune (εὐδαιμονία), another central concept in ancient moral philosophy and with time (καιρός), a notion that describes the right moment of action. The following group of seven chapters, 7-13, deals with issues of general spiritual development and authority: submission to God (chs. 7-9) and obedience to the Church (chs. 11-13). After these two sections, the author turns to the main topic of his text, namely moral advice on how to act in different circumstances. The discussion starts with two chapters on moral categories such as good and evil, and on the appropriate behavior towards others (chs. 14 and 15). Following this theoretical setting, the material is divided into separate sections: chs. 16-21, on relations with individuals (trust and friendship); chs. 22-34, on the individual's right course of action converging in the idea of the ἄριστος ἀνὴρ. Chs. 35-93 constitute the largest section of the text, that deals with various aspects of moral action which a ruler has to take into consideration: calumny, focus of mind, state of mind, temperance, cautiousness, avoidance of dissimulation, honesty, relaxation after times of intense activity, military strategy, real friendship;⁸³ good versus evil actions, the different stages entailed by the right course of action,⁸⁴ education,⁸⁵ or the misfortunes of life.⁸⁶ This type of advice specifically tailored for his son as a ruler is often intertwined with the enunciation of moral principles and of virtues commonly used in texts of advice for rulers: measure (μετρίότης), the four cardinal virtues

⁸³ Ch. 21: ἢ που φίλος σοι σαφὴς ὃς κοινωνῶν σοι τῶν ἔργων, κατόπιν τοῦ συνοίσοντος αἰεὶ τὸ χάριεν τίθησιν.

⁸⁴ Cf. chs. 44 and 45 which are connected by the notion of ἔξις (attitude): κακῇ γὰρ πράξει τὸ βλαπτὸν ἀκολουθεῖ [...] προσέχων τοῖς καλοῖς ἔξις ἀπὸ μικρῶν ἔρχεται [...] καὶ τὸ κακὸν γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἀγαθόν, ταῖς διανοίαις συγγινόμενον εἰς ἔργον ἐκβαίνειν εἴωθε (ch.44)

⁸⁵ Chs. 52 and 53: κἂν ἀπὴ τῆς δυναστείας ἡ παιδείουσις, τὸ ῥώμης χρῆμα, καὶ πᾶν τοιοῦτον, πρὸς τῷ μηδὲν τι προσενεγκεῖν τῶν καλῶν καὶ βλάβην ἐστὶν ὅτε προὔξησησεν.

⁸⁶ Chs. 54 and 55.

(temperance, prudence, fortitude, justice), the ruler as head in the metaphor of the state as a living body, the ruler-legislator, the emperor as model for his subjects and fulfilling various roles (πατήρ, ἰατρός, ποιμὴν, διδάσκαλος). The final six chapters of the *Foundations* have the role of a conclusion which end the full circle of advice by returning to the theoretical stance disclosed in the beginning of the text: they deal with foreseeing the future based on the reasonable assessment of present conditions, questions on life as a divine gift, and eventually return to definitions of concepts like good and evil.

The structural coherence of the *Foundations* is often marked not only by the thematic grouping of chapters but also by explicitly forging connections between paragraphs. Several examples would suffice here: in approaching issues of trust between individuals, chs. 20 and 21 build on the contrast between the true friend (σαφῆς φίλος) and the one who uses only flattery (κολακεία); the chapters are followed by two other paragraphs that mirror the previous ones, 22 and 23, about the truth-loving ruler (φιλάληθης ἄρχων) and about how envy (φθόνος) gives birth to dishonesty (συκοφαντία) and hatred (μῖσος). Chs. 27 and 28 deal with a similar matter, the causes of evil: if in ch. 27, Manuel speaks of the original sin as responsible for the perverted human nature, in ch. 28 the author's focus turns on the “evil men and demons who are counseling us the worst things.” Chs. 79 and 80 are connected by the theme of the emperor's necessity to take everything more easily and not let excessive worries take on his mind. First, in ch. 79 Manuel explains that worries in excess affect the ruler's mind. Then, in ch. 80 he offers a recipe for the ruler's peace of mind, which starts from the general observation that: οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεὶς ἐν ἀνθρώποις, ὃς ἂν σπουδῇ διηνεκῶς χρήσαιτο· ἀλλ’ ἡ φύσις ἐκάστῳ σπουδάζοντι καὶ παραμυθίας τινὸς ἐφίεται. Reading books and other ways to relax outdoors should, according to Manuel, have an equal part in the prince's strategies to unwind. Chs. 81 and 82 are connected by the theme of the disposition towards other people: first, on the damages of hypocrisy in court and then, on the qualities an emperor should display: dignity and magnificence (σεμνότης and μεγαλοπρέπεια). Chs. 84 and 85 deal with a related topic, the emperor's attitude towards his subjects and the law, while in chs. 87, 88, and 89 Manuel deals with the emperor's military activities and the best strategies a ruler should adopt on the battlefield. After this intermezzo of practical advice, Manuel returns to more abstract chapters: chs. 92 and 93 reveal the idea of an emperor-teacher who should provide models for his subjects, followed by chs. 94, 95, and 96 discussing the relation between wisdom, knowledge, and good administration.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Apart from the parallelism of content in successive chapters, there are several cases of parallelism of

Thus, it appears that the text's literary logic does not follow a linear process but a rather convoluted path: it begins with the discussion of more general concepts, proceeds to matters of practical demeanor, returns to general moral notions, repeats ideas from the beginning so that, towards the end, the practical matters of administration could be explained in light of a system of ethical values.⁸⁸ This apparently loose structure allows the author to pursue concomitantly different lines of thought and to maintain a certain openness of the text by offering the possibility to connect these clusters in different ways.

4.2. Genre

All these peculiarities of content and structure underline the question of the genre adopted in the *Foundations*, a question whose answer can shed further light on the text's intended function. Certainly, owing to its declared intent and to its multiple instances of advice, the text comes closer to the popular genre of the so-called *princely mirrors*, yet, at the same time, as pointed out above, it remains intriguing that to a large extent it also deals with the enunciation of general moral and philosophical principles, thus departing from the consecrated models of texts of advice for rulers. It appears that, unlike other Byzantine authors of handbooks of good conduct such as Agapetos (sixth century), Photios (ninth century), Theophylact of Ochrid (eleventh century), Nikephoros Blemmydes (thirteenth century), or Thomas Magistros (fourteenth century), Manuel adopted here a different approach characterized by a marked didacticism. Arguably, at a formal level, this approach entailed the combination of several generic strands which drew upon different sources: *gnomologia* (*anthologies/florilegia*), *hypothekai*, *kephalaia* (*centuria*), or the so-called *princely mirrors*. A look at other texts similar in form or content can throw more light on the relationship of Manuel's text to these various textual traditions and help us further understand how he adapted these sources in order to shape his authorial voice. For this reason, the ensuing section involves not only the issue of sources but it also explores questions of continuities across the Byzantine period, intertextuality, reliance on tradition, and self-renewal.

paragraph structure. Thus, chs. 13 and 14 place in their third sentence definitions rendered in similar ways: ch. 13: Κρείττον ἐργάσασθαι τι χρηστόν [...] κάλλιστον and ch.14: χεῖρον ἐργάσασθαι πονηρόν [...] κάκιστον

⁸⁸ For instance, the notion of individual choice resurfaces in ch.28. H. Hunger noticed the repetitions in the *princely mirrors* as well, without however connecting them to an overall structure, "Fürstenspiegel" in *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, vol 1, Munich: Beck, 1978, 157-162.

4.2.1. Wisdom and advice literature

Any discussion of the genre of the *Foundations* has to take into consideration the author's use of gnomic or wisdom literature, a common source for texts of advice for rulers. The text includes a significant number of implicit and explicit quotations drawn from different *auctoritates*, although mentioning the source of the quotation was not usual among the authors of court admonitory texts.⁸⁹ Manuel combined quotations from classical poets, like Homer or the tragedians,⁹⁰ with proverbs,⁹¹ or with other frequent biblical or patristic references.⁹² In many cases citations seem to have been reworked from other sources⁹³ as many of them can be found in the collections of gnomes that circulated in Byzantium. In ch. 55, “a poet” (τις τῶν ποιητῶν) is quoted with the following pithy saying: οὐκ ἔστιν εὐρεῖν βίον ἄλυπον ἐν οὐδενί. The saying can be traced back to the comic poet Menander⁹⁴ who included it in his collection of *Sententiae*⁹⁵ and also in the chapters περὶ γνώμης of Hermogenes,⁹⁶ Nicholas,⁹⁷ and Aphthonius' *Progymnasmata*.⁹⁸ Likewise, the statement in ch. 12 (ἴσον τῷ πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζειν τὸ πολεμεῖν

⁸⁹ I. Ševčenko (“Agapetos: East and West,” 8-9) and H. Hunger (*Die Hochsprachliche Literatur*, 158-160) noticed that Manuel is the only author of a *princely mirror* to mention Isocrates' name: Ἴσοκράτης δίδωσι γνώμην, ἔχειν μὲν ἡδέως πρὸς ἅπαντας παραινῶσαν· χρῆσθαι δὲ τοῖς βελτίστοις (ch.15).

⁹⁰ Ch. 96: καὶ κρείττονος τοῦ λύσοντος τὸ ἄπορον ἡμῖν κατὰ τὸν πάλαι Οἰδίποδα, Ch. 33: ὄφρα σε, καθ'Ὅμηρον, τίωσιν [...] ἡμὲν νέοι, ἡδὲ γέροντες, ch. 39: Ἔφη οὖν τις Πυθαγόρας τοῦνομα· δεινὰ μὲν ἐκπρήξας, ἐπιπλήσσει· χρηστὰ δὲ τέρπου, ch. 72: ὁ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς συνῶν ἀγαθὰ πορίζεται. ὁ δὲ μιγνύμενος κακοῖς καὶ τὸν ἴδιον ἀπόλλυσι νοῦν, ὡς τις ἔφη τῶν ποιητῶν, ch. 92: ἡσυχίαν ἄγειν βέλτιον, κατὰ τὸν φιλόσοφον ἰατρόν.

⁹¹ Apart from gnomes, Manuel also makes usage of another form of wise literature, the proverbs, understood as sententious phrases conveyed through different and more popular channels than the gnomes transmitted rather through an intellectual tradition. Although the limit between gnomes and proverbs remains fragile, this difference was perceived by Palaiologan authors. For this period we have a major collection of proverbs by Michael Apostolius. His introduction to *Συναγωγή παροιμιῶν καὶ συνθήκη* (*Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, Hildesheim: G. Olm, 1958, 233), comprises a discussion of proverbs defined in terms similar to gnomes: παροιμία ἐστὶ λόγος ὠφέλιμος, ἥτοι βιωφελής, ἐπικρύψει μετρία πολὺ τὸ χρήσιμον ἔχων ἐν ἑαυτῷ· ἢ λόγος προτρεπτικός παρὰ πᾶσαν τοῦ βίου τὴν ὁδὸν χρησιμεύων. The *Foundations* include several proverbs introduced probably for their imagery which adds further explanations into the emperor's didactic project. Two examples of widely used proverbs may count here, in ch. 26: ἐκείνω (i.e. God) γὰρ καὶ τρίχες ἠρίθμηνται, καὶ τῶν στρουθίων φροντίς ἐστὶ, καὶ φαυλοτέρων πραγμάτων, and in ch. 43: ὕδρα τέρμεις, παροιμία, τὸ ἀνέφικτον δηλοῦσα. καὶ ὁ τὸ ἴδιον θέμενος πρὸ τῶν κοινῆ συμφερόντων πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐφέλκεται ταυτηνὴ τὴν εἰκόνα. This proverb appears in several collections of proverbs from the fifteenth c.: e.g. *Proverbia e codice Bodleiano*- ἐπὶ τῶν ἀμηχάνων: διὰ τὰς τῆς ὕδρας κεφαλὰς, ἅς τέμνων ὁ Ἡρακλῆς οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἐκράτει αὐτῆς ἀναδιδούσης ἄλλας ἀντὶ τῶν κοπτωμένων.

⁹² Ch. 10: Αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ τὸ θέλειν, καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας, ὁ θεῖος ἀπεφήνατο Παῦλος, ch. 13: κατὰ τὸν εἰπόντα προφήτην, ch. 52: εἰ ἔτι ἀνθρώποις ἤρεσκον, Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἦμην. *Ad Galatas*, ch. 1, 10, 3; chs. 52 and 56: κατὰ τὸν θεῖον Ἀπόστολον, ch. 69: ὡς Job, ch. 100: Ἐκκλινον ἀπὸ κακοῦ, φησὶν ὁ θεῖος Δαβὶδ, καὶ ποιήσον ἀγαθόν.

⁹³ Cf. ch. 68: οὐδὲν ἂν εἶη δεινόν, ὃ μὴ φορητὸν ἡμῖν εἶπέ τις τῶν ποιητῶν ἄλλως φράσας and ch.16: Μέλλει νῦν εἰρήσεσθαι, ὃ καὶ καθ' αὐτὸ ρηθῆναι καλὸν καὶ τῆς τοῦ ῥήτορος γνώμης συστατικόν.

⁹⁴ Th. Kock, *Comitorum Atticorum Fragmenta*, Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1880, vol 3, 411.

⁹⁵ *Menandri Sententiae; Comparatio Menandri Et Philistionis*, Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana Leipzig: Teubner, 1964, 521.

⁹⁶ *Hermogenis Opera*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1913, 3. 18.

⁹⁷ Nicholas the Sophist, *Nicolai Progymnasmata*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1913, 24. 8.

⁹⁸ *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, *Rhetores Graeci* v. 10, Leipzig: Teubner, 1926, vol 10, 7-19.

τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τοῖς δόγμασι)⁹⁹ was intensely used by the Church Fathers and was also listed by fifteenth century paroemiographic corpora, such as those of Makarios Chrysokephalos and Michael Apostolios.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, in ch. 23, the opening statement (ὡσπερ ἰὸς σίδηρον, οὕτως ὁ φθόνος τὴν ἔχουσαν αὐτὸν ἐξαναλίσκει ψυχὴν) appears also in contemporary gnomologia and in other texts as well.¹⁰¹

The usage of gnomes thus largely informed the aspect of the *Foundations*. In particular, two genres relied on the use of gnomic sayings: *hypothekai* and *kephalaia*, the very terms used in the title of Manuel's text. As it will be argued in the following, both the *hypothekai* and the *kephalaia* forms influenced the shape and content of the message of Manuel's text. The *hypothekai* represented one of the oldest denominations for collections of wisdom-sayings in the deliberative genre.¹⁰² Originating in Hesiod's epic poems, they were soon borrowed in public oratory. In *To Nicocles* (3), the oration that constituted the model of ancient and medieval texts of advice for rulers, Isocrates explicitly described his text as ὑποθήκας ὡς χρῆ ζῆν while in *To Demonicus* (5) pseudo-Isocrates spoke of his speech as a παραίνεσις similar to a series of ὑποθήκαι. In the Hellenistic period, the *hypothekai* lost their epic and dramatic character¹⁰³ so that later on, in his *Bibliotheca*, Photios commented on the function of the *hypothekai* in the process of education limiting himself to noticing their usefulness for shaping the appropriate conduct of young individuals.¹⁰⁴

As a popular rhetorical genre, the *hypothekai* were essentially panoplies of elaborated wise statements with a gnomic core. Manuel's composition reflects this definition and, to a certain extent, the use of gnomes controls the flow of the *Foundations*. The author's favorable disposition toward the inclusion of gnomes is understandable in light of their central role in school exercises - *progymnasmata*:¹⁰⁵ as such they were geared towards training students in

⁹⁹ *Acta*, 26.14.3-4.

¹⁰⁰ *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, Hildesheim: G. Olm, 1958, Manuel Chrysokephalos, *Centuria* 7. 44. 1; Michael Apostolios, *Centuria* 6.57.3.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Demetrios Kydones, *De morte*, 98 and Manuel II, *Panegyric oration for his father upon the recovery from an illness*, p. 233.

¹⁰² K. Berger, "Hellenistische Gattungen im Neuen Testament," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der Neueren Forschung*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1984, vol. 25, 1051.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* With Philo's *Hypothetikos Logos* they begin to designate rather collections of maxims treating moral issues not from a theoretical perspective but from a practical point of view and aiming at the immediate application of ethical commandments.

¹⁰⁴ Ἀνεγνώσθη <Ἰωάννου Στοβαίου> ἐκλογῶν, ἀποφθεγμάτων, ὑποθηκῶν, βιβλία τέσσαρα ἐν τεύχεσι δυοῖ. Προσφωνεῖ δὲ ταῦτα, δι' ὃν καὶ τὴν συνάθροισιν φιλοπονησαὶ λέγει, Σεπτιμίῳ ἰδίῳ υἱῷ. Ἡ δὲ συναγωγή αὐτῶ ἐκ τε ποιητῶν καὶ ῥητόρων καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὰς πολιτείας λαμπρῶς βεβιωκότων ἐγένετο, ὧν (ὡς καὶ αὐτός φησι) τῶν μὲν τὰς ἐκλογὰς τῶν δὲ τὰ ἀποφθέγματα καὶ τινῶν ὑποθήκας συλλεξάμενος, ἐπὶ τῷ ῥυθμίσει καὶ βελτιῶσαι τῷ παιδί τὴν φύσιν ἀμαυρότερον ἔχουσαν πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀναγνωσμάτων μνήμην, στείλειεν. Photios, *Bibliotheca*, ed. R. Henry, Paris: Belles lettres, 1959, 167.112a.

¹⁰⁵ The importance of gnomes and chreiai in the Byzantine educational system can hardly be overestimated.

practical matters that would teach the young students strategies of conveying public messages.¹⁰⁶

Thus, it appears that one major element that defined the *Foundations* genre was the reliance on collections of gnomic sayings known as *gnomologia*.¹⁰⁷ The irregular structure of these anthologies generated various approaches to the study of gnomes and prompted some scholars to identify even a gnomic genre. K. Berger, D. Searby, and P. Odorico operated various distinctions between the types of gnomes and between the collections themselves. As it has been transmitted to us, in its present condition, the Byzantine gnomological tradition, offers the picture of a *mélange* of many loose ends. The difficulty of assessing this long and complex tradition comes from the existence of an apparently endless flow of shorter or longer anthologies. In addition to these problems, if some collections are connected among themselves, the attribution of gnomes varies to a large extent.

Most of the *gnomologia* used by the admonitory texts cultivated a limited set of themes, sometimes grouped in well delimited sections: the divine being, soul, self-conscience, virtue, wit and wisdom, education, truth, admonition, moderation, law and justice, authority and rulers, action, well-doing, happiness, mercy, freedom and slavery, aging, effective oratory,

Aphthonius' *progymnasmata* counted the elaboration of gnomes among his fourteen categories of exercises designed to prepare the students for public speaking: μῦθος, χρεία, ἀνασκευή, κατασκευή, εἰσφορὰ νόμου, κοινὸς τόπος, ἐγκώμιον, ψόγος, σύγκρισις, ἠθοποποιία, ἔκφρασις, and διήγημα. In his *Bibliotheca*, Photios writes the following concerning Stobaios' work: "The book is serviceable both for those who have read the actual works composed by the above mentioned authors, to guide their memory, and for those who have not gotten in touch with them, since through assiduously studying them they can in a short time acquire a record, albeit abridged, of many beautiful and varying thoughts. To both groups applies, as we might expect, that without effort and delay it is possible to find what you are looking for, whenever you wish to go from these summaries to the complete works. And also for other purposes, for those who endeavor to speak and write, this book is not without use," Photius, *Bibliotheca*, 167, 115b, vol II.

¹⁰⁶ According to the pedagogical programs like Theon's or Aphthonius' students were taught to wield a maxim by expanding or compressing it. As a matter of fact, the gnomological tradition was one of the undercurrents in the history of education and of rhetoric in both Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Some collections of gnomes were specifically designed to help students learn and, for this reason, their authors arranged gnomes in the form of questions and answers which made them more easily memorable. However, in the case of Manuel's *Foundations* they are developed in self-standing paragraphs and, from this viewpoint, the purpose seems not anymore the easiness of memorization but to further explain moral aspects of life and demeanor. Manuel seems to have followed Aristotle's discussion of γνῶμαι, where the philosopher defined maxims as general statements only about questions of practical conduct, courses of conduct to be chosen or avoided (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1394A. 19ff and 1395A. 2 ff). Later on, Hermogenes also indicated the practical moral aspect of gnomic advice: Γνώμη ἐστὶ λόγος κεφαλαιώδης ἐν ἀποφάσει καθολικῇ ἀποτρέπων τι ἢ προτρέπων ἐπὶ τι ἢ ὁποῖον ἕκαστόν ἐστι δηλῶν, Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata*, 4.1.

¹⁰⁷ The multitude of manuscripts comprising collections of gnomes witness to their popularity both collectively-arranged in gnomologies and anthologies representing instances of summaries of accumulated wisdom of a culture which they aimed to transmit to successive generations- and individually- scattered through many other different texts. For instance, Maurice's *Strategikon* included a section of gnomai while in the fourteenth century the *Σύνοψις ῥητορικῆς* by Joseph Rhakendytes explicitly recommends the use of gnomes in letters: Ἐν ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς χρησιμώτατα τὰ γνωματεύματα τῶν σοφῶν, καὶ τὰ οὕτω καλούμενα ἀποφθέγματα καὶ τὰ παροιμιώδη, C. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, Stuttgart: G. Cotta 1832, vol 3, 558.

faithful and fake friends, desire, pleasure, richness, love of money, independence, evil, envy, drunkenness, misfortune, sorrow, anger, women, abandoned things, etc. Scattered through the entire corpus of Byzantine literature, gnomes attest for a certain taste for what has been called *wisdom* and *advice literature*. Other literary genres used gnomic sayings as sheer ornaments or as powerful arguments, but rather few texts grouped them thematically or in other meaningful ways.

Wisdom and advice literature in late Byzantium

The gnomic content of the *Foundations* reflected the popularity of collections of gnomes in late Byzantium.¹⁰⁸ Judging from their number, this type of parainetic literature enjoyed a high reputation among other rhetorical genres. For instance, the Ms. Vat. gr. 1619 which included the *Foundations* comprised among other things also an ancient gnomology attributed to Plutarch, the *Apophthegmata of kings and emperors* (ff. 211-288v).

It was not unusual for authors of Manuel's circle to gather gnomes in collections of various forms. Isidore of Kiev included among his texts a section on sentences and short citations on life, *hybris*, and the effects of fear and hope.¹⁰⁹ Another contemporary of Manuel, John Chortasmenos, also wrote a text of advice but he did not make much use of gnomes in his series of *Moral counsels* (*Ἠθικὰ παραγγέλματα*), that still retained a fragmentary form. Unlike in Manuel's case, Chortasmenos' moral counsel for proper conduct relies more on the enunciation of Christian truths and on his personal observations of life at court. Both elements were integrated in a rather pessimistic vision of social activity in which all individuals should keep a low profile in order to succeed or survive:

Tenth political commandment: Do not cease to spend time with your fellows. But if it is necessary to speak, beware not to be the one who initiates a discussion. If a discussion is initiated by others, adopt one of the following two strategies: either remain silent with regard to what has been said, or praise and accept what has been said. For it is very dangerous to wish to contradict others on various topics.

¹⁰⁸ Shorter or longer collections of moral advice making use of gnomes continued to appear constantly in the Palaiologan period. One of the most important sources for the assessment of Byzantine gnomologia, is the *Gnomologium Vaticanum* (ed. L Sternbach, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1963,) a fourteenth century list of wise sayings collected from different ancient authors belonging to different schools of thinking or periods. It surely draws on previous similar collections and one particularity of this Gnomologium is the dramatization of the gnomic saying since all the gnomes were attributed to certain individual, most often famous philosophers like Antisthenes, Diogenes the Cynic, Plato, etc, or poets like Euripides, Ibykos, or orators like Isocrates and Demosthenes. Apart from these popular sources, there are also other anonymous individuals, especially women from Attica, Laconia, Syracuse, or even Olympias, Alexander the Great's mother. As for the early Palaiologan gnomic collections with an identifiable author, we can count here the *kephalaia* of Andronikos Palaiologos: fifty three short gnomic maxims copied from different other gnomic works, grouped according to different categories, M. Ozbic, "I ΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΑ di Andronico Paleologo," BZ 91, (1998): 406-422.

¹⁰⁹ As in Ms. Vaticanus gr. 914 discussed and described by P. Schreiner, "Literarische Interessen anhand von Gelehrten-codices," 211.

Πολιτικόν ἴ·τοῖς ὁμοτέχνουσι μὴ πάνυ τοι συνδιατρίβειν ἀνέχου. εἰ δ' ἄρα ἀνάγκη, φυλάττου, μηδαμῶς πρότερος λόγον κινεῖν· εἰ δὲ παρ' ἐκείνων γένοιτο, δυοῖν θάτερον ἢ σιωπᾶν ἐπὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις, κἂν καὶ παρὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν φθέγγωνται, ἢ ἐπαινεῖν τε καὶ ἀποδέχεσθαι τὰ λεγόμενα· δεινὸν γάρ, ὧ φιλότης, καὶ σφόδρα δεινὸν τὸ καὶ περὶ τῶν τυχόντων αὐτοῖς ἀντιλέγειν ἐθέλειν.¹¹⁰

Another contemporary text, Demetrios Chrysoloras' *A hundred letters addressed to the emperor Manuel II* is to a certain extent comparable with the *Foundations*, and it has even been suggested that it was actually intended as a literary answer to Manuel's chapters.¹¹¹ Although there are no conclusive indications as to Chrysoloras' conscious attempt to mirror the *Foundations*, these so-called letters combined epistolary features of the repenting (μεταμελετική) type¹¹² with elements of panegyric,¹¹³ and of admonitory texts addressed to rulers.¹¹⁴ Thus here, advice addressed to rulers takes a rather peculiar form, for Chrysoloras' *Letters* combined it with requests for apologies and praises for virtues like the emperor's generosity.

Similar in the predominant gnomic form and didactic intent was Joseph Bryennios' *Treatise on reason* (Ἐπόμνημα περὶ νοός). The subtitle indicates that the *kephalaion* form stood as main model: κεφαλαιώδεις χρήσεις διαλαμβάνον, ὡς χρή τοῦτον καθαίρειν. The preacher's didactic method here consists mainly of a succession of definitions without further explanations.¹¹⁵

As for the emperor's interest in wisdom and advice literature, it is reflected by Manuel's own short list of pieces of advice, which has been preserved in only one manuscript (Ms. Barb. gr. 219, f. 90v) under the title, *Several words for brevity and peace in deliberations* (Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἄτινα συντομίαν ἄγει καὶ εἰρήνην ἐν ταῖς βουλαῖς). This text, until now unedited,¹¹⁶ is in fact a set of seven commandments, also probably addressed to his son as they retain a didactic style:

1. Μὴ ἀνακόπτειν ἀρξάμενον.

¹¹⁰ Chortasmenos-Hunger, 240.

¹¹¹ A. Garzya, "Introduction," *Demetrios Chrysoloras: Cento Epistole a Manuele II Paleologo*, 10-12.

¹¹² Although the precise reason for these apologies remains unknown, Chrysoloras continuously apologizes for a previous verbal attack on the emperor. The μεταμελητική ἐπιστολή category was listed by Proclus, *De forma epistolari*.

¹¹³ E.g. Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*. Apparently, the *Hundred letters* draw much of its substance from this previous text.

¹¹⁴ Chrysoloras included quotations from authors of admonitory texts, both Byzantine and classical such as Nikephoros Blemmydes' *Imperial statue* (Ἀνδριάς βασιλικός), Isocrates, and Isidore of Pelusium.

¹¹⁵ Several interesting parallels between the *Foundations* and other contemporary texts of advice emerge. For instance, Ioannes Eugenikos' *Hortatory note* addressed to Despot Theodore although cast in the form of a deliberative oration, draws extensively on gnomic content (ὑποθήκαι) and moral precepts (παραγγέλματα): βούλομαι δέ σε μηδὲ τῆς ἐκ τῶν ὑποθήκων καὶ παραγγελμάτων ὠφελείας τῶν ἔξω σοφῶν ἀπολελειφθῆναι, ὧν τὸ λυσιτελεῖς καὶ χάριεν βουλόμενόν με παραδραμεῖν οὐκ ἔῃ, *PP* 1, 86.

¹¹⁶ The only mention is in Ch. Dendrinis' list of Manuel's works: *An annotated edition of the treatise On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, PhD dissertation, 1996.

2. Μὴ μέμφεσθαι περὶ λέξιν.
3. Μὴ λέγειν τὰ περὶ ἄλλων λεχθέντα ἀλλὰ ἢ προστιθέναι ἢ ἀφαιρεῖν.
4. Μὴ λέγειν περὶ τῶν ἐπομένων, πρὸ τοῦ τὴν καθόλου δόξαν στερχθῆναι.
5. Μὴ διαλέγεσθαι πρὸς πρόσωπον, ἀλλὰ ἀπλῶς λέγειν τὰ δοκοῦντα.
6. Μὴ πολυπλασιάζειν τὸ κυρωθέν.
7. Μὴ λέγειν ἑτέραν βουλήν, πρὸ τοῦ τὴν λαληθεῖσαν λαβεῖν τέλος.¹¹⁷

As it can be noticed, in this case, advice takes a very concise form and it addresses a single moral issue. The seven commandments indicate the emperor's interest in providing guidance in several aspects of life.

The use of gnomes and gnomologia in the Foundations

The above excursus into the Palaiologan uses of gnomes and gnomologia can help us better understand how Manuel himself combined gnomonic sayings in his text. Certainly, in many respects Manuel's *Foundations* resembled *florilegia* of gnomes as it collected short excerpts from different authors or collections of sayings which were subsequently expanded and reinterpreted in order to fit a more sophisticated purpose that pertained to both teaching and advertising the imperial offspring. It was also an opportunity for the emperor to display his familiarity with gnomologies, like any educated Byzantine.¹¹⁸ This familiarity was echoed by Manuel Chrysoloras when he described the emperor's manner to write and philosophize as sententious.¹¹⁹

Unlike in other texts of his, in the *Foundations*, gnomes were reworked according to the textual frame which was intended to accommodate the emperor's didactic-intellectual exercise. Ch. 39 provides a glimpse at the writer's ambiguous attitude towards ancient wisdom. The author shows awareness of the ancient models yet, at the same time, he also voices a personal perspective. Thus, when stating that χρῆ θεμέλιον ἔχοντας τῶν ἀρχαιοτέρων τὰς γνώμας τοὺς νεωτέρους οἰκοδομεῖν εἴ τι δύναιτο, Manuel also appears eager to emphasize the role of his personal opinions, his views, and accumulated experience.¹²⁰ The result is that

¹¹⁷ See Appendix 8.

¹¹⁸ Evidence for Manuel's knowledge of gnomonic collections comes from other sources as well. Just like in the past, when authors had been admired for their skillful use of gnomes (for instance, Euripides was usually described as ὁ γνωμολογικότατος), a preface by Joasaph the Monk preceding the funeral oration for Manuel's brother Theodore in MS. Vat. gr. 1619 counts the usage of gnomes among the emperor's most striking literary talents: πυκνοῖς τ' ἐνθυμήμασι κέχρηται καὶ καταλλήλοις ἐργασίαις, γνωμικοῖς τε ἀρίστοις, ἀποστάσεσί τε καὶ ἐπεμβολαῖς (Ed. by J. Chrysostomides: Τοῦ ἱερομονάχου κυροῦ Ἰωάσαφ Περὶ τοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ λόγου, *Funeral Oration*, 17-18).

¹¹⁹ εἰ δὲ καὶ τὴν γνωματικὴν φιλοσοφίαν τις βούλοιο λέγειν, καθ' ἣν τινὲς σοφοὶ καὶ φιλόσοφοι ἐκλήθησαν, δῆλον ὡς, ἄλλου τινὸς ἐν αὐτοῖς προηγουμένου, καθ' ὃ ἔλεγον ἐκεῖνα, πόσαι γνώμαι φύσεως καὶ φιλοσοφίας καὶ ἠθῶν ἐχόμεναι, ἐπὶ τοῦ σοῦ τούτου λόγου διαλάμπουσιν (Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 93.21).

¹²⁰ Cf. the epistolary preface of the *Foundations*.

sometimes Manuel quotes gnomes or wisdom sayings verbatim while at other times he quotes them in a more approximate manner, thereby indicating that his opinion mattered as much as the authority of the tradition.¹²¹

In doing so, the emperor was aware that the force of gnomic phrases came from their assessing of situations, partly as statements of duty standards which may have taken the form of prohibitions or commands. According to rhetorical theory, gnomic phrases had to be formulated either as proofs or as *ornatus*.¹²² In the first case (as proofs) they were meant to have authority, while in the second they had a demonstrative function, adding a philosophical component to the chief line of advice. A look at Manuel's text, where isolated gnomes occupy a limited space, reveals that such enunciations were in most cases used as *ornatus* rather than as proofs or for their authority.

One can also notice a tendency towards the inclusion of gnomes in the incipit or the conclusion of paragraphs where they seem to be more effective. A frequent pattern for constructing a moral argument in the *Foundations* is the following: a thesis is stated, then its antithesis or converse, followed immediately by the application of one part of the antithesis to a concrete case. Some chapters open with an argument-headline cast in gnomic form,¹²³ as in ch. 77: Πρᾶξις καλή, κῆρυξ λαμπρὸς, which determines the contents of the entire chapter. In many cases, initial gnomes provide a canvas for the author's disquisition of moral principles and observations on the ruler's appropriate behavior. Quotations in the first line of a paragraph support the author's reflection and produce two different phenomena: *extension*, through a simple explanation of the initial phrase characterized by brevity or expressed in metaphorical language; and *progression*, meaning that it recreates the steps of argumentation and the representational elements that led to the precept. There are even fewer cases where the maxim makes up for the conclusion of the chapter.

Such usage of gnomic sayings points to the existence of a double rhythm, one based on very short sentences¹²⁴ and the other developed along a more discursive line of thought-allowing for a more detailed argumentation and the addition of different aspects of reality or of the attitude to adopt in certain circumstances. This double rhythm is further elaborated in

¹²¹ Ch. 68.

¹²² H. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: a foundation for literary study*, Leiden: Brill, 1998, 432.

¹²³ The usage of short sentences remains restricted. Only in few paragraphs appears in the opening phrases: ch.22: λειμώνας μὲν ἄνθη κοσμεῖ· καὶ οὐρανὸν ἀστέρων χοροί· τὸ δὲ φιλάληθες ἄρχοντα. Καὶ τρόπις μὲν ἡ δύναμις ναυσί, καὶ θεμέλιος οἴκοις, ὧ δὲ φροντίς ἐστὶν ἄληκτος σώζεσθαι λαοὺς τε καὶ πόλεις, ὅτι κεν κεφαλῆ κατανεύση, πιστὸν εἶναι καὶ πολεμίοις, οἰομένῳ οὐκ ἄξιον αὐτῷ τὸ ζῆν ψευσαμένῳ.

¹²⁴ E.g. ch. 23: Ἴδὸν μὲν σίδηρος τίκτει, μῖσος δὲ καὶ δόλον καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα, ψυχὴ ζηλότυπός τε καὶ φθονερά.

the *Orations*, as it will be argued in the ensuing chapter of this unit. Thus, when looked at more closely, the gnomological content of the *Foundations* reveals an uncommon handling in comparison with contemporary texts of advice such as those of Joseph Bryennios or John Chortasmenos. In contrast with these authors and with the gnomonic tradition in general, Manuel's strategy was to avoid the discontinuity between the paragraphs which included gnomes and to treat them in a unitary framework.

4.2.2. *Kephalaia* and *centuria*

In Byzantine literature the gnomonic form was also largely reflected in the use of the form of *κεφάλαια*, a genre which prized conciseness of expression¹²⁵ and was particularly appreciated because of its short, abstract sentences with a higher rhetorical impact.¹²⁶ In ancient rhetorical theory *κεφάλαια* were discussed as part of the *elocutio* as an unembellished basic idea of a sentence and especially as part of *inventio*.¹²⁷ Manuel also seems to have relied extensively on this tradition; in the following, I will try to identify several common points between the *Foundations* and other collections of *kephalaia*, particularly contemporary ones.

In the Palaiologan period, theologians like Gregory Palamas (1296-1359) or Mark Eugenikos (1394-1445) made extensive use of *κεφάλαια* in dogmatic debates. Palamas' polemical work of hesychast theology bears a title that indicates both a topical and a formal division: *One hundred and fifty chapters on topics of natural and theological Science, the moral and the ascetic intended as a purge for the Barlaamite Corruption* (*Κεφάλαια ἑκατὸν πενήκοντα φυσικὰ καὶ θεολογικά, ἠθικά τε καὶ πρακτικὰ καὶ καθαρτικὰ τῆς Βαρλααμίτιδος λύμης*). Significantly, Palamas' chapters were grouped in short series, each dealing with a particular issue: the eternity of the universe (chs. 1-2), the celestial sphere (3-7), the terrestrial sphere (8-14), the natural human faculties (15-20) etc.¹²⁸ Also close in form and content to the *Foundations* were two other compositions by Joseph Bryennios: *The garden or the anthology of divine cogitations and maxims*

¹²⁵ Although they were a widely employed form, the ancient rhetoricians have not much to say on the format or content of series of *κεφάλαια*.

¹²⁶ That *κεφάλαια* were perceived as a form characterized mainly by conciseness is demonstrated by the large scale use of the phrase *ὡς ἐν κεφαλαίῳ* which on a simple search on TLG returns more than a hundred occurrences. It was used for instance in the *Funeral Oration for his Brother Theodore*, to describe the concise account of Theodore's deeds: *ταῦτα ὡς ἐν κεφαλαίῳ ἡμῖν εἴρηται καὶ νομίζομεν καλῶς ἀποδεδεῖχθαι τὴν τοῦδε φύσιν ὡς ἦν ἀξία πολλῶν ἐπαίνων* (*Funeral Oration*, 97. 3-4).

¹²⁷ H. Lausberg, *Handbook of literary rhetoric: a foundation for literary study*, Leiden : Brill, 1998, 279.

¹²⁸ R.E. Sinkewicz, *The one hundred and fifty chapters by Saint Gregory Palamas*, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1988. Later on, in the fifteenth century, Mark Eugenikos used the *κεφάλαια* in another work of religious polemic: *Κεφάλαια συλλογιστικά πρὸς Λατίνους περὶ τῆς τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἐκπορεύσεως, καὶ κατὰ τῆς αἰρέσεως τῶν Ἀκινδυνιστῶν*. By the middle of the fourteenth century, in the debates on Hesychasm, another supporter of the movement, Philotheos Kokkinos, also used the form of *κεφάλαια* against Barlaam and Akyndinos. See also, W. Gass, *Die Mystik des Nikolaus Cabasilas vom Leben in Christo*, C.A. Koch, 1849.

(Κῆπος ἢ ἀνθολογία τῶν θείων ἐννοιῶν ἢ γνῶμαι Λ' θεολογικά καὶ Σ' ἠθικά) and the *Forty-nine chapters* (κεφάλαια ἐπτάκις ἐπτά). They also started with prefaces which argued for the necessity to present advice beneficial (ἐπ' ὠφελεία) for daily life and they also grouped chapters according to different topics.¹²⁹ Yet, unlike Manuel, Bryennios used a middle level of style, less gnostic and much more straightforward. In addition, Bryennios' *kephalaia* had a strong theological orientation even if in the *Kēpos* he distinguished between spiritual and practical advice. Manuel himself was not entirely unfamiliar with this form of *kephalaia*: his treatise *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, written in response to a learned professor from Sorbonne, was divided into one hundred fifty-six chapters systematically approaching the arguments for the Orthodoxy of the doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit.¹³⁰

Unlike the gnomologies most often transmitted anonymously, the *kephalaia* and the *hypothekai*, were commonly gathered in *centuria*, collections of one hundred or one hundred and fifty paragraphs which dealt with theological issues.¹³¹ They were always ascribed to a certain authority and because of this, they included not only gnostic sayings, but, more often than not, also the author's perspective and opinions on the debated issues. Several parallels can be traced between the *Foundations* and the tradition of moral-theological *centuria* of *kephalaia* and *hypothekai*. For instance, Maxim the Confessor's four *centuria* were preceded by a prologue addressed to Elpidios¹³² and had an expository character offering explanations and definitions of Christian virtues with few exhortations.¹³³ In the tenth century, Ilias the Presbyter gathered gnostic sayings from Maxim the Confessor and John of Karpathos in an anthology, which he expanded and divided into four parts: 1) moral teaching (fasting, ascetic effort, vices and virtues); 2) prayer; 3) spiritual contemplation; and 4) the practice of the virtues. Furthermore, in addition to the fact that *centuria* were usually grouped according to different topics, as it has been noticed, they fulfilled two major functions: either as a spiritual testament or as a component of an educational program.¹³⁴

These observations corroborated with the educational scope of the *Foundations* and with

¹²⁹ Bryennios, *Ta paraleipomena*, 48. In the other text, Bryennios argues that the chapters were written for the Cretans whom he left after he came to Constantinople, Vindob. theol. gr. 235, f. 2 r: προθεωρία τοῦδε τοῦ παντός συντάγματος· Ἐμοὶ τὸ θεῖον κριτήριον δέδοικτο δύο πρὸς Κρήτας βιβλία συντέθειται.

¹³⁰ Ch. Dendrinou, *An annotated edition of The treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit and the Letter to Alexios Iagouf*, PhD dissertation, University of London, 1993.

¹³¹ As those by Maximus the Confessor, Niketas Stethatos, John of Karpathos, Ilias the Presbyter or Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022).

¹³² A. Ceresa-Gastaldo, *Massimo confessore. Capitoli sulla carità*. Rome: Editrice Studium, 1963: 48-238.

¹³³ Symeon the New Theologian also wrote two *centuria* with a similar title: κεφάλαια πρακτικά καὶ θεολογικά. J. Darrouzès, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Chapitres théologiques, gnostiques et pratiques*. Sources chrétiennes 51. Paris: Cerf, 1996: 40-186. The two *centuria* are supplemented by another collection of twenty-five other chapters.

¹³⁴ A. Kazhdan, "Chapters," in *ODB*, vol. 1, 410.

the fact that its chapters were clustered in different groups lead one to the conclusion that Manuel might also have had in mind the model of *centuria* when addressing his son.

4.2.3. A princely mirror?

The scholars who used the *Foundations* in their investigation of late Byzantine political history unhesitatingly included it in the genre of *princely mirrors*.¹³⁵ This label was attached to Manuel's hundred chapters on the basis of several features shared with a number of Byzantine texts addressed to young princes and mainly comprising advice for how to act in different situations.¹³⁶ Among these features, the political context of advice, its gnomic content, and the sources (especially Isocrates' *To Nicocles* or pseudo-Isocrates' *To Demonicus*) have long been regarded as arguments in favor of close connections between these texts. Moreover, the formal resemblance with Agapetos' sixth-century *Advice to the emperor*, as well as its influence on many other subsequent texts dealing with the education of a prince, played a major role in attaching the *Foundations* to this tradition.¹³⁷ Certainly, these similarities cannot be underestimated and, to a certain extent, many books of advice in the Byzantine world represented nothing but the avatars of Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor*. Yet, arguably, if we consider the particularities of the *Foundations* and the attachment to the tradition of *centuria*, this label applied in the case of Manuel's composition does not fully explain other features of the text reducing its scope to its political content.

Unlike the western *specula*,¹³⁸ which often represented manifestos of political change

¹³⁵ K. Païdas, *Κάτοπτρα ηγεμόνων*, Barker, *Manuel II*, and A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 201.

¹³⁶ For instance, Manuel often uses a similar phrase as Photios in the *Admonitory chapters* (κεφάλαια παραινετικά) also attributed to Basil I: *as gold is tested on whetstones so is the mind of man in acts of government and the feelings of subjects* (ch.28).

¹³⁷ See B. Baldwin and I. Ševčenko, "Agapetos," in *ODB*, vol. 1, 34.

¹³⁸ The Byzantines never used the term "princely mirror," a concept coined in twelfth century Italy first in its Latin form- *speculum principis* (For a comprehensive overview of western princely mirrors see W. Berges, *Die Fürstenspiegel des hohen und späten Mittelalters*, Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1938 and R. Bradley, "Backgrounds of the Title Speculum in medieval Literature," *Speculum* 29 (1954): 100-115.) The western medieval *fürstenspiegel* differed from the Byzantine advisory texts in several essential aspects, although they shared many common tenets even if, at one point, even Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor* acquired popularity at the French royal court See Jacques Krynen, *L'Empire du roi : idées et croyances politiques en France, XIIIe-XVe siècle*, Paris: Gallimard, 1993. From a formal point of view, in the West they never took the form of successive paragraphs like the *Advice to the emperor* or the *Foundations*, but usually they were predicated upon forms like orations (e.g. John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*- 1159) or fully fledged political treatises (Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum*: early fourteenth century). Princely mirrors proved to be a popular genre in almost all geographical areas of western medieval world: England, France, Spain, Hungary (E. Nemerkeny, *Latin classics in Medieval Hungary*. Budapest: CEU Press, 2004), Scandinavian countries, and the Slavs had knowledge of texts providing advice for present or future rulers. In the West, there circulated both classical writings also popular in the East such as the Latin translation of the *Secretum Secretorum* as well as texts written both in Latin or in the vernacular languages. Some texts like Aegidius Romanus' *De regimine principum* knew a staggering popularity reflected in its subsequent circulation and translation across territories and times (C.F. Briggs, *Giles of Rome's De regimine principum: reading and writing politics at court and university*, c. 1275-c.1525, Cambridge: Cambridge University

regarding various state institutions and the society as a whole,¹³⁹ in Byzantium the texts of advice for princes which were included by the modern scholars in the category of *mirrors*, remained rather confined to a set of tenets commenting on the emperor's office.¹⁴⁰ More than anything else, the Byzantine *Fürstenspiegel* emphasized the ruler's relationship with God and his embodiment of law (νόμος ἔμψυχος): these two values, inherited from the political thought of the Hellenistic period found a fertile ground for further development in the panegyric rhetoric as well,¹⁴¹ which prompted scholars to regard it as a species of the encomium.¹⁴²

Despite the existence of common ground and principles, defining the genre of *Fürstenspiegel* in Byzantium remains a cumbersome task.¹⁴³ P. Odorico's recent treatment of the topic concludes that the Byzantine princely mirrors is rather an empty notion reflecting the moderns' tendency to project into a different space ideas and forms characteristic to western literature.¹⁴⁴ Other scholars who dealt with the topic of texts of advice approached two main areas of inquiry: either spelling out their ancient sources¹⁴⁵ or pinpointing the resilience of a

Press, 1999).

¹³⁹ For instance, John of Salisbury's *Policraticus* which discussed the question of the prince's political responsibility and offered justifications for tyrannicide (C.J. Nederman, "Priests, Kings, and Tyrants: Spiritual and Temporal Power in John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*," in *Speculum* 66 (1991): 572-590) and *Princely virtues in the Middle Ages, 1200-1500*, ed. I. P. Bejczy, Cary J. Nederman, Turnhout: Brepols, 2007.

¹⁴⁰ See E. Barker *Social and political thought in Byzantium: from Justinian I to the last Palaeologus: passages from Byzantine writers and documents*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957, 30-50 and D. Nicol, "Byzantine political thought," in *Cambridge History of Political Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 52-70.

¹⁴¹ On the tradition of princely mirrors in Byzantium see also F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy*, vol. 2, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 300-320. Cf. D. Nicol, "Byzantine political thought," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought (c.350-c.1450)*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, 51-82.

¹⁴² A. Kazhdan, "Princely Mirrors," in *ODB*, vol 3, 1379-80 K. Païdas, *Κάτοπτρα*, 10-12.

¹⁴³ On the difficulties to provide a clear definition of the genre see M. Philipp, "Fürstenspiegel," in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, vol 3, ed. G. Ueding, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1994, 495. Similar difficulties are reflected by the attempts of the first editor of Theophylakt of Ochrid's imperial panegyric addressed to Constantine Doukas to divide it into paragraphs, according to the model provided by Agapetos. However, in this case, as P. Gautier argued convincingly, the alleged title of the text, Παιδεία βασιλική, was the invention of its seventeenth century editor (ibid.), P. Poussines, and it represented the result of an erroneous interpretation. Poussines considered that, since Theophylakt by that time (eleventh century) occupied the positions of teacher of rhetoric at the Byzantine court and tutor for the young Constantine, the text preserved in ms. Laurentianus gr. 59-12 was a mainly educational writing (*PG* 126, Cols. 253-286. The first part (*Pars prior panegyrica*) in this edition deals with the emperor's family and is divided into thirteen chapters, while the second section (*Pars altera paraenetica*) deals with the system of virtues an emperor should acquire and is divided into thirty paragraphs.) Consequently, he artificially divided it into a panegyric and paraenetic section. Yet, it was a well known fact that encomiastic texts addressed to emperors included also numerous pieces of counsel and reminded the ruler of his position in community.

¹⁴⁴ Such as P. Odorico who privileged the investigation of context in the analysis of the texts of advice for rulers and dismissed the genre of Byzantine *princely mirrors* as *une catégorie inexistante, véritable boîte à idées vides*, "Les miroirs des princes à Byzance. Une lecture horizontale," in P. Odorico, *L'éducation au gouvernement et à la vie: La tradition des 'règles de vie' de l'antiquité au Moyen Âge*, Colloque International-Pise, 18 et 19 mars 2005, Paris 2009, 226

¹⁴⁵ A. Giannouli, "Paränese zwischen Enkomion and Psogos. Zur Gattungseinordnung byzantinischer Fürstenspiegel," in A. Rhoby, E. Schiffer, eds., *Imitatio - aemulatio - variatio. Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur*. Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010, 119-126. P. Hadot, "Fürstenspiegel," in *RAC* 8, 1972, 555-632. Pierre Hadot's discussion of

set of political notions from Justinian to the end of the empire.¹⁴⁶ In one of the most influential interpretations of Byzantine *specula*,¹⁴⁷ H. Hunger analyzed the formal differences in the corpus of Byzantine texts of advice for rulers and concluded that there can be identified two categories of mirrors:¹⁴⁸ those following the *gnomological* tradition¹⁴⁹ and those with a more coherent (*zusammenhängend*) structure.¹⁵⁰ With regard to Manuel's *Foundations*, Hunger conceded that the emperor “transformed the small *apophthegmata* into rhetorically elaborated paragraphs.¹⁵¹” Hunger's approach reflected the dynamism and the power of Byzantine advisory texts to reinvent themselves. He thus stated that the gnomic “mirrors” reflected the flexibility and the creativity assumed by each author in adapting gnomonic wisdom to the needs of his work.

This flexibility embedded in the advisory texts produced in the Byzantine world has been more recently highlighted by G. Prinzing in a study focusing on topics common to princely mirrors and integrated in other texts.¹⁵² Prinzing discussed eighteen princely mirrors and operated a distinction between self standing ones (*selbstständige*) and integrated ones (*integrierte*).¹⁵³ Subsequently, he noticed the difficulties involved in the definition of a

the tradition of princely mirrors in the ancient and medieval world discusses Agapetos and Photios' *Kephalaia parainetika* from the Byzantine tradition. Hadot focuses more on the ancient Greek tradition (starting with Homer) and on the western tradition.

¹⁴⁶ Accordingly, regarding Agapetos, P. Henry III discussed in detail Philo's influence on Agapetos (P. Henry III, "A Mirror for Justinian: The *Ekthesis* of Agapetos," *GRBS* 8 (1967): 381-308), while I. Ševčenko looked at Agapetos' influence on subsequent texts as well as at its popularity in late Byzantium and beyond, in the Slavic world. Likewise, the only overviews dedicated to the study of princely mirrors in Byzantium from the tenth to the fifteenth century by K. Païdas (Η θεματική των Βυζαντινών «κατόπτρων ηγεμόνος» της πρώιμης και μέσης περιόδου (398-1085): συμβολή στην πολιτική θεωρία των Βυζαντινών, Athens: Gregores, 2005) are limited to the presentation of the major common themes present in these texts: tyranny and freedom, God and emperor, the emperor as embodiment of law, etc. Despite tracking several changes in the use of these topics through the centuries, Païdas' account remains uncritical as he does not contextualize the mirrors or explain the changes in the usage of different sources (patristic or classical) in different contexts. Other shorter overviews of Byzantine advisory political texts are to be found in W. Blum, *Byzantinische Fürstenspiegel: Agapetos; Theophylakt von Ochrid; Thomas Magister*, Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1981, and, more recently, in D. Angelov, *Imperial ideology*, 116-134. They all place these texts in the category of princely mirrors, a category also used in the recent volume on early Byzantine political advice, P. N. Bell, *Three Political Voices from the Age of Justinian: Agapetus, Advice to the emperor; Dialogue on Political Science; Paul the Silentary, Description of Hagia Sophia*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 30.

¹⁴⁷ H. Hunger, "Fürstenspiegel," in *Die hochsprachliche Literatur*, vol.1, 158-165. W. Blum, *Byzantinische Fürstenspiegel*, 38.

¹⁴⁸ Both kinds of mirrors are divided in longer or shorter sections and cultivate similar values: the four Platonic cardinal virtues, love of God, etc. Ibid. , 159. For a full account of the common values present in the Mirrors see K. Païdas, *Κάτοπτρα ηγεμόνος*.

¹⁴⁹ In the first category he included Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor*, Basil's *Admonitory chapters* (*κεφάλαια παραινετικά*), and Antonios' *Melissa*.

¹⁵⁰ Thomas Magistros' *On Kingship*, Kekaumenos' *Strategikon*, Blemmydes' *Imperial statue* and Theophylaktos of Ochrid' s *Imperial Education*.

¹⁵¹ Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche Literatur*, 157.

¹⁵² G. Prinzing, "Beobachtungen zu "integrierten" Fürstenspiegeln der Byzantiner," *JÖB* 38 (1988): 1-31.

¹⁵³ One of the terms used by G. Prinzing for defining the mirrors, *Themenkomplex* (topic area; range of topics),

Fürstenspiegel genre in Byzantium and argued that, in the case of Byzantine texts, a strict and widely used definition does not entirely make justice to the genre.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, Prinzing asserted that in order to have a better idea about this literary form one has to look into other types of writings that treat the problem of a prince's education, fragments integrated into texts that treat other issues as well.

Leaving aside the criticisms that have been passed upon these treatments,¹⁵⁵ Hunger's and Prinzing's treatments of *princely mirrors* reveal the adaptability of this genre which allowed for more innovations in terms of the messages conveyed. A. Kazhdan, for instance, noticed the innovative character of the princely mirror in the tenth century which, according to him, by that time had not yet acquired a definitive form.¹⁵⁶ Likewise, P. Odorico, while acknowledging the existence of a tradition of texts of advice for rulers, highlights the liberties taken by the authors to treat the material which they drew from the repertoire of traditional advice for rulers.¹⁵⁷

This flexibility and variety in the forms of *princely mirrors* also relied on different ways of handling the *mirror* model which was imitated in the subsequent texts of advice addressed to young rulers:¹⁵⁸ Agapetos the Deacon's *Advice to the emperor*.¹⁵⁹ As suggested above, it is likely that Agapetos, when describing the imperial might, in the beginning and in the end of his text was inspired by the rules of encomium.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, this text, which acquired a wide

seems to describe better the situation of these texts in Byzantine literature. Indeed, we cannot speak of a fully fledged genre but rather of different themes and elements that surface in a wide range of texts, elements which are subsequently combined and arranged in different molds.

¹⁵⁴ Like O. Eberhardt's definition: Ein Fürstenspiegel ist ein geschlossenes Werk, das mit dem Zweck der grundsätzlichen Wissensvermittlung oder Ermahnung möglichst vollständig das rechte Verhalten des Herrschers im Blick auf seine besondere Stellung erörtert; dabei liegt meist eine persönliche Beziehung zum Herrscher zugrunde, O. Eberhardt, *Via Regia: Der Fürstenspiegel Smaragds Von St. Mihiel U. Seine Literar. Gattung*, Munich: Fink, 1977, 280.

¹⁵⁵ P. Odorico, "Les miroirs des princes à Byzance," 224-226.

¹⁵⁶ A. Kazhdan, *A History of Byzantine Literature*, II, Athens: Institute for Byzantine Research, 1999, 63-65. He discussed the example of Leo VI's funeral speech for his father Basil I, a text which, in the scholar's opinion, came close to the reinvention of the princely mirror. If Basil's portrait is abstract and "consists of trite generalities," Kazhdan claims, Leo's originality emerges in focusing on his own person and the active conversations with his audience. Taking Leo's example, an ambivalent figure who erased the borderline between hymnography and hagiography and took steps toward exploiting ancient heritage, Kazhdan concluded that princely mirrors were a rhetorical subgenre similar to the *ekphrasis* (*Ibid.*, 65).

¹⁵⁷ P. Odorico, "Les miroirs des princes à Byzance," 245.

¹⁵⁸ For instance, Agapetos' influence has been noticed with regard to sections of Pseudo-Basil *Admonitory chapters* (*Κεφάλαια παραινετικά*) and to the numerous paragraphs from the sixth century writer embedded into *Barlaam and Joasaph*. P. Henry III, "A Mirror for Justinian," 288-291.

¹⁵⁹ I. Ševčenko, "Agapetos East and West," 5-9.

¹⁶⁰ See the address to Emperor Justinian in Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor* first chapter: τιμῆς ἀπάσης ὑπέρτερον ἔχων ἀξίωμα, βασιλεῦ, and in the last chapter (72): ἀήτητε βασιλεῦ. Cf. also P. Odorico ("Les miroirs des princes à Byzance," 227-233) who argues that the *Advice to the emperor* is a panegyric written in the context of the sixth century debates concerning the best form of government.

popularity in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries when manuscripts of the *Advice to the emperor* proliferated, combined numerous sources.¹⁶¹ According to some scholars, it was precisely the very complicated scheme of combining sources and genres that made Agapetos so popular. Here one can identify a major particularity of Manuel's text for such a scheme was absent from the profile of the *Foundations*, a text where the author's involvement in the manipulation of different moral themes is conspicuous.

Agapetos' influence in late Byzantium and beyond has been investigated by I. Ševčenko¹⁶² who noticed that the *Foundations* shares with the *Advice to the emperor* not only stylistic devices like the division into paragraphs, the acrostic, the use of parallelisms and gnomes, but also “a fair amount of raw material.”¹⁶³ Accordingly, Ševčenko convincingly argued that Manuel had a copy of the *Advice to the emperor* at hand although he never quoted Agapetos verbatim like Basil I's *Admonitory chapters*,¹⁶⁴ because, in his view, the emperor was too sophisticated a writer and also because he probably wanted to stress the connection with Isocrates, the only author quoted in the *Foundations*.¹⁶⁵ Thus, Ševčenko concluded, albeit without further investigating the issue, that “Agapetos' abstract preciousness was accommodated side by side with the sentiments of a new age.”¹⁶⁶

These “sentiments of a new age” underpinned the differences between Manuel's *Foundations* and the *Advice to the emperor*. First, the differences regarding several aspects of the respective context of production remain significant: Justinian, at the time when the text was addressed to him, was a mature individual who had already recorded several military successes,¹⁶⁷ and probably needed a public confirmation for his activities, while John VIII was still a teenage boy when he received the *hypothekai*. Second, regardless of these contextual aspects, there are further marked differences pertaining to the central themes of each of the two texts. The representation of the ruler as a God fearing Christian monarch is treated in

¹⁶¹ R. Frohne demonstrated that Agapetos artfully reworked and reinvented his sources, according to three rules: collecting the useful phrases from each author, praising the emperor's sacredness, and moderately adorning the material he acquired. R. Frohne, *Agapetos Diaconus: Untersuchungen zu den Quellen und zur Wirkungsgeschichte des ersten byzantinischen Fürstenspiegels*, St. Gallen: OK Druck, 1985, 151-159

¹⁶² First, he studied the deacon's influence on the ideology of muscovite princes (I. Ševčenko, “A Neglected Byzantine Source of Muscovite Political Ideology,” *Harvard Slavic Studies* 2 (1954): 141-179), and second, in a more extensive study that traces the transmission of manuscripts containing Agapetos' work in both western and especially in the eastern intellectual and political traditions (“Agapetus East and West”).

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 150.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. chs. 8, 30, 39, 60, 95 in the *Foundations* and chs. 8, 25, 66, 28, 13 in the *Advice to the emperor*.

¹⁶⁵ I. Ševčenko, “Agapetus East and West” 8-9. Isocrates was quoted in the beginning of the *Foundations*, ch.4.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ Agapetos even mentions the emperor's wife in the last chapter of his *Advice to the emperor* (72): ἦν σοὶ παράσχοι Χριστὸς μετὰ τῆς ὁμοζύγου. In the same paragraph Justinian was addressed with the words: βασιλεῦ ἀήτητε, alluding to his military conquests.

different ways. Agapetos depicted the ruler in neo-Pythagorean terms as the incarnation of God's Word and as standing in the same relation to the City as God to the world and as the embodiment of law.¹⁶⁸ Interestingly enough, statements that account for the ruler's omnipotence¹⁶⁹ frequent in Agapetos, find no corresponding formulations in the *Foundations*.¹⁷⁰

Remarkably, Agapetos had no observations on the Church and its role, and, moreover, he did not bring explicit Christian teaching to the emperor's attention,¹⁷¹ with the result that some scholars doubted the Deacon's Christianity.¹⁷² On the other hand, notions like the philosopher-king, present in Agapetos,¹⁷³ are missing from Manuel's chapters. The *Advice to the emperor* contains little that can be considered philosophical in terms of style of argumentation or prescription, for it may have been rather intended as a crafted exercise in the application of non-technical Christian terminology, which can be read in multiple ways.¹⁷⁴ It is noticeable that, in comparison with other political advisory texts, the *Foundations* was less formal and the author seems to have relied less on wise sayings and more on his personal experience, a strategy emphasized in the prefatory letter of the text.¹⁷⁵ A mark of this specific approach to the material is the text's pessimistic touch that contrasts with the purported intention to celebrate Byzantine kingship:

In the course of life the misfortunes are manifold. If one is hoping to find many things, he will actually come across few. Ἐν δὲ τῷ βίῳ τὰ τῆς ἀτυχίας πλεονεκτεῖ. Καὶ πολλὰ τις ἐλπίσας εὐρήσειν, ὀλίγων μόλις ἐπιτετύχηκε.¹⁷⁶

Further differences emerge in Agapetos' overall strategy to present moral behavior as part of the emperor's behavior¹⁷⁷ whereas Manuel switches these two aspects: it is ideal to acquire a moral behavior which would then shape the emperor's activity. Agapetos notices that

¹⁶⁸ For a discussion of Diotogenes' influence on Byzantine political theory, see D. Nicol, "Byzantine Political Theory," in *Cambridge Companion to Medieval Political Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, 26 and 32.

¹⁶⁹ Such is the case only with ch. 68: τιμώτατον πάντων ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία, ἢ κύριος μὲν πάντων ἐστὶν ὁ βασιλεὺς.

¹⁷⁰ Likewise in his text of advice for rulers, Theodore II Laskaris, another celebrated Byzantine philosopher-king, used in the very beginning of his text a triumphal image of emperorship and depicted Alexander the Great's great deeds. See L. Tartaglia ed., "L'opuscolo De subiectionum in principem officii di Teodoro II Lascaris," *Diptycha 2* (1980-1981): 196-209, Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ τῶν Ἑλλήνων μὲν βασιλεὺς, Μακεδόνων δὲ συστρατιώτης καὶ ἀρχηγός, ἐκείνων μὲν ὡς ἄρχων, τούτων δὲ ὡς αὐτοῖς συναγωνιζόμενος, πολλὰ καὶ ἄλλα πυρσοφανῆ κατὰ κόσμον ἀρετῆς ἐστήσατο τρόπαια, ἐχθρῶν κατασχέσεις, χωρῶν ἀλώσεις, ἐθνῶν πανδήμου ἀφανισμούς, καὶ πόλεις ὅλας ὀλοκλήρους κόσμου σχεδὸν εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ εὐνομίαν λαμπρῶς συνεισήγαγε (1-5).

¹⁷¹ Chs. 5, 11, 15 and 60 use the term *pious*, also an attribute of Roman emperors.

¹⁷² P. N. Bell, *Three Political Voices from the Age of Justinian*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009, 35.

¹⁷³ *Advice to the emperor*, ch. 17.

¹⁷⁴ P. N. Bell, *Three Political Voices*, 33.

¹⁷⁵ PG 156, 312-316.

¹⁷⁶ Ch. 54.

¹⁷⁷ E.g. Agapetos, *Advice to the emperor*, ch. 12.

an appropriate conduct is in the emperor's best interest¹⁷⁸ for this is the element that insures the emperor's redemption and checks any excesses in the absence of other formal constraints.

With regard to the techniques of advice employed, whereas Agapetos used direct address in almost each of his shorter chapters,¹⁷⁹ whereas Manuel employs it much more rarely. The emperor's text has a more intimate tone and bears the imprint of the speaker's political experience as well as of his position as father of the addressee, expressed in the preface. In the *Foundations* the speaker tries to assert his authority deriving from the cultivation of a parental sense of authority, as father, and in the cultivation of his role of imperial authority. While it can be easily shown that Manuel drew his gnomic material from different sources, he only rarely points to the authority emanating from the well of gnomic literature.

Further differences between Manuel's *Foundations* and Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor* emerge when considering the structuring of the material. While in the emperor's text, as pointed out earlier, there seems to be a sense of order, Agapetos developed a rhetorical technique which combined notions of moral and public conduct without attempting to impose any sense of order or coherence on his texts. The general themes of medieval political theory were developed throughout the *Foundations* by repetition and addition of new personal perspectives. In a way they were woven into one another for practical purposes: the prince was not invited to read the mirror from beginning to end but to find useful advice applicable to different circumstances. On the contrary, it appears that the *Foundations* make sense only if read from its very beginning until the end.

And finally, if Agapetos, seemingly draws on the tradition of panegyrics, Manuel rather uses to a far greater extent the moral-philosophical tradition. In contrast to other similar texts of advice, Manuel's *Foundations* are more concerned with enunciating moral principles of education than with praising even if indirectly the emperor's office.

The comparison with Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor* leads us to conclude that doubtless Manuel's *Foundations* drew on the tradition of advisory texts for rulers, a tradition usually treated under the heading of *princely mirrors*. There are many important similarities with Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor* or other texts of advice, both at the level of structure and of content. Nevertheless, the *Foundations* also shows an intention to reuse this old tradition in an original way that entailed the adaptation of a well-known material to the text's circumstances of advertising his son's John VIII position as co-emperor.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., chs. 5, 8, 18, 24, 44, 60, 64.

¹⁷⁹ Especially the address that mentions the addressee's office: βασιλεῦ.

The attachment to the tradition of *centuria* with its educational upshot and systematic arrangement of topics as well as the marked departure from the Agapetian model allow us to include the *Foundations* within a larger class of Byzantine advisory and didactic literature which, in my opinion, can better account for its aims and functions. We cannot define the genre of *Fürstenspiegel* in terms of common formal characteristics, but we can rather describe such texts in terms of a common intention: to educate a future emperor. This corpus of advisory literature geared especially towards conduct regulation comprises different kinds of texts: collections of κεφάλαια (Agapetos, Nikephoros Blemmydes, Photios), gnomologies (e.g. Melissa), imperial orations (Theophylakt of Ochrid), poems (Marinos Phalieros, Spaneas, Alexios I Komnenos¹⁸⁰), as well as texts that combine advice in different other forms (panegyrics, novels, military treatises, letters).¹⁸¹ In terms of sources, this tradition is very complicated and goes back to Hellenistic texts.¹⁸²

The use of the sources in the *Foundations* demonstrates how different rhetorical forms based on school exercises like the *progymnasmata* were reworked in order to serve the purposes of a late Byzantine author. Manuel's tactics entailed a juxtaposition of several strands of rhetorical practice common for political texts and theological reflection into a moral synthesis. As shown above, an important element in this synthesis was the political reflection on the emperor's role filtered by the model of Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor*. However, two further strands, the *hypothekai* and *kephalaia*, were added to the result that the message of the text acquired the undertones of the wisdom literature commonly associated with gnomologies.

The innovations resulting from the combination of these genres suggest that it is more useful to discuss the *Foundations* in terms of a complex text with a didactic intent, a text that escapes exact classification according to modern or Byzantine hermeneutic rhetorical tools. Yet, in order to fully appreciate the didactic function of the text one has also to identify the major features of the author's voice. In the following I will proceed to the analysis of the authorial didactic-political voice, the major element that made the *Foundations* be perceived as an educational text with a far reaching political message.

¹⁸⁰ M. Mullett, "The imperial vocabulary of Alexios I Komnenos," in *Alexios I Komnenos. Papers of the second Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium*, ed. M. Mullett and S. Smythe, Belfast, 1996, 359-397.

¹⁸¹ Elements of political advice in the manner of a 'princely mirror' appear frequently in the early letters addressed by Kydones to Manuel (e.g. Kydones, *Letters*, 21).

¹⁸² For instance, R. Frohne identified only for Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor* a wide range of texts that may be counted as sources: Hierokles, Isocrates, maxims drawn from the Bible, Church Fathers, florilegia of maxims (particularly Stobaios), writers of the School of Gaza, Neoplatonic authors, Isidor of Pelusium, Philo, etc. R. Frohne, *Agapetos Diaconus: Untersuchungen*, 252.

4.3. Authorial voice

The *Foundations* differ from other texts of advice not only in terms of form but also with regard to the specific didactic strategy of conveying the author's message. The author joins together different authorial voices, one of political exhortation and another with moral encouragement which correspond to the emperor's two different roles: of political advisor and of *mentor* for his son. While the former role takes shape by delivering advice with regard to governance, more often it appears that the author rather adopted the point of view of a teacher, *didaskalos*. Thus, the official role of the emperor advertising his successor and ideology is subsumed to the more effective roles of teacher and, to an even wider extent to the role of a father. In this section I will attempt to trace the elements which shaped this type of didactic authorial voice: the *Foundations* as a representation of social behavior, the author's own statements detailing his didactic approach, the systematic arrangement of the chapters, the prefatory letter as a personal document addressed to John VIII Palaiologos, the style of the text which privileges rhetorical amplification, and finally the statements of other contemporary authors pertaining to Manuel's didacticism.

First, the *Foundations* stands as a representation of social behavior, a fresco of daily life intended not only for the teenage John but for a larger audience. To a certain extent, the *Foundations* resemble the contemporary vernacular poem, *Λόγοι Διδακτικοί* by Marinos Phalieros, a Cretan merchant who addressed to his son an extensive writing including pieces of concrete advice.¹⁸³ Sometimes, concrete details of daily life surface, reinforcing the emperor's didactic design: chs. 41 and 48 build their arguments on a *business oriented* comparison centered on the idea of *ἀγορά*;¹⁸⁴ then, in ch.71, when pointing to the worthlessness of immoral kings despite their wealth and power, Manuel compares his lack of value with the actors' lives: *ἀλλὰ τῆς μὲν ἐξουσίας ἂν εἶη καὶ τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς ὑποκρινομένων αὐτὴν πολλῶ γελοιότερος.*¹⁸⁵ In

¹⁸³ Marinos Phalieros, *The Logoi Didaktikoi of Marinos Phalieros: A Critical Edition with Introduction, Notes and Index Verborum*, Leiden: Brill, 1977. This poem written by a Cretan merchant in the vernacular Greek language of the island draws on several themes parallel to the ones addressed by court literature like honoring God as supreme force (vs.1-150) and showing respect to the others. Phalieros' poem was not based on abstract advice but offered concrete details as to how to lead an appropriate daily life: what to buy for a household, what prices to pay for different commodities, how to treat one's wife and children, how to act if widowed, etc. In particular, it offered practical advice with regard to the acquisition and preservation of wealth, revealing itself as a remarkable document of what type of advice was deemed necessary in different social environments: *Ἄν ἔχεις εἰς τὸ σπίτι σου ἄλογα καὶ μουλάρια,/ ἄς τὰ συχνοστριγλίζουσιν κι ἄς τὰ κρατοῦν καθάρια/ κι ἐσὺ ἀτὸς σου συντήρα τὰ πῶς πίνουσιν καὶ τρῶσι* (Marinos Phalieros, *Λόγοι Διδακτικοί*, 201-204).

¹⁸⁴ Ch. 48: *ἔοικε δὲ καὶ ἀγορᾶ τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς πράγματα, καὶ ἕξεστι πρὸς κέρδος νοῦν ἔχουσι πάντα πράττειν, πωλεῖν, ἀλλάττειν, ὠνεῖσθαι.*

¹⁸⁵ In the same category can be included comparisons that involve animal representations: ch. 53: *ἐπεὶ μηδ' ἵππος*

many cases, the audience is required to make sense of the implied didacticism and unlike in other texts with a pedagogical intent, Manuel's method of teaching seems to entail a deliberate attempt to teach through consecutive series of contradictions. Further details on his method of teaching emerge in chs. 52 and 53 when Manuel reflects on the possibility to educate either by means of λόγος or by παράδειγμα.¹⁸⁶

Second, evidence for the emperor's efforts to adopt a didactic voice comes from the author's own statements. According to the epistolary preface, the intended audience included not only his son but also the general public:

And I have delayed the delivery of the parental advice which can be beneficial to both the son and the general public. καὶ πατρικὰς παραινήσεις, συνενεγκεῖν μὲν δυναμένας υἱεῖ, συνενεγκεῖν δὲ τῷ κοινῷ, ὡσπερ ἐξεπίτηδες ἀναβάλλεσθαι.¹⁸⁷

It seems that the audience he intended was restricted to younger persons, for, in several instances Manuel made known his didactic intent by indicating that his advice was shaped as a pedagogical project not only for his son but also for other teenagers (παῖδες) and youths (νέοι, νεώτεροι, νεότης).¹⁸⁸ Ch. 92 argues in favor of Manuel's interest in finding practical solutions for educating his son and makes a distinction between a youth's and an adult person's education.¹⁸⁹ Accordingly, the emperor offers examples of situations when a young person was allowed to speak up: if one is asked in public to put forward an opinion, if one has to respond to calumnies, or if he has to answer during the teaching lessons. In this framework of didacticism, in ch. 93 Manuel praises the rhetorician's abilities to speak well and persuade other individuals of the importance to appreciate what is good:

It is best to know what is the better course of action in all the situations, to speak well and in an effective manner, and to be able to wisely implant the aspiration for good deeds into the souls of others. Κάλλιστον εἰδέναι τὸ βέλτιον ἐπὶ τῶν ἀπάντων, καὶ δύναμιν ἔχειν καλῶς εἰπεῖν καὶ τὸν τῶν καλῶν ἔρωτα σοφῶς ψυχαῖς ἐμφυτεύειν.

The process of acquisition of eloquence meant to prompt others to pursue good deeds had

ὑπέρθερμός τε καὶ ἰσχυρὸς ἰπέα βάνασσον ὠνησεν and ch. 72: Μιᾶ γὰρ πτέρυγι πτηνὸν οὐτ' ἐκφεύζεται κακὸν οὐτ' ἂν ἀγαθοῦ τινοσ τύχοι.

¹⁸⁶ Ch. 32: definition and vision of learning: ἡδύ τι τὸ μαθεῖν, οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ παθεῖν πταίσαντα, ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ διαπεφευγέναι τὸ δυσχερέστερον, τῆ τῶν ἄλλων διαμαρτία γενόμενον ἐμπειρότερον.

¹⁸⁷ 313b. See also 316b: ἐροῦμεν δὲ οἶμαι τοιαῦτα, Θεοῦ τὸν λόγον ἰθύνοντος, ἃ συνοίσει μὲν καὶ νῦν, συνοίσει δὲ ἐς τὸ μέλλον καὶ συμβήσεται καὶ νέῳ καὶ γέροντι, καὶ τύχη πάση, καὶ τάξει, τῷ τε ὄντι, τῷ τε ἐσομένῳ. On the other hand, the main addressee of the text, John VIII, is pictured as a young man who can grasp the meaning of most of the chapters: ὅσει σοὶ Θεὸς ἀγαθόν, ἔχειν μὲν τὸ σκῆπτρον ἐκείθεν ἐπισταμένῳ, δοῦλον δὲ σαυτὸν ἐκείνου σαφῶς εἰδόντι, καὶ τῆ δουλείᾳ τῆ πρὸς ἐκείνον χαίροντι μᾶλλον, ἢ τῷ βασιλεύειν τῶν ἄλλων.

¹⁸⁸ 344d, 353a, 365d, 375d, 380b.

¹⁸⁹ Ch. 92: Προσῆκει δὲ νεωτέροις μᾶλλον ἢ τοῖς εἰς ἀκμὴν ἀφιγμένοις.

another purpose as well: it helped the ruler and teacher to become conscious of his claims and to stay away from inappropriate actions. Thus, towards the end of the *Foundations*, the author reflects on the teacher's individuality:

It is most shameful to be able to guide the lives of others and to keep your life unchanged. Αἴσχιστον [...] βίους ἄλλων ὀρθοῦν δυνάμενον, αὐτὸν τηρεῖν ἀδιόρθωτον.

Third, as argued above, the didactic features of the author's voice emerge in the arrangement of the chapters and the systematic approach of moral issues that reflect the techniques of a teacher addressing a student. Seemingly, the author's concern was to render each piece of advice more understandable. That Manuel envisaged a coherent program of education was signaled not only by the careful structure displayed in the *Foundations* but also in the preface. There he used the opportunity to set up the framework of the ensuing one hundred paragraphs and sketched the two main aspects of the education of a young Byzantine prince: the pursuit of physical activities, like hunting or military preparation, and the intellectual training. He also outlined the main ethical principles a young emperor should follow in order to become *kalos kagathos*: having acquired physical strength, at a following stage, he should study the wisdom of ancient authors. In line with these programmatic statements, the emperor remarked that, as a father with a long political experience, he can teach certain topics better than any other poet.¹⁹⁰ According to this program of systematic education, it is claimed in the preface, the value of intellectual education was higher than the value of physical education.

Fourth, by and large, the emperor's strong authorial voice reflected in the prefatory letter introduces further dissonances, which may be explained by an intention to provide flexibility in his didactic project. This preface provides an insight into how the emperor portrayed himself with regard to his son:

For to speak with authority, which is very effective for school teachers, professors, and anyone who strives to restore or to forge the nature of the youths, is entirely possible for me. But for those (i.e. the ancient writers) it is entirely impossible, even though all the wisdom is gathered into one. For how can they provide exhortations causing no fear, or in a trustful manner, or in a confident way according to the stance of an emperor, a father, or a friend, given that they lack the position which inspires the lack of fear, and the imperial majesty, and the friendship which grows with the intimacy between teachers and students. τὸ γὰρ δὴ μετ' ἐξουσίας εἰπεῖν, ὃ πολλὴν τὴν δύναμιν ἔχει καὶ παιδοτρίβη, καὶ διδασκάλῳ, καὶ παντὶ διορθουμένῳ φύσει νεῶν, ἢ πλάττοντι, ἐμοὶ μὲν ἔξῃστι παντελῶς,

¹⁹⁰ 316d.

ἐκείνοις δὲ οὐδαμῶς, οὐδ' ἂν ἡ πάντων σοφία εἰς ἓν γε τούτοις συνέλθῃ. Πῶς μὲν γὰρ ἂν προστάξαιεν ἀδεῶς, πῶς δὲ πιστῶς, πῶς δὲ θαρρούντως, κατὰ βασιλέα, καὶ πατέρα, καὶ φίλον, οἵτινες ἐστέρηνται καὶ σχήματος ἀφοβίαν διδόντος, καὶ σχέσεως πασῶν κρατούσης τῷ τῆς φύσεως φίλτρῳ, καὶ φιλίας συνηθείᾳ θαρρυνούσης;¹⁹¹

With its personal undertones, the prefatory letter is revealing for the teaching role the emperor embodied. Here, Manuel details his proposed model of education, which, as he claims, was based not only on the wisdom of the ancients but also on his own experience and personal failures, a statement that does not square easily with his imperial office:

I am convinced that in so far as there is some benefit here, if you want to gain something by acting diligently, it would be easy to make plain that you are the best of the men and of the emperors. For if, as the author of this text, I am inferior to these texts, nevertheless this should not be an impediment for you to acquire virtue; but if I find something better (since nobody was excepted from the goods that follow), you will consider that you inherited this for you and you will strive eagerly to advance and improve your father's wealth and even the empire. As you notice my defects (for they are many and great) be willing to earn something from these, setting them as a teacher for a better life and for a more secure empire. It is good that you imitate those who saved themselves from the others' shipwrecks and learned their lessons from the mistakes and misfortunes of those. Πείθομαι γὰρ εἶναι τοσοῦτον ἐνταυθοῖ τὸ συνοῖσον, ὅσον γε, εἰ φιλοπόνως αὐτὸ δρέψαιο ραδίως ἀποφῆναί σε ἄριστον ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ βασιλέων. Εἰ δ' ὅ ταῦτα γράφων ἐγὼ πολλῶν χεῖρον ἔχω τῶν γεγραμμένων, ἀλλὰ σοι μὴ τοῦτο ἔστω πρὸς τὸ καλὸν κώλυμα, ἢ εἴργον τι τοπαράπαν. Ἄλλ' εἴ πού τι καὶ βέλτιον εὔρηται παρ' ἐμοί, ἐπεὶ μηδεὶς ἐστέρηται πάντων ἐξῆς τῶν καλῶν, ἡγοῦ σοι πρέπειν τοῦτο κληρονομησαί, καὶ πρὸς ἐπίδοσιν ἀγαγεῖν πολλῶν γε κρείσσω φιλοτιμήσεσθαι ἢ τὴν οὐσίαν τὴν πατρικὴν καὶ βασιλείαν αὐτήν. Τὰ μὰ δὲ ἐλαττώματα διορῶν (πολλὰ δ' ἐστὶ καὶ μεγάλα) θέλε τι καὶ παρὰ τούτων κερδᾶναι, διδάσκαλον αὐτὰ προστησάμενος βίου τε ἀμείνονος, καὶ πολιτείας ἀσφαλέστερας. καλὸν σοι γὰρ ἐκείνους μιμήσασθαι, οἳ τοῖς ἐτέρων ναυαγίοις διασώζονται, ἀπὸ τῶν ἐκείνων ἀμαρτημάτων τε καὶ ἀτυχημάτων τὸ δέον καταμαθόντες.¹⁹²

As a matter of fact, a look at this dedicatory text in epistolary form shows that it functioned essentially as a virtual didactic pact.¹⁹³ The less rigid epistolary framework allowed Manuel to address his son in formal as well as in less formal terms. In the prefatory letter, Manuel attempted to shed more light on the nature of his *Foundations* by reminding young John of his

¹⁹¹ 317a.

¹⁹² 317c.

¹⁹³ Cf. the end of the prefatory letter, 320a: Καὶ μὴν ὀλίσθου τις ἐγγὺς γεγονὼς, φθάσαντος ἄλλου κατενεχθῆναι, αὐτὸς ἰδὼν ἀπεπήδησε· καὶ γέγονε τὸ πτώμα τῶν ἄλλων σωτηρία νοῦν ἔχουσιν. Ἄλλὰ καὶ κρεῖττον ἰατρῶν, πολὺ τῆ τέχνῃ φρονούντων, ἐνίους γε τινὲς ἐθεράπευσαν ἐκ νοσημάτων δυσπορῶν, ἀπὸ μόνου τοῦ παθεῖν τὴν πείραν εἰληφότες. Καίτοι καὶ παῖδες ἰατρῶν τὴν παροιμίαν ἐξήλεγξάν που, ὀδόντα τε καὶ ὀφθαλμὸν ἀποβαλόντες τινὲ φαρμάκῳ ἢ ἔτεόν τι πάθοντες, ἔπειτ' ἐμπειρότεροι γεγονότες ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων ἀμαρτημάτων, καὶ ὦν γε ἤττους ἐφάνησαν παθημάτων ἐπὶ τῶν ἰδίων σωμάτων, τούτων πολλοὺς ἀπαλλάζοντες, τοῦ δεινοῦ περιγεγονότες τῆ προστεθείσῃ τῆ πείρᾳ τέχνῃ. Κεφάλαιον τοῦ λόγου, Ὁ κακὸς βουλόμενος εἶναι ὑπ' οὐδενὸς ὠφελήσεται, ὁ δ' ἀγαθὸς ἐξ ἀπάντων.

privileged position in the court and of the importance of intellectual education.¹⁹⁴

His personal approach in the preface is reinforced by the comparison with other contemporary prefaces to texts of advice such as John Chortasmenos' preface to his *Moral Counsels* (*Ἠθικὰ Παραγγέλματα*). There, Chortasmenos also outlined the reasons behind, the design, and the intent of his fourteen chapters in a brief introductory text which divided advice in two major categories, *spiritual* and *worldly*:

I will enumerate in turns in the manner of a book of precepts addressed to myself, on the one hand those types of behavior which are pleasant for people and which need to be maintained, and on the other hand those types of behavior which are not pleasant to the people but which are pleasant to the wise and good God. Ἐρῶ τοίνυν ἀναμιξ ἐν παραγγελίας σχήματι πρὸς ἑμαυτόν, ὅσα τε δεῖ φυλάττειν ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκοντα καὶ ὅσα τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ τούναντίον ὅσα τε δεῖ φυλάττεσθαι τῶν ἀνθρώποις ἀπαρεσκόντων καὶ ὅσα τῷ Θεῷ μόνω σοφῷ τε καὶ ἀγαθῷ.

On the contrary, whereas Chortasmenos' text focused on explaining the format of his text and the principles behind the division of advice, it is noticeable that Manuel's preface did not deal with an explanation of the types of chapters but it rather focused on establishing a relationship with his son. Thus, ultimately, Manuel's prefatory letter conveys his anxieties with regard to the educator's mission: how does he have to address the issues of administration? As a father or as an emperor? What kind of authority would fit into the context?

The prefatory letter puts forward the idea of a strong *kinship relation* (*πατρικὴ σχέσηις*)¹⁹⁵ which overshadows the official tie that would connect an emperor and his successor.¹⁹⁶ The expression of fatherly affection indicated that Manuel was not concerned exclusively with adding luster to the imperial office but also with conveying the idea of intimacy with his son.

¹⁹⁴ In offering numerous details on the *Foundations*, he only partially adhered to a tradition of such opening texts: a similar prefatory section of an advisory text can be found in Theophylakt of Ochrid's βασιλικὸς λόγος addressed to Constantine Doukas in the last decades of the eleventh century: right in the first paragraphs the metropolitan spoke about the nature and value of his λόγος (*Λόγος εἰς τὸν πορφυρογέννητον κύρ Κωνσταντῖνον* in *Discours, Traités, Poésies et Lettres, Thessalonique: Association de Recherches Byzantines*, 1980, 179, 1-7: δῶρόν τι καὶ ἐγώ, βασιλεῦ φίλε, τοῦτο δίδωμι· δῶρον ἐμοὶ διδόναι καὶ σοὶ λαμβάνειν ἰλαρῶς οἰκειότατον. Καὶ τάχα κρεῖττον τῶν ἄλλων, ἃ δαπάνη τε χρόνου καὶ φθόνου, καὶ λησταῖς εὐπορία, καὶ κλέπταις ἄρπαγμα. Οἱ μὲν γάρ σου τοῦ κράτους ὑπήκοοι δασμοφοροῦσιν ἐτήσια, οἱ μὲν χρυσίον, οἱ δὲ ἀργύριον, οἱ δὲ ὅσα ἄλλα εἰς φθορὰν τῇ ἀποχρήσει, καθά φησιν ὁ θεῖος Ἀπόστολος, Λόγος δὲ χρυσοῦ τιμαλφέστερος, ἀργύρου λαμπρότερος, πάντων ἀπλῶς μονιμώτερος) in addition to the speaker's duties in his position of imperial tutor (*Ibid.* 179, 11-19: καγὼ τοίνυν ὁ σὸς διδάσκαλος (περοῦμαι γὰρ τῷ ὀνόματι καὶ δεκάπηχυς γίνομαι, βασιλέως καθηγητῆς προσκαλούμενος), καὶ ἐθέλοντῆς ἄγω σοὶ τοῦ λόγου τὸ δῶρον τήμερον, καὶ σοὶ εὐάγγελος γίνομαι (μὴ ἀπιστήσης φωνῆ διδασκάλου), ὡς εὐδαιμονίας ποταμοὶ σοὶ ῥυήσονται, εἶπερ ἐπὶ σὴν καρδίαν, ὡς ὑετός, καταβαίνει τὰ ἐμὰ ῥήματα. Ὅθεν τὰ ἐκούσια τοῦ στόματός μου εὐδόκησας. Οὐ γὰρ κολακεύσω τὸν ἐμὸν αὐτοκράτορα, οὐδὲ θρύψω σου τὰ ὦτα λόγοις ἀπατηλοῖς, καὶ τὸν σοφιστὴν ἐπιφαίνουσιν.)

¹⁹⁵ 316c. In describing the relation between the two, Manuel speaks also of *φιλία*.

¹⁹⁶ An observation in the opening part of the letter stresses Manuel's fatherhood: ἐγὼ δὲ τοῦτον εἵποιμι ἂν οὕτως τὸ πρέπον εἰπεῖν, οὐ μὴν γε πάντα καλῶς σκοπήσαντα. Ἔδει γὰρ σου τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπαλωτέραν οὔσαν, πεπονηκυῖαν καὶ πλῶ μακρῶ, καὶ ἀποδημίᾳ γονέων δοῦναί τι διαχυθῆναι.

The text came, Manuel claims, from a desire to fulfill a promise: previously, he gave his son a gift in the form of a horse and an eagle, and now the moment has arrived for John to receive another more substantial present in the form of προτρεπτικούς λόγους and πατρικάς παραινέσεις so that both John and the other listeners or readers of the text may have a more substantial benefit (συνενεγκεῖν μὲν δυναμένης υἱεῖ, συνενεγκεῖν δὲ τῷ κοινῷ).

In tune with this presentation of a tight relation between emperor and son, the prefatory letter (προοιμιακὴ ἐπιστολή) gives an account of the biographical circumstances and reasons for producing the text. The letter begins *ex abrupto* with a concrete reference to the circumstances of production: after reaching the Peloponnese in his voyage to western Europe, Manuel left his family in the peninsula under the authority of his trusted brother, Theodore:

After I left you in the Peloponnese when I came back from Italy, you were still a little child, and as you could not attend a course of education because of your age, and because fate hindered me to spend time with you, I sought to offer you a model of education by addressing you these following *hypothekai*. Ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ σε λιπὼν ἐξ Ἰταλίας ἐρχόμενος, ἦσθα δὲ παιδίον ἔτι, καὶ παιδείας οὐ συχνῆς μετέχων διὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν, ἄλλως τέ σοι καὶ τῆς τύχης ἐμποδῶν εἰς τοῦτο γεγενημένης, ὑποθήκαις τῇ δυνάμει συμβαινούσαις ἐρρῦθμιζον.¹⁹⁷

Then throughout this opening letter, John's image, like other representations of ideal children, acquires realistic contours of a child who, like any boy of his age divided his time between games and learning from his teachers.¹⁹⁸

Fifth, the didactic function of the text is largely reflected at the level of style. As mentioned, Manuel tried to accommodate his formulaic expressions in a coherent, well ordered, and persuasive writing that would respond to the demands of a didactic use, and, as such, would aptly function at the given *καιρός*. In this sense, the author employed a set of rhetorical instruments effective in his pedagogical endeavor based on gnomic collections as well as on other literary traditions. Significantly, if in the collections of wise sayings, gnomes and proverbs functioned without a pre-configured context whatsoever, here, by contrast,

¹⁹⁷ 313a.

¹⁹⁸ D. Angelov, "Emperors and Patriarchs as Ideal Children and Adolescents: Literary Conventions and Cultural Expectations," in *Becoming Byzantine: Children and Childhood in Byzantium*, Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2009, 123-125. The preface also echoes a much earlier letter addressed by Kydones to his younger student, Manuel (Loenertz dated the letter to the interval 1379-1382, *Correspondence*, I.), in which the teacher expresses a veiled discontent with the young emperor's tendency to spend too much time hunting, and to leave aside his studies, Kydones, *Letters*, 214.7-14, ἀλλὰ καὶ πολλὴν ἂν ἤνεγκεν ἡμῖν ἡδονὴν τὸ σοὶ συμβαδίζειν, οὐ μόνον εἰς τὴν ὄψιν ὀρώσι καὶ γλώττης ἀκούουσιν οὐχ ἦττον ὠφελεῖν ἢ τέρπειν τοὺς ἀκούοντας δυναμένης, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς θήρας καρπούμενοις ψυχαγωγίαν, ἢ καὶ Πλάτωνα ἂν ἐξήλκυσε τῆς Στοᾶς καὶ τοῖς κυσὶ συνθεῖν ἔπεισεν, τοὺς ἐν Λυκείῳ περιπάτους ἀφέντα. ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ τὰ τόξα οὐδαμῆ τῶν Ἡρακλέους λειπόμενα, δι' ὧν σοι τὸ βέλος οὐκ ἔστιν ἀμαρτεῖν οὐ στοχάζη, τίν' οὐκ ἂν καὶ τῶν σεμνοτάτων πείσειε πηδῶντα «βάλλ' οὕτω» βοᾶν, ὡς οὐκ ἔτ' οὕσης παρ' ἄλλοις ὑπερβολῆς.

maxims were introduced in order to contribute to the construction of a particular frame intended to offer a kind of *bird-eye view* perspective upon most aspects of the individual's demeanor in a hierarchic society.

Didacticism is thus reflected in the usage of several stylistic features: the elaborate Atticizing language as well as a certain set of specific figures of speech, like assonances, repetitions, antitheses, balanced contrasts, or several images facilitating the recall of an entire saying. Again, the large-scale use of these figures of speech contrasts with the contemporary similar texts of advice, like John Chortasmenos' *Moral Counsels* or Joseph Bryennios' *Kephalaia* which do not use many figures of style or gnomic sayings. On the contrary, in the *Foundations*, particularly abundant are the parallelisms and antitheses, marks of a style appropriate for the age of the main addressee, John VIII, a teenage boy at the time, but also because of the gnomic core of the text.¹⁹⁹ The accumulation of epithets sometimes used for emphasis, as for instance in ch. 48 where a string of four epithets (μεμπτόν, αἰσχρόν, δεινόν, ἀνόητον) is used to condemn the idea of renouncing moral values in exchange for money. In other instances, instead of an accumulation of neutral epithets defining moral obligation, emphasis is expressed with the help of nominal phrases as in ch. 46: καλὸν καὶ λίαν ἐπαινετὸν or in ch. 77: καλὸν καὶ ἡδὺ θέαμα καὶ παράκλησις πρὸς τάγαθόν. Then, emphasis is usually employed in the beginning of a paragraph when it is intended to draw particular attention to the ensuing statements: αὐτόθεν δῆλον τὸ ῥηθησόμενον· λεκτέον δὴ (ch.10).

A major stylistic feature that differentiates the text from other similar writings of advice is the direct address by means of vocative and imperative that emphasize a kinship relationship. As a matter of fact, John's position as co-emperor is mentioned only once in the title,²⁰⁰ and instead, generally, when turning to his son, the emperor addresses him with the epithet φίλτατε. Similarly, the imperatives, when used, represent means of directing the young prince's attention to moral principles rather than referring to a specific course of action.²⁰¹ In general, imperative is used not in order to stress obligatory activities but only to draw the young co-emperor's attention to the admonitory nature of what was going to be said. Moreover, often, direct address is combined with categorical assertions using neuter and third

¹⁹⁹ Parallelisms are to be found especially in the opening sentences of the paragraphs: ch. 22, λειμῶνας μὲν ἄνθη κοσμεῖ· καὶ οὐρανὸν ἀστέρων χοροί· τὸ δὲ φιλάληθες ἄρχοντα, ch. 47, Τοῦ μὲν γὰρ πολλὰ ἄν αἴτια γένοιτο· τοῦ δὲ τὴν γνώμην μόνην αἰτιατέον [...] Τὸ προθυμεῖσθαι γὰρ ἀνδρὸς. Τὸ δὲ σφαλῆναι καὶ τύχης, ch. 73, ἄρτος σώματι τροφή· ψυχὴ δὲ μάθησις ἀγαθή, ch. 77, πράξις καλή, κήρυξ λαμπρός.

²⁰⁰ The chapters are preceded by a dedicatory inscription: Βασιλεὺς Βασιλεῖ Μανουήλ Ἰωάννη Πατὴρ Ὑιῷ ψυχῆς ψυχῇ καρπὸν τροφὴν ἐμῆς τῆ σῆ ὁποιασοῦν ἀκμαζούση ἢ ὁ Θεὸς εἶη κοσμήτωρ.

²⁰¹ Ch. 4: ἴσθι, ch. 38: ὕθλον ἡγοῦ and συχνὰ ποιοῦ, ch. 41: λογίζου, ch. 45: παρακελεύου τῇ ψυχῇ.

person singular.²⁰²

Thus, despite the instances of direct address, the use of imperatives and vocatives is rather reduced in comparison to other texts of advice. Instead, more often, indicative is employed for enunciating moral principles, discussing their implications, or offering prescriptions. Chapter 86, for instance opens with three imperatives (θέλε, γίνωσκε, μὴ ἀθύμει) but continues with a verb of obligation (τοῦτο δεῖ σκοπεῖν) and for the rest of the paragraph it employs indicative third person singular in order to show how different individuals act in order to attain the supreme good, ἔσχατον τῶν καλῶν. The idea of authority is then habitually conveyed in terms of moral obligation expressed in verbs like χρῆ, δεῖ, ἀνάγκη ἐστίν, or in definitions involving an adjective qualifying a moral act: e.g. ch. 13: λυσιτελές γε καὶ καλὸν μηδὲν τι τῶν κακῶν ἐνεργεῖν.²⁰³

As for other figures of style, commonly, images conveyed by means of metaphors and comparisons function as catalysts which fill in the gaps between the more abstract assertions of a paragraph. Such examples can be recognized in comparisons drawn from the common store of other texts of advice: the comparison between life and a ship,²⁰⁴ silence and a fortified tower,²⁰⁵ the ruler and the helmsman,²⁰⁶ or the physical strength combined with conscientiousness and a glorious crown.²⁰⁷ The frequent comparisons and metaphors deploy a series of images adding further effects to the ethical messages. These effects emerge by revivifying old metaphors in passages that draw more on abstract advice and arguments. They stand rather as pretexts for more developed pieces of advice, as, for instance in ch. 58:

The sailing master enjoys the favorable wind which gently fills the sails, while there is a calm weather. Εὖ πνεύσης ἀπολαύων ναύκληρος αὐρας, ἡμέρως ἰστία πληρούσης, αἰθρίας μὲν οὐσης πολλῆς.

To an even greater extent, ch. 90 exemplifies the tendency to enforce the didactic message through the use of metaphors. The paragraph begins with a sentence which both draws the addressee's attention and justifies the use of images in order to illustrate a moral notion: "I

²⁰² E.g. ch 10. Ὁ τὸν Θεὸν ἀγαπᾶν οὐ θέλων ὑπὸ τῶν οὐκοῦν ὀθέλων εὐνους ἔχειν, ὧν ἄρχει, εὐνους ὦν διατελείτω τῷ πνοῆς πάσης κρατοῦντι.

²⁰³ Similarly, another significant feature is the increased presence of potential and conditional formulations which are absent from other admonitory texts for princes, ch. 45: ἦν ἐπιθυμῆς τελειότητος, καὶ μεγίστων ἐν μεθέξει καλῶν γενέσθαι; ch. 91: Εἰ ἐπιστημόνως τις τοῖς ἀνά χεῖρας πράγμασι, Οὐδὲν κωλύσει καὶ τάναντία εἰς ἔν τι φέρειν τῶν ἀγαθῶν.

²⁰⁴ Ch. 86: τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ὡς ἔτυχε φερομένοις, κατὰ τὰ ἀνερμάτιστα πλοῖα, καὶ ζῶσιν ἐν φαυλότητι ὥσπερ ἐν χρηστότητι [...] οὐδ' ἐν ἐλπίσι κείσεται τῶν κακῶν ἢ διόρθωσις.

²⁰⁵ Ch. 92: ἡ σιωπὴ κόσμος λαμπρός, πύργος ἰσχυρὸς κεκτημένοις.

²⁰⁶ Ch. 22.

²⁰⁷ Ch. 53: ῥώμη σώματος συγκεκριμένη συνέσει πεπλεγμένος ἄριστα τοῖς τυραννεύουσι στέφανος [...] ἐπεὶ μηδ' ἵππος ὑπέρθερμός τε καὶ ἰσχυρὸς ἵππέα βάνουσον ὦνησεν.

would say something to someone who knows” (εἰδοῖσι ἄνθρωποις που λέγοιμι). Then a description that features animal imagery follows:

The hunter catches the eagle with the help of a birdlime [...] And the lion is caught in traps, but just because the lion is reckless. Most often, the larks are higher than the trap so that they would not attack out of control those who offer them food. But the deer who is demonstrating its name through its deeds cannot be easily caught on the rocks with the snare for birds. Ἰξεύει μὲν ὁ θηρευτὴς αἰετὸν [...]. Καὶ λέων μὲν ἀλίσκεται πάγαις, ἀλλ’ ἀπρονοήτως βαδίζων. Κορυδαλοὶ δὲ πάγης ἀνώτεροι ὡς ἐπιτοπλεῖστόν εἰσιν, ὡς μὴ προπετῶς, μηδὲ λίχνως τῶν εἰς τροφήν προκαλουμένων ἀπτόμενοι. Ἡ δὲ δορκὰς ἔργοις αὐτοῖς συνιστῶσα τοῦνομα, βρόχοις οὐκ εὐάλωτος γίγνεται.

Another distinctive stylistic feature of the text is the constant appeal to moral models whereby abstract notions are dramatized and illustrated. The importance of illustration by means of moral types is stressed in the very first lines of the first chapter, which sets the tone for the entire mirror:

People have different lives: some have prudence, education and uprightness, others stupidity, ignorance, and wickedness. Βίοι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις διάφοροι· οἱ μὲν φρονήσει, καὶ παιδεύσει, καὶ χρηστότητι, οἱ δὲ ἀβελτηρίᾳ, καὶ ἀπαιδευσίᾳ, καὶ πονηρίᾳ γιγνόμενοι τε καὶ μεριζόμενοι.

Usually, dramatization concerns an opposition between a positive and a negative moral individual type encountered in different forms: in chapter 25, the opposition is built around two characters, of the infamous one (ὁ κακοηθής) and of the good-hearted one (ὁ εὐηθής); in ch. 86 around those who live in meanness and the reasonable ones (ζῶσιν ἐν φαυλοτήτι ὡσπερ ἐν χρηστοτήτι and ὁ λογισμοῖς ἰθύνόμενος); and in ch. 87 between οἱ φρίττοντες τὸν θάνατον ἐπὶ τῶν πολέμων and οἱ δ’ ὡς τεθνηξόμενοι διαμάχονται.

Yet, perhaps the most conspicuous stylistic feature that underlines the didacticism of the *Foundations* is amplification. Ch. 24 illustrates this technique absent from other collections of *kephalaia* addressed to rulers: Manuel proceeds from a personal observation: ὡς ἄγαμαι τὸν φεύγοντα τὰς ὑπερβολὰς, καὶ λόγοι μάλα σοφῶν συνιστῶσί μου τὸν ἔρωτα τουτονί. Then, he enhances his statement with a gnomic enunciation: μέτρον ἄριστον, and explains how the right measure becomes apparent: συνάδει δὲ τοῖς λόγοις τὰ πράγματα. Next, he proceeds to establishing the extremes of ethical types: ὁ κακοήθης καὶ ὁ εὐήθης. Finally, he turns to the definition of μεσότης as generating virtue: φρονήματος καρπός, παρακαλοῦντος εἰς ἀρετήν.

In ch. 27 amplification surfaces in the detailed elaboration of the image of a fertile piece of land in the first half of the chapter, where the author develops a representation of the

individuals' power to counter moral afflictions:

Think about your heart as a fertile soil in itself which, because of the drought of our common nature, produces nothing good. Next, cleaned up by God through baptism as if by a plough and by the irrigation of the holy anointment it became soft from the previous state of harshness and from being devoid of any smell it acquired a pleasant perfume; it received the divine mandates as if it received the seeds of a harvest; and by the power of the cup of the Eucharist and of the holy table, it was nourished, it grew, and arriving at maturity it was saved. The weeds, the excesses, and the intrigues of the enemies, I believe, are no smaller than those of the dishonest people and of the daemons themselves; the recklessness of our minds provides an opportunity to sow them. Yet, it is us who are careless. Νόει μοι τὴν σὴν καρδίαν οἶονεὶ χρῆσιμὴν γῆν τὸ καθ' αὐτὴν οὖσαν καὶ τῷ κοινῷ τῆς φύσεως ἀρχμῶ [...] φύουσαν μηδὲν ὑγιές. Εἶτα τῷ βαπτίσματι ὡσπερ ἀρότρῳ τινὶ ἀνακαθαρθεῖσαν Θεῷ, καὶ τῇ τοῦ μύρου ἀρδεΐα ἀπὸ σκληρᾶς εἰς ἀπαλὴν μετενηνεγακμένην, καὶ ἐξ ὀσμῆς οὐδὲν ἐχούσης χάριεν εἰς εὐωδωδέστεραν ἐλθοῦσαν. σπόρον δὲ τὰς ἐντολὰς δεξαμένην. Καὶ τῇ τοῦ ποτηρίου δυνάμει, καὶ τῆς τραπέζης τρέφουσιν καὶ αὐξοῦσιν τὸ καταβληθέν, καὶ τελειοῦσιν, καὶ διασώζουσιν. Ζιζάνια δὲ τῶν ἐχθρῶν τὰς ὑπερβολὰς, καὶ τὰς μηχανάς, οὐχ ἦττον οἶμαι τῶν πονηρῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἢ τὰς τῶν δαιμόνων αὐτῶν· ὧν καιρὸς εἰς τὸ σπαρῆναι τὸ τῆς διανοίας ἡμῶν ἀμελές ἐστι. πρὸς γε τὴν αὐξὴν ἢ δύνάμει τὸ πρὸς τὰς ἐντολὰς ὀλιγώρως ἡμᾶς ἔχειν.

These instances of stylistic amplification contrast with the recommendations for conciseness in gnomic texts, for ever since the ancient rhetoricians, brevity associated with gnomes stood as one of the fundamental stylistic qualities.²⁰⁸ On the contrary, Manuel expands gnomes into paragraphs that explain in detail moral notions and the connections among them.

Finally, evidence for the emperor's didactic voice adopted in the *Foundations* comes from outside the text, as many court authors contemporary to Manuel noticed that the emperor played a role in his son's education. Thus, in a *Consolatory Speech addressed to Emperor Constantine* on the occasion of John's death, John Argyropoulos, suggested that John VIII largely benefited from the education provided by his father:

Wasn't he (John VIII) brilliantly educated by his great father (i.e. Manuel), didn't he take benefit from him who was both father and teacher, just like Peleus drew benefit from Cheiron? Οὐ λαμπρῶς ὑπὸ τῷ μεγάλῳ πατρὶ [...] ἐπαιδεύετο, πατρὶ τε ἅμα τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ διδασκάλῳ χρησάμενος, οὐχ ὡσπερ ὁ τοῦ Πηλέως τῷ Χείρωνι;²⁰⁹

Demetrios Chrysoloras' panegyric in the form of a *synkrisis* between the emperor and former rulers draws partially on the same theme of Manuel in the role of tutor for his son:

And he, the good one, exhorts them to do what is necessary, he guides and supports

²⁰⁸ For an overview of the major stylistic devices used in Byzantine rhetorical writing see G.L. Kustas, "The Function and Evolution of Byzantine Rhetoric," in *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric*, Thessalonike: Patriarchikon Hidryma Paterikon Spoudon, 1973.

²⁰⁹ In S. Lampros, *Argyropouleia*, 26.9-11.

them, as an experienced teacher, and he, as an advisor, explains the best plans to them who do not know what is beneficial. καὶ τοῖς μὲν ὡς καλὸς ἅ χρηὴ πράττειν παραγγέλλει, τοῖς δὲ ὡς διδάσκαλος γνώριμος τὰ πρὸς ὠφέλειαν ὑφηγεῖται, τοῖς δὲ ὡς σύμβουλος γνώμας εἰσηγούμενος τὰς ἀρίστας τὸ συμφέρον ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐκ εἰδόσι.²¹⁰

Later, Isidore of Kiev offered details on Manuel's didactic efforts to educate. His extensive *Panegyric* praised John for having listened to his father Manuel's advice, which, according to the panegyrist, was also a sign of the skillful emperor:

And he (John VIII) had not only a teacher but also a father, and because of him he fills his soul with wisdom, and he beautifies the imperial office by all means, and he adorns it by all means. Καὶ γίνεταί τῳ νέῳ βασιλεῖ παιδευτῆς οὐχ ἦττον ἢ πατήρ, καὶ λόγους γέμοντας σοφίας αὐτῳ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀποπληροῖ καὶ τὴν βασιλικὴν πάντῃ καλλύνει, πάντῃ κατακοσμεῖ.²¹¹

Isidore's panegyric conveyed an idea of the range of literary education Manuel provided, an education which included both basic classes of grammar as well as more complex rhetorical exercises. Allusions to the gnomic *Foundations* and the subsequent paraenetic *Oration*s are included as well, indicating that Isidore perceived Manuel's efforts as part of his son's larger program of education.²¹² Furthermore the panegyrist emphasizes the theoretical training of the educational program set for John by his father:

He does not stay away either from Aristotle's treatises on nature and logic or from the military conflicts. Throughout his life, he lives with these philosophers, since he spends time everyday with Plato and Aristotle. Thus, his soul was impressed by his father who was both teacher and emperor. Οὐδὲ φυσιολογίας καὶ ὅσα τῆς Ἀριστοτέλους τυγχάνει λογικῆς πραγματείας σχεδὸν οὐδ' ἐν τοῖς ἀγῶσιν ἀφίσταται τοῦ πολέμου. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τούτων ζύντροφον διὰ βίου τὸν χορὸν ἄγει τῶν φιλοσόφων, Ἀριστοτέλει καὶ Πλάτῳ καθ' ἡμέραν συνών. Οὕτως ἐνετετύπωτο πρὸς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῳ καὶ διδασκάλου καὶ βασιλέως ἡ ψυχὴ.²¹³

Significantly enough, Isidore insisted on this image of Manuel as a school teacher:

Such is our emperor's nurturing and education which came from his father (Manuel), mentor, and teacher. τοιάδε ἡμῖν ἡ τροφή καὶ παιδεία τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ

²¹⁰ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 235.23-25.

²¹¹ Ibid. 169.10-15. Then, he further explicates the father's role in teaching John the principles of the art of ruling: ὅθεν καὶ χρηματίζονται συνεχρημάτιζε καὶ πρεσβείαις ἐξ ἅπαντος ὁμιλοῦντι γένους συνωμιλεῖ καὶ συνέπραττεν ἐν πᾶσι καὶ τοῖς τῶν πραγμάτων ἐπιβάλλοντι πολιτικοῖς συνεπιδίδου ἑαυτὸν, ῥυθμιζόμενον διὰ πάντων ὑπ' ἐκείνων καθηγεμόνι καὶ διδασκάλῳ· οὐ μὴδὲν ἦν οὐ τῶν μεγάλων, οὐ τῶν μικροτέρων, οὐ τῶν μέσων, ὅ τινος ἐνδεῖν τῶν ὅλων εἶπεν ἄν τις. Καὶ νῦν μὲν ἵππευειν καλῶς ἐφ' ἵππου φερόμενος ἐγυμνάζετο [...] νῦν δὲ διδασκόμενος βάλλειν κατὰ σκοπὸν καὶ κατ' ἦθος ἐντείνειν τόξα [...] Τίς γὰρ ἀμείνων καὶ πράττειν ἐκείνου καὶ διδάσκει τὰ τοιαῦτα; (169.17). Isidore then offers a catalog of military activities John was taught by his father, 170.4.

²¹² Ibid. 171.7-30.

²¹³ Ibid. 172.6.

παρὰ τοιούδε πατρός καὶ παιδευτοῦ καὶ διδασκάλου.²¹⁴

Likewise, in a funeral oration on the emperor's death, Makarios Makres, alludes to Manuel's professorial role at the Byzantine court in general.²¹⁵

The emperor's educational role is also underlined by the evidence regarding the addressee's, John VIII Palaiologos, level of education. There are several pieces of evidence suggesting that he followed a regular course of education where the curriculum of ancient texts played a chief role. At the council of Ferrara-Florence he is said to have quoted correctly a line from Homer²¹⁶ while Bessarion in his treatise on the procession of the Holy Spirit says that Emperor John carried with him in Italy a volume with the works of St. Basil the Great.²¹⁷ In a letter dating from 1438 the Italian scholar Ambrogio Traversari noticed that John, while in Italy, took many books with him²¹⁸ and later on, the historian Doukas says that one of Bayezid's sons, during the years spent as hostage in Constantinople, “was enamored of Greek learning while with emperor John, Manuel's son, and was frequenting the school in order to set his mind to letters.”²¹⁹ Likewise, in the panegyric addressed to John, Isidore of Kiev, described the emperor's son as a highly learned youth, knowledgeable of naval tactics and different military techniques, as well as of literature, rhetoric, theology and philosophy.²²⁰ All these pieces of evidence concerning the emperor's son intellectual background suggest that Manuel's text could have possibly be conceived as a complementary element into John's education. Moreover it is somewhat telling that, unlike in Manuel's case whose relation with Demetrios Kydones is well attested in their correspondence, neither the *Foundations* nor the *Oration*s make any

²¹⁴ Ibid. 172.25. The statement that Manuel acted as a teacher is reinforced with a comparison with other mythical mentors: τί γὰρ Χείρων Πηλεΐ ἢ Φοῖνιξ Ἀχιλλεΐ ἢ τις ἕτερος ἐκείνων τινὶ τῶν ὕμνουμένων παραπλήσιος ὡσπερ τούτῳ ἐκείνος; οὐδὲν οὗτοι, οὐδὲν πρὸς αὐτὸν κἂν πάντες συνέλθοιεν εἰς ταῦτὸν διδάσκαλοί τε καὶ παιδευταί (173.2).

²¹⁵ Makarios Makres, “Epitaphios for Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos,” in A. Sideras, *Unedierte byzantinische Grabreden*, Κλασικά Γράμματα 5. Thessalonike: Παρατηρητής, 1990: 306.3-4: μαθεῖν ἔδει; καὶ τίς ἐκείνου βελτίων διδάξει;

²¹⁶ *Quae supersunt actorum graecorum concilii Florentini necnon descriptionis cuiusdam eiusdem*, Roma: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1953, 106.

²¹⁷ Bessarion, *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, in PG 161, 326B.

²¹⁸ *vidimus apud imperatorem pleraque graeca volumina digna memoriae*, L. Mehus ed., *Ambrosii Traversari latinae epistolae*. Florence: 1959. Book 13, ep. 16, 67.

²¹⁹ Doukas, *Historia*, 98. For a discussion on John's education see J. Gill, “John VIII Palaeologus. A Character Study,” *Studi bizantini e neoellenici* 9 (1957): 152-170 and I. Djuric, *Le crépuscule de Byzance*, Paris: Maisonneuve, 1996, 87-157.

²²⁰ καὶ οὐδὲ ῥητορικῆς ἄγευστον εἶασεν αὐτὸν ἢ καὶ προβουλεῦσαι καὶ εὐρεῖν τὰ δέοντα καὶ εἰσηγήσασθαι καὶ ἐνθυμηθῆναι καὶ δεινότητα ἐπιθεῖναι πᾶσι καὶ τὸ πιθανὸν καὶ γλίσχρον τῶν νοημάτων ἀντιπαραθεῖναι τῷ προσδιαλεγόμενῳ [...] Καὶ μετ' ἐκεῖνα ῥυθμίζει καὶ παιδεύει λόγοις φιλοσοφίας καὶ θεωρήμασι [...] Ἀλλὰ καὶ τούτων ξύντροφον διὰ βίου τὸν χορὸν ἄγει τῶν φιλοσόφων, Ἀριστοτέλει καὶ Πλάτωνι καθ' ἡμέραν συνών, τοῖς καθηγέμοσιν ἐκείνων. *PP*, 3, 169-172.

reference to young John's tutors: Theodore Kaukadenos and Theodore Antiochites.²²¹ If this may reflect the fact that such rhetorical texts avoided concrete references to persons or events, not even the prefatory letter of *Foundations* mention anything about the tutors, despite offering other details concerning John's education.²²²

Given these different aspects that highlight the didactic intent of the text, it becomes therefore necessary to search for the speaker's authority and identity elsewhere and not only in his official imperial role. Sometimes, the author equated his experience with the authority of ancient wisdom,²²³ and, judged from this perspective, Manuel's text posed a basic dichotomy between teaching by experience and teaching by authority:²²⁴ personal experience is increasingly recognized as a valid source of parental didactic authority, to the extent that in the *Foundations* didactic authority moves from remote texts and exemplary lives into the author's voice. Thus, ch. 55 argues that people learn more from their deeds and experience rather than from a theoretical approach.²²⁵ As a matter of fact, in the *Foundations*, experience was valued from the beginning when Manuel addressed the importance of choice and responsibility, and discussed the differences between voluntary and involuntary acts.²²⁶

²²¹ I. Djuric, *Le crepuscule*, 146 and S. Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés pendant l'époque des Paléologues (1261-1453)*, Athens: Hetaireia ton filon tou laou, 1996, 200.

²²² Apparently, in letter 27, a response to Theodore Kaukadenos, Manuel invited his addressee to become his children's tutor after the emperor was impressed by his oratorical skills during a *theatron* meeting (Manuel, *Letters*, 13-16, 70: πέπεικας τίνυνν καὶ ἡ ἐλπίς σοι ἐξέβη· ὅπως δὲ καὶ τὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἐκβήσεται, τοῦτο δ' ἔσται ἦν τοῖν νέοιν σαυτὸν σωφρονιστὴν ἐπιστήσας. Ὁ δὲ δίκαιον εἶποις ἄν, εὖ οἶδα, καὶ ἅμα γε συνοῖσον κακείνοις τε καὶ τῇ θυγατρὶ· καὶ οὐ χαλεπὸν οἶμαι πράξει εἰάν βουλομένω σοι). Kaukadenos, in his turn, had been in good relations with Demetrios Kydones, the emperor's tutor, who introduced him in John V's court by the middle of the 1380s (*PLP*, 11561). In addition to this information, we know that Theodore Antiochites was John VIII's teacher in the Peloponnese between 1400 and 1403. He was also an acquaintance of John Chortasmenos, (Chortasmenos- Hunger, Letter 16). On Theodore Antiochites' activity as John's tutor see Isidore, *Panegyric*, 162. Before Manuel went in the West, he sent his sons in Morea to his brother Theodore I. S. Mergiali, *L'Enseignement*, p. 195; Thiriet, *Regestes*, II, no. 1114, Zakythinis, *Le Despotat*, II, p. 95).

²²³ Ch. 49 highlights agreement with ancient statements: ἔμοιγε τοὶ παραδοξότερον ἐνταυθοῖ νομίζουσιν παρίσταται, οὐ ψευδομένης τῆς πάλαι δόξης. Ch.32 discusses the relationship between theoretical knowledge and experience. Cf also the connection between experience and ancient wisdom in ch. 24: ὡς ἄγαμαι τὸν φεύγοντα τὰς ὑπερβολὰς, καὶ λόγοι μάλα σοφῶν συνιστῶσί μου τὸν ἔρωτα τουτονί. Ch. 49 brings forward the support of classical tradition: παλαιὰ τις δόξα καὶ διαρκὴς ἄχρι νῦν. Yet, unlike in the *Gnomologia*, there are very few sentences openly attributed. Apart from the prefatory letter, Manuel mentions only once Isocrates in chapter fifteen: Ἰσοκράτης δίδωσι γνώμην, ἔχειν μὲν ἡδέως πρὸς ἅπαντας παραινοῦσαν· χρῆσθαι δὲ τοῖς βελτίστοις.

²²⁴ Cf. ch. 91, Εἰ ἐπιστημόνως τις τοῖς ἀνὰ χεῖρας πράγμασι, οὐδὲν κωλύσει καὶ τάναντία εἰς ἓν τι φέρειν τῶν ἀγαθῶν. Καὶ σκόπει δὴ μοι τὸν λόγον.

²²⁵ Cf. also ch. 52: τοὺς μὲν ἄγει λόγος, οἱ δὲ ῥυθμίζονται παραδείγματι. Οἱ μὲν δέονται κέντρον, οἱ δὲ χαλίνου. Γρηγορίου θεοῦ τοῦτο ἡ φωνή, a passage from Gregory of Nazianzos, *Apologetica* (orat. 2), PG 35, 436. The statement had a long career: it can be found twice in John of Damascus' *Sacra parallela*, vol. 95, page 1541, line 41 and vol 80, page 1876, line 16. The gnomic saying survives also in the *Lexicon Vindobonense*, <alphabetic letter alpha>, entry 22, line 6 (*Lexicon Vindobonense*, Petropoli: Eggert, 1867) The popularity of this gnome proves Manuel's connections to the patristic tradition and gnomologia. It appears also in the tenth century *Florilegium Marcianum* (Paolo Odorico, *Il prato e l'ape: il sapere sentenzioso del Monaco Giovanni*, Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981, 230.)

²²⁶ Cf ch. 95, 96 and 97 which draw on issues of practice and knowledge. Another proof of Manuel's didactic

his advisory role as an alternative identity. Therefore, at times, Manuel reflects on how an advisor should speak:

For it is necessary that those who exhort pursue <in their admonitions> what is beneficial. Χρῆ γὰρ, οἶμαι, τοὺς παραινοῦντας συνοῖσον ἔργον ἀσπάζεσθαι.²³²

Such statements reflect Manuel's subtle strategy for representing John VIII as co-emperor: by combining the categories of father and teacher into one single voice, the emperor plays with his needs as a father, on the one hand, and the service to the prince as his creation, on the other hand. This resulted in a calculated pose probably designed to create the impression that a transparent advice would typify also his approach in other instances of governance. The major advantage of creating a migrating voice between paternal intimacy and solemnity was the emperor's claim of objectivity for, in working with multiple voices the author operated a multiple and stronger self-authorization.

Conclusion

In this chapter, based on a text which has been so far included in the category of the so-called princely mirrors, I have tried to analyze how the emperor's didactic voice was fashioned and how it functioned. While there is no clear demarcation between the personal and the official-imperial voices, the didacticism of the text remains the catalyst of the one hundred paragraphs dealing with different aspect of ethics.

The *Foundations* combine both the tradition of political advice inaugurated by Agapetos, the gnomic tradition, and the tradition of theological *centuria* providing moral and theological principles. The different generic strands identifiable in the text allow for a multifaceted authorial voice that is far less formal than in the case of other previous similar texts. Manuel's aim was not to compress all aspects of political wisdom in striking sentences, as it is mostly apparent in texts like Nikephoros Blemmydes' *Imperial Statue*, made of 219 short paragraphs which rarely exceed four lines, as well as in Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor*, made of 72 chapters with a predominantly encomiastic character. On the contrary, the *Foundations* is not just a list of principles for the emperor's conduct but also a complex guide for understanding, managing, and implementing ethical axioms. Furthermore, it would be misleading and much too generalizing to state that Manuel derived his advice entirely from different authoritative sources. What counts in the *Foundations* is what the author did with the material he had

²³² Ch. 17.

harvested from others, not least in injecting a degree of political realism and paternal intimacy, difficult to find in the same place in the court rhetoric of the period. It is for this reason that I. Ševčenko considered it “the most appealing Byzantine mirror.”²³³

In re-elaborating the gnomic tradition, Manuel partly positioned himself outside the traditional tenets transmitted via other texts of advice. If we were to follow H. Hunger's division of *princely mirrors* in Byzantium, we could say that the *Foundations* can be placed in between the gnomic and the discursive mirrors. Nonetheless, Hunger's labeling of gnomic mirrors has certain limitations with regard to Manuel's text. Indeed, it may be that such writings are gnomic in so far as gnomes add sententiousness in many places, but to describe the *Foundations* as gnomic seem to narrow the scope of the text and, at the same time, to misinterpret its function. In fact, I would suggest that for the present case one should shy away from placing the *Foundations* in the category of “princely mirrors,” at least because it fails to explain the core features of the text. In addition, I believe that the model provided by the collections of *kephalaia* gathered into *centuria* with a marked educational purpose plays a major role in the construction of the *Foundations*.

In the epistolary preface, Manuel made clear that he addressed the *Foundations* to a very young person, his son, John, who was about to enter adolescence. This may count as the chief reason why he did not insist on the ideal representation of the ruler, but rather tends to outline the profile of the ἄριστος ἀνὴρ. By renegotiating the terms of Byzantine admonitory texts addressed to imperial figures, the work embodies an intention to convey a set of moral values and practical experience into the imperial office.

For these reasons, the *Foundations* can be regarded as an instrument of ordering, controlling, and shaping the body of moral and political knowledge he inherited. The *Foundations* does not address exclusively particular matters of state administration but equally focuses on ethics, thus constituting itself in a preliminary stage to a more comprehensive political education. It is therefore plausible that the *Foundations* represented a text designed for an earlier age that would cover the first level of a sophisticated educational program, while the subsequent text, the *Seven ethico-political orations*, with its much more elaborated presentation of moral axioms and virtues, may have been intended for a later period. Thus, however allusive and traditional, Manuel's *Foundations* must not deceive us: it lacks substantial commentaries on practical issues but by stressing the moral aspects it proves that this remained one of the few ways for the emperor to act as a model in the Byzantine political milieu.

²³³ I. Ševčenko, “Agapetos East and West,” 8.

Chapter 5:

The *didactic voice: The Orations (Seven ethical-political orations)*

Introduction

In two manuscripts containing Manuel's writings, the *Foundations of an imperial conduct* are followed by a series of seven orations and an attached epistolary epilogue on ethical matters.¹ Each of these orations bear an explanatory lemma, but the entire collection, also dedicated to his son John VIII, has no title.² It was probably for this reason that they became known with a somewhat neutral and vague title, added in their first printed edition published in the sixteenth century in Basel by Johannes Leunclavius under the Latin title *Orationes septem ethico-politicae*. Later on, this edition was reproduced with the same title in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*.³ Despite criticisms,⁴ this title reflects to a large extent the contents of the orations: on the one hand, they were delivered in a political context, as the exposition of the tenets of traditional Byzantine rulership in the epistolary epilogue indicates. On the other hand, an attempt to analyze them in tandem with the previous text of the moral *Foundations* is legitimate since both texts are found in the same manuscripts and addressed a similar set of issues revolving around the formulation of a comprehensive moral system for the prince's use.

The date of the *Orations* can be established with certainty between the years 1408-1410. First, internal evidence suggests that they were written after the *Foundations* when John was

¹ Vindob. phil.gr. 42 and Vindob. phil.gr. 98. The orations survive in three additional manuscripts: Coisl. gr. 341, Vat. gr. 266, and Vat. gr. 632. A. Angelou argued that the Vindob. phil. gr. 098 constituted the final copy of most of Manuel's texts and included most of his corrections, "Introduction," *Dialog on marriage*, 19-20. Moreover, in the *Hundred Letters addressed to Manuel*, Demetrios Chrysoloras mentioned together the two texts, the κεφάλαια and the λόγοι: ἄριστε βασιλεῦ, μαρτυρεῖ τοῖς πλήθος διαφόρων ἐπιστολῶν, κεφάλαια καὶ λόγοι πολλοὶ καὶ μεγάλοι ἅμα (75.1-4).

² The dedication to John VIII is included in the table of contents of the MS Vindob. phil.gr. 98 where the titles begin with the formula τοῦ αὐτοῦ πρὸς αὐτὸν (John) λόγος πρῶτος, f. 1 r-v. The Vindob. phil. gr. 042 places the seven orations together with the *Foundations* under the heading: Βιβλίον παραινετικὸν τοῦ εὐλαβεστάτου καὶ φιλοχρίστου Μανουὴλ τοῦ Παλαιολόγου, πρὸς ἐρασιμωτάτον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα, Ἰωάννην τὸν Παλαιολόγον (f. 1v).

³ There is no modern edition of the *Orations*. In the present chapter I will use the text published in PG, vol. 156, cols 385-562. For the present chapter I consulted the manuscripts Vat. gr. 632, Vindob. gr.98, and Vindob. gr. 42.

⁴ B. de Xivrey, *Mémoire sur la vie et les ouvrages de l'empereur Manuel Paléologue*, Paris, 1853, 37.

referred to as a μειράκιον who spent more time hunting and playing than he did studying.⁵ On the other hand, in the *Orations* John was addressed as a more mature person: in the first oration Manuel assumes that John already had knowledge of the legendary characters and stories he recounted: Croesus, Xerxes, and Gyges. Then, in the fifth oration the emperor alludes to a previous contradictory dialog with his son on the topic of pleasure and to his lofty attitude towards courtiers (seventh oration). Apart from these circumstantial pieces of information, we also have other evidence that enables us to offer a safer dating: a letter addressed to Gabriel of Thessalonike sent together with an *Homily on Saint Mary of Egypt* that reproduces the sixth *logos*, can be dated to late 1408-1410, during the emperor's visit to Thessalonike.⁶ As a matter of fact, a recent study has demonstrated that this homily was derived from the text of the *Seven ethico-political orations*.⁷ This date helps us identify John VIII's position at the imperial court, for, by that time he had already been appointed co-emperor, a fact which Manuel himself mentioned once.⁸

The years of composition thus coincided with a period of relative calm for much-tried Byzantium. The Ottomans, defeated in the Battle of Ankara, were passing through a time of internal strife and Manuel tried to take advantage of this situation by interfering into their dynastic conflicts. In parallel, he sought to strengthen his position in the remote Morea and Thessalonike, as indicated by his numerous visits to these regions.⁹

As discussed in the beginning of the previous chapter, the two texts, the *Foundations of an imperial conduct* and the *Orations* were tied together. Like in the preceding *Foundations*, in this series of *orations*, the emperor details and expands upon similar virtues a ruler should acquire and employ both in matters of public administration as well as in daily court transactions. Yet, by and large, unlike in the related hundred chapters on imperial education, his treatment of the subject matter was conducted in different terms and frequently included more sophisticated theoretical arguments. In contrast to the *Foundations*, the *orations* deal only sporadically with aspects of governing, such as how to assert authority or how to act in military campaigns. Furthermore, the *Orations* focused on a reduced set of themes and concepts, and elaborated in more detail their implications and ties within an overall ethical

⁵ In the beginning of the seventh oration, Manuel refers back to subject matters discussed in the *κεφάλαια*.

⁶ Manuel, *Letters*, 150, footnote 1.

⁷ E. Kaltsogiani, "Zur Entstehung der Rede des Manuel II Palaiologos auf die Heilige Maria von Ägypten [BHG 1044c]," *Parekbolai*, vol 1, 37-59.

⁸ 557a: Αὐτός σου τὴν φίλην κεφαλὴν, ὧ συμβασιλεῦ τε καὶ παῖ, οὐ μόνον ἐνταυθοῖ στεφανώσαι, ἀλλὰ κάκει, τῷ καλῷ στεφάνῳ τῶν μακαρίων.

⁹ See ch. 1.

system. Thus, they tend to integrate the ruler's craft into a comprehensive theoretical framework based on both the writer's political experience as well as on concepts borrowed from ancient ethics.

In many ways, the seven orations represented a summary of Manuel's previous literary productions. Themes and concepts reflecting his preoccupations with theology, his knowledge of classical authors, as well as his tendency to address issues of the ruler's conduct to a wider public were here re-elaborated in a mold different from anything he wrote before. By assembling these different texts in a compact framework, it seems that his intention was to present in a more coherent shape for the use of his son not only a compilation of different moral norms similar to those found in the *Foundations*, but also a more applied discussion of several fundamental ethical guidelines. As it will be argued, the emperor also used the orations as a platform to launch criticism against recent actions of his son and lecture publicly for what an emperor ought to stand for in society.

To begin with, in the present chapter I will argue that, despite their differences of form, the orations essentially constituted a unitary collection and, for this reason, one should consider both the relations between them which render the *Orationes* a coherent and complete piece of writing, as well as their particularities. Based on this assumption, I divide the present chapter in two sections: first, I will review the contents of each of the seven orations and identify their major literary and rhetorical features. Second, I will deal with the entire collection of orations and suggest that, despite their differences in contents and genre, collectively they form a compositional unit and that, as such, they were meant to convey a single message. In addition, I will argue that the author experimented with different oratorical genres.

At the heart of the *Orationes* stands the idea that John, already appointed co-emperor, had to follow certain rules of ethical behavior, drawn from the moral accounts of ancient writers or from the scriptures. Manuel addresses John not only as the future ruler of the state, as a typical advisory writing addressed to a young prince would require, but equally as his son. Because of these distinct roles, the seven orations seem to complement each other by serving different immediate purposes and audiences.

Like the preceding *Foundations*, the *Orationes* attracted a limited attention, owing probably to the tendency of previous scholarship to search for concrete factual information which is absent here. The text was examined by few scholars whose opinions were included in

general accounts of Manuel's works.¹⁰ The century old volume, *Mémoire sur la vie et les ouvrages de l'empereur Manuel Paléologue* by B. de Xivrey¹¹ still provides the most detailed account of these texts. In his monograph J. Barker also mentioned the orations when describing Manuel's manuscripts: following de Xivrey, Barker stated that the orations were “ill-advisedly entitled ethical and political, and that they are only a work of moral advice.¹²” More surprisingly is that the scholars who dealt with the *Foundations* neglected the *Orations* altogether, despite their visible connections. For instance, K. Païdas¹³ and G. Prinzing¹⁴ did not discuss them even if the first oration would easily qualify for an *integrated princely mirror*, given the models of rulers it proposes.

In so far as the literary contemporary context is concerned, it is difficult to draw any parallels between the *Orations* and other contemporary texts or collections, mostly because each of the seven orations showed the features of a different genre. The first one adopts the profile of a traditional text of advice for a young prince, the following four have the features of short treatises on different concepts of ethical philosophy, while the last two seem to draw more on homiletic literature. In comparison to other similar educational texts addressed to younger individuals, probably due to his public office, Manuel seems less inclined to emphasize his own experience than, for instance, Theodore Metochites' *Ethical oration or on education* (Λόγος ἠθικὸς ἢ περὶ παιδείας) who spoke more openly about his experience as an intellectual in the service of Andronikos II.¹⁵ Metochites' text in the form of an unbroken oration sharing a didactic interest similar with the *Orations* has more personal overtones while also stressing the pedagogical value of the transmission of intellectual experience to a younger person.¹⁶

On the other hand, the late Palaiologan period produced a significant body of texts dealing with definitions of virtues. In particular, panegyrists and public orators were keen to deal precisely with this aspect and Manuel could have drawn inspiration from this vast reservoir. For instance Solon's image as ideal ruler constantly emerged in panegyrics, paroemiographical collections, and other literary genres.¹⁷ Yet, Manuel chose to act upon this

¹⁰ Barker, *Manuel II*, 413.

¹¹ B. de Xivrey, *Mémoire*, 143-146.

¹² Barker, *Manuel II*, 435.

¹³ K. Païdas, *Κάτοπτρα ηγεμόνων*, 15.

¹⁴ G. Prinzing, “Beobachtungen zu ‘integrierten’ Fürstenspiegeln der Byzantiner,” *JÖB* 38 (1988): 1-31.

¹⁵ Metochites, *ἠθικὸς ἢ περὶ παιδείας*, ch. 1-5, ed. I. D. Polemes, Athens: Kanaki, 1995, 53-67.

¹⁶ E.g. τοῦτ' οὖν αὐτὸς ἑμαυτῷ προτίθημι, τοῦτ' ἀξιῶ καὶ σοί γε, τοῦτο βούλομαι ξυνδοκεῖν. *Ibid.*, 256. 61.20-21.

¹⁷ Cf. Gemistos Plethon, *Book of Laws* (Νόμων συγγραφή), 1.2.72; *Monody for Empress Cleope*, 161.1; *Prosphōnēmaton for Despot Demetrius*, 207.11; Manuel Kalekas, *Oration addressed to the emperor*, 1.98; John Chortasmenos, *Letters*, 1.25; Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 230.24; Michael Apostolios, *Collectio paroemiarum*, 4.3.2.

tradition in a personal fashion since he did not only use this model of the Athenian ruler for a quick reference to the ruler's wisdom, as it happened in many other contemporary rhetorical texts,¹⁸ but also provided a detailed account of the Athenian legislator's activity. Thereby, he indicated that this model was to play a significant part in his vision of the Byzantine political establishment. There are also differences between the ethical theoretical scaffolding of the orations and other contemporary theoretical accounts, such as Gemistos Plethon's essay inspired by Stoicism, *On virtues* which opens *in medias res* with the definition of virtue¹⁹ and proceeds to analyze each virtue in detail.

The dramatic setting

Since the information on these orations is scarce, most of our evidence pertaining to their context of delivery and their audience comes from the texts themselves. The sole relevant piece of information to such matters regards the sixth oration and indicates that it was performed in a religious context after the recitation of a *vita* of Saint Mary of Egypt.²⁰ Still, this piece of information does not allow us to automatically assume that the oration was performed in a church since, by that time many *homilies* were delivered at court.²¹ It is probable that each oration had a different audience, and that, based on their contents, we can assume that their audience was restricted to a group of people more learned than the popular audience (often public assemblies) of deliberative pieces. Thus, the scene of the performance of the orations resembles both a school and a church: Manuel plays the role of both the capable rhetorician who lectures his son on the acquisition of virtues and also of the priest who insists on the acquisition of a set of Christian basic principles (especially in the last two orations). But the speaker's prominence often deflects attention from the discussed issues and points to his authority as in the first and the last orations. If the speaker's aim was to deal in depth with ethical matters, he had to let his person recede into background. And that was apparently the emperor's chief problem, for he had to strike a balance between addressing his son as well as a larger audience.

The public character of the orations is highlighted by Manuel's frequent indications that he was addressing both John and the public, as for instance when he commented on the

¹⁸ E.g. Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 230.24.

¹⁹ ἀρετή ἐστὶν καθ' ἣν ἀγαθοὶ ἐσμεν, George Gemistos Plethon, *On virtues*, Athens: Akademia Athenon, 1987, a.1.3.

²⁰ Vat. gr. 632.

²¹ Many of Joseph Bryennios' numerous homilies were performed in the palace, ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ, Bryennios, *Ta heurethenta*, ed. E. Boulgares.

ways of transmitting his message:

Be willing to attempt to express in detail everything that is possible to happen in this manifold and theatrical life, and all the things which life shows to us, changing the mask little by little and dramatizing, sometimes because of the circumstances, other times because of various pretexts and persons, and above all, because of the deep changes of our times. Τὸ γὰρ κατὰ μέρος πειρᾶσθαι φράζειν, ὅσαπερ ἐνδέχεται συμπεσεῖν τῷ πολυμόρφῳ καὶ σκηρικῷ τῷδε βίῳ, καὶ ὅσαπερ ἡμῖν αὐτὸς <ὁ βίος> δείκνυσι, τὸ προσωπεῖον ὑπαλλάττων, καὶ μονονουχὶ δραματοποιῶν, ἄλλοτε ἄλλων παρεμπιπτόντων, διαφόρων ἀφορμῶν καὶ προσώπων ἔνεκα, καὶ προσέτι τῶν καιρῶν παντοδαπῶς μεταβαλλομένων.²²

Other instances in the text suggest that the orations were performed in public. In the fifth oration Manuel mentions a group of people present at the time of the performance.²³ These people were not only passive listeners but they were also asked to draw benefit from the seven *logoi*. In the second oration, the author summarizes the aim of the entire collection, that is to equally instruct both John and those who will come across these texts:

And it is necessary for us to say what we think about this issue for your pleasure and equally *for the benefit of those who would come across this work*. Καὶ ἡμῖν ἀνάγκη εἶναι, τὰ γε δοκοῦντα περὶ ταυτησὶ λέγειν, σὴν τε χάριν καὶ ὠφελείας ἔνεκεν τῶν ἐντευζομένων ἴσως τῷ λόγῳ.²⁴

At one point in the second oration, Manuel refers to a manifold and theatrical life (πολύμορφος and σκηρικός βίος),²⁵ terms which suggest that, apart from the public character of the texts, the emperor had probably in mind the discussions that took place publicly in the *theatra* he presided.²⁶ Frequently, when Manuel adopted a theoretical position, he referred to an earlier contrary opinion only in order to refute it.

Yet, since John VIII was the main addressee of the orations, at times he was directly addressed, as in the sixth oration where the emperor chided John for previous mistakes (πρὸς

²² 428a.

²³ 465b: οἶμαι δέ τινας τῶν παρόντων σαφέστερον ἐθέλειν ἀκοῦσαι, καὶ χρῆναι τούτοις παραμυθῆσασθαι μοι δοκεῖ, ὅσον ἰκανόν. Cf. also 520b: ταῦτ' οὖν γινώσκοντες, ὧ παρόντες and 437c, τοῖς ἀκούσασιν. Manuel suggests that *the first oration was recited in front of a large audience: τὴν ἀκοὴν τῶν παρόντων* (528d).

²⁴ 441d. Cf. also 404d-405a: ἡγήμεθα μάλα συμβαίνειν τῷ προκειμένῳ σκοπῷ μήτε πάντας ἀγαγεῖν εἰς μέσον τούς γε τοιούτους, ἵνα μὴ τὸ θέατρον ἀποκναίσωμεν, ἀμύθητόν τινα ἀριθμὸν παρεισάγοντες, μήτ' ἀμέτρως χρῆσασθαι ταυταισὶ ταῖς κατ' αὐτούς ἱστορίαις, μὴ ποτε πρὸς ἐλέατος διηγημάτων ἀπείρων τὸ προκειμένον ἡμῖν ἐμπεσὸν ναυαγήσῃ. Καὶ δὴ καλῶς μοι δοκεῖ συμπεπεράσθαι τὸ καταρχὰς ἡμῖν βούλημα. Ὡς γὰρ τι παράδειγμα λαβόντες ἤδη τοὺς ἄνδρας τούτους, ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων αὐτοῖς ἀπάντων καὶ τὰς ἱστορίας τὰς περὶ τούτων ἰκανῶς ἀφοσιωσάμενοι, πᾶσάν τε περιεργίαν παρέντες, κατὰ καιρὸν ἀπαλλαττόμεθα, ὡς ἐμέ γε περὶ τούτου νομίσαι. Καὶ γὰρ τοι μεμιμήμεθα ὀρθῶς διαπραξάμενοι τοὺς ἀργυρογνώμονας, οἷς γε ἔθος ἐκ τοῦ μέρους τὸ πᾶν εἶδέναι. Καὶ οἶμαι χρῆναι ἀγαπᾶν τῇ μεθόδῳ ταύτῃ.

²⁵ 428a, δραματοποιῶν/ also 404d: ἵνα μὴν τὸ θέατρον ἀποκναίσωμεν. 437c: in a similar attempt to stage a dramatic setting for philosophical concepts, Manuel presents the passions as coming in disguise: εἰ γὰρ δὴ καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς ἡμᾶς τὰ πάθηματὰ πολλῆς, ὡς ἂν τις εἴποι, τῆς σκηρῆς καὶ τῆς ὑποκρίσεως.

²⁶ See ch. 2.

σε γὰρ αὐθις ἐπαναστρέφω).²⁷ In many other cases the emperor turned to his conversations with John who supported a different view on certain matters: the address in the second and the third oration (εἰ γὰρ σιωπᾶς) suggests that previously the emperor and his son had a conversation, probably in the same manner as the dialog with his mother.²⁸ In the same vein, it appears that some of the orations were also probably composed as responses to previous polemics between Manuel and his son with regard to theoretical issues, since evidence for John's education comes from the later panegyrics addressed to him.²⁹ For instance, it is likely that the fifth oration on the moderate use of pleasure served to answer the author's arguments presented in the fourth oration.

What are you saying, you who were openly discrediting pleasure? For if you keep silent, then I will eventually tell you what, I believe, you will be pleased to listen. Having confirmed your opinions, whereby you have represented in short the image of pleasure [...]. τί δὴ φῆς ὁ τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀπλῶς διαβάλλων; εἰ γὰρ σιωπᾶς, αὐτὸς ἐρῶ σοι τελευταῖον ἐγώ, ὅπερ ἂν ἡδέως ἀκούσαις, οἶμαι. Ἐγώ σου τοὺς λόγους ἐπικυρώσας, δι' ὧν σὺ τὴν εἰκόνα τῆς ἡδονῆς μικροῦ συντόμως ἀνεζωγράφησας.³⁰

The last section of the same oration reveals once again that between Manuel and his son there may have taken place several debates. Nonetheless, according to the emperor, they did not affect the substance of the argumentation for, he claims, it was rather their rhetorical manners used by each of them which differed:

If this seems right to you, let us therefore agree in our words as well, for our arguments converge in the same idea. [...] For our differences are in the words we use and not in our reasoning. But if it seems appropriate to you to call this pleasure, and to call the same an abuse, I will not disagree. Just let me say that a moderate pleasure is a good thing. ἄγε οὖν, εἴ σοι δοκεῖ, συμβῶμεν ἅμα τοὺς λόγους. Τοὺς γὰρ λογισμοὺς ἡμῖν εἰς ταυτὸν εἶναι νομίζω. [...] Ὡστ' ἐν λόγοις ἡμῖν ἡ διαφορά, οὐ τοῖς λογισμοῖς. Ἄλλ' εἰ τί σοι καλὸν δοκεῖ τοῦτο καλεῖν ἡδονήν, τὴν δ' αὐτὴν παράχρησιν, οὐ διοίσομαι. μόνον δὲ μοι καὶ αὐτὸς ἀγαθὸν τὴν σύμμετρον ἡδονὴν λέγειν.³¹

5.1. The contents of the *Orations*

Even if all the orations were driven by the same urge to provide advice in ethical matters, a cursory examination of the text evinces major differences in terms of their contents and of the

²⁷ In the second section of the sixth oration it was suggested that the oration came as a reply to a previous discussion with John, 509a: εἰ γὰρ ἐκόντες, ὡς σὺ φῆς, τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς εὐδαιμονίαν διέπτυσαν.

²⁸ 484a: ἄγε οὖν, εἴ σοι δοκεῖ, συμβῶμεν ἅμα τοὺς λόγους. Τοὺς γὰρ λογισμοὺς ἡμῖν εἰς ταυτὸν εἶναι νομίζω.

²⁹ Especially Isidore's and John Argyropoulos' panegyrics. See ch. 4.

³⁰ 481b-c.

³¹ 484a.

genre they belong to. While their explanatory titles offer several hints to their different rhetorical genres,³² it is only the first oration which indicates its genre in the title as *προτρεπτικός*. We do get however more information on their genre by examining their content and ways to approach the ethical principles at stake.

Despite their generic differences, several common formal features emerge in all the orations, reflecting the emperor's knowledge of the conventions for speech writing. The most conspicuous such feature is the strict division operated within the orations between a preamble, proofs, refutation of counterarguments, and a concluding part summarizing the main arguments.³³ The preambles function both as introductions into the main issues to be discussed in each oration as well as bridging sections between the pieces of the collection. The review of the contents of the orations will constitute a first step in retracing the relations between the *Oration*s and in identifying the position of the text within the late Byzantine literary milieu. In the following I will present the content of each oration and then try to identify their major ethical themes used in the education of the co-emperor.

5.1.1. Major themes in the *Oration*s

Although in terms of form the orations differ to a wide extent, several dominant themes emerge across all seven texts. Manuel approached several major categories of topics drawing on ethics, philosophy, and Christian doctrine. Arguably, his interests here lay in the definitions and detailed explanations of four different moral and political categories: virtue and sin, voluntariness and choice, pleasure, and the representation of imperial authority.³⁴

Virtue and sin

Like in other writings with a similar educational scope, here as well the central concern was to map several significant selected virtues that would befit an individual and then define them in relation to other broader ethical categories. These virtues do not always converge in the ideal

³² *Oration One*: A protreptic oration for literature, and about virtue and the good ruler. *Two*: That the good is loved in a natural way by everyone. The evil person is to be hated by himself/herself. *Three*: On choice and will (voluntary); and that the evil does not come by nature and does not originate from outside, but it becomes the cause of itself. *Four*: On pleasure (on the dangers of pleasure). *Five*: On pleasure and against what has been told (on the benefits of pleasure). *Six*: That sin is the worst thing; nobody has to despair, not of himself, not of someone else, must judge himself, but not someone else; and not hate the sinners, but have pity; and on repentance, and God's providence, and on love and philanthropy. *Seven*: On humility.

³³ For instance the conclusion of the third oration: 424d: ἀλλὰ τούτων μὲν ἄλις, φησί· συνεπεράνθη γὰρ ὡς ἔχρην, οἴμαι [...] καὶ ἀκολούθως οἴμαι ῥηθέν, ἀναγκάζει πάντως ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον διελεῖν, καὶ παραδοῦναι σαφέστερον.

³⁴ The quoted examples to follow come from different sections of the *Oration*s: *Oration I*, 385a-409b, *Oration II*, 409b-419d, *Oration III*, 419d-441d, *Oration IV*, 441d-461c, *Oration V*, 461d-483a, *Oration VI*, 483b-527b, *Oration VII*, 527c-557a, *Epistolary epilogue*, 557b-561a.

of the good ruler, but, more often they refer to general ethical aspects. While all the *Orations* ultimately refer to exercising a set of virtues leading to a good character, Manuel does not provide a solid theoretical basis but instead limits himself to quoting several major authorities in the field: Plato, Aristotle, and the Bible. Only the second oration provides a brief theoretical preamble to the topic by grounding the discussion of virtue in an account of nature (φύσις) and choice (προαίρεσις), and thus echoing the first chapters of the *Foundations*: human nature is good *per se*, it is shared by all individuals,³⁵ it is always in search of cognate good actions, and always avoiding what is contrary to the good.³⁶ Therefore, Manuel concludes, it is only through one's choice, that some actions become praiseworthy and virtuous while other individuals fail to distinguish between evil and good.³⁷

In this account of virtues, as Manuel himself often indicates, Aristotle's influence was pervasive. Even if Aristotle's treatises of *Ethics* were written long before by a philosopher with a completely different world view, his position on almost all topics central to moral philosophy in Byzantium was regarded authoritative by many in Byzantium: nature and the importance of virtues, agency, reasons for action, criteria for right actions, emotions, moral perception, etc.³⁸

Following this Aristotelian scheme, the process of exercising different virtues culminates in the acquisition of happiness (εὐδαιμονία) another topic hotly debated in the ancient schools of philosophy. Like in many other instances of the *Orations*, this concept was approached dialectically by opposing the opinions of those who wrongly believe to have acquired happiness and the truly happy ones (εὐδαίμονες). In the first category, Manuel included those who agree that honor and high social positions are a result of exercising virtue, when in fact they had no merits whatsoever but only a favorable fate.³⁹ In contrast, he argues, true happiness can be attained only by choosing the right course of action and education:⁴⁰ like

³⁵ 409c: εἴη δ' ἂν τοῦτο γε ἡ πάντων μὲν ἀρχὴ καὶ ὑπεράρχιος φύσις, πάντων δὲ δημιουργὸς καὶ συνέχουσα καὶ εὖ ποιοῦσα δύναμις. The notion of the common human nature is also used in the discussion of the sixth oration on despair and the obligation not to judge others.

³⁶ 412c: ἡ φύσις γὰρ ἡμῖν ἀποδέδεικται ἐξ ἀγαθοῦ τε καὶ ἀγαθῆ καὶ τὸ συγγενές ζητοῦσα καὶ τὰλλότριον ἅπαν φεύγουσα.

³⁷ 412d: μέγα δὲ κάκεινο νομίζουσιν ὅτι θαυματοποιούς καὶ μίμους καὶ ὀρχηστάς, σμήνη τε κολάκων, καὶ ὕβριστῶν ἔθνη, καὶ παρασίτων ἔσμον καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους τοὺς τοιούτους εὖ ποιεῖν δύναται.

³⁸ Beginning with the twelfth century, as suggested by Anna Komnene's program of commentaries commissioned to George Tornikios and Michael of Ephesus, Aristotle's *Nicomachean ethics* gained in popularity (P. Frankopan, "The Literary, Cultural and Political Context for the Twelfth-Century Commentary on the *Nicomachean ethics*," in *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean ethics*, ed. by C. Barber and D. Jenkins, Leiden: Brill, 2009, 45-63. For the Palaiologan period we know of paraphrases of the *Nicomachean ethics* by George Pachymeres and John VI Kantakouzenos (L. G. Benakis, "Aristotelian Ethics in Byzantium," *Ibid*, 67-69).

³⁹ 416a: οἶονται μὲν οὖν ἀρετὴν μετέρχεσθαι τῷ φιλοτιμεῖσθαι. Ὅθεν τὴν τύχην οὐδαμῶς, τὴν δ' ἀρετὴν αἰτιῶνται πρὸς γενναιότητα.

⁴⁰ 416b: οἱ δ' ἀγαθοὶ καὶ νουνεχέστεροι τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῷ ὄλω τε καὶ τῷ παντὶ τῇ προαιρέσει τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν

in the preceding *Foundations*, the virtuous individual who had attained happiness embodies the ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ, the ideal individual who acts for and through virtue.⁴¹ According to given circumstances, Manuel applies other qualities to his ideal good individual (ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ): often he defines the ἀγαθός as useful and worthy (χρηστός),⁴² reflecting thus his primary concern to provide examples of virtuous actions which may lead one to attaining the long lasting glory.⁴³

The discussion of fundamental virtues and vices is also set in the framework of the ruler's responsibility to provide models of behavior.⁴⁴ The central supposition leading Manuel's discussion of virtues is that they have to be understood as the building blocks of a moral-political system, since he often lists different connected virtues,⁴⁵ or refers to a whole system of virtues (ἀρετῶν ἅπαν σύνταγμα).⁴⁶ Such ways to define virtues highlight the idea already present in the *dispositio* of the matter of the *Orations* that some virtues are more valuable than others. Clearcut instances of a hierarchical order of virtues are the representations of virtues like humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη), explicitly portrayed as the ultimate virtue an individual could attain,⁴⁷ the road to ethical perfection (ὁδὸς καὶ πέρας), Christian love (ἀγάπη), the origin of other virtues,⁴⁸ and moderation (μετριοφροσύνη), a reflection of the previous two.⁴⁹ According to this hierarchical perspective, forms of virtues inspired by the Christian doctrine were more significant than others and developed by ancient philosophical systems. Among these three virtues, it is humility which received most attention in the emperor's account who lists it as the main virtue without which all other virtues fail to bring benefit either to the ruler or to the community at large:

Had one acquired all virtues, he would draw no benefit for himself, unless he previously acquired humility, since this one only lightens and guards all other virtues. Ὅ δὲ τὰ καλὰ κτησάμενος πάντα οὐδὲν ἑαυτὸν ὠνησεν, εἰ μὴ καὶ τὴν

λογίζονται.

⁴¹ In the first oration in the account of Solon and in the sixth oration, 493b: καὶ διὰ ταῦτα οἱ τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἄριστοι οὐτ' ἀπογινώσκουσι τοὺς οὐκ ἀπογνόντας, οὐτ' εὐχερῶς κατακρίνουσι.

⁴² 417b: καὶ δι' ἐντελέχειαν πράξεων μοχθηρῶν μήτ' ἐθέλων χρηστός.

⁴³ 416d: ἡ διαρκέσασα δόξα.

⁴⁴ 436c: πῶς οὐχ ὑπεύθυνος οὗτος ἑαυτῷ τῶν κακῶν ἀτεχνῶς γίνεται, ῥέπων τῇ παρ' ἑαυτοῦ διαθέσει πρὸς τὰ δυνάμενα βλάπτειν, καὶ πᾶσι τρόποις ἑαυτὸν εὐάλωτον ἐκείνοις παρασκευάζων.

⁴⁵ 417a: ταῦτα δὲ οἱ κλάδοι τῆς ἀρετῆς ἢ τοῖς μετᾶσχουσιν αὐτῆς γνησίως.

⁴⁶ 540a. Cf. also VII.541d: ἔστι μὲν ἡ ἀγάπη μήτηρ τε ἅμα καὶ τροφὸς καὶ ρίζα καὶ κρηπίς ἀντικρυς τῷ τῶν ἀρετῶν συστήματι.

⁴⁷ 529a: καὶ δὴ μοι τελεσθέντος τοῦ πρὶν διαύλου, ὥρα κάκεινοις χαρίζεσθαι, καὶ σοι τὸ δέον ἀποπληροῦν. Τὸ δὲ ὕστατον εἰπεῖν περὶ τῆς πάντα ἀγαθῆς ταπεινοφροσύνης οὐ κατὰ τύχην γέγονεν, ἀλλ' οὕτω δόξαν ἀκόλουθον εἶναι.

⁴⁸ 540c: ἀρχὴ γὰρ δῆπουθεν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ τῶν ἀρετῶν ἐστὶ κύκλου. Ἡ δὲ μετριότης τὸ τέλος. Cf. also: ἐγὼ δὲ ταύτην τὴν ἀρετὴν μείζω μὲν τῶν ἄλλων ὑπολαμβάνω, ἀγάπη δὲ φιλότιμον.

⁴⁹ 540c: Measure, μετριοφροσύνη, μέτρον, is present throughout the *Orations*, especially in the praise of Solon, in the presentation of the positive pleasure, and in the last oration. It is one of any individual's essential qualities, 544d: ὥστε καὶ μόνη τῶν ἀρετῶν στεφοθέτης δέδεικται ἢ μετριοφροσύνη. Καὶ μεγάλα πράττοντα.

ταπεινοφροσύνην προσεκτήσατο, ὡς οὕσαν γε ταύτην μόνην μάλιστα πασῶν ἀρετῶν λαμπτήρᾳ τε καὶ φύλακα τῶν ἀγαθῶν πάντων.⁵⁰

Yet, Manuel was not interested in promoting ταπεινοφροσύνη exclusively as a Christian virtue reflecting one's simplicity of behavior in a community,⁵¹ but also as a virtue that would befit a ruler. This idea is suggested by his insistence to add further explanations that fit in the context of his address to the young co-emperor. Thus, contrary to the multifariousness of sin,⁵² humility possesses a uniform character,⁵³ and, moreover, gives meaning to the idea of order (τάξις) and hierarchy.⁵⁴ If humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη) was shunned by panegyrists in their accounts of imperial virtues, other admonitory texts produced outside the courtly sphere cultivated it often with a different meaning. For instance, Marinos Phalieros' vernacular Λόγοι διδασκτικοί, provides here a paradigm of advice that included humility:

Be always humble and patient/ For, I tell you, that these two, humbleness and patience,/ Were the crowns of Saint Catherine/ and of the admirable Holy Martyr Niketas. Ἄς εἶσαι πάντα ταπεινὸς κι ὑπομονῆς μεγάλης,/διότι αὐτὴ ἡ ταπεινώσις κι ἡ ὑπομονὴ ἔναι ἐκείνη,/ λέγω σου, ὅπου ἔστεφάνωσεν τὴν Ἁγία Αἰκατερίνη,/ τὸν Ἅγιον τὸν θαυμαστὸν μάρτυραν τὸν Νικήτα.⁵⁵

Manuel's approach envisioning a hierarchy-like structure of virtues was not the only way to understand virtues. In other instances, Manuel constructed a parallel modality to present the different kinds of virtues. Thus, he also presented the image of a full circle of virtues,⁵⁶ with Christian love and moderation as chief landmarks, but without humility, the other central virtue. This image, comparable to the definition of humility as concomitantly a road and an end, supplements the hierarchical perspective and provides the reader with the possibility to approach and understand the system of moral virtues in more than one straightforward way.

Unlike in the ancient philosophical treatises, here virtues are most often contrasted to

⁵⁰ 529a. Cf. 536a: τὸ θεῖον τοίνυν καὶ πολύμνητον χρῆμα ἡ ταπεινοφροσύνη, πολλαχόθεν οὕσα κοσμία, καὶ σὺν ἀμηχάνῳ κάλλει περιοῦσα πρὸς ἑαυτὴν πάντας καὶ ποιεῖται ἑαυτῆς ἔραστὰς μετὰ μανίας σῶφρονος. A definition of humility can be found at the end of the oration, 541d: ἔστι δὲ ἡ ταπεινοφροσύνη οἰονεῖ τις ὁδὸς καὶ πέρασ καὶ ὅτιπερ ἂν γένοιτο ἢ νοοῖτο ἔρεισμα καὶ φυλακτήριον ἀκριβὲς πάντων ἐξῆς τῶν καλῶν, λῆξις τε τῶν ἀρετῶν καὶ ἀνάπαυσις καὶ σωτήριος λιμὴν καὶ χωρίον ἀσφαλές. Yet, the overall attitude is that humility, as any Christian cardinal virtue cannot be described entirely in words: it is rather like a riddle αἴνιγμα (532c).

⁵¹ As in the case of Isidore of Kiev's *Panegyric*.

⁵² In some forms of pleasure.

⁵³ ἡ δὲ ταπεινοφροσύνη μονοειδῆς τις οὕσα, 537b.

⁵⁴ 537d: ἀπέκρυψε μὲν ὑπασπιστὰς ἡ ταπεινοφροσύνη, τοὺς ἀκριβῶς τὴν τάξιν διατηρήσαντας, ἐν καιροῖς οὐ συγχωροῦσιν ἀτρέμας ἴστασθαι.

⁵⁵ Marinos Phalieros, *Λόγοι διδασκτικοί*, 48-51.

⁵⁶ 540c: ἀρχὴ γὰρ δῆπουθεν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ τῶν ἀρετῶν ἐστὶ κύκλου. Ἡ δὲ μετριότης τὸ τέλος.

sins and not to vices. Following a similar educational purpose,⁵⁷ like virtues, sins are hierarchically ordered with discouragement (the sixth oration) and judgment of others' shortcomings (seventh oration) on top of this scale.⁵⁸ Manuel explains the wrongfulness of ἀπόγνωσις by stating that it overlooks the truth of the Christian revelation.⁵⁹ The causes of moral evil and subsequently of moral mistakes are then identified in ignorance and indifference, as opposed to knowledge listed in the first oration as one of the ruler's essential virtues:

This evil originates in deceit and errors: it grows out of ignorance and recklessness which nourishes and expands the evil. ἀλλ' ἐξαπάτη τε καὶ διαμαρτία τουτὶ τὸ κακὸν φύεται· ρίζαν δὲ καὶ ἀρδείαν ἔχον τὴν ἀπαιδευσίαν καὶ ῥαθυμίαν, τῷ χρόνῳ δῆπου τρεφόμενον, καὶ ἐπεκτεινόμενον.⁶⁰

In addition to these main sets of virtues and sins, Manuel approached other sets of virtues as well. Among these, he emphasized that mastering rhetorical skills constituted one of the virtues that should be exercised in the public life, an idea that was not new to Byzantium.⁶¹ In the texts of writers of the fourteenth century however, rhetoric combined with knowledge and wisdom, did not seem to have acquired the profile of a virtue within the imperial function. For instance, Demetrios Kydones acknowledged only an ornamental role for rhetoric in exercising political authority:

And the emperors themselves take pleasure in adorning their office with wisdom and learning. καὶ οἱ βασιλεῖς αὐτοὶ τε ἡσθήσονται ἔχοντες παρ' ἑαυτοῖς τὸν τὸ κοινὸν σχῆμα τῆ σοφία κοσμοῦντα.⁶²

Despite the systematic presentation of ideal and praiseworthy types of virtue, this

⁵⁷ 493d: εἰ γὰρ μετὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἐπιμέλειαν, καὶ τάλεξιτήρια φάρμακα, τὸ διανοχλοῦν χωρεῖ, δέος ἐστὶν οὐ μικρὸν μὴ ὑπερνεκίῃσαν τῷ χρόνῳ, εἰς τοὺς τῆς ἀπογνώσεως βυθοὺς τὰς τῶν ἐαλωκότων ψυχὰς παραπέμψῃ, πρὸς οὓς οὐδεὶς πω κατελθὼν ἐπανῆκεν. Οὕτως οἱ ἀκίβδηλον τὴν ἀρετὴν κεκτημένοι.

⁵⁸ The contrasting vices are φθόνος and ζῆλος, 500b: φθόνου γὰρ ἐγκαθημένου ταῖς ψυχαῖς, οὐ ζήλου τὸ τοιοῦτον κακόν.

⁵⁹ πῶς οὖν οὐκ ἔξω φρενῶν ἐστίν, ὁ τὴν σωτηρίαν ἀπογινώσκων, τῶν ἀπεγνωκότων μὲν δι' ἑαυτοὺς καὶ τὰς πράξεις, χρησταῖς δ' οὖν ὅπως ζώντων ἐλπίσι δι' αὐτόν γε τὸν Σῶτηρα, καὶ ἅπερ οὗτος πέπονθεν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν σταυρωθεῖς; The account of ἀπόγνωσις is reinforced with passages from the New Testament, 493b: ὁ Δημιουργὸς γὰρ κριτικὸς ἐνθυμήσεων καὶ ἐννοιῶν καρδίας. Μὴ καταδικάζετε ἵνα μὴ καταδικασθῆτε (Luke, 6.37).

⁶⁰ 436a.

⁶¹ Earlier, in his *Prolegomena* for instance John Sikeliotēs (years) argued that rhetoric is a crucial part of most sciences, and particularly of the political one. Sikeliotēs, “Prolegomena in Hermogenis librum perī ideōn” in H. Rabe, *Prolegomenon sylloge, Rhetores Graeci*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1931: 393-420.

⁶² Kydones, *Letters*, 397.20. In another letter addressed to John VI Kantakouzenos, Kydones refers to the pleasures of rhetoric without any reference to its use in public: Πολλὴν οἶδά σοι χάριν καὶ τῆς ἡδονῆς καὶ τῆς ὠφελείας ὧν ἀμφοῖν αἰτιός μοι κατέστης τὸ τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ Χρυσσοστόμου πέμψας βιβλίον. Ἄει γὰρ ἐγὼ τὸν ἄνδρα ἐκεῖνον πάντων τῶν πώποτε ῥητορικῆς ἀψαμένων πλεῖστον ὑπερτιθεῖς καὶ τῆ τοῦ Λεσβίου μουσικῆ τὴν τοῦδε γλωτταν εἰκάζων (Kydones, *Letters*, 406.3-5).

account of virtues is highly problematized. Manuel is admitting that virtue cannot be encountered in pure forms but always mixed with other attitudes, thus alluding to the inherent problems of the emperor's office who was supposed to publicly display an image of moral perfection.⁶³

Finally, an important aspect that distinguished Manuel's treatment of virtues from other similar accounts, whether in panegyrics or in other more systematic treatises, is that the system of virtues developed throughout the *Orationes* does not comprise any explicit reference to the traditional four cardinal virtues of a ruler that populate the Byzantine encomiastic or admonitory texts for emperors. Due to this conspicuous absence it is likely that the emperor did not intend the text as a traditional book of education for a future ruler, a princely mirror so to say, but rather he probably aimed at supplementing and ultimately renewing an old system of virtues.

Voluntariness and choice

Following Aristotle's two treatises on ethics, the *Nicomachean* and the *Eudemian ethics*, the *Orationes* treat the system of virtues within a larger abstract discussion of the voluntary character of actions and individual responsibility.⁶⁴ Manuel followed this model of ethical philosophy and took a step further admitting that virtuous actions are to be praised and vicious actions blamed only if they are voluntary. In doing so he ascribed responsibility of action to the agent and less to the circumstances.⁶⁵ He argued that actions originate in the individual agent's choice. Responsibility and voluntariness were both derived from the notion of a good human nature (φύσις)⁶⁶ a concept already extensively dealt with in the *Foundations*.⁶⁷ In addition, owing to the preliminary points made in the previous *Foundations*, the discussion on voluntariness in the third speech is not a general disquisition of free will but rather appears as an attempt to ground other theoretical and practical issues such as the acquisition of

⁶³ 496d: ἦν μὲν οὖν, οἶμαι, προσῆκον ἐπιεικῶς τοὺς κεκτημένους μὲν ἀρετὴν, κεκτημένους δὲ κακίαν καὶ οἷον ἀναμιξ ἄμφω, μὴ τῶν ἄλλων κατεπαίρεσθαι διὰ τὸ χρηστότερον μέρος.

⁶⁴ The connection between virtue and voluntariness emerges in the end of the third oration: καὶ τὸ μὲν καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν ἐκουσίως γιγνόμενον, τοῦτο εἶναι τὴν ἀρετὴν.

⁶⁵ 440a: εἰς ἃ δὴ πάντα τὴν κοινὴν φύσιν καὶ γνῶσιν καὶ ἐπιστήμην καὶ δεξιότητα οὐδ' ὅπως οἶμαι μοι δοκῶ. Τὴν δὲ τινῶν ἀπαιδευσίαν καὶ καταφρόνησιν πρὸς τὸ καλὸν τε καὶ ἀγαθὸν αἰτιατέον ἡμῖν.

⁶⁶ It emerges often in the third oration on choice and will, cf. 441a: ἡ φύσις δὲ πᾶσι κοινή, καὶ τὰ ταύτης ἡμῖν κοινά [...] ἡ μὲν γὰρ φύσις ἐν ὅροις μένει, καὶ προαιτῆσεται πρὸς Θεὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, καὶ τὴν ἐκάστου συνειδήσιν, ἐὰν μὴ ἐνῆ ποιεῖν τὰ καὶ τὰ· ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις δύναται ἂν μεταβληθῆσθαι καὶ πεποικίλται, and 440d: ἐστὶ γὰρ οὐ φύσεως, οὐδὲ τινος τῶν θύραθεν συμπτωμάτων ἀλλὰ προαιρέσεως ἔγκλημα.

⁶⁷ This notion of human nature was less elaborated than the similar concept developed by his mentor, Kydones, who, in his *De contemnenda morte*, had previously worked with a more refined distinction between the λογική and the νοερά φύσις.

virtues.

An essential differentiation operated in the *Orationes* with regard to human will is between plain (σαφῶς) voluntary acts (τὰ ἐκούσια) and acts against will (τὰ ἀκούσια).⁶⁸ While in defining these two categories, the emperor relies on Aristotle's authority, he further focuses on identifying criteria for distinguishing further types of involuntary⁶⁹ acts (τὰ οὐχ ἐκούσια) like those generated by lack of information or by constraint,⁷⁰ which can still be motivated.⁷¹ Such are the cases of the individuals in power who, because of their unrestrained will, act swiftly in certain circumstances without paying heed to any immediate consequences.⁷² In contrast, voluntary acts take place with full knowledge of consequences,⁷³ and by choice.⁷⁴ Again, Manuel refers here to concrete cases insisting on a particular category of voluntary acts, namely, cases of people aware of their mistakes,⁷⁵ who nevertheless afterwards blame circumstantial factors, such as drunkenness and momentary excess (ὑβρις).

Apart from the two broad categories outlined here, the emperor introduces a further category, the “mixed voluntary actions” (τὰ μιξεκούσια), a distinction intended to solve the difficulties of establishing solid criteria for voluntary and involuntary actions. This category mirrors the previous statement on the impossibility of acquiring virtues in pure form and the suggestions revealing the problems inherent to a universal definition of the emperor's office. In this category Manuel includes actions requiring negative operations in order to achieve a positive result, e.g. in the case when a soldier running away from more resourceful enemies on the battlefield is not to be blamed.⁷⁶ Therefore, in all instances, Manuel recommends to keep the middle path between actions with positive or negative outcomes, and to rely on knowledge and choice by all means.⁷⁷ It is ignorance of the benefits⁷⁸ of our actions, Manuel claims, that

⁶⁸ 428c-432b.

⁶⁹ The vocabulary for describing voluntariness draws on Aristotle as Manuel himself acknowledges: *περὶ δὲ τῶν οὐχ ἐκούσιων* (Ἀριστοτέλους δὲ τοῦτο φωνή· οὕτω γὰρ ἐκάλεσε τὰ ἀμφιρρεπῆ καὶ μὴ παντελῶς καθαρεύοντα τοῦ τε ἐκούσιου καὶ ἀκούσιου), 432b

⁷⁰ Already Aristotle had identified these two excusing conditions, ignorance and force, which have remained central in philosophical and legal accounts of responsibility: *βία καὶ ἀνάγκη*, *Nicomachean ethics*. III.1. 1110a1-b17

⁷¹ 424a.

⁷² 429a.

⁷³ 428c: *ἐν γνώσει*. Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean ethics*, 1110b28-1111a19.

⁷⁴ 428d: *λέγω τὸ καὶ πᾶν ἐκούσιον τῆς προαιρέσεως γίνεσθαι*.

⁷⁵ 432a: *ὥστε τὸ πᾶν εἰργάσατο γνώμη*.

⁷⁶ 433a: *οὐ γὰρ ὁ φυγῶν μυρίους τῶν πολεμίων δειλὸς εὐθὺς κριθήσεται, εἴ τις τεθνάναι κέκρικε πρὸ τοῦ φυγῆ χρήσασθαι*.

⁷⁷ 433c: *ὅπόσον τι τῆς γνώσεως ἢ τῆς προαιρέσεως μίξομεν τοῖς ἐφ' ἡμῖν πράγμασιν*.

⁷⁸ 437d: *ἄγνοια τὸ κακόν, εἰ δεῖ συντόμως εἰπεῖν*. Cf. also 440b: *τὸ γὰρ μήτε πεπαιδευμένον εἶναι, μήτε σπουδαῖον, ἀλλ' ἀγνοεῖν τὰ συνοίσοντα, λέγω δὴ τὰ τοῖς ὁμοίοις οὐκ ἀγνοούμενα, ἐκ τοῦ ὀλιγώρως ἔχειν πρὸς τὰ χρηστότερα τῶν ἡθῶν*.

distorts individual choice.⁷⁹ Accordingly, judgment based on will and knowledge which derives from deliberation and learning (βουλήν καὶ μάθησιν, 440b) generates a correct choice,

Therefore it results that whatever occurs by knowledge and deliberation occurs also by choice. συμβαίνει δὴ (καλὸν γὰρ οἶμαι συναγαγεῖν) τὸ μὲν ἐν γνώμῃ καὶ βουλήν, καὶ προαιρέσει γιγνόμενον, οὗ καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ παρ' ἡμῶν ἐστι.⁸⁰

Further reflection on ignorance and responsibility leads Manuel to further refinement. For the sake of clarity of his argument in the end of the discussion on voluntariness he operates a distinction between acting *in* ignorance and acting *through* ignorance concluding that responsibility for individual actions comes equally as a consequence of choice and as the expression of one's character.⁸¹

Pleasure

With two of the seven orations dedicated to this topic (orations four and five), Manuel appears to have envisaged a central role for the topic of pleasure in his moral system.⁸² Here as well, he followed closely other models, for, since antiquity, understanding pleasure and pain have played an important role in the preparation for philosophy and life. If for Aristotle (*Nicomachean ethics*) as well as for the ancient schools of thought, especially the Epicureans and the Stoics, pleasure was a constant matter of debate, this topic proved to be far more difficult to accommodate with the Christian doctrine. For this reason, in the two orations Manuel was not interested to argue in favor or against a position with regard to the nature of pleasure-an end in itself or a process, but instead, the main question was whether pleasure constituted a good or an evil emotion.

Far from being a hedonist or a stoic, the author does not distinguish between bodily and spiritual pleasures. He draws on Aristotle's views about the validity of pleasure based in his philosophical methodology, with its respect for common sense, and in the principle of his ethics, that all things aim at the highest good. Furthermore, he adds a Christian touch to this account by insisting on the idea that pleasure comes from God. Like Aristotle, Manuel concedes that bodily pleasures are good up to a point, that is, when their enjoyment is part of, or

⁷⁹ 437d: εἰ δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ προαιρέσεως, οὐδὲ ὑπάρχει τὸ σύνολον.

⁸⁰ 433 c. Cf. 440c: ἡ δὲ κρίσις προαιρέσεως.

⁸¹ 436 c: πῶς οὐχ ὑπεύθυνος οὗτος ἑαυτῷ τῶν κακῶν ἀτεχνῶς γίνεται, ῥέπων τῇ παρ' ἑαυτοῦ διαθέσει πρὸς τὰ δυνάμενα βλέπειν, καὶ πᾶσι τρόποις ἑαυτὸν εὐάλωτον ἐκείνοις παρασκευάζων;

⁸² Ἡδονὴ also appears in the *Foundations*, ch. 49, as generating sorrow; also in chs. 46 and 67 where the origin of pleasure is assigned to a state of mind: ὥστε καὶ τὸ ἡρεμεῖν, καὶ τὸ ἡδεσθαι, καὶ τὸ ταράττεσθαι τε καὶ θλίβεσθαι λογισμῶν ἂν εἴη μᾶλλον ἢ τῆς φύσεως τῶν πραγμάτων.

constrained by temperance.⁸³ Since ultimately, the emperor claims that happiness consists only in virtuous activities, following this line of argumentation it will be only those pleasures that are *really good* which are worth pursuing.⁸⁴

As in other instances, the emperor's account of pleasure set in contrast two antithetic opinions on pleasure echoing the previous concepts of choice and moral good.⁸⁵ First, Manuel approaches the position of those who blame pleasure and describe it largely as an excessive and a damaging emotion:⁸⁶ pleasure represents a terrifying affliction,⁸⁷ and a voluntary madness, ἐκούσιος μανία.⁸⁸ The psychological process of attaining it, the hope and the expectation for future achievements are shortly dealt with.⁸⁹ According to this current of opinion, the pleasant (τὸ ἡδύ), and the delightful (τὸ τερπνόν), prove to be, in fact, more harmful and painful since they induce high expectations which can be fulfilled only for a short period of time.⁹⁰ Pleasure, Manuel concludes, is therefore blameworthy for the strength (ἰσχύς, δύναμις) it demands in order to cheat, persuade, and enslave those who seek it;⁹¹ for some people pleasure represents the aim of all their actions, and they try hard to attain it.⁹² This view is strengthened by the idea of the multiplicity of pleasure,⁹³ compared to a chameleon, a Proteus,⁹⁴ and a hydra whose head, once cut off, gives birth to other multiple heads.⁹⁵

Yet, in the fifth oration Manuel reverses this view, and defends a moderate position on pleasure:

It is appropriate and just to defend the reasonable positive aspects of pleasure and not to fight against it. καλὰ καὶ δίκαια ποιεῖ ὁ τὰ εἰκότα ἀμύνων τῇ ἡδονῇ, καθ' ὃ γὰρ μέρος οὐκ ἔδει πολεμουμένη.⁹⁶

⁸³ Cf. 460a. Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean ethics*, VII.14, 1154a.

⁸⁴ 460b.

⁸⁵ 480d: κατὰ δὴ τοὺς ἤδη ρηθέντας λόγους προσήκει νομίζειν τὴν ἡδονὴν τοῖς μὲν ἀγαθὴν εἶναι, τοῖς δὲ τοῦναντίον.

⁸⁶ 460a: ἡττηθείσης γὰρ αὐτῆς, παιᾶνας ἄδειν προσήκον καὶ σκιρτᾶν μετὰ φαιδρότητος. The fourth oration uses extremely negative terms to describe pleasure: it is a dreadful thing, αὕτη τὰς νιφάδας τοῦ πυρὸς ὕσέ ποτε Σοδομίταις (460c) and it is impossible to escape it, τὸ δὲ ταυτησί χεῖριστον, ὅτι ταῦτα γινώσκοντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι, οὐκ ἀπαλλαγῆναι δυνάμεθα, σφόδρα θέλοντες ἢ τοῦναντίον ἴσως δυνάμενοι, οὐ βουλόμεθα (460c).

⁸⁷ 444c: δεινὸν πάθος.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ 449a: καὶ τὸ προσδοκώμενον σβέννυναι, πρὸ τοῦ φανῆναι τελέως.

⁹⁰ 445a-b: καὶ ἀγλύνει μᾶλλον τὸ ὑπερβάλλον τῆς πλησμονῆς ἢ παραμυθεῖται τὸ μέτριον τῆς τρυφῆς. Cf. 448d: δηλον τὸν θυμὸν ἐκ τῆς ἀποτυχίας τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν φύεσθαι.

⁹¹ 448c: ὅ τε γὰρ δοῦλος τῶν ἡδονῶν ἀναγκαίως δεῖται χρημάτων.

⁹² 453d: οἷς γὰρ δὴ τέλος ἡ ἡδονή, ῥαδίως γε τούτους πείθει, πάντα τολμῶντας τὰ ἄτοπα.

⁹³ 449d: πῶς ἂν τις ὅλος γλώσσα γενόμενος, τοὺς ἐκείνης τρόπους, τὰς μηχανάς, τὰς πλοκάς, τὰς ποικιλίας ἐξείποι; Πειρᾶ μὲν ἅπασι τρόποις ἢ δυσμενῆς· γοητεύει δὲ πῶς οἷε; δελεάζει δὲ κακοθηεῖα ἐσχάτη· καὶ πᾶσι γίνεται πάντα, πρὸς ἀνατροπὴν τῶν χρηστοτέρων ἡθῶν.

⁹⁴ 456a.

⁹⁵ 457c: ἂν τμηθῇ τὴν κεφαλὴν, πολυκέφαλος εὐθὺς ἀναφαίνεται.

⁹⁶ 461d.

According to this view, pleasure is good by itself and comes from God (κατ' αὐτήν θεόθεν).⁹⁷ Still, Manuel admits that excess and abuse of pleasure remain harmful for it can lead to excess and abuse (ὑπερβολὰς καὶ παραχρήσεις).⁹⁸

In support of his position, the emperor adduces Aristotle's tripartite division of the soul. Manuel refers to the Aristotelian theory of the soul's different parts (ἐπιθυμία, τὸ λογικὸν μέρος, τὸ θυμικὸν μέρος)⁹⁹ and defines pleasure as part of both the reasoning and the sensitive part of humans.¹⁰⁰ From this perspective, pleasure when used according to the right measure must not be assimilated to vices.¹⁰¹ While he is ready to admit that it is pleasure alongside with wisdom that stirs desire (ἐπιθυμία)¹⁰² Manuel applies an *interpretatio Christiana* to this theory when stating that these parts of the soul, as elements of God's creation, are necessarily good.¹⁰³ In fact, he claims, Christian principles should form the basis for the interpretation of pleasure.¹⁰⁴ In the conclusion of his discussion on pleasure, Manuel restates that pleasure comes from God (θεόθεν) and when used wisely (σωφρόνως) and in moderation (μεμετρημένως) it is necessarily good.¹⁰⁵

Symbolic representations of kingship

Like in the *Foundations*, Manuel's approach to kingship gives more credit to his experience and relies less on prophetic or mythological models:

⁹⁷ 464d.

⁹⁸ 465a.

⁹⁹ 465d: καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἕξωθεν τὸ ἐπιθυμεῖν, οὐδὲ ὑστερογενές, οὐδ' ἐπίκτητον, ἀλλ' ἐμφυτός τις δύναμις τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ἀχώριστος, καὶ μέρος γε τι ταύτης τῆς τριμεροῦς τε καὶ ἀμεροῦς (λέγω δὲ νῦν περὶ τῆς λογικῆς τε καὶ ἡμετέρας), δηλονότι ἀγαθὸν ἢ ἐπιθυμία.

¹⁰⁰ 481b: καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ Θεοῦ δεδομένον τῇ τε λογικῇ καὶ αἰσθητικῇ φύσει.

¹⁰¹ 469b: ὅφ' ἡμῶν γὰρ ζητούμενη ἢ ἐπιθυμώμενη τοῖς ζητούμενοις δι' ἐκεῖνό γε καὶ μόνον, ὃ τῇ φύσει δέδοται ζητεῖν ἐξαρχῆς εὐθύς, δηλονότι τὸν Θεόν, τὴν ἀρετὴν, τὴν ἑαυτῆς σύστασιν, πῶς οὐκ ἂν εἴη δικαία ἢ ἡδονὴ ἀγαθὴ νομίζεσθαι, καὶ καλοῦς ἐργαζομένη τοὺς αὐτῆς σωφρόνως μετέχοντας.

¹⁰² 468a: πρόδηλον γὰρ ὡς ἢ ἐπιθυμία δι' εὐφροσύνην καὶ ἡδονὴν ἔχει τὴν κίνησιν.

¹⁰³ 481b: εἶναι μὲν οὖν φημι τὴν ψυχὴν, καὶ πάντα τὰ αὐτῆς μέλη, ὡς ἂν τις εἴποι, καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις, παρὰ Θεοῦ. Πῶς γὰρ οὐ; εἶναι δὲ καλὰ καὶ ἀγαθὰ, ὡς ἀπὸ Θεοῦ.

¹⁰⁴ 465c: καὶ δὴ σκοπῶμεν ὡδὶ. Ἀρξόμεθα δ' αὐθις ἐκ τῶν προτέρων. Θεμέλιον γὰρ ἄλλον οὐδεὶς δύναται θεῖναι παρὰ τὸν κείμενον, ἔφη Παῦλος. Καὶ ὁδῶ βαδίζων ὁ λόγος, θεοῦ συναιρομένου, συντόμως τὸ γινόμενον ἀποδώσει.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. 469a and 464d: ὅτι δὲ θεόθεν ἢ ἡδονὴ, οὐδενὸς οἶμαι δεῖσθαι λόγου. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν ἐκ Θεοῦ, ὡς δὲ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς οὔσι, καὶ τοῦτο γε δόγμα κοινόν. Κοινὸν καὶ τοῦτο γένοιτ' ἂν, οἶμαι, δόγμα, ὡς ἢ ἡδονὴ καλόν, καὶ δηλον αὐτόθεν. Interestingly, this view goes against other contemporary accounts of pleasure, such as the one outlined in Plethon's treatise against Gennadios Scholarios. In this highly polemical text geared towards defending Plato's theoretical positions, Plethon criticized Aristotle's method in general and his position with regard to pleasure in particular and accused the Stagirite for favoring the Epicureans' account of pleasure: καὶ φαίνεται Ἀριστοτέλης οὐ μόνον τῶν περὶ ἡδονῆς λόγων Ἐπικούρω δούς τὰς ἀφορμάς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν περὶ προνοίας τῆς τοῦ θείου ἐξαιρέσεως· σὺ δὲ τολμᾶς, καὶ ταῦτα μετὰ τῆς ἀσυνεσίας, Πλάτωνι Ἀριστοτέλη παραβάλλειν τὴν καὶ κρίνειν τῷ ἄνδρῃ; ποία διανοία πεποιθώς; ποία ἐπιστήμη λόγων; [...] Ἀριστοτέλης δ' ἄτε οὐ διαιρέσει ὡς τὰ πολλὰ χρώμενος, ἀλλ' ἐπαγωγῇ, χεῖρονι διαιρέσεως μεθόδῳ, see E.V. Maltese, ed., *Georgii Gemisti Plethonis, Contra Scholarii pro Aristotele Obiectiones*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1988, 31.91-97.

And I say this not as someone who gives oracles, nor as a prophet. For, to give oracles was Teiresias' mission, and the gift of prophesying belonged to David. Καὶ τοῦτο λέγω, οὐ μαντευόμενος, οὐδὲ προφητεύων. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ Τειρεσίου τοῦ πάλαι, τὸ δὲ Δαβὶδ βασιλέως.¹⁰⁶

Therefore, *it seems to me* that there is a single road, the one which leads to humility: this means to attribute all good deeds to God. δοκῶ τοίνυν μοι μίαν τὴν ὁδὸν εἶναι, τὴν ἐπὶ τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην ἀναβιβάζουσαν· τὸ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν δηλονότι τὰ καλῶς πραττόμενα ἀναφέρειν.¹⁰⁷

In a text addressed to a young emperor, one would expect to find frequent allusions to classical models of kingship. Yet, the symbolic representations of kingship are sporadic with few mentions of legendary rulers and confined to the first oration: Alexander, Cyrus, Achilles or Sampson appear rarely and only as shadowy terms of comparison.¹⁰⁸

Although the virtues required by the emperor's position were constantly emphasized and discussed, a more substantial and coherent representation of kingship remains problematic, since in the four philosophical orations the author's primary intention was to provide a general ethical training. In doing so, Manuel envisaged the exercising of political action within an ethical frame, an idea inspired by Aristotle's philosophical system. For this reason, the several statements that refer precisely to the rulers' representation, seem rather to be appended to the system of moral virtues he develops than to represent the author's central preoccupations.

It is only the first and the last of the orations that explicitly include elements of a model of ruler, while, as it can be seen from the above account, the other orations provided a theoretical background and a normative approach to his son's behavior. In the first oration, the model envisaged by Manuel was constructed upon the conflicts which opposed the Greeks of classical antiquity to the peoples of the East, thus drawing a clear parallel to the contemporary conflict between the Byzantines and the Ottoman Turks. The oration contrasts Croesus' excessive accumulation of wealth with Solon's moderation accompanied by well reasoning. The story of the encounter between Croesus and Solon, also present in other contemporary orations like Chortasmenos' panegyric for Manuel, serves in the first instance as illustration for the idea that material wealth is not always conducive to success.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ 405d.

¹⁰⁷ 548b.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.: Κἄν οὕτω τὴν σαυτοῦ ψυχὴν ἀσύγκριτον ἀποφήνης, ὡς εἶναι μὲν τῆς Νέστορος καὶ Σολομῶντος φρονιμωτέραν, εἶναι δὲ τῆς Ἀχιλλέως καὶ Σαμψῶν ἀνδρειοτέραν, γέμουσάν τε ἀρετῶν.

¹⁰⁹ 392a: καὶ γὰρ τοι καὶ πενία μετ' ἀρετῆς τιμιωτέρα τῶν πλούτῳ κομώντων ἐκείνης ἄνευ.

Significantly enough, the model of rulership emerging in the first oration draws rather on negative representations triggered by the action of several eastern rulers: Gyges, Croesus, and Xerxes. Above everything, they were criticized for their irrational choices:

Thus, this irrational multitude of barbarians was defeated by a small army who was worthy of many rewards. Αὕτη τοίνυν ἡ πλήθους ἡ βαρβαρική ἧς λογισμὸς ἅπας ἥττητο, ὀλίγων πάνυ στρατιώτων ἥττηται, πολλῶν γε μέντοι γερῶν ἀξίων.¹¹⁰

Croesus preferred to amass wealth which he misleadingly took for happiness, Gyges came into power through magic and deception, while Xerxes was driven by the desire to conquer foreign and unknown lands and proved unable to make use of the huge military forces at his disposal. In contrast, the Athenians led by Solon honored peace, instead of desiring to acquire land:

In this way, the Athenians who possessed all kinds of virtues, were honoring peace instead of many measures of land. Οὕτω δὴ πρὸς πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν ἔχοντες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἐτίμων μὲν εἰρήνην, πρὸ τοῦ πλέθρα πάμπολλα γῆς κερδάναι.¹¹¹

Apart from the two orations, another section of the *Oration*s focusing on the ruler's image is the epistolary epilogue.¹¹² This short text serves to express a traditional Byzantine idea of rulership and to highlight several tenets familiar to the audience with regard to the imperial office: the emperor is God's representative on earth and the one who stands on the throne should act accordingly. Far from adding anything new, this perspective rather reflects a preoccupation to integrate this text in the tradition of Byzantine political writing and to emphasize the emperor's position in state and the subjects' expectations. Ultimately, Manuel seems to be willing to attach his personal experience and his knowledge of moral and philosophical tenets to the Byzantine imperial tradition.

Having identified the major topics discussed in the *Oration*s I will proceed now to a discussion of the contents and methods of advice employed in each of the seven orations.

5.1.2. The contents of the orations

First oration

As disclosed in the lemma, the first oration¹¹³ belongs to the genre of protreptic orations. Owing to the fact that its main purpose was to provide advice to a young co-emperor,

¹¹⁰ 392d.

¹¹¹ 392d.

¹¹² 560c: a discussion-explanation of the notion of kingship.

¹¹³ Λόγος προτρεπτικός εἰς λόγους, καὶ περὶ ἀρετῆς καὶ ἀγαθοῦ ἄρχοντος: The protreptic oration for literature, and about virtue and the good ruler.

protreptic elements in the form of moral prescriptions, are pervasive in the collection. Yet, since this is the only oration in the collection that was specifically ascribed to a rhetorical genre, a brief excursus into the origins and functions of this literary form is helpful so that we can then assess Manuel's understanding of this rhetorical form.

Originating in texts of classical philosophy, protreptic discourses aimed at changing the conduct in the readers/listeners, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to win a young student for the study of philosophy.¹¹⁴ These aims, expressed explicitly or implicitly, were often borrowed by writers of diatribes, another popular literary genre in antiquity, whose wider purpose was to change a person's conduct in society through education. Later on, *protreptic* speeches specialized in offering general advice for converting people to philosophy. Thus, it became a common belief that the protreptic orations were meant as a primary stage any student was supposed to go through in his or her *paideia*. In theory, after the protreptic stage came *parainesis* where the students were explained how to lead their lives in a community.¹¹⁵

As far as we can grasp from the extant pieces of protreptic literature,¹¹⁶ there was no preferred form for such texts which could equally take the shape of public orations, letters, dialogs, or anthologies. Michael Apostoles, the fifteenth century Byzantine teacher, described proverbs as *λόγοι προτρεπτικοί*,¹¹⁷ while in a Christian context Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, the fourteenth century ecclesiastic writer, equated protreptic with admonitory orations addressed to larger audiences.¹¹⁸ They only adhered to a common set of rhetorical techniques intended to persuade and expose major aspects of philosophy to someone from outside the field in search for a broad education. Commonly, the *protreptikoi*, advocated for a wide range of preoccupations from intellectual to military ones and did not dwell upon details. The preserved *protreptikoi* indicate that while the label *protreptikos* had been used rather loosely since antiquity through the Middle Ages, at the same time, most frequently, they emphasized a philosophical training.¹¹⁹ Despite the popularity of the genre in antiquity, with the

¹¹⁴ S.J. Porter, *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period, 330 B.C.-A.D. 400*, Leiden: Brill, 2001, 120-125.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Posidonius in D. M. Schenkeveld, "Philosophical Prose," in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric*, 204.

¹¹⁶ Although the need to proselytize of the Hellenistic philosophical schools (Peripatetics, Epicureans, Stoics) generated a great many *protreptikoi*, most of them are now lost.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Michael Apostolius, *Collectio paroemiarum*, P.4. 7-9 in E. Leutsch, *Corpus paroemiographorum Graecorum*, v. 2, Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1965: Παροιμία ἐστὶ λόγος ὠφέλιμος, ἥτοι βιωφελής, ἐπικρύψει μετρία πολὺ τὸ χρησιμὸν ἔχων ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἢ λόγος προτρεπτικός παρὰ πᾶσαν τοῦ βίου τὴν ὁδὸν χρησιμεύων.

¹¹⁸ *Historia ecclesiastica*, 4.33.42: καὶ πρὸς Ἑλληνας δὲ αὐτῷ λόγος ἐγράφη προτρεπτικός.

¹¹⁹ Epicurus' *Letter to Menoeceus* dealt with both *protreptikoi logoi* and *parainesis*: the writer admonished the young student to pursue the study of philosophy throughout his whole life and ends with a practical advice on how to exercise himself in life. Philodemus' treatise *On the good king*, in fact a consolatory letter, offers an exposition of the appropriate behavior of military commanders which was to be applied in real life by the dedicatee. In another influential and popular *Protreptikos Logos*, Iamblichos brought together different extracts

disappearance of the old philosophical schools, in Byzantium the interest for protreptic speeches significantly decreased.¹²⁰ Another factor leading to their disappearance was the fact that other rhetorical genres, such as homilies or catechetical texts began to replace them and to fulfill a protreptic function. On the other hand, in the Palaiologan period exhortations for the study of philosophy echoing the ancient protreptic orations continued to be written. Demetrios Kydones for instance wrote a long text on the study of philosophy as a means to escape the fear of death.¹²¹ Earlier on, Theodore Metochites, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, composed a fully-fledged protreptic oration addressed to a young student who had neglected his education and dedicated himself to other preoccupations: Ἠθικὸς ἢ περὶ παιδείας. As prerequisites of a successful education Metochites identified faith (chs. 6-9) and virtue (chs. 10-14). According to him, education (παιδεία) strengthens virtue (ch. 15), helps people to overcome difficulties, and expands one's horizon by providing useful knowledge about other places and peoples. If, in his opinion, education can offer aesthetic pleasure (chs. 25-33), he also points out that there is a large group of people who consider that education does not bring any benefit (chs. 58-62). Metochites' speech highlights the utility of various disciplines like philosophy or history and it relies on the authority of philosophers such as Plato, as well as on his experience as an intellectual involved in the public affairs of the court.¹²²

In so far as the first oration is concerned, Manuel only partially adhered to this long-standing tradition. Even if he places this text in the category of advice for intellectual training, he operates an important twist: he substitutes the traditional study of philosophy with an exhortation to acquire necessary rhetorical skills useful in exercising power:

there is nothing more beneficial for the rulers than to know how to speak well. Τοῦ καλῶς ἐπίστασθαι λέγειν οὐδὲν ἂν γένοιτο λυσιτελέστερον ἄρχουσιν.¹²³

Moreover, he used less injunctions and imperatives, as it was the case in Iamblichos' *protreptic*,

from ancient philosophers, especially Aristotle's *protreptikos* addressed to the King of Cyprus whom he tried to convince of the necessity to philosophize (φιλοσοφητέον), H. Pistelli, *Iamblichi protrepticus ad fidem codicis Florentini*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1888 (repr. 1967): 3-126. Themistius' *Protreptic speech towards philosophy for the people of Nicomedia*, G. Downey, A.F. Norman, and H. Schenkl, *Themistii Orations quae supersunt*, vol. 2. Leipzig: Teubner, 1971: 97-111. In addition to a presentation of virtues for a military commander it contains admonitions for Valentinianus to pursue the study of philosophy.

¹²⁰ For a more detailed account of the *protreptikos* in Byzantium see: "Εἰσαγωγή," in Θεόδωρος Μετοχίτης. Ἠθικός, ed. I. Polemes, Athens: Kanaki, 1995, 15-49.

¹²¹ Kydones, *De contemnenda morte*, 16.5-10: τὸ γὰρ φρονεῖν καὶ νοεῖν καὶ τοῖς θείοις καὶ ἄσωμάτοις συνάπτεσθαι, and 16.25-39.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ 385a.

and instead introduced *χρεῖαι* as the major means to persuade his son of the necessity of rhetoric. Thus, in the preamble of the oration he lists the chief methods of didactic approach, analysis and comparison:

*Let us investigate the deeds of each of the above mentioned men, and what they could have achieved. Thereafter, let us compare the one who is honored in this oration, who was also such a great ruler. Σκοπῶμεν δὴ τῶν εἰρημένων ἀνδρῶν ἕκαστον, καὶ τί ποτε δεδύνηται κατορθῶσαι [...]. Ἔπειτα τὸν λόγους εὐδόκιμον τουτοισὶ παραβάλωμεν, ὄντα γε καὶ ἄλλα τοιοῦτον ἄρχοντα.*¹²⁴

This approach entailed connecting different episodes (*διηγήματα*)¹²⁵ which illustrated a positive model (*παράδειγμά τι*) of action and a hypothetical model of government (*ἐξ ὑποθέσεως*):

Such an emperor or omnipotent ruler of a community with a vigorous soul, will be the savior for his people, and highly beneficial, since he would be knowledgeable of the best course of action at all times and in all circumstances. ὁ γοῦν τοιοῦτος βασιλεύς, ἢ ὅλως ἄρχων τινῶν, ἐρρωμένως ἔχων τὴν ψυχὴν [...] ἔσται μὲν γὰρ αὐτοῖς σωτήρ, ἔσται δὲ παντοίως ὠφέλιμος, ἐν ἅπασι καιροῖς τε καὶ περιστάσεσι γινώσκων μὲν τὸ πᾶσι συνοῖσον βέλτιον πάντων ἐκείνων.¹²⁶

Manuel departs from the *protreptic* tradition in other ways as well. Here, unlike in the following orations, he is far from assuming the theoretical system of a certain philosophical school and therefore refrains from drawing on abstract arguments. Instead, the oration relies on several well-known Herodotian episodes contrasting models of rulership which typify an idea of political wisdom (*πολιτικὴ ἐπιστήμη*): the meeting between Solon the Athenian and Croesus,¹²⁷ Xerxes' campaign against Greece,¹²⁸ and the story of Gyges the Lydian king.¹²⁹ The transparent idea resulting from these stories is that wisdom and reason prevail over sheer force.

Unsurprisingly, all three narratives weave moralizing statements in their historical-mythographic fabric. Thus, each section acquires a certain vividness as in the presentation of the Persians' transfer from Asia to Europe.¹³⁰ This move allows the author to include information about the landscape where the Persian army proceeded in its march to Europe,

¹²⁴ 385a: Cf. also the method of *σύγκρισις* in 408d.

¹²⁵ The connections between different parts are often highlighted, and likewise the beginning of argument, 405d: καὶ σκοπεῖτω τις ὧδί.

¹²⁶ 404c-d.

¹²⁷ The story of Solon's meeting with Croesus, in Herodotus' version had a long career in Byzantium, e.g. in John Tzetzes, *Chiliades*, 1.4-54. Tzetzes distinguished between Herodotus and Xenophon's account: Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν Ἡρόδοτος. Ὁ Ξενοφῶν δὲ λέγει/μηδὲν τὸν Κροῖσον δυσχερὲς παθεῖν (1.54-55).

¹²⁸ 389d-401d.

¹²⁹ 401d-404c.

¹³⁰ 396c-d: ἀλλὰ μὴν ἀντὶ πεδίου τὴν ὀρεινὴν, ἀντὶ δὲ ψαμμώδους τὴν λίθων γέμουσαν, ἀντὶ δὲ λείας ὁδοῦ τὴν τραχεῖαν καὶ σκολὰν ἤλαυνε.

details meant to enhance the moral differences between ethical and non-ethical actions. Following Herodotus, Manuel describes how, while crossing from one continent to another, most Persians soldiers were unable to continue their march and died of exhaustion.¹³¹

The first narrative focuses on the meeting between Solon and Croesus (385a- 389c), during the former's visit in Lydia¹³² and recounts the dialog between the two leaders on happiness. The second section of the oration relates another episode from Herodotus, featuring Gyges, the Lydian shepherd who became king with the help of a magical ring (στροφῆ σφενδόνης). This last story, very popular with the Byzantine authors of panegyrics,¹³³ is labeled a μῦθος (401d), thus once again pointing to the progymnastic material the emperor understood to use for illustrating his moral precepts. Similarly to Croesus and Xerxes, Gyges acquired massive wealth through violence and contrivance (βία καὶ μηχανῆ).

Yet, despite the heavy usage of narrative episodes the writer's attitude towards these remains ambiguous. On the one hand the author dwells upon the narrative sections for their exemplary imagery, but on the other hand, he glosses at length on the moral content of the stories. For this reason, in adapting fully fledged narrative episodes to the moral scope of the collection, towards the end of the oration, Manuel abandons narratives and puts forward a plain model of ruler:

Wherefore, leaving aside the historical narratives, let us now compare those heroes with that *perfect man* about whom we spoke in the beginning. I mean the one who is prudent, good, and wise. Ὡστε δεῖ τῶν ἱστοριῶν ἀφήμενον [...] πειραθῆναι τουτοῖσι τοῖς ἀνδράσι παραβαλεῖν ἐκεῖνον δὴ τὸν ἄριστον ἄνδρα, ὃν ἐξ ὑποθέσεως ὑπεθέμεθα καταρχὰς εὐθύς. Λέγω δὴ τὸν φρόνιμον καὶ ἀγαθὸν καὶ σοφόν.¹³⁴

Second oration

Beginning with the second oration, the focus shifts from symbolic and mythological representations of the best forms of government to the discussion of abstract notions of moral philosophy. In terms of subject matter and formulation, these *speeches* are interconnected and constitute a distinct group in the collection, different from the inaugurating protreptic lecture and the last two homilies.¹³⁵ By and large, they echo the genre of philosophical essays defined

¹³¹ Cf. 396c: τοὺς δ' οὐκ ἀρκοῦντας ἀκολουθεῖν, τούτους δ' ἐς κόρακας.

¹³² The debt to Herodotus is plainly indicated, 389b: Ἐξεσι δέ σοι καθαρώτερον γινῶναι τὰ περὶ τῶνδε, εἴαν γε βουλομένῳ διεξελεθῆναι, εἴ τις τε ἄλλος περὶ τούτων ἰστόρηκε, καὶ τὰς Ἡροδότου Μούσας.

¹³³ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 241.27: σεμνυόμενοι μᾶλλον αὐτοῖς ἢ τῇ σφενδόνη Γύγης καὶ πλατάνῳ Κῦρος χρυσῆ.

¹³⁴ 405 a.

¹³⁵ For instance, the link between the second and the fourth and fifth orations on pleasure is established by using the same categories of individuals (οἱ ἀγαθοὶ and οἱ φαῦλοι) who generate conflicting definitions of the moral

as prose monologues on selected theoretical problems.¹³⁶ Yet, they cannot be fully integrated in the tradition of philosophical writing given that they are tuned to the *protreptic* tone of the first and the last two orations. For this reason, in these four *Oration*s the discussion of abstract themes is frequently supplemented by explanatory examples of how different categories of individuals understand notions like the *moral good* (τὸ ἀγαθόν) working in the real world.

The author frequently claims that, in formulating his moral counseling, he relies on working philosophical definitions borrowed from other authoritative sources, mainly ancient philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, or, less frequently, the Scriptures.¹³⁷ Concepts drawn from Aristotle's *Nicomachean ethics*, such as actuality (ἐντελέχεια) or happiness (εὐδαιμονία), are pervasive even if they are never treated systematically.¹³⁸ In fact, the *Nicomachean ethics* or one of its *paraphrases* which circulated in Byzantium¹³⁹ seems to have constituted the model for these four orations since the major concerns of the Stagirite can be identified here in an almost identical sequence: the moral good (τὸ ἀγαθόν), virtues, happiness, voluntary and involuntary, and the nature of pleasure.¹⁴⁰ This second oration, inaugurating the philosophical part of the *Oration*s, deals with the first three issues.

Arguably inspired by Plato's and Aristotle's ethical insights, Manuel is not interested in building the self-portrait of a philosopher, but theorizes and puts into practice a proper style for a set of norms of proper demeanor. Several contemporary examples can shed further light on the authorial role he envisaged for himself and consequently on the text's functions. George Gemistos Plethon's contemporary treatise *On virtues*, dealing with similar themes, opens with a definition of virtues and continues in distinct successive stages towards definitions of different types of virtues.¹⁴¹ Plethon's declared aim was to treat with precision the topic of virtues.¹⁴² For this reason he sharply divided virtues between general-γενικαί and special-εἰδικαί. A section of the treatise, titled *Division of virtues* (Διαίρεσις τῶν ἀρετῶν) describes virtues in an abstract fashion, according to precise criteria and not according to the context of

good: οὔτοι καὶ τοὺς φαύλους ἀνθρώπους ἀγαθοὺς νομίζουσιν εἶναι, καὶ τοὺς ἀθλίους εὐδαίμονας [...] ὁ βίος δὲ αὐτοῖς τρυφῆς καὶ πλέον οὐδέν (412 c-d).

¹³⁶ K. Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/byzantine-philosophy/>

¹³⁷ Cf. 417c: λήξαντι γὰρ ἀκολουθεῖ τὸνναντίον, κατὰ Πλάτωνα, and 420c: Καὶ εἰ ταῦτα ἀληθῆ, πῶς οὐ μέγα ἄνθρωπος, κατὰ τὴν Γραφήν, ἀγαθοῖς ἔργοις χαίρων;

¹³⁸ 417b: δι' ἐντελέθειαν πράξεων μοχθηρῶν.

¹³⁹ L. Benakis, "Aristotelian Ethics in Byzantium," in *Medieval Greek commentaries on the Nicomachean ethics*, Leiden: Brill, 2009. 63-73.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. the similar order of chapters in the *Nicomachean ethics*.

¹⁴¹ ἀρετὴ ἐστὶν ἕξις καθ' ἣν ἀγαθοὶ ἐσμεν. Cf. Aristotle, *Eudemian ethics*, 1219a.32: ἡ δ' ἀρετὴ βελτίστη ἕξις.

¹⁴² Plethon, *On virtues*, a. 2.1: ῥητέον δὲ αὐθις δι' ἀκριβείας μᾶλλον περὶ αὐτῶν, ἀρξαμένοις ἀπὸ τῆς ἀτελεστάτης, ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν τελεωτάτην κατὰ φύσιν ἰοῦσι.

political action:

The general virtues are prudence, justice, courage, and wisdom while the special ones are fear of God, good judgment-derived from prudence, holiness, statehood, kindness- derived from courage, and moderation, freedom, and decorum- derived from wisdom. Τῶν ἀρετῶν γενικαὶ μὲν, φρόνησις, δικαιοσύνη, ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη, εἰδικαὶ δέ, τῇ μὲν φρονήσει ὑποδιαιρούμεναι, θεοσέβεια, εὐβουλία, τῇ δὲ δικαιοσύνη, ὀσιότης, πολιτεία, χρηστότης, τῇ δὲ ἀνδρεία, εὐψυχία, γενναιότης, πραότης, τῇ δὲ σωφροσύνη, μετριότης, ἐλευθεριότης, κοσμιότης.¹⁴³

Slightly later on, the cardinal Bessarion writing on virtues and influenced by Aristotle, used a similar technical philosophical style in his treatise *On Substance* against Plethon.¹⁴⁴ When dealing with definitions of moral categories, both Plethon and Bessarion assumed a style different from Manuel's, characterized by technical precision and oriented towards argumentation and not towards the application of theoretical definitions to individual *ethos*.

Another contemporary attempt to systematize virtues belongs to one of the emperor's closest friends and collaborators, Manuel Chrysoloras, author of an extended commentary on Manuel's *Funeral Oration on Theodore, Despot of Morea*.¹⁴⁵ Basing his account on the lists of topics provided by the ancient rhetorical theory, Chrysoloras uses an approach comparable to Manuel's hierarchic treatment of virtues while also drawing on Aristotle's *Ethics*.¹⁴⁶ Still, he proposes a different and essentially hierarchic view where justice (δικαιοσύνη) and not humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη) is positioned on top.¹⁴⁷

In contrast to these texts, Manuel did not comply to the rules of a philosophical systematic style of writing as clearcut theoretical distinctions are rare.¹⁴⁸ They are treated in a different fashion developed on top of Manuel's political experience. Claiming a certain authority over the ensuing statements and foretelling his personal view about the ruler's virtues, the emperor gears the text towards personal reflection right from the opening statement of the oration:

I consider, and I think that everyone agrees, that not only the earnest and good men, but also the wicked and the evil ones hate wickedness on account of their nature. ἐγὼ νομίζω καὶ πάντας οἶμαι τῇ δόξει ταύτη συνθέσθαι, μὴ μόνον τὸν σπουδαῖον καὶ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν φαῦλον καὶ πονηρὸν ἄνθρωπον, μισοπόνηρον καὶ φιλόκαλον

¹⁴³ Plethon, *On virtues*, b. 14.17-21.

¹⁴⁴ George Gemistos Plethon, *On substance against Plethon*, ed. L. Mohler, *Aus Bessarions Gelehrtenkreis: Abhandlungen, Reden, Briefe*, Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1942: 149-150.

¹⁴⁵ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. the definition of virtues similar to the one used by Plethon: ἀρετὴ ἐστὶ ἕξις καθ' ἣν ἄνθρωπος ἀγαθὸς γίνεται, *Epistolary discourse*, 129.13.

¹⁴⁷ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *A Hundred Letters*, 91.3.

¹⁴⁸ E.g. 420b: ἀρετὴ γὰρ ἀνεργητος (not actualized or realized) ἀμωσγέπως ἄκοσμος (somehow disorderly).

εἶναι αὐτῇ τῇ φύσει.

The text is divided into two distinct but related parts- first, on moral good and evil and, second, drawing from the previous part, on virtues and their aim, happiness. The opposition between moral good and evil is dramatized, by contrasting the views of those who hate knavery and are good (μισοπόνηροι καὶ ἀγαθοί), on the one hand, and, on the other hand the opinions of the φαυλότεροι.¹⁴⁹ This strategy allows him to avoid the intricacies of philosophical argumentation and focus further on adding moral glosses about other categories of individuals. Therefore, at times, it is not the notion of good that seems to matter, but rather the construction of different moral individual characters. The emphasis on character and not on concepts *per se* is further revealed by the introduction of another moral category: the half-evil people (οἱ ἡμίφαυλοι).¹⁵⁰ Subsequently, each of the concerned parties is set to produce in turn its own definition of virtue and good life.¹⁵¹

Third oration

Building on the preoccupations of the previous *logos*,¹⁵² the third oration deals with a similar range of aspects regarding the notion of a natural good as common to everyone. Here, Manuel takes a further step in his argument for a virtuous life and, like in the *Foundations*, he introduces several notions borrowed from Aristotle's *Ethics*:¹⁵³ voluntary, involuntary, and non-voluntary actions, as well as the conscious choice of the course of life, προαίρεσις:

It remains therefore to argue why some people act in some way, while others act in a different way, although we have a similar nature. And we say that this happens because of our different choices. ἔστι δὲ λοιπὸν φάναι, διατὶ οἱ μὲν τοῦτο, οἱ δὲ ἐκεῖνο γινόμεθα, μιᾶς τιμῆς καὶ φύσεως ἤξιωμένοι. Καὶ φάμεν, διὰ τὴν προαίρεσιν μόνην.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ 413a: αὐται μὲν οὖν αἱ κρίσεις τῶν φαυλοτέρων περὶ τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον.

¹⁵⁰ 413a-b: παρὰ δὲ τοῖς ἡμίφαυλοις ὡς ἂν τις εἴποι, καὶ τινος φιλοτιμίας μετέχουσι, τῶν τῇ τρυφῇ καὶ ῥαθυμίᾳ προσηλωμένων μακαριώτερος δήπου φαίνεται ὁ διὰ χοροῦς ἀνδραπόδων, καὶ οἰκετῶν πλήθη, καὶ τὴν ἄλλην τῶν πραγμάτων ἀφθονίαν, καὶ πολὺ ἀργύριον ἀφειδῶς ἀναλισκόμενον τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἀνώτερος γινόμενος.

¹⁵¹ For instance, we find the view on the moral good of the φαυλοί in two instances 413a: αὐται μὲν οὖν αἱ κρίσεις τῶν φαυλοτέρων περὶ τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον, καὶ οὕτω τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν ὀρίζονται and 413c: ἀλλ' ἐκ τῆς ἐκβάσεως μόνης τουτοῖσι τὰ πράγματα κρίνεται, τὴν ἀρετὴν μετροῦσι τοῖς εὐτυχήμασιν, ἄκροις (ὅ φάσι) δακτύλοις τῶν πραγμάτων ἐφαπτομένοις. Eventually, Manuel insists on the gap dividing the two groups of individuals with different opinions on the definition of moral good, 416b: [...] Οἱ δὲ ἀγαθοὶ καὶ νουνεχέστεροι τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῷ ὅλῳ καὶ τῷ παντί, τῇ προαίρεσει καὶ τῇ παιδεύσει τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν λογιζονται.

¹⁵² 420d: δέδεικται μὲν, ὡς ἠγοῦμαι, τὸ προκειμένον ἡμῖν ἱκανῶς, καὶ πέρας ὁ λόγος εἴληφε προσῆκον αὐτῷ.

¹⁵³ Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 1223a.21-1223a.27: ληπτέον ἄρα τί τὸ ἐκούσιον καὶ τί τὸ ἀκούσιον, καὶ τί ἐστιν ἡ προαίρεσις, ἐπειδὴ ἡ ἀρετὴ καὶ ἡ κακία ὀρίζεται τούτοις, πρῶτον σκεπτέον τὸ ἐκούσιον καὶ τὸ ἀκούσιον. τριῶν δὲ τούτων ἓν τι δόξειεν <ἂν> εἶναι, ἤτοι κατ' ὄρεξιν ἢ κατὰ προαίρεσιν ἢ κατὰ διάνοιαν, τὸ μὲν ἐκούσιον κατὰ τούτων τι, τὸ δ' ἀκούσιον παρὰ τούτων τι. ἀλλὰ μὴν ἢ ὄρεξις εἰς τρία διαιρεῖται, εἰς βούλησιν καὶ θυμὸν καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν.

¹⁵⁴ 421 a.

Owing to the complexity of his argument, more than in the previous orations, Aristotle and Plato constitute here the major sources of authority.¹⁵⁵ The method employed here is similar to the previous oration by creating a contrast between conflicting definitions coming from different groups of individuals.

Fourth oration

As mentioned, the fourth and the fifth orations deal with another major topic in ethical philosophy, pleasure, which, in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* was discussed right after the topic of will. Like in the previous orations, here the argument is constructed in an orderly manner which takes shape in several successive stages.¹⁵⁶ The oration emphasizes the negative sides of pleasure and, for this reason, it resembles a *psogos*, only that it was addressed against an emotion and not against a person. Here, Plato is quoted as supreme authority and source for this current of opinion.¹⁵⁷

Two major aspects stand out with regard to this oration: first, the author states that the negative view on pleasure does not necessarily coincide with his opinion but it comes from people with a restricted definition of pleasure. Second, for a greater effect, pleasure is personified as a plague in a long tirade exemplifying its damages. The negative hues of the personification of pleasure somehow breaks the balanced account of moral notions suggesting that such a perspective was excessive and the emperor-author did not entirely agree with it.

Who could possibly describe its modes, its contrivances, or its versatility? For it always takes delight in cunning by which it inflicts indignities upon everyone. It is just as others represented it, "It takes on," they say "the mask of the benefit and of the good." πῶς ἄν τις ὅλος, τοὺς ἐκείνης τρόπους, τὰς μηχανάς, τὰς ποικιλίας ἐξείποι; δόλοισ γὰρ αἰεὶ χαίρει, ἐν οἷς καὶ μᾶλλον πᾶσι λυμαίνεται. Ὡσπερὲ γὰρ διαζωγραφοῦντες αὐτήν, Ὑποδύεται, φασί, τὸ πρωσοπεῖον τοῦ καλοῦ τε καὶ συνοίσοντος.¹⁵⁸

Thus, here, the arguments of the previous sections were replaced by long vituperations, where the length and the intensity of the hyperbolic descriptions of the damages of pleasure contrasts with the author's previous more tempered opinions.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ 432b: Ἀριστοτέλους δὲ τοῦτο φωνή and 437c: κατὰ τὸν Πλάτωνα. One might add the Old Testament, 425a: δεῖ γὰρ γυμνοὺς γεννηθέντας γυμνοὺς καὶ ἀπιέναι, κατὰ τὴν Ἰωβ ἐκείνου φωνήν.

¹⁵⁶ 449c-d: καὶ τί ἄν πρῶτον εἴπομεν; τί δὲ ὕστατον; τί δὲ μέσον τῶν ἐκείνη πρὸς ἡμᾶς γιγνομένων;

¹⁵⁷ 449a: οὐδὲ γὰρ οἶμαι λεληθῆναι τὴν ψυχὴν, ὡς τῷ ἥδεσθαι αὐτοῦ ἀναγκαίως ἀκολουθεῖ τὸ λυπηρόν, κατὰ τὸν Ἀρίστωνος Πλάτωνα.

¹⁵⁸ 449c.

¹⁵⁹ In 449d a long personification accounts for the insidious mechanisms of pleasure: πειρᾷ μὲν ἅπασιν τρόποις ἡ δυσμενῆς (ὡς γὰρ ἔμψυχον αὐτὴν νῦν πῶς εἰς μέσον ἐξοίσομεν). Δελεάζει δὲ κακοηθείᾳ ἐσχάτη· καὶ πᾶσι γίνεται πάντα, πρὸς ἀνατροπὴν τῶν χρηστοτέρων ἡθῶν. Σύμβουλος αὐτόκλητος ἔπεισι, καὶ τὴν ῥαστώνην

Fifth oration

Essentially, the fifth oration which deals with the same theme, pleasure, is a response to the previous essay. In terms of theoretical approach, if in the fourth oration the emperor claimed to rely on the authority of Plato's dialogs, this one draws on Aristotle's balanced account of pleasure. By contrasting these two different views on the same topic Manuel seems to employ here the dialectic method on a larger scale. If in the previous oration he expounded an alternative view of pleasure, without mentioning his position, this time Manuel states his theoretical position right after the preamble:

I contend that pleasure is good for those who want to be good, and for those who make use of it in an appropriate and honest way, it is a vital element in our lives, and by no means harmful or immoral, unless we want to abuse it. φημι οὖν εἶναι τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀγαθὸν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἐθέλουσιν εἶναι, καὶ τοῖς καλοῖς τε καὶ σεμνῶς χρωμένοις αὐτῇ τι καὶ σεμνὸν ἄντικρυς, τῷ τε βίῳ συστατικὸν ἡμῖν, καὶ μηδενός γε πρόξενον τῶν κακῶν, εἴγε ἡμεῖς βουλόμεθα.¹⁶⁰

Thus, in the case of this oration the chief goal is not only to present a different view on the topic of pleasure, but to offer a complete teaching (δόγμα) about how to deal with pleasure.¹⁶¹ This set of normative teachings about pleasure, Manuel claims, had a practical purpose, namely to help those people afflicted by wrong convictions regain the path of righteousness.¹⁶² For this reason, the oration marks a break with the previous *logoi* by departing from an expository manner and providing a first attempt to expose practical solutions on how to undertake actions that involve passions or emotions.¹⁶³ As a result, this appears to be the only oration in the collection where normative accounts of behavior, as distinguished from abstract moral prescriptions, occupy most of the text.¹⁶⁴

Sixth oration

By far the longest in the series, the sixth oration¹⁶⁵ is sharply divided into two parts: first (484a-

θαυμάζουσα, κακίζει πάνθ' ἃ δίδωσιν ἀγῶνα σώμασι καὶ ψυχαῖς, νοσοποιὰ ταυτὶ καλοῦσα. Τῇ τε γὰρ σαρκί, τῷ τε πνεύματι, συχνήν τινα ζάλην καὶ ταραχὴν ἐμποιεῖν αὐτὰ λέγει.

¹⁶⁰ 464c.

¹⁶¹ 465b: ὅθεν δὴ διὰ πλειόνων ἐκθέμενος τὸν λόγον, ὀρθῶς γε ἔχον δεῖξω τὸ δόγμα, ἀνάγκαις, οἶμαι, πρεπούσαις.

¹⁶² 461d: εἰ γὰρ τὸ πλανᾶσθαι λίαν κακόν, τὸ δὲ πλανωμένους ὀρθοῦν πειρᾶσθαι, βοηθεῖν αὐτοῖς ἐστὶ, καὶ τὸ βοηθεῖν τοῖς ὁμογενέσιν εἰς δύναμιν ἅπασι χρέος κοινόν. Cf. also 464a: βούλομαι δὲ τινος πλάνης ἐλευθεροῦν ἐνίου, ἥδη πειρώμενος προασφαλίσασθαι τοὺς ἀκροατάς, ὡς μὴ πειραθεῖν ἐτέρας πλάνης.

¹⁶³ See 505c: δεῖ γὰρ καρτερώτερον διαμάχεσθαι τοῖς τῶν ἐχθίστων ἰσχυροτέροις.

¹⁶⁴ 505d. οἷ γὰρ τὰ οἰκεῖα οὐκ ἴσμεν, καὶ πολλῶ γε μάλλον τὰ τῶν ἐτέρων ἡμεῖς καὶ κατακρίνομεν καὶ ἀπογινώσκομεν, καὶ εὐχερῶς μισοῦμεν τοὺς ἀδελφούς, ἐπειδὴν ἀμαρτῶσι, χειρὸν αὐτῶν πολλακίς διακείμενοι.

¹⁶⁵ "That sin is the worst thing; nobody has to despair, not of himself, not of someone else, must judge himself, but not someone else; and not hate the sinners, but have pity; and on repentance, and God's providence, and on love and philanthropy."

505a), the actual homiletic section on the “greatest of all sins,” despair (ἀπόγνωσις), and second (505a-528c),¹⁶⁶ a direct admonition to young John concerning the relation with people lower in rank and furthering the implications of other themes approached in the previous part: God's love and mercy. The demarcation line between the two sections of the oration emerges in the address to the son in 505a: *for now I turn back to you* (πρὸς σὲ γὰρ ἐπαναστρέφω).

The two distinct and loosely connected parts of equal size may constitute a reason for the unusual length of the oration, more than double in size of the other orations. In motivating the extent of the second part Manuel states that the significance of the envisaged topic demanded a lengthier account: *I will multiply the oration, as I see that the suffering took hold on you* (πολυπλασιάσω τὸν λόγον, πολὺ τὸ πάθος κρατοῦν ὀρῶν).¹⁶⁷

As for the aims and the content of the sixth oration, they can also be evaluated by looking into its fate: after it was written and delivered as part of the “ethico-political” series, the emperor reused it *verbatim* sometime between between 1408 and 1410 in a homily on St. Mary of Egypt delivered on the occasion of a religious feast.¹⁶⁸ In the *prooimion* of the homily which followed the recitation of the *vita* of St. Mary of Egypt, Manuel established the connection with the sixth oration:

The oration which will be delivered now belongs to the series of orations which I had already addressed to my son and emperor. As I consider that it fits very well the present feast, I will present it now. Ὁ τοίνυν ῥηθισόμενος ἤδη λόγος ἔστι μὲν ἐκ τῶν ἡμῖν εἰρημένων πρὸς τὸν υἱὸν τε καὶ βασιλέα [...] δόξας δὲ πάνυ συμβαίνειν τῇ παρουσίᾳ ἑορτῆς, ταύτη παρ’ ἡμῶν νῦν προσφέρεται.¹⁶⁹

Information about this homily,¹⁷⁰ and implicitly about the fate of the oration, comes from one of Manuel's letters addressed to his friend, Gabriel, metropolitan of Thessalonike whom he had asked to further distribute his text.¹⁷¹

The close relationship with the *Homily on Saint Mary of Egypt* suggests that the text was geared towards a genre that significantly differed from previous ones. Thus, it included

¹⁶⁶ This was not a new topic for Manuel who dealt with it in another homily, on the Mother of God (M. Jugie, *Homelies Mariales*). Written after the recovery from an illness (χαλεπωτάτης νόσου, 2-3), the homily is an exhortation against fear of death, distress provoked by the numerous torments in one's life, taking the image of the Mother of God as model of how to deal with suffering. Cf. 562-566 and the *hypothesis* (543.19-24) of the homily: Καὶ ταῦθ’ ὡσπερ τινὰ πορισάμενος ὕλην διαιρεῖ, καὶ δείκνυσι τοὺς τρόπους, οἷς ὁ θάνατος φοβερός τοῖς ἀνθρώποις γίνεται, καὶ τέλος παραινεῖ μὴ λυπεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ συγχαίρειν τῇ θεοτόκῳ τῆς πρὸς τὸν Υἱὸν μεταστάσεως.

¹⁶⁷ 505c.

¹⁶⁸ See above the “Introduction” of the present Unit.

¹⁶⁹ Vat. gr. 1619, f. 15v. See Appendix 9.

¹⁷⁰ This still unedited homily has been transmitted in two codices, Vat. gr. 1619, fols. 15r-29v32 and Vat. gr. 632, fols. 336r-350v33.

¹⁷¹ Manuel, *Letters*, 52.

features particular to a homily such as the constant reminding of the Christian basic doctrinal truths, or the inclusion of much more Biblical quotations than in the previous orations. The topics approached, (ἁμαρτία, ἀπογιγνώσκειν, κρίνειν δὲ ἑαυτὸν καὶ οὐχ ἕτερον, τοὺς ἡμαρτηκότας οὐ μισεῖν, ἐλεημοσύνη, μετάνοια, ἀγάπη, and φιλανθρωπία) often popped up in Byzantine homilies. In this case as well, the homiletic approach justified the manner of addressing a larger audience in a more direct way by pointing to ways of how to correct sins.¹⁷²

In comparison with the previous texts, this oration does not teach by presenting new perspectives or arguments but projects a model of behavior within a set of previously known truths of Christian doctrine. It relies on the Christological model of rulership¹⁷³ and it often turns to the *paraenetic* depository of the Bible.¹⁷⁴ The authority of the Bible¹⁷⁵ and of the patristic authors replaces Plato and Aristotle and the references from Church Fathers like Gregory of Nazianz or John Chrysostom, who provided models of exegetic homily are much more frequent than in other orations.¹⁷⁶ Resembling a fully fledged homily, at least in the first section, the text partly abandons the appeal to classical sources and instead it supports the prescriptive statements with biblical passages.

The focus moves within a range of topics that includes a general discussion of Christian tenets and representations of divine acts¹⁷⁷ as well as an ideal model of earthly rulership reflecting divine πρόνοια.¹⁷⁸ In the first section the emperor attempts to wrap up the previous conclusions on moral good, will, and emotions in a more explicit Christian framework.¹⁷⁹ Yet, despite the shift in theoretical orientation, the connection with the other orations in the collection still emerges in various instances. Continuing the preoccupation of the fifth oration to identify ways to apply theoretical norms to daily behavior, the emphasis now falls on concrete steps to avoid emotions like despair, instead of dwelling upon representations of concepts, a strategy which echoes the fifth oration. Manuel states *expressis verbis* the precise

¹⁷² At this point, the oration uses widely the first person plural, 497b: τὰ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ἄλλων ὀξέως ὀρώμεν· πρὸς δὲ τὰ οἰκεῖα κακὰ οὔτε ὀφθαλμὸν ἔχομεν, οὔτε οὖς, οὔτε γνῶσιν, οὔτε μὴν ἐθέλομεν ἔχειν.

¹⁷³ Cf. 560c.

¹⁷⁴ E.g., 505b: ὡς ἡ Γραφή παραίνει, 509d: διὰ τὸ γεγενῆσθαί σε ἐγκαταλελειμμένην καὶ μεμισημένην καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ βοηθῶν (Isaiah, 60, 15-2).

¹⁷⁵ There are numerous examples especially in the first part, 508a: ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστὶ, κατὰ τὸν φίλον Ἀπόστολον, τί ποτ' ἂν γένοιτο κοινὸν τῷ Θεῷ πρὸς τὸ μῖσος;

¹⁷⁶ 516b: καὶ ταῦτα μὲν τῆδε· ἡμῖν δὲ ἄρα βέλτιον μὴ δευτέρας δεηθῆναι καθάρσεως, ἀλλὰ στήναι μέχρι τῆς πρώτης, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Θεολόγου φωνήν, 505a: οἱ γὰρ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, φησὶν ἢ χρυσοῦ Γλώττα, τῶν μὲν ἰδίων ἁμαρτημάτων συνήγοροι γίνονται, τῶν δ' ἄλλοτρίων κατήγοροι.

¹⁷⁷ 512c

¹⁷⁸ 513B: οὐδεὶς ἀπόβλητος τῷ δημιουργῷ, οὐδεὶς ἐν λήθῃ τοῦ προνοῦντος πάντων ἐξῆς, οὐδεὶς ἐν μίσει τοῦ ἀπαθοῦς, οὐκ ἐν ἀμελείᾳ τινὶ, οὐκ ἐν οὐδενὶ τῶν τοιούτων.

¹⁷⁹ Statements like in 496c: ψυχῆς γὰρ θάνατον δεῖ νοεῖν τὸ κεχωρίσθαι Θεοῦ are absent from previous orations where doctrinal principles seem much more loose.

aims of the oration:

These were my aims from the beginning. To advise everyone to come in tearful repentance in front of the one who calls the sinners to repent and who gives living water to the thirsty ones. ἄ μοι σκοπὸς ἦν ἐξαρχῆς. Ἐκεῖνο δ' ἄν τοῖς ἅπασιν συμβουλεύσαιμι [...] προσδραμεῖν ἐν μετανοίᾳ καὶ δάκρυσιν τῷ καλοῦντι τοὺς ἁμαρτωλοὺς εἰς μετάνοιαν, τοὺς διψῶντας ἐπὶ τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ.¹⁸⁰

The second section includes more concrete references to individual moral faults¹⁸¹ while the final section reiterates the didactic purpose of the oration.¹⁸²

Then, having addressed directly his son, Manuel returns to the purpose of his oration,¹⁸³ Such statements constitute a framework for subsequent observations on the imperial image.¹⁸⁴ He speaks of the *θεραπεία*, probably an allusion to the fact that John had to repent for several previous mistakes. The last passage connects the sixth oration to the following one by approaching *φιλανθρωπία* and *ἀγάπη* as divine virtues and ends in the fashion of a homily: αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα ἅμα τῷ Πατρὶ, καὶ ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι, εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀμήν.

Seventh oration

The topic of the seventh oration, the two Christian cardinal virtues, humility and love, connects the text with the previous oration in a kind of a disguised homily. Like in the preceding text, the oration constructs an ethical argument in two distinct phases: first, a presentation of several Christian precepts (533c-d) and second, a direct address to John openly criticizing his behavior. Now, having expounded different ethical issues and because this final oration strives to sum up the entire collection, Manuel alludes more frequently to the kinship connection with his son and formulates the political upshot of the entire series of orations. The proem of the *λόγος* implies that this text stood as a conclusion of the entire collection. Moreover, it is here that by mentioning the *κεφάλαια*, the emperor considered both works as complementing each other.

This affection of mine for you generated these many speeches together with a

¹⁸⁰ 525b. In addition to the connection with the practical side to be found in the second speech on pleasure, Manuel also provides a strong link with the orations on will and choice, 485b: λέγω δὲ βούλησιν νῦν τὴν διὰ τῶν ἔργων μαρτυρουμένην [...] Ἐκ γὰρ τοῦ μὴ βούλεσθαι ἰαθῆναι τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς παθήματα ἐπιμένειν εἴωθεν ἡμῖν.

¹⁸¹ 497a: εἴτε γὰρ νωθεῖα τίς ἐστι τὸ διαβαλλόμενον, εἴτ' ὀλιγωρία πρὸς τάγαθόν, ἢ ὃ τί περ ἂν τῶν ὀπωσοῦν οὐ καλῶν [...].

¹⁸² 528a: καὶ διὰ ταῦτα τοῖς πᾶσιν ἂν παραινέσαιμι, καὶ πρό γε πάντων τῆ ἑμαυτοῦ ψυχῆ, μὴ ταῦτα πράττειν ἡμᾶς ἐθέλειν, δι' ἃ δεήσει πολλῶν δακρύων καὶ στεναγμῶν, ἐπὶ τὴν ἀρίστην ὁδὸν ἐπιστρέψασιν· ἀλλ' ἐκείνων ἔχεσθαι, οἷς ἂν εἴη καθαρῶς ἠδῆσθαι.

¹⁸³ 513b: ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς, ὧ φίλτατε, πᾶσι τοῖς τοιοῦτοις χαίρειν εἰπόντες, τὸν προκειμένον ἡμῖν ἐξεργαζώμεθα λόγον. Οὐδεὶς ἀπόβλητος τῷ δημιουργῷ.

¹⁸⁴ 513c-516b.

letter (i.e. the opening letter of the Foundations). τοῦτό μοι τὸ φίλτρον εἰργάσατο τοὺς τε λόγους τουτουσὶ τοὺς πολλοὺς καὶ τὰ πρὸς σε κεφάλαια σὺν ἐπιστολαῖς.¹⁸⁵

Like in the sixth oration, here the method of advice marks a shift from the *philosophical* orations: illustrative stories or argumentation based on ancient philosophers disappear, because, as Manuel states, his intention was to confront John's deeds with the Christian eternal truths and the divine revelation:

And the Saviour made it clear when he addressed his disciples with the following words: You can do nothing without me. There will be no need of words for me, nor of the ancients, nor of the moderns, with which to indicate the truthfulness of the <divine> doctrine. I will not make use of examples, nor of syllogisms. Καὶ δηλοῖ τὸ τῷ Σωτῆρι πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς εἰρημένον, Χωρὶς ἐμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν. [...] Οὐ δὴ δεήσει μοι λόγων, οὔτε παλαιῶν, οὔτε νέων, οἷς ἂν ἦν συστήσαι τοῦτο τὸ δόγμα ἀληθές. Οὐ παραδείγμασι χρήσομαι, οὐ συλλογισμοῖς.¹⁸⁶

Despite the topic similar to the subject matter of the sixth oration, it turns out that biblical references are much more rare than in the sixth *logos*. Instead, the oration rather combines citations from patristic authors,¹⁸⁷ absent in previous texts, with the usual appeal to the authority of classical authors: Plato,¹⁸⁸ Demosthenes,¹⁸⁹ or Homer.¹⁹⁰

The first section offers an account of the highest virtue, humility, mirroring the *incipit* of the previous oration which dealt with the “worst of sins:”

This divine and much praised virtue, humility, is adorned from many sides with an immense beauty and attracts everyone to it, and makes the others love it with a wise madness. τὸ θεῖον τοίνυν καὶ πολυύμητον χρῆμα ἢ ταπεινοφροσύνη, πολλαχόθεν οὔσα κοσμία, καὶ σὺν ἀμηχάνῳ κάλλει περιουσα, πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἐφέλκεται πάντας, καὶ ποιεῖται ἑαυτῆς ἔραστὰς μετὰ μανίας σώφρονος.¹⁹¹

Then it proceeds to a related topic and extends the discussion to another Christian fundamental virtue, love, by summarizing the previous discussion on humility:

Having thus spoken, it is also necessary to speak in a more concise manner about the other virtue, that is love, which can be defined as both mother and nourisher, root and foundation for the system of virtues, a guide for all those who proceed

¹⁸⁵ 529c-d.

¹⁸⁶ 548d.

¹⁸⁷ For instance John Chrysostom, 548c: τοῦτο δὲ τοσοῦτον κακὸν ὥστε καὶ τὸν Χρυσορρημονά που διδάξει βέλτιον σαφῶς εἶναι μὴ πράξαι τι τῶν καλῶν καὶ ὑπὸ δίκην ἑαυτὸν μεγίστην ὑπολαμβάνειν, ἢ κατορθοῦντα οἶσθαι πάντων ἕξις ὑπερκεῖσθαι.

¹⁸⁸ E.g. 529c: οὐδὲ γὰρ Φαῖδρον ἀγνοῶ, εἰ μὴ καὶ ἐμαυτοῦ ἐπιλέλησμαι, κατὰ τὸν Ἀρίστωνος Πλάτωνα.

¹⁸⁹ 529b: Καὶ ταύτην τὴν γνώμην εἶπε μὲν τις τῶν πάλοι θαυμαζομένων ἐπὶ σοφίᾳ (Δημοσθένης οὗτος ἐστίν, οὗ μετὰ μνήμης ἀγαθῆς ὁ διὰ μέσου πᾶς χρόνος διατετήρηκε τοῦνομα.)

¹⁹⁰ 533a: ὥστε ἔρωμένως ἔχειν ἐφ' οἷς πολλ' ἐμόγησα Ὀμηρικῶς εἰπεῖν and 529d: ᾧ γὰρ λαοὶ τ' ἐπιτετράφαται, καὶ τόσσα μέμηλε, εἶπεν ὁ ποιητής (Homer, *Iliad*, 2.25); 421d: ὅλως δὲ τὰ λυπηρὰ εἰς ἑαυτὰ στρεφόμενα, ὡς τὰ πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάττης κύματα διαλύεται.

¹⁹¹ 533d-536a. Cf. also 541b: ἀγαθὴ γάρ ἐστι καθ' αὐτήν, ὡς εἰρηνικὴ καὶ πραοτάτη, ὃ δὲ Θεοῦ ἐστίν ἴδιον.

towards virtue. Εἰ δέ δὴ καὶ τοῦτο χρεῶν ἔστι, συνελόντας ἡμᾶς εἰπεῖν ὡσπερεῖ κεφαλαιωδέστερον, ἑκατέρας τοῦργον καὶ τὸ ἴδιον ἔστι μὲν ἡ ἀγάπη, μήτηρ τε ἅμα, καὶ τρόφος, καὶ ρίζα, καὶ κρηπὶς ἄντικρυς τῷ τῶν ἀρετῶν συστήματι, ἀρχή τε τοῖς ὀδεύουσι πρὸς ἀρετὴν ἅπασι.¹⁹²

Having given an account of humility as virtue and of its relation with other values like moderation, Manuel proceeds to an account of the means to attain these virtues. This passage makes the transition to the section of advice for his son, John, and, like in the previous oration it is marked by a direct address.¹⁹³ Then, before an account regarding types of behavior contrary to humility, such as arrogance (ὑπερηφάνεια) and tendency to quarrel (ζιζάνιον), the author points out that one has to measure carefully his means of attaining the ends of his actions.¹⁹⁴

The first step in providing counsel consisted in correcting John's erroneous beliefs which he held with regard to other people lower in rank and made known probably after a dialog with the emperor.¹⁹⁵ Thereafter, the address to John takes the accents of a radical criticism. John is advised to repent immediately for his actions. Although it is not entirely clear how literally this advice should have been taken, the public assessment of the co-emperor's behavior was probably meant to create the image of an emperor concerned with his son's and successor's education:

But you my beloved, be humble and mourn. For you have to be aware that you are not willing to be good. Σὺ δέ γε φίλτατε [...] ταπεινοφρόνει καὶ πένθει. δεῖ γὰρ εἰδέναι τῆδε σαυτὸν οὐκ ἐθέλοντα καλὸν εἶναι.¹⁹⁶

Even if Manuel does not provide further details about these actions which require repentance, from the above allusions it is likely that they had to do with approaching the courtiers in an irreverent manner. It is for this reason that the final section includes advice as to what kind of behavior John should avoid:

Since you do everything good, do not act arrogantly. For you do not acquire authority because of evilness towards someone else but because of your deeds. Σοῦ

¹⁹² 541d.

¹⁹³ 545b: ἀλλ' ἐρεῖς, ὦ φίλτατε.

¹⁹⁴ 545b-c: χρὴ γὰρ προστιθέναι τοὺς τρόπους, δι' ὧν γένοιτο σαῖς εὐχαῖς τὸν πλοῦτον τοῦτον ἡμᾶς πλουτῆσαι [...] ἀλλὰ σοὶ μὲν, ὦ γαθὲ τοιαῦτα λέγοντι τὸ γιγνόμενον εἰρήσεται. Καὶ ἅπερ ἂν εὐξαίμην περὶ σου, ταῦτα πράξεις· τουτὶ δὲ τὸ γιγνόμενον χαλεπὸν ἐμοὶ λέγειν.

¹⁹⁵ 552d: ὥστε σοὶ ψευδὲς τὸ συμπέρασμα, καὶ προσέτι παντάπασιν ἄτοπον [...] καὶ σὺ αὐτὸς εἴρηκας, ὡς τοὺς μὲν φαύλους ἢ κόλασις, τοὺς δ' ὁ χορὸς ἐκδέχεται τῶν μακαρίων ἀνδρῶν. Ὡστε σοὶ καὶ ταῖς θέσεσι διαμάχεται, οἷς γε δοκεῖς αὐταῖς ἐπαμύνειν, καὶ γίγνεται πάντοθεν σαφές, ὡς ἔστιν ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖν καὶ μὴ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν. Ἄτοπον ἄρα σοὶ τὸ συμπέρασμα καὶ κατὰ τὸνδε τὸν λόγον. Εἰ δὲ καὶ πολλοὺς ἂν ἔχοις τοὺς συναιροῦντας, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν σοὶ πρὸς βοήθειαν ἢ τούτων συμμαχία [...] Τὸ πάθος μέντοι, τοιαῦτα λέγων, κράτιστον ἀπέφηνας· πρὸς ὃ γε καὶ αὐτὸς σοὶ ταῦτα φρονῶ.

¹⁹⁶ 533b.

γε τὰγαθὰ πάντα πράττοντος, μὴ ὑψηλοφρόνει. Οὐ γὰρ διὰ τὴν ἐκεῖνου κακίαν σπουδαῖος αὐτὸς γέγονας ἀλλ' ἀπλῶς διὰ τὰς πράξεις.¹⁹⁷

The attitude- τρόπος, becomes in the author's view the element with which one enters social transactions and which determines the success of one's actions¹⁹⁸ and, by this account, the conclusion puts forward a strong moralizing message:

This is my opinion and it has been demonstrated by all means that one must not be high-minded, even if he reached the highest authority. Ἐπεὶ ὡς ἔγωγ' ἄν φαίην, διὰ πάντων ἀποδέδεικται, μηδένα δεῖν ὑψηλοφρονεῖν, εἰ καὶ τῶν ἐς ἄκρον ἀφιγμένων.

The epistolary epilogue

Like in the preceding *Foundations*, in the *Orations* as well, Manuel included an additional text in the form of a letter that offers some details concerning the reasons for putting together this collection of essays. Yet, if in the prefatory letter of the *Foundations* Manuel tried to establish a relationship based on their kinship tie, here the manner of address is more formal probably because the text was meant for a wider audience¹⁹⁹ and the emperor wished to assert his authority more vigorously. As a matter of fact, panegyric elements dominate this final section of the *Orations* to the extent that, by projecting the image of a ruler empowered by God,²⁰⁰ this epilogue represents a rather unusual text appended to seven orations which, despite their scope, avoided any allusion to the emperor's preeminence in society.

The epilogue provides few pieces of direct counsel to John²⁰¹ and points to the necessity of following long-standing moral precepts.²⁰² It is here that Manuel operates a clearer distinction between the “new better law” promoted by himself and the “old law”:

For I seat on this throne and I am now addressing you these exhortations which are better than the ones of the previous times in so far as they reflect a new law and a new grace. If you wish, one can say that if those <exhortations of the old> reflect

¹⁹⁷ 533c.

¹⁹⁸ 548b: ἀκτέον δὴ τὸν λόγον ἐπὶ τὸν τρόπον, ᾧ ἄν τις πράξας τὸ ἀγαθὸν.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. the final address which suggests the framework of an imperial ceremonial, 560d-561a: δοίη σοι δὲ Θεὸς καὶ αὐτοῖς τοῖς πράγμασιν ὡς τάχιστα ἐπιγνῶναι, τί ποτε πατήρ ἐστι πρὸς παῖδας· ὃ καὶ ἐλπίζω καὶ εὐχομαι καὶ ταῖς ἐλπίσιν εὐφραίνομαι [...] Δός δὴ πάντας, ᾧ φίλτατε, εὐδαίμονά με νομίζειν, ὡσπερ τῷ καλὸν φῦσαι καὶ ἀγαθόν, οὕτω δὲ καὶ τῷ παιδεῦσαι, καὶ τοιοῦτον ἀποφῆναι βασιλέα τὸν υἱόν, οἷον ἂν οἱ νουνεχεῖς τῶν ὑπ' αὐτὸν εὐξαιντο.

²⁰⁰ 560c: Εἰ γὰρ καὶ θεόθεν ἀμφοτέροις τὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς, ἐμοὶ τε λέγω καὶ τῷ Μωσῆ (καὶ γὰρ κάκεινος ἡγέμων καὶ διδάσκαλος. Ταυτὶ δὲ πάντως ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐπεὶ καὶ πᾶσα ἐξουσία, κατὰ τὸν ἀπόστολον). ἀλλ' ἢ βασιλεία ἀμείνων ἡγεμονίας, αἶ γε νυνὶ διδάχαι τῶν παλαιότερων πολλῶ τελεώτεραι, ἅτε δὴ τῆς νέας Διαθήκης ἐξηρητημέναι, τῆς τελειούσης τὸν νόμον.

²⁰¹ 560a: It is allowed to me by the office I have to tell you about these things too, to obey those rules which have been set long before.

²⁰² Ibid: οὐδὲ γὰρ θέμις ἀπειθεῖν σε τοῖς δεδομένοις [...] Πολλῶ γε μᾶλλον πρέπον ἐστὶν ἐμοὶ σοι τὸ συνοῖσον λέγοντι, πείθεσθαι, εἰ δὴ καὶ μὴ τοῦτο καλῶς πράττοιμι.

the shadow of the law, mine represent a true mandate. The seat upon which I find myself now is better than the one of the olden times and it supersedes it by far, since (if I am not too daring) it mirrors God's authority. Κάθημαι γὰρ δὴ καὶ αὐτός, νυνὶ σοὶ παραινέσεις προτείνων, τοσοῦτον γε ἀμείνους τῶν τότε, ὅσον αἱ μὲν τῆς παλαιᾶς, αἱ δὲ τῆς νέας εἰσὶ νομοθεσίας καὶ χάριτος. Εἰ δὲ βούλει γε, σκιᾶς ἐκεῖναι τῆς νομικῆς, αἱ δὲ παρ' ἡμῶν αὐταὶ τοῦ τῆς ἀληθείας κηρύγματος ἔχονται. Ἡ δὲ δὴ καθέδρα, ἐφ' ἧς ἔγωγε νῦν, κρείττων ἐκείνης τῆς πρεσβυτέρας, καὶ πολλῶ τῶ περιόντι νικῶσα, ἄτε δὴ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ (εἰ μὴ τολμηρὸν εἰπεῖν) εἰκονίζουσα.²⁰³

The epilogue thus partly illuminates the choice for the subject matters approached in the orations: these different speeches including narrative, ancient philosophy or Christian principles may have served as a *vademecum*, a book containing as much knowledge as possible to be transmitted from father to son.

5.2. Between teaching and preaching: the construction of genre in the *Orations*

Having presented the contents and methods of advice specific to these seven texts, I will now deal with the genre of the *Orations*, and argue that despite its aspect of heterogeneity, this collection must be regarded as a coherent and homogeneous text.²⁰⁴ As I have pointed out in the introduction of this unit, in the present case as well, a definition of genre functional here has to consider two major aspects: the form of the text and the rhetorical type which provides the composition's occasion and function. In size and comprehensive scope the format of a collection of seven successive orations relies on an approach very distinct from that of a fully-fledged oration. This approach entailed multiple ways of linking speeches and generating an impetus toward totalization usually implied in didactic cycles. Inter- and intratextual echoes proliferate, as Manuel's variations of the different moral and philosophical themes interact to modify several common places regarding Emperor John's behavior.

I suggest that the thematic and stylistic coherence of the *Orations* allow us to regard these seven orations as a diatribe, a form of speech popular in antiquity and defined as a group of lectures or orations on a moral theme characterized by vividness and immediacy in language.²⁰⁵ Aside from homilies, sometimes gathered in thematic collections,²⁰⁶ polemic

²⁰³ 560a.

²⁰⁴ 465b: the succession of arguments: ἔτι καὶ μᾶλλον συστήσαι καὶ τῇ τῶν λόγων ἀκολουθία ἐν διαφόροις ἐπιχειρήμασι.

²⁰⁵ An overview of the diatribe as literary genre in the antiquity and the Middle Ages can be found in S.K. Stowers, "Diatribe," in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, ed. G. Ueding, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1994, 627-633. See also S. Porter, *Handbook of classical rhetoric in the Hellenistic period*, 202.

²⁰⁶ Other collections of various texts with similar function can be identified in the homilies of Joseph Bryennios, Philotheos Kokkinos (*Three Homilies on Beatitudes*), or Isidore Glabas (*Four Homilies for St. Demetrios*) or Theodore

speeches on various Christian doctrinal issues,²⁰⁷ deliberative orations, or occasional educational treatises such as the above mentioned Ἠθικός ἢ περὶ παιδείας by Theodore Metochites, there is virtually no similar example of didactic prose that would envisage a wide range of topics subsumed to a didactic intention.

Even if such literary productions were quasi-absent in late Byzantium, I believe that we can relate the *Orations* to the genre of *diatribes* with a certain degree of precision. Let us briefly look at the history of the genre. In the sense current in Antiquity and the Middle Ages, diatribes stood for a tradition of certain typical productions of the Hellenistic period in authors like Bion of Borysthenes, Plutarch, or Dio Chrysostom.²⁰⁸ In ancient literary theory diatribes treated as a *paraenetic* counterpart of *protreptic*, dealt with practical matters.²⁰⁹ Besides, diatribes presupposed a continuity despite the strict division into a series of speeches which cut across several themes simultaneously. Their chief intention was to guide the disciples through several stages of moral progress. In antiquity, the teachers and public orators addressed diatribes to a limited group of students, and not a large public. The authors of diatribes, particularly popular in the Hellenistic period, did not restrict themselves to a single school of thought but, in their search for individual happiness, they often combined different themes. On the other hand, diatribes were by no means lessons of philosophy for the masses: Epictetus' lectures would probably have not been understood by a popular audience, but were intended for students in an early stage of their philosophical training.

The lectures included in a diatribe were commonly used for introducing philosophical themes, or for establishing a contact with an unspecialized but educated audience. For their didactic purposes, authors of diatribes relied on deliberative techniques such as direct address, appeal to maxims of illustrious predecessors, or the heavy use of rhetorical figures: parallelisms, isocola, antithesis, comparisons, or anecdotes.²¹⁰ In their quest of expediency, authors of diatribes avoided difficult philosophical topics and approached a standard list of

II Laskaris' *Eight Sermons on Christian Theology*.

²⁰⁷ It is the case with the collection of four speeches by Makarios Makres entitled: *Πρὸς τοὺς σκανδαλιζομένους ἐπὶ τῇ εὐπραγίᾳ τῶν ἀσεβῶν*, contending with theological arguments and biblical passages that the achievements of the Ottomans on the battlefield were temporary: A. Argyriou, *Macaire Makrès et la polémique contre l'Islam*, Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1986: 239-300. Nevertheless, despite the fact that all four orations draw on plain advice for maintaining the Orthodox faith, Makres' series of orations lacks internal cohesion, as each of the speeches deals with a separate topic and the author does not provide links between speeches.

²⁰⁸ Cf. André Oltramare, *Les origines de la diatribe Romaine*, Geneva: 1926, 39.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 45.

²¹⁰ S. Porter, *Handbook of classical rhetoric*, 123. Sometimes it used the Socratic technique of leading students into contradiction in order to correct them afterwards. In fact there was a close connection between diatribe and philosophical dialog, another genre which reappears in the Palaiologan period, M.A. Boyle argued that diatribe evolved in classical antiquity as a popularization of the philosophical dialog, *Rhetoric and Reform*, 45.

subjects: poverty and wealth, passions and emotions, self control, fear of death, or divinity.²¹¹ Hermogenes held a similar view on diatribes as *handbooks of ethics* whose definition records the following string of features:

A diatribe is an exposition of a brief ethical notion meant to imprint the speaker's character into the listener's judgment. Διατριβή ἐστὶ βραχέος διανοήματος ἠθικοῦ ἔκτασις, ἵνα ἐμμείνη τὸ ἦθος τοῦ λέγοντος ἐν τῇ γνώμῃ τοῦ ἀκούοντος.²¹²

As pointed out above, the emperor constantly emulated different philosophers who dealt with topics such as moral good, pleasure, or virtues, but he avoided a polemical approach. Because of the absence of vehement contentions for a certain point of view, the tone remains moderate throughout the seven texts, which goes against the profile of the deliberative orations seeking not to appease emotions but to exacerbate them. In the *Orations* Manuel adopted a civil ethos reflected by the presentation of argumentation *in utramque partem*, as the chief means to arrive at moral truth. Often he backs the authority of philosophical principles with his own appraisals, and once he claims to have exhausted a topic.²¹³ Once again, this treatment contrasts with deliberative orations where speakers abide to the decision of an assembly. Manuel's judgment, as he often argued, is individual and conciliatory; for instance he conceded that both those who say that pleasure is a *pathos* and those who strive to attain it are right.²¹⁴

In light of these observations, despite the pervasiveness of authoritative ideas originating in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, the orations are therefore to be understood neither as a philosophical work nor as a preparation for philosophy. Instead, by and large, philosophy is turned here into the *ancilla* of rhetoric, the main instrument of persuasion available for a future emperor. Conversely, rhetoric becomes the major instrument and medium of transmitting principles of good conduct. The arrangement of topics suggests that the more theoretical sections constituted the basic ingredient in a larger context that guided the listeners towards the end of the didactic program included in the *Orations*. Thus, Manuel began with the profile of the ideal virtuous ruler, while the following four *philosophical* orations disengage from this representation of the ideal ruler, offering very little actual guidance on aspects of the ruler's craft. The seven orations can thus be read as a single text in seven chapters proposing a path which one is invited to follow up to the peak of the true supreme

²¹¹ Ibid., 50.

²¹² Περὶ μεθόδου δεινότητος, 5.5.

²¹³ Cf. 441.b: δεῖ δέ, οἶμαι, τὸ πᾶν εἰπόντας συντεταγμένως καὶ συντόμως, ἐνταῦθα στήσαι τὸν λόγον.

²¹⁴ Cf. fifth oration.

virtue: the Christian *humbleness* of the seventh oration which echoed Solon's humbleness portrayed in his conversation with Croesus in the first oration. Eventually, as stated in the epilogue, the whole set of moral arguments developed throughout the *Orations* was included in a traditional Byzantine perspective of kingship, which emphasized the relation between emperor and God.

The unity of the *Orations* seen as a diatribe is instantiated at various other levels as well. Based on their contents and methods of approaching the subject matter, they can be roughly grouped in three categories: the first oration with its preoccupation for the emperor's image stands alone, the following four orations tend to explore and explain theoretical concepts drawing on the classical philosophical and rhetorical tradition; and finally, the sixth and the seventh orations are more prescriptive and draw on the Christian tradition that provides its theoretical background. Yet, as the proem of the sixth oration indicates when referring back to the previous discussion on pleasure in the fifth logos, these three groups were formally connected:

In the preceding lecture on pleasure, I have offered several arguments in its favor. Having discussed the nature of pleasure, now it is necessary, I believe, to discuss despair, if we were to fulfill our duty. For, on the one hand, it is due to the abuse of pleasure, that sins appear in our souls; and, on the other hand, from the frequent sins there comes despair. Περὶ ἡδονῆς προδιαλεχθέντες, ἀποδεδώκαμεν τὸν περὶ ταυτησὶ λόγον. Δεῖν δὲ ἡμᾶς οἶμαι, περὶ ἐκείνης διεξιόντας, καὶ περὶ ἀπογνώσεως διαλέξασθαι, εἰ μέλλοιμεν ποιεῖν τὸ προσῆκον. Ἀπὸ μὲν γὰρ τῆς τῶν ἡδονῶν ἀκρασίας τὰ ἀμαρτήματα εἰς τὰς ἡμετέρας ψυχὰς κατασκήπτει· ἐκ δὲ συχνῆς ἀμαρτίας ἀπόγνωσις.²¹⁵

Manuel never used a specific term to designate his work, except for the general term λόγος, in both singular and plural. Yet, on the other hand he offered several hints with regard to the overall design of the *Orations*. Thus, the sixth oration includes a motivation throwing light on the intention behind the process of putting together the seven different rhetorical pieces. According to Manuel, the discussion of the topic of despair (ἀπόγνωσις) emerged as part of a lengthier text, an undertaking (ἐγχείρησις) that was planned beforehand to comprise a string of different texts meant to be read together.²¹⁶ In the same vein, frequently, the term προσῆκον (the undertaken task) is mentioned as the emperor's real impulse to write an admonition for his son. Even if Manuel does not offer a full insight into what this might have meant for himself or for the audience, it can be inferred that it was tied either to the duty of

²¹⁵ 484b-c.

²¹⁶ 484b. See translation above.

educating the son or the duty to write in a manner that would fit the demands of the multifaceted collection of *Orations*.²¹⁷

Manuel also offered the reasons for his global approach to presenting the system of virtues and the ways to attain them. It is the case with the explanations for the inclusion of philosophical digressions necessary in order to complement the regular course of instruction in the second oration:

For it seems to me that I would prefer to philosophize rather than to provide you moral principles of education. The form of the present oration forces me to highlight many divisions and subdivisions, and many degrees, and to reveal a certain scale of these. Δόξομεν γὰρ φιλοσοφεῖν φιλοτιμεῖσθαι μᾶλλον, ἢ σε πρὸς ἦθος παιδεύειν. Ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀκολουθία τοῦ λόγου καταναγκάζει διαιρέσεις τε πολλὰς καὶ ὑποδιαιρέσεις δεικνύναι, καὶ βαθμοὺς πολλοὺς ποιεῖν, καὶ οἶονεῖ τινα τούτων κλίμακα ἀποφῆναι.²¹⁸

This passage indicates the author's awareness of his pedagogical mission which, as he claims, he fully assumed as an obligation. Such an approach entailing the breaking down of substantial theoretical themes into smaller parts is mostly visible in the third oration where by emphasizing the unity and didactic function of the text, it also suggested the unity and the didactic function of the *Orations* as a whole:

These statements can be made about the obvious voluntary and involuntary actions. On the non-voluntary actions (this is Aristotle's opinion) I state that. And, in support of the statements which will be made here, I will recall now something that I previously said. Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν περὶ τῶν σαφῶς ἐκουσίων καὶ ἀκουσίων [...] Περὶ δὲ τῶν οὐχ ἐκουσίων (Ἀριστοτέλους δὲ τοῦτο φωνή) ἐκεῖνο λέγω. Μνησθήσομαι δὲ τινος τῶν προειρημένων εἰς ὑπόθεσιν τῶν ῥηθησομένων.²¹⁹

Owing to this didactic function, Manuel tuned his speech to the appropriate approach and method of effective presentation, for sometimes, as the author stated, it had to be explained at length, and in other instances it needed brevity.²²⁰

²¹⁷ Another formula frequently employed by the author to describe the *Orations* is τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ λόγου (404c), which suggests that, from the outset, the author had a clear idea of the shape the collection of speeches should take. On the one hand, this shape entailed successive stages in developing its argument and, on the other hand, it excluded details which the author considered irrelevant for his pedagogical aims (τὸ προκείμενον). The author also alluded to the extent of the endeavor, a fact that might have explained the division into seven different orations, 533b: ἡμῖν δ' ἐνταῦθα γενομένοις τοῦ λόγου ὄκνος τις ἐπέρχεται θαυμαστός, καὶ ἀποπηδᾶν παραινεῖ εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν αὐτῶν δύναμιν ἀφορῶσι, καὶ τὸ τοῦ πράγματος μέγεθος. Ἐνταῦθα γὰρ τὸ δυσχερὲς οὕτω νικῶν ἐστὶ μεθ' ὑπερβολῆς, ὡς οὐδὲν ἕτερον. Λύει τε γὰρ τόνον ψυχῆς καὶ χανοῖ τοὺς λογισμοὺς καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν ἔκλυτον ἀποφαίνει.

²¹⁸ 428b.

²¹⁹ 432b.

²²⁰ 428 b-c. καὶ γὰρ καὶ τὸ σχῆμα τῆς ὁμιλίας, καὶ ἡ τοῦ λόγου καταρχὰς ὁρμή, εἴργει τοσοῦτον ὑπερεκτείνεσθαι, πάσαις ἐπόμενον ταῖς παρεκδρομαῖς, κἂν ἀναγκαῖαι τὸ κατ' αὐτὰς λέγεσθαι. Ἀρκτέον δὲ καὶ πειρατέον, ὡς οἶόν τε, διὰ βραχέων ἀποδοῦναι τὸν λόγον. Cf. also 541d: εἰ δὲ δὴ καὶ τοῦτο χρέων ἐστὶ, συνελόντας ἡμᾶς εἰπεῖν ὡσπερὶ κεφαλαϊωδέστερον.

The unity of the *Orations* is thus also reflected at the level of style. The author's interplay with various stylistic categories used in each of the seven λόγοι also functioned as a catalyst for maintaining together the different parts of the text. A certain tension between a neat logical argumentation employing concepts of classical philosophy and a will to instruct permeates the text of the *Orations*. In the third oration, before beginning a more sophisticated presentation of ethical concepts, Manuel insisted that he did not intend to produce confusion or dizziness (ίλιγγία) in his attempt to clarify sharp logical divisions and subdivisions already operated by philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, and others.²²¹ With regard to notions such as the moral good or voluntariness he admits that the ancient philosophers have already produced complete accounts,²²² and that his task remains only to briefly (διὰ βραχέων)²²³ *expose the foundation of moral demeanor and to instruct*. Moreover, the sort of the speech (σχῆμα τῆς ὁμιλίας) and the onset of the text (ὄρμη τοῦ λόγου) would not allow him to present all the details concerning the ethical problems in debate. These observations indicate that Manuel was aware of both the function and limitations of his *Orations*, as an original unit, despite borrowing heavily from various sources.

In all seven orations, Manuel adopted a style radically different from that of the *Foundations*, where the restrictive form of the κεφάλαιον compelled him to put to work a limited range of stylistic devices. As a result, several important differences from the *Foundations* render the didactic scope of the *Orations* more focused. Thus, in the *Orations*, the sententious style of the *Foundations* leaves room to a more discursive one and, of practical necessity, the speaker claims to adopt the stylistic virtue of clarity (σαφήνεια) which allows him to pass quickly through a larger body of theoretical material.²²⁴ While quotations from the Old and the New Testament abound in the sixth and the seventh orations, *gnomologia* and collections of proverbs receive much less attention.²²⁵ A reduced usage of gnomes and sententious style allows for more authorial interventions which usually enforce the authority

²²¹ 428a Manuel states that he wouldn't like to get too much into details concerning the intricate concept of voluntary actions, and that he would try to be as explicit as possible in order not to induce confusion: πλὴν εἰ τοῦτο ποιῆσαιμι, εἰς ἄπειρον ὁ λόγος ἐξενεχθεῖς, εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι τὴν νεότητα ἀποκναίσας, ίλιγγιᾶν προξενήσει.

²²² Ἡμεῖς δὲ μόνον ὡς ἔνεστιν ἀφοσιωσάμενοι τὰ περὶ τῶνδε.

²²³ Cf. 464d: ἔστι δέ, ὡς ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος διὰ βραχέων αὐτίκα δείξει, εἰ τῆς θείας ῥοπῆς ἀπολαύοι [...] ἐν δὲ τι πάνυ βραχύτατον ἀρκέσειεν ἂν, οἶμαι.

²²⁴ Few maxims originating in the *gnomologia* were used here: Καὶ ὁ τὸ σπέρμα παρασχών, αὐτὸς τῶν φύντων αἴτιος 432b: from Demosthenes (*On the crown*, 159.4) also quoted by Constantine Ivankos in his letter to Simon the Athonite (110-111).

²²⁵ Cf. 424d, καὶ συλλαμβάνονταί μοι ταυτησὶ τῆς ἐννοίας, οἳ τε σοφοὶ τῶν παλαιότερων καὶ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ἱεροὶ τινες ἄνδρες.

of the emperor's didactic voice.²²⁶ These changes in the style of address corresponded to a better modulated pedagogical function²²⁷ which in turn revealed the author's strategies of self-representation.²²⁸

Yet, just like in the *Foundations*, where arrangement of the moral issues mattered, here one of Manuel's major concerns was to create a functional and rounded *dispositio* of the material in each oration.²²⁹ The above summary of the contents of the orations indicated that the author attempted to produce well shaped and coherent compositions. A mark of this strategy is that the epilogues wrap up the contents of each oration and sometimes offer an insight into the topics of the following oration.²³⁰ Similarly, in the second oration, the concluding passage echoes the statement in the beginning of the oration.²³¹

In fact, the first five orations follow a similar pattern which includes an initial declaration concerning the contents,²³² three topics for discussion by confirmation and refutation, and a conclusion. This common design entailed that the presentation of the addressed topics was usually set in the opening of the oration.²³³ In order to construct arguments more extended than the restrictive length of a paragraph, he often summarizes previous arguments, or anticipates ensuing controversies, techniques which provide the text with a rhythm specific to a didactic handbook. For this reason, marks of continuity between the various topics, such as bridging statements signaling connections between important arguments are frequently embedded.²³⁴ They provide a smooth transition between the major

²²⁶ Cf. 437d: εἰ μὴ ἀγροϊκὸς ἐγώ. 440c ταῦτα δὲ ἡμῖν ἔδει δειχθῆναι, καὶ γέγονε κατὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν ἰσχύν.

²²⁷ 506c: πολυπλασιάσω τὸν λόγον, πολὺ τὸ πάθος κρατοῦν ὀρών.

²²⁸ 465c: σιωπήσας δὲ πολλά, ἃ καὶ μὴ λεχθέντα φυγῆ τοῦ κόρου, οὐκ ἂν ἐνέγκαι ζημίαν, οἶμαι, τῷ προκειμένῳ τρόπῳ

²²⁹ E.g. 449C: καὶ τί ἂν πρῶτον εἴποιμεν; τί δὲ ὕστατον; τί δὲ μέσον τῶν ἐκείνη πρὸς ἡμᾶς γιγνομένων; πῶς ἂν τις ὄλος, τοὺς ἐκείνης τρόπους, τὰς μηχανάς, τὰς ποικιλίας ἐξείποι;

²³⁰ III. 441b: Εἶεν. Δεῖ δέ, οἶμαι, τὸ πᾶν εἰπόντας συντεταγμένως τε καὶ συντόμως, ἐνταῦθα στήσαι τὸν λόγον· καὶ φασὲν δι' ἄγνοιαν μὲν τὸ κακὸν γίνεσθαι, ἐκούσιον δ' ὅμως εἶναι, καὶ προαιρετικῆς τινος γνώμης καὶ οἰκείας διαθέσεως. Ὡστε δὴ κακῶ γεγονότι γνώμη τὸ τῶν καλουμένων περιστάσεων ἅπαν ἄθροισμα, καὶ πᾶσα τούτῳ πρόφασις, καὶ παραίτησις, καὶ πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα, ψιλὴ τις σκῆψις.

²³¹ 420c: ὅτε τοίνυν ταῦθ' οὕτως ἔχει, δηλονότι πέφυκε ἅπας ἄνθρωπος εἶναι μισοπόνηρος, εἶναι δὲ φιλόκαλος· καὶ συμφώνως ἔχουσιν ἅπαντες, ὅτι καλὸν ἢ ἀρετὴ καὶ κακὸν ἢ πονηρία. See the beginning of the oration.

²³² E.g. δεῖν δὲ ἡμᾶς οἶμαι, περὶ ἐκείνης διεξιόντας, καὶ περὶ ἀπογνώσεως διαλέξασθαι, εἰ μέλλοιμεν ποιεῖν τὸ προσῆκον. 440b: εἶεν. Δεῖ δέ, οἶμαι, τὸ πᾶν εἰπόντας συντεταγμένως τε καὶ συντόμως, ἐνταῦθα στήσαι τὸν λόγον. The subject matter is also briefly presented in 440c: ὁ λόγος δὲ ἡμῖν ἐξαρχῆς οὐ περὶ παραφρονοῦντων ἀνθρώπων ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶνδε μόνον οἷς τὸ προαιρετικὸν ἐν ὑγείᾳ, ἀλωβήτου τοῦ φρονεῖν μένοντος.

²³³ Thus, the preamble of the first oration lists the ensuing sections of the essay in the first oration, 404c: ἀποδεικνύται πειράσθαι ταῖς παραθέσεσιν, ὡς ἄρχουσιν ἐθέλουσιν ἀγαθοῖς εἶναι πάντων ἄμεινον ἂν εἴη. Cf. another instance when Manuel delimits the sections of the discourse: 460b: ἕως ᾧδε τὰ περὶ τῆς ἡδονῆς ἔσται, ἐπεὶ μὴ δεῖ περαιτέρω. 548b: ἀκτέον δὲ τὸν λόγον ἐπὶ τὸν τρόπον, ᾧ ἂν τις πράξας τὸ ἀγαθόν, διαφύγοι τὸ περὶ αὐτοῦ δοξάσαι τι μέγα, καὶ τὰ μέτρια φρονήσας [...] Δοκῶ τοίνυν μοι μίαν τινὰ τὴν ὁδὸν εἶναι, τὴν ἐπὶ τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην ἀναβιβάζουσαν.

²³⁴ E.g. the frequently used Σκοπῶμεν δὲ.

points for discussion and help to avoid monotony by alternating between examples, stories, or quotations.

In addition to the usual arsenal of rhetorical devices-argumentative questions (τί γάρ), or summarizing statements that round off the paragraphs-the same didactic scope brings in an oscillation between two major methods: on the one hand, he uses brevity necessary for approaching a wider variety of themes²³⁵ and, on the other hand, he motivates the inclusion of certain details and the complexity of certain topics.²³⁶ As a result, there can be distinguished two pervasive common modes of organizing the topics of advice throughout the seven texts. First, the organization of the material seems to rely on arguments from justice and advantage. The second mode draws on a comparative presentation: argumentative points are developed through illustrations referring to separate and contrasting times, places, or groups of individuals with different opinions. Both these modes of organization are subsumed to pedagogical insertions in the form of castigations, criticisms, or references to concrete instances of public behavior.

To sum up this section it appears that the seven *Oration*s were intended as something different from a series of seven texts unconnected among themselves. It is noticeable that the apparent indetermination of this collection of different types of *Oration*s constituted the main reason for allowing both for a greater freedom in the use of philosophical or theological themes as well as for their easier circulation between texts. Yet, if we cease looking at the orations in isolation as instances of genres perfectly shaped and unambiguous categories, and instead search for the kinship among them, we can acquire a better insight into their overall function: an understanding of their cohesiveness, and, at the same time, their internal changes, reversals, and development.

5.3. Authorial voice: teaching the son and admonishing the emperor

As suggested above, the formal differences between the seven orations indicate that the author approached ethical and political advice in more than one way. There can be distinguished several types of approach: by illustrative examples, by philosophical argumentation, by putting forward Christian Orthodox principles, and by displaying instances of personal experience.

²³⁵ 469a: ὡςθ' ὅπερ ὑπισχνόμεθα δείξειν, ἀγαθὸν εἴληφε τέλος, Θεοῦ συναιρομένου, βράχεσι λόγοις; Cf. 465c: καὶ ὁδῶ βαδίζων ὁ λόγος, Θεοῦ συναιρουμένου συντόμως τὸ γινόμενον ἀποδώσει.

²³⁶ See 460b (on the length of the discussion on pleasure), ἕως ὧδε τὰ περὶ τῆς ἡδονῆς ἔσται, ἐπεὶ μὴ δεῖ περαιτέρω. Οὔτε γὰρ ἐς τὰκριβὲς ἐλθεῖν μοι δοκεῖ ῥάδιον εἶναι τὸν περὶ ταύτης λέγοντα, οὔτε τὸ μῆκος θέλοντα φεύγειν, τὰ κατ' αὐτὴν καθαρῶς εἰπεῖν δυνηθῆναι.

Even if no oration relies on a single type of approach, each of the seven texts depends on a dominant compositional and methodological mode that reflects the author's peculiar didactic voice. In the following section I will try to map the major constituent elements and modulations of the authorial voice as expressed here.

From the outset, it appears that Manuel, having assumed the goals of a diatribe writer proved to have fully undertaken the role of a didaskalos striving to impress his ethos onto his student's mind. All seven orations include frequent formulas of address to John, like ὦ φίλτατε or σύ,²³⁷ whereas only once, in the seventh oration, the official title, βασιλεύς, is used. These formulas attest that, despite the public character of the texts, the emperor wished to include the advice he was giving in the sphere of the kinship as well, although this tendency is not as visible as in the *Foundations*. An “I-you” relationship pervades the author's approach in the Orations and this is the chief way in which Manuel maintained the teacher/taught one roles, the more advanced talking to the novice and through him to a wider readership. Along these lines, especially in the sixth and seventh orations as well as in the epistolary epilogue, he often emphasized that the teachings he presented came from himself.

By doing so, he set himself in contrast with ecclesiastical authors of homilies who assumed didactic stances according to which only Christ, the Holy Scriptures, or the saints could incarnate the authorities which generated moral teachings.²³⁸ On the other hand, the emperor came close to the model of spiritual and intellectual mentorship envisaged earlier by Demetrios Kydones. In their intense correspondence, apart from the customary praise for imperial generosity, the scholar exhorted Manuel to pursue a rhetorical education and at the same time he criticized his student's political errors or excesses, whenever required by the circumstances.²³⁹ In Letter 21, the earliest letter Kydones sent to the young Manuel, he praised the submission and respect for the father-emperor.²⁴⁰ From this perspective, with the inclusion of castigations and admonitions, the orations seem to have been designed to win John's respect for his father.

²³⁷ E.g. 529c

²³⁸ To give an example, the contemporary homilies of Isidore Glabas avoid any mention of the authorial self or the preacher in general as fulfilling the role of a didaskalos in front of the audience. Glabas' case indicates that he took a rather impersonal perspective towards teaching unlike Manuel who is more straightforward and provides direct counseling to his listeners. Isidore Glabas shows this stance in both his sermons and his letters: δι' ὧν ἂν εἰς μαθητὰς τοῦ κοινῆ διδασκάλου καὶ Δεσπότητος τελούμεν, *Orations*, 1.6.4. Cf. also Joseph Bryennios: ὁ φύσει διδάσκαλος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, *Consolation addressed to the Cretan monks*, 395, or ὁ τῆς οἰκουμένης διδάσκαλος Παῦλος, *Ibid.*, 488.

²³⁹ As, for instance, in the episode of Manuel's rebellion in Thessalonike.

²⁴⁰ Kydones, *Letters*, 21. 6-8: βασιλεῖ τε γὰρ πείθεσθαι νόμιμον, καὶ γονέας τιμᾶν ὅσιον, καὶ τῆς πρὸς τὸ θεῖον τιμῆς ἢ πρὸς ἐκείνους τεκμήριον καὶ μάλα σαφές.

If the often reiterated primary aim of the *Orations* was to teach, the object of teaching was not an ordinary topic which students had to learn in school. The author's primary task (τὸ προκείμενον)²⁴¹ as he often claimed, pertained to the inculcation of moral principles by means of both the authority of the precursors and the speaker's experience. This urge toward teaching did not emerge only in selected orations but it informed the entire collection, regardless of the topics approached. It surfaced especially in the first oration, a protreptic speech, and in the last one, where the didactic function was set in explicit terms.²⁴² They indicate that the aim was not just to put on display the value of certain moral ways of life, but to provide means of attaining it by correcting flaws of behavior.²⁴³

This sort of teaching required a teacher with several special abilities. As any concerned teacher, Manuel showed his acquaintance with the topics he approached and that he has traveled at least some way along the path he was presenting to John. Similarly to the *Foundations*, in the relation with John and the rest of the audience, Manuel combined two positions of authority: of ruler and of father-tutor. If, as noted above, Manuel states that the text was envisaged for a wider audience and for the common benefit of the society, he also insists on presenting John as the main addressee of this piece, pointing to a parallel and even stronger father-son type of relationship. It is only in the beginning of the seventh oration that Manuel projects the image of an affectionate father,²⁴⁴ while in most instances, direct address from a paternal perspective is used in order to strengthen a programmatic statement and to provide further evidential qualification. As he remarked in the third oration, he was aware of the necessity to undertake these two major roles.²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ Cf. δέδεικται μὲν, ὡς ἡγοῦμαι, τὸ προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἰκανῶς καὶ τὸ πέρας ὁ λόγος εἴληφε προσῆκον αὐτῶ (420d), νῦν δὲ τῶν προκειμένων ἐχώμεθα (393a), Ἔνεκα τοῦ προκειμένου σκοποῦ (389c). In the same category can be listed τὸ προσῆκον.

²⁴² Cf. 548c: [...] ὡς ὁ λόγος ἤδη ἔφθη. Τοῦτο δὲ τοσούτῳ κακόν ὥστε καὶ τὸν Χρυσορρήμονά που διδάξει βέλτιον σαφῶς.

²⁴³ 532d: οὐ γὰρ κατ' ἐπίδειξιν πρὸς τουτονὶ τὸν ἄθλον ἀπεδυσάμεθα, οὐδὲ τὸ θαυμάσαι τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην οὕτως ἀπλῶς ὁ σκοπὸς ἡμῖν ἐξαρχῆς ἦν (οὐδὲ γὰρ δεῖται τῶν παρ' ἡμῶν ἐπαίνων ἐκείνη γε)· ἀλλ' ὅπως αὐτὴ γένοιτο τῷ παιδί φίλη, καλλίστη τούτῳ φανεῖσα.

²⁴⁴ Σὺ δὲ μοι πάντως, ὦ φίλτατε, καὶ τὸ περὶ σε μέγα φίλτρον, ὑπόθεσιν μοι τοῦ τολμήματος ἤδη πῶς γέγονε.

²⁴⁵ 462d: ὥστ' ἐμοὶ τοῦτο προσήκει οὐ μόνον ὡσπερ τοῖς ἄλλοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ μετὰ διπλῆς τῆς προσθήκης· τοῦτο μὲν διὰ τὸ σχῆμα, τοῦτο δὲ καὶ διὰ σε, δι' ὃν γε δήπουθεν ἑμαυτὸν εἰς τουτονὶ τὸν ἀγῶνα καθῆκα, μηδὲ τοῦ καιροῦ παντάπασιν ἐπιτρέποντος [...] Βούλομαι δὲ τινος πλάνης ἐλευθεροῦν ἐνίους, ἤδη πειρώμενος προασφαλίσασθαι τοὺς ἀκροατάς, ὡς μὴ πειραθεῖεν ἐτέρας πλάνης ἐκ τε τῶν ἄρτι λεχθέντων, κάκ τῶν ἤδη ῥηθησομένων. Ἴσως γὰρ ἂν τινες οὐ καλῶς μὲν, ἐνθυμηθεῖεν δ' οὖν ὁμῶς, ὡς ὑπὲρ ἐκείνην δεῖξαι βουλόμενος ἑμαυτὸν καὶ κακοήθως ἀλαζονεύσασθαι, τουτονὶ τὸν λόγον ἐνεστηράμην. Καὶ εἰ τὰ παρ' ἡμῶν ἀπλῶς λεγόμενα μεθ' ὑποψίας ἀδίκου λάβοιεν δόξαν τινὰ οὐκ ὀρθὴν ἐφ' ἐτέραν δεξάμενοι. Οὐδεὶς γὰρ οἶμαι μᾶλλον ὁμοῦ τῶν τῆς ἀκρασίας πεπεράται βελῶν, οὐδὲ τραυματίας, ὡς ἐγώ, ἐκεῖθεν ἀπελήλυθεν. Ἐγωγε καλῶς ἑμαυτὸν ἐπίσταμαι, ὡς οὐδ' ἐπίσταμαι γε καλῶς ὅσον ἐνδὲω τοῦ τιμᾶν ἐν ἅπασι τὴν συμμετρίαν. Ὅστ' οὐχ ὑπὲρ ἑμαυτοῦ ἀλλ' ὅπως ἂν δυνάμεως ἔχοιμι, ὑπὲρ ὠφελείας ἀπλῶς ἐρῶ.

By this account, Manuel wove together the two standpoints, of the emperor and of the father, in a sole didactic framework which, like in the *Foundations*, was further reinforced by adding further elements associated to his didacticism: first, the pedagogical approach which Manuel tries to create by treating the subject matter in a systematic way and by arranging the various themes according to a scheme that would become easily understandable for his young son. This didactic method entailed apart from the use of models circulated by authors like Herodotus, Aristotle, or Demosthenes most probably already studied by John earlier on, the self-promotion of Manuel as a model emperor.²⁴⁶ Second, he conveyed moralizing messages with impact on both his son and the extended audience of his texts. Thus, within this didactic framework, Manuel leads both his son and the audience through different stages of moral education.²⁴⁷ The definitions and distinctions reflecting a didactic approach do not represent just a series of abstract statements: ultimately the purpose of this oration remains to find the aims, the ways out, the limits, the principles, and the social function of a moral education.²⁴⁸ For this reason, by and large, whenever philosophical or theological issues surface, a moralizing normative ending is added. For instance, in the seventh oration, the account of Christ's sufferings is followed by the morale of the story.²⁴⁹

Despite these many similarities, in terms of the type of didactic model cultivated in the *Orations*, there are several marked differences from the *Foundations*. The will to instruct, which pervades the *Orations*, does not depend, like in the *Foundations*, on a store of Hellenic and patristic wisdom in the form of precepts for the noble young man, but on more substantial pieces of advice. Most often, advice is unadorned and encompasses a wide range of aspects: from enticing the young son to acquire knowledge in order to engage in public speaking to following strict rules of behavior inspired by Christian doctrine. Thus, the moral instruction of the *Orations* emerged as more elaborate than in the *Foundations* which rather stood for a prescriptive account of a handbook outlining the principles of an early stage in moral teaching. A conspicuous difference from the previous text is that the exhortation to the acquisition of rhetorical skills for political action put forward in the first *Oration*²⁵⁰ has no equivalent in the

²⁴⁶ 464a.

²⁴⁷ This method is explicitly made known, 465b: ὄθεν δὴ διὰ πλείονων ἐκθέμενος τὸν λόγον, ὀρθῶς γε ἔχον δεῖξω τὸ δόγμα.

²⁴⁸ 432a-b.

²⁴⁹ 525a: προσέτι δὲ κακεῖνο μαθεῖν ἔξεστιν ἀπὸ τούτου, ὅτι τὸ πλανώμενον εὐρεθὲν πολὺ τετριχωμένον ὑπῆρχεν ἐκ τῶν τῆς πλάνης οἶμαι, κακῶν· καὶ ἦν οἷον μὴ δύνασθαι ῥαδίως ἐπανέρχεται, ἀλλὰ τῆς τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ποιμένου δεόμενον ἐπικουρίας εἰς τοῦτο [...] ἐπειδὴ δὲ τοῦτο μαθηθάνομεν οὐδὲ γοῦν σμικρὸν τι βαδίσαν δόξειαν ἂν εἰκότως ἔτι πως τοὺς λογισμοὺς δίχα τεμνόμενον εἶναι.

²⁵⁰ 389b: Manuel explicitly advises John to consult Herodotus' *Histories* in order to improve his knowledge and

Foundations. Similarly, the representation of humility as supreme kingly virtue as well as the image of a divinely inspired imperial authority in the epistolary epilogue are absent from the *Hyothekai*.

Advice for John takes many different shapes such as direct address attached to a theoretical account,²⁵¹ rhetorical questions,²⁵² imperatives,²⁵³ exemplary stories, or, most often by statements indicating an appropriate or inappropriate demeanor.²⁵⁴ In more elaborate forms advice takes the shape of criticism not only against John's behavior but also against his opinions on certain issues, as it happened in the lecture on pleasure.²⁵⁵ The admonition inserted in the debate over the nature of pleasure testifies to a possible previous dialog between the emperor and his son.²⁵⁶ Often, advice is reinforced by castigations, usually inserted in the expository theoretical sections: as mentioned, in the seventh oration the author's advice turns into outright criticism against John's behavior. Here didacticism and moralization converge in Manuel's public rebuking of John for having judged inappropriately other individuals.²⁵⁷

understanding of the ruler's craft: *ἑώρα γὰρ δέ σοι καθαρώτερον γνῶναι τὰ περὶ τῶνδε, ἔαν γε ἢ βουλομένῳ διεξελεθῆιν, εἰ τίς τε ἄλλος περὶ τούτων ἰστόρηκε, καὶ τὰς Ἡροδότου Μούσας.*

²⁵¹ Cf. the discussion about sins in the sixth oration, 497a: *καὶ ὧ σὺ, ποίαις κολάσεις ὧν ὑπεύθυνος, οὐ καταποντίζεις σεαυτόν.* In 421c, Manuel explains that will is not enough for someone to be good: *ὥστε τὸ βούλεσθαι μόνον οὐχ ἰκανὸν ἀγαθοῦς ἐργάσασθαι.* Also, the change from an impersonal account of sins to a direct address in the sixth oration was specifically marked.

²⁵² 497a: *εἶτα πῶς ἐκεῖνος μὲν κακός, ὁ ἀμφιρρηπῆς, σὺ δ' ἐκεῖνῳ πάντα ὧν καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν πονηρίαν ἐφάμιλλος, βέλτιστος ἂν εἴης καὶ ἀγαθός;*

²⁵³ 504b: *πεῖθου μοι κάκεῖνο σοι λέγοντι, τῷ τοὺς ἄλλους εὐχερῶς κατακρίνοντι· οὐδὲ τὰ σαυτοῦ οἴος τε εἰ, μήτοι γε τὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων.*

²⁵⁴ 424b: *ἀλλὰ σπουδῆ καὶ καρτερίᾳ μεγίστη τὰ κακὰ διαφεύγειν δύνασθαι.* Or 437d: *ἄγνοια τὸ κακόν, εἰ δεῖ συντόμως εἰπεῖν.* Cf. also: 425a: *δεῖ γὰρ γυμνοὺς γεννηθέντας γυμνοὺς καὶ ἀπιέναι, κατὰ τὴν Ἰώβ ἐκείνου φωνήν, τὴν ἄχρι νῦν ὑμνουμένην [...]* Οἷς οὖν ὁ δρόμος σύντομος ἐπειγόμενος εἰς φθορὰν καὶ ταύτην ἴσως αὐτίκα μάλα γενησομένην, τούτοις τί μόνιμον, τί σταθερόν, τί πάγιον.

²⁵⁵ 473c-d: *σὺ μὲν γὰρ, ὧ τάν, ὡς ἔοικε, σαυτὸν αἰτίας ἐλευθεροῖς, καὶ τὴν ἀκρασίαν οὐδὲν λογίζῃ καὶ τὴν ἐθελούσιον κίνησιν παρ' οὐδὲν τίθης· μόνην δὲ τὴν ἡδονὴν ἄνω καὶ κάτω στρέφεις, αἰτιώμενος ἀπλῶς πρὸς ἅπερ ἂν ποτέ σοιπραχθεῖ εἰς ἀυθάδειαν καὶ τέρψιν. Καὶ παραινῶ σοι φείδεσθαι τῶν τοιούτων κρίσεων, καὶ μακρὰν ἀπέχεσθαι τούτων τῶν λογισμῶν, πόρρω που καὶ τούτων ὄντων τῆς ἀλήθειας. Ποιεῖν γὰρ παραπλήσιον, ὡσπερ ἂν εἰ φάρμακον ἔδει σε πεπωκέναι, ὑπὸ ἰατρῶν ἀρίστων ἐσκευασμένον, εἴτ' ἀκαίρως αὐτὸς χρησάμενος τῷ φαρμάκῳ, πρὸς τουναντίον ἐκβάντος σοι τοῦ βουλήματος, ἀφεις σαυτὸν ἐπιπλήττειν, σὺ δὲ διαβάλλεις τὸ φάρμακον, καὶ τοὺς ἐκεῖνο σοφῶς κεράσαντας.*

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ 512 c: *εἰ δὲ ἐκεῖνος (God) οὐκέτι κρίνει, ἀλλὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἀναμένει, πάντα τὰ ἡμετέρα μάλλον ἡμῶν ἐπιστάμενος· σὺ καὶ τὸν καιρὸν προαρπάζων, καὶ τοῦ κριτοῦ σφετεριζόμενος σχῆμα, μήτε τὰ σαυτοῦ καλῶς ἐπιγινώσκων κακὰ, μήτε τὰ κείνων, οὐς κατακρίνεις, πῶς οὐκ ἔργον θεομισῆς ἐκπληροῖς; τίνας δὲ καὶ θήσει σέ τις μερίδος; οὐ τῶν παντάπασιν ἀνοήτων; εἰ γὰρ καὶ παρὰ Θεοῦ τὸ κρίνειν εἰληφῶς, οὐδ' οὕτω πάντως ἔπραττες ἂν, δι' ὧν ἂν εἶχες θαυμάζεσθαι παρὰ τοῦ δόντος τὸ κρίνειν, ἐκεῖνος γὰρ χρηστός ἐστίν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀχαρίστους καὶ πονηροὺς. Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ παρὰ σαυτοῦ τοῦτο εἰληφῶς, εἰ μὲν ἐκίρνας τούτῳ φιλανθρωπίαν, ἦν μὲν οὐδ' οὕτως ὄσιον, οὐδ' ἀγαθόν σοι τὸ τόλμημα· πόθεν; πολλοῦ γε καὶ δεῖ· οὐ γὰρ δεῖ ληΐζεσθαι τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐπ' οὐδεμιᾶ προφάσει φιλανθρωπίας. [...] νυνὶ δὲ μή τε παρὰ Θεοῦ τὸ κρίνειν λαβῶν, καὶ ὁμόσε χωρῶν, κατ' ἄμφω τὰναντία φαίνῃ ποιῶν. Εἶτα σὺ μὲν τῆς οὐσίας διαρπαγείσης, ἢ καὶ πολλοστοῦ τινος ταύτης μέρους, ἔστω δὲ καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν φιλάτων αὐτῶν, οὐκ ἐνέγκαις, ἀλλ' ἐβόησας εὐθύς, τὸν πατραλοῖαν, τὸν ἄσων· ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐδὲ γοῦν τὰ ἴσα δίδως, ἀλλὰ κακῶς διακείμενος καὶ τὰ πρὸς*

The didacticism that underlines the author's voice is further signaled not only by the continuous effort to provide advice, but also by the lack of praise for John's qualities, in a text that likely was delivered publicly and was supposed to advertise his son as successor. On the contrary, as noticed above, John was here rather criticized, an attitude that contrasts with other public rhetorical addresses.²⁵⁸ As a result of this strategy to express a strong personal voice it appears that the author-emperor used the opportunity of the seven orations not to praise his son but to reveal the elements of an ethos useful for both the co-emperor in his early youth and for his subjects. In doing so he reflected a tendency to neglect the image of the present ruler, a tendency present in his previous texts as well.

Other modulations of the author's voice can be grasped through an inquiry into the methods of constructing his educational message. Essentially, Manuel's chief strategy did not differ from the strategy of other Byzantine authors of orations who organized their topics into antithetic patterns reflecting symmetry and proportion. Yet, if in most rhetorical public orations the climax came near the center of the work, with a slight fall of intensity thereafter, in the emperor's case, the *Oration*s continuously accumulated arguments and representations so that the climax came at the end of the collection.²⁵⁹

Climax finds expression in the presentation of a hierarchic system that takes as a basis less significant topics and proceeds to cardinal virtues that spawn other moral qualities. It was important for Manuel to outline several general considerations, before making concrete observations on his son's behavior, in an attempt to make John more receptive to his didactic discourse. It was also equally important to impress these general considerations toward the end of the speech, particularly to demonstrate that his concrete observations were linked to

αὐτὸν [...] Ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν ἴσως καὶ σεαυτὸν μισήσεις· παρὰ δὲ τοῦ φιλανθρώπου Θεοῦ οὐκ ἔνι σε τοῦτο παθεῖν. In the second oration he chides those who refuse to follow the path of righteousness, οἱ πονηροὶ καὶ φαῦλοι, and expands the action of moral good and evil to the entire community. Due to their knowledge and education, the good ones (οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ἄνδρες) can easily make the difference between what is related to them (συγγενές) or not (417a).

²⁵⁸ Again, Kydones' earlier letters to young Manuel offer a different perspective which included a multitude of eulogies. Even if it was customary for a court officer to praise an emperor, Kydones' relation with Manuel which entailed criticism as well, does not entirely explain the praises he was addressing to his much younger disciple. Moreover, the *mesazōn* encouraged Manuel to improve his leadership skills at a time when he was struggling for power with his father, John V. In a letter sent from Constantinople to Manuel, while in the Turkish camp, Kydones exhorted Manuel to become a model ruler for his subjects whereas in the *Oration*s John was far from being represented as a model of kingly behavior: ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ὁμοίους πόθ' ἤξειν καιροῦς οὐκ ἀνέλπιστον εἶναι νομίζων, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο δεῖν ἡγούμενος τοὺς σωθησομένους καὶ πρὸς τὸ μέλλον παρασκευάζεσθαι, τὰ μὲν παραινῶν τὰ δὲ ἐπιτάττων, ἔστι δ' ἂν καὶ παραδεικνύς ὡσπερ ἀγαθὸς παιδοτρίβης τῷ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ὑποδείγματι ὅπως δεῖ χρῆσθαι τοῖς σώμασι τοὺς νέους διδάσκων (*Letters*, 220.18-22).

²⁵⁹ G. Kennedy, *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, vol. 1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, xiv-xv.

the problems outlined in the previous speeches. There is also a difference of tone of the various *Orations*. Thus, the conclusion of the seventh oration as well as the epistolary epilogue are triumphant while the other texts are in general much more balanced in their presentation of arguments and counsel.²⁶⁰

On the other hand, alongside hierarchy, noticeably there is a less obvious tendency to round off the edges of these seven different texts proposing various moral principles and offer the possibility of a different, “circular” reading of the text. This strategy becomes visible in the parallels between the first and the last orations, the only ones that are openly considering the best ways to govern. In the first speech, Solon plays the role of the model ruler who managed to defend Athens with few resources but making use of wise principles of political administration, which entailed the selection of a group of ἄριστοι from among the equal members of the community. The representation of Athens as an egalitarian and reduced in size democracy contrasts the wealth, hubris, and insolence of the eastern empires. In the last oration which puts forward the virtue of humility as the ruler's fundamental quality, Solon's image of a moderate and humble leader among his peer ἄριστοι reemerges, but this time in Christian dress.

Climax and circularity embedded in the structure of the *Orations* find reflection in the author's assumed different identities,²⁶¹ an element which maintains the integrity of the *Orations*. The rhetorician's engaged “I” yields to the impersonal stance of the imperial office asserting itself transparently especially in the epistolary epilogue: Manuel orchestrates a variation of roles as disguised teacher, mythographer, and philosopher, all of them predicated upon two major social functions, emperor and father, which he often switches.²⁶² In this manner the audience was expected to perceive how individual speech genres reinvented habitually employed elements and how they reshaped their features against the tradition of public admonitory speeches.

The audience is thus led through a labyrinth of intersecting roles assumed by the author and, for this reason, the emperor's relationship with it acquires a fluctuating dynamic. The author had to prove flexibility because he probably encountered different types of educated audiences: some appreciated more protreptic speeches, others-philosophical, and

²⁶⁰ Terms like μετρίως, πρέπον and προσήκον which emerge frequently convey an idea of equilibrium applied to both the form and content of the *Orations*.

²⁶¹ Cf. 529a: καὶ δὴ μοι τελεσθέντος τοῦ πρὶν διαύλου, ὥρα κάκεινοις χαρίζεσθαι, καὶ σοὶ τὸ δέον ἀποπληροῦν.

²⁶² Manuel, emphasizes the role of the emperor-father's experience in shaping his son's opinions: 464b: οὐδεὶς γὰρ οἶμαι μᾶλλον ἐμοῦ τῶν τῆς ἀκρᾶσίας πεπεύρατα βελῶν, οὐδὲ τραυματίας, ὡς ἐγώ, ἀπελήλυθεν. [...] ‘Ὅστ’ οὐχ ὑπὲρ ἐμαυτοῦ, ἀλλ’ ὅπως ἂν δυνάμεως ἔχοιμι, ὑπὲρ ὠφελείας ἀπλῶς ἐρῶ.

others the homiletic genre. Depending on the textual level of his lessons and on the various teaching roles, Manuel is either engaged or distant: his commentaries are, in turns, generous or parsimonious, benevolent or judgmental, and scholarly or clerical-spiritual. By revealing these multiple perspectives on virtues - theological, philosophical, or derived from experience - Manuel instantiates the problems inherent in the political paradigm itself: the emperor represents an ideal individual, yet it is difficult to make the person who is going to hold the office become such a perfect man, an embodiment of so many virtues.

Also as a reflection of his switching roles which allowed him to move easily from argumentation and figural representation to prescriptive language, several various possibilities of modulations of genres were unfolded. His oratorical combinations include the discourse of classical paradigmatic historiography, contemporary conflicts, philosophical arguments, and homiletic exhortations. In my opinion, the mix of these different genres reflect an intention to create a distinct didactic voice, if not to subvert their core generic features: the homilies for instance reinforce their didactic meaning when combined with pagan mythological knowledge and with public castigations addressed to the young co-emperor.

In the case of the first oration, I have already indicated that as a protreptic oration, it does not offer advice for the pursuit of philosophy, as one would have expected, but points to the significance of rhetoric. The result of this switch of interests may be puzzling for the readers of protreptic speeches usually focused on the image of the philosopher king, but at the same time, one should take into account the emperor's intention to offer a more realistic representation of what has been expected from a ruler, mostly political wisdom (πολιτική ἐπιστήμη) and a set of practical virtues helpful in coping with the increased influence of the courtiers and other social categories. Yet, this dispute between philosophy and rhetoric did not represent an obstacle in the effective communication of the emperor's political messages. The roles of the philosopher and of the rhetorician are interchangeable with a tendency to emphasize the value of the latter. Likewise, the *Orationes* are far from generating a dichotomy opposing philosophy and theology, cultivated by other contemporary religious writers like Joseph Bryennios who preached intensely at Manuel's court and apparently in the presence of large audiences expressed such a view.²⁶³

²⁶³ ὅτι φιλοσοφίας μὲν ὕλη τὰ ὄντα, θεολογίας δὲ τέλος ὁ ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ ὄντα, καὶ πάντων δημιουργός· καὶ χρὴ μῆτε τὴν πίστιν νομίζειν τέχνων μῆτε τὰ παρὰ τὰ ἐκπεφασμένα τοῖς θεολόγοις θεολογεῖν· ὑπέρκειται γὰρ κατ' ἀσύγκριτον λόγον ἢ θεολογία τῆς φιλοσοφίας, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ταύτη ὑπόκειται· καὶ τοῦτο ῥάδιον συνιδεῖν, τῷ καὶ μικρὰν αἴσθησιν ἔχοντι, ὡς οὐδ' εἰ πάντες παρήσαν φιλόσοφοι, τῷ θείῳ φωτισθέντες λουτρῷ, Joseph Bryennios, *Ta heurethenta*, 5th homily, 93.

Combining past and present authorities constituted another major strategy to effectively communicate general ethical principles applicable to present circumstances. Authors like Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Herodotus, the evangelists, or the Church Fathers are often quoted. Yet, the relationship with past authors writing on ethics remains ambiguous. One can detect traces of dissatisfaction with this tradition, as stated in the seventh oration where the method of excerpting from different authors is problematized.²⁶⁴

This dissatisfaction comes from Manuel's intention to break off with the tradition and foreshadows a different view on the emperor's role.²⁶⁵ Often, Manuel argues from his reality and sketches plans for future actions according to his own views. Even the previous *Foundations* are quoted as a valid source of inspiration for moral models, equal to other texts of advice.²⁶⁶ He insists on the validity of his authorial methods and indicates his attempts to add a personal contribution not just reproducing old ideas.²⁶⁷ While he relies upon different traditions, the emperor never hesitates to provide landmarks of his contribution to the approached subject matters, as in the second oration. The author's frequent interventions²⁶⁸ trigger changes in the account of ideal kingly behavior common for other imperial authors, and in the disposition of the material in the orations. Mastering of persuasion skills²⁶⁹ is overtly included in the list of kingly virtues, while humility, another virtue that does not appear in other similar texts of advice for young rulers, is set on top of this system. Thus, even if he does sometimes admit that he did not add anything new to the theoretical scaffolding of ethics,²⁷⁰ eventually, in the concluding sections of the orations, he is always keen to reveal his own rhetorical achievements.²⁷¹

Conclusions

Far from being a text exclusively concerned with developing a theory of kingship, the Orations

²⁶⁴ 532a: πολλῶν δὲ ὄντων καὶ μεγάλων τῶν περὶ ταπεινοφροσύνης προειρηκότων καὶ ἐν τοῖς πάλαι, καὶ ἐν τοῖς νῦν, οὐδεὶς οὐδέπω τὸ πᾶν εἴρηκε [...] ἴσμεν τοίνυν ἐκείνους μὲν καλῶς εἰπόντας, εἴ τις εἰς τὴν τῶν λόγων ἰσχὺν ἀπίδοι.

²⁶⁵ Cf. the distinction between νέα and παλαιὰ νομοθεσία in the *Epistolary Epilogue*, 560a.

²⁶⁶ The previous *Foundations* receive in Manuel's view an authority equal to that of the biblical or ancient authors: καὶ συλλαμβάνονται μὲν ταυτησί τῆς ἐννοίας, οἳ τε σοφοὶ τῶν παλαιωτέρων καὶ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ἱεροὶ τινες ἄνδρες. Ἀκήκοας δὲ τι καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν περὶ τούτων σαφέστερον εἰρηκότων ἐν τῷ ἐξηκοστῷ δευτέρῳ τῶν πρὸς σε μοι κεφαλαίων.

²⁶⁷ See the ἐπίλογος ἐπιστολιμαίος.

²⁶⁸ For instance, 545d: ἐρῶ δὲ τὸν ἐκείνου σκοπόν, οὐ τὰ ῥήματα.

²⁶⁹ Cf. 457a: ἀλλ' ἄθρει μοι καὶ τῆδε τὴν ἡδονήν, καὶ πόση τις ἡ ταύτης ἰσχὺς καθ' ἡμῶν ἐστὶν εἰς τὸ ἀπατᾶν, εἰς τὸ πειθεῖν, εἰς τὸ βιάζεσθαι. Πολλῶ γὰρ εἶναι χαλεπωτέραν φημι πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἡδὴ ἢ πρὸς τοὺς προπάτορας πάλαι.

²⁷⁰ Καινὸν δὲ οἶμαι μηδέν, μηδὲ ἀπεικός, εἰ περιέστηκεν αὐτῷ πρὸς τούναντίον ἡ δόξα μηδαμῶς ἐπ' ἀρετῆ, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ μετάλλοις τεθαρρηκότι.

²⁷¹ 441c: ταῦτα δὲ ἡμῖν ἔδει δειχθῆναι, καὶ γέγονε κατὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν ἰσχύν.

is rather geared towards the presentation of the individual's acquisition of moral values. The correlation between ethics, the rulers' virtues, and rhetorical skills was certainly framed into a tradition that originates in the writings of the rhetoricians of the Hellenistic and the Greco-Roman times.²⁷² Yet, in Manuel's case, by developing the idea of a special kind of imperial behavior the presentation of moral virtues reflects, on the one hand, such a tradition and, on the other hand, an insight that could only have come with practical experience. Drawing on multiple philosophical sources, this formulation of imperial behavior was based on the ideal of tolerance, with strong bonds of friendship and values such as education and moderate enjoyment of life.

The seven orations establish a tight connection with the preceding work, the *Foundations*, with which they share several common issues. I suggest that the two texts were probably intended as a sole textual unit, functioning as a single work in the form of a moral diptych with an epistolary introduction in the *Foundations* and an epistolary epilogue in the *Orationes*. Moreover, a number of allusions included in the *Orationes* refer to the subject matter of the *Foundations* and create a pattern of interlace that weaves together their two moral-political “plots.” This concatenation combined with the absence of an official prologue in the *Orationes* invited readers to consider these two texts in tandem and interpret their patterns of repetition and variation. From this perspective the function of the collection emerges as twofold: first, to further the investigation of some of the themes approached in the *Foundations* and offer details on issues discussed in the *Foundations*; and second, to publicly blame John VIII for previous acts of misbehavior.

The *Orationes* shared an intention to educate and for this purpose they used different strategies: narrative accounts, discussions of philosophical concepts, or homiletic style. What unites them is the mechanism of a protreptic rhetoric which Manuel seems to put to work in combination with parainetic elements, in an attempt to subvert rhetorical genres used in Byzantium for addressing questions of rulership. Like in the other texts of his, while the author was aware of the borrowings from ancient philosophers' texts, he was also keen to point out elements of his experience that are reflected in the style he adopted for addressing his son. Old concepts are applied to new situations so that different views on the ruler's virtues would throw light on the problems inherent in the construction of an ideal representation of kingship.

²⁷² T. Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and the Roman Worlds*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 146-150, 228, and 267.

In the context of the late Byzantine court rhetoric, the seven orations bear the appearance of an experimental text, especially due to their generic differences and the strategies of combining different rhetorical forms. The *Orationes* mix mythological narrative and biblical imagery with sharp philosophical argumentation drawn from ancient philosophers; homiletic and philosophical styles; protreptic and apologetic. Above all, Manuel also shows awareness of his political experience and individual authorial skills.

These observations suggest that the reader/listener is invited to view the orations as parts of a meaningful whole, rather than to see them as separate writings. Like most Byzantine homilies or texts of advice the *Orationes* combined both Christian and pagan elements in various molds. Such literary polyphony contributed to the success of the orations and added the possibility of multiple readings. Moreover, similarly to other Byzantine anthologies or collections of different literary genres, Manuel's *Orationes* had its own method of bringing order into a loose body of subject matters, classifying various orations, invoking thematic similarities and designing a cohesive unity.²⁷³ They were connected in a form which can be described both circular as well as progressing from argument to argument. Thus, the *Orationes* begins with a text on the ruler's virtues (first oration), then it further explains the fundamentals of these virtues (second to fifth oration) and in the end it turns back to the ruler's cardinal virtues adding a final Christian deeper ideological statement (sixth and seventh orations). By this account, Manuel is conceiving his literary voice as that of a conscious author with a coherent oeuvre reflecting his political identity and not as an author of various texts produced during many years and performed on different occasions.

²⁷³ For a discussion of the methods of anthologizing poems used by Byzantine authors, see M. Lauxtermann, *Byzantine poetry from Pisides to Geometres*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2003, 75.

Chapter 6:

The narrative voice: Ἐπιτάφιος Λόγος (*Funeral oration on brother Theodore, Despot of Morea*)

In 1418 the humanist Guarino of Verona, a former student of Greek in Constantinople,¹ commented in a letter upon a funeral oration which the emperor Manuel II wrote on his brother, Theodore, Despot of Morea (1382-1407). Guarino praised the emperor's literary skill with the following words:

The emperor himself once sent me a very kind letter together with a funeral oration on his brother, which he wrote; the oration is delightful, ample and admirably interwoven with beautiful words and gnomic expression.

*Ipse etiam imperator humanissimam quandam ad me misit epistulam et funebrem pro eius fratre orationem quam ipse confecit; oratio est persuavis copiosa et miro contexta verborum et sententiarum ornatu.*²

In the same letter Guarino mentioned that he had asked his friend Ambrogio Traversari to translate the text into Latin or Italian,³ thus echoing a request made by the emperor in a letter dating from 1417.⁴ Despite the emperor's optimism regarding this translation project,⁵ the reasons why Manuel intended to circulate his text in the West remain unknown. Did Manuel attempt to advertise his literary skills in the intellectual milieu of humanist Italy or was he trying to convey a message about his political options in a wider European context,

¹ Guarino studied Greek with Manuel and John Chrysoloras and lived in Constantinople for several years until 1408. See G. Cammelli, *I dotti bizantini e le origini dell'umanesimo*, Florence: Vallecchi, 1954, 131-139.

² Roberto Sabadini, ed. *Epistolario Di Guarino Veronese*, vol 1, Torino: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1959, letter 94 addressed to his friend, Nicolaus, 172-173. Cf. also the Ambrogio Traversari's remarks on the oration in *Ambrosii Traversari generalis Camalduensium aliorumque ad ipsum et ad alios de eodem Ambrosio latinae epistolae*, Florence, 1759, II, 292.

³ *Ibidem*: *hanc ipsam ad fratrem Ambrosium nostrum mittam* (I will send this <oration> to Ambrosius, our brother). On Ambrogio Traversari and his relation with Guarino see C. L. Stinger, *Humanism and the church fathers: Ambrogio Traversari*, New York: SUNY Press, 1977.

⁴ Manuel, *Letters*, 60, 167: "In return for the favor I am doing you, read it and then show it to those you know if you could add to the author's reputation. You could also translate it into Latin or, if you will, into your own language."

⁵ Eventually, the project does not seem to have materialized as in the case of other late Byzantine shorter texts: Manuel Chrysoloras' *Comparison between the Old and the New Rome* was translated into Latin shortly after its production. See F. Niutta, "La traduzione latina di Francesco Aleardi della *Synkrisis* di Crisolora," 223-245, in *Manuele Crisolora e il ritorno del greco in Occidente: atti del convegno internazionale: Napoli, 26-29 giugno 1997* ed. by R. Maisano, Antonio Rollo, Napoli, 2002.

particularly at a time when he was in search for western help to defend Byzantium?⁶ Whether the first or the second option holds true, Guarino's letter suggests that the oration was considered interesting enough for an audience outside the exclusive literary circles of Constantinople, already much aware of the emperor's literary skills.⁷

If the Byzantine *literati* appreciated the text for its literary merits, the *Funeral oration on Theodore* also summed up the main tenets of the emperor's political outlook present in his other texts. As such it stood for a different modality of conveying political messages that pertained to the events in the history of the early fifteenth century Peloponnese. Indeed, despite its aspect of an encomium on a close relative and imperial offspring, an overarching discourse of legitimization and justification of a certain course of political and military action pervades the different layers of this oration, which documents the tumultuous history of the late fourteenth century Peloponnese.

Given this text's place within the late Byzantine literary milieu as well as its underlying political dimension, the present chapter will analyze the major formal aspects relevant for the poetics of praise addressed to Theodore I Palaiologos, by focusing on the extensive narrative of events which the emperor included in the oration. Based on this analysis it will be suggested that ultimately the author constructed this text of commemoration for his brother around an idea of the emperor's strict control of the affairs in this remote region of the Byzantine empire. Like in the case of the previous chapters, the present chapter will be divided in several sections that will highlight the major literary aspects of the text: first, the contexts of production and its contents arranged according to the rules of the *epitaphios logos* genre; second, and most substantially, I will analyze the narrative; and finally I will discuss the authorial voice emerging from this text.

6.1. Contexts of production

So far, Manuel II' s *Funeral oration on his brother Theodore* has sparked little discussion among scholars of Byzantine literature. This situation is somehow unusual, considering that the text was edited no less than three times, quite a rare achievement in the life of a Byzantine writing:

⁶ Cf. G. Patacsi, 'Joseph Bryennios et les discussions sur un concile d'union (1414-1431)', *Kleronomia* 5 (1973), 73-96.

⁷ During his reign, Manuel had systematically promoted his rhetorical skills in order to project the image of a highly educated ruler. His panegyrists often praised him as *didaskalos*, a teacher. See Makarios Makres, "Epitaphios for Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos," in A. Sideras, *Unedierte byzantinische Grabreden*, Κλασικά Γράμματα 5. Thessalonike: Parateretes, 1990: 306.3-4, Demetrios Chrysoloras, Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 235.23-25.

in F. Combéfis' *Bibliotheca patrum*, later reproduced in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*,⁸ in S. Lambros' collection of late Byzantine sources,⁹ and, more recently by J. Chrysostomides.¹⁰ The last edition emerges as by far the most comprehensive one, for its editor, J. Chrysostomides, has studied all the extant manuscript versions of the texts.¹¹ In addition, this latter edition of the *Oration* is accompanied by numerous illuminating comments helping the reader understand the historical events alluded to and their implications. Moreover, Chrysostomides, like most scholars who dealt with the *Oration*,¹² insisted on the importance of this text as a historical document for the medieval Peloponnese. Indeed, the text provides a considerable amount of data pertaining to individuals, situations, and events which shaped the history of the region.¹³ Nevertheless, when ceasing to consider the text exclusively as a historical source, its contents become rather striking, as, at times, one would expect something different from an oration intended to honor the memory of a dead individual. Close observation of other aspects of this text, like its cultural-literary setting or its performative context, may take us a step beyond from the sheer reconstruction of Morean history in late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, which has already been treated extensively and help us appreciate the underlying reasons of the emperor's action in Morea.¹⁴ The present chapter will therefore follow a slightly different path and focus on Manuel's *Funeral oration* as a literary document of the late Palaiologan period.

The *Funeral oration on Theodore* was written around the year 1410¹⁵ and was dedicated to

⁸ PG, 156, 175-308. This edition reproduces the text established by F. Combéfis who also translated it into Latin, *Historia haeresis monothelitarum*, in *Graeco-Latina patrum bibliotheca novum auctarium*, Paris, 1648, 1037-1214. This edition was based on a single manuscript: Paris. Suppl. gr. 309.

⁹ PP 3, 1-119. This edition was based on five manuscripts.

¹⁰ *Manuel II Palaeologus: Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*. Introduction, text, and notes by Julian Chrysostomides. Thessalonike: Association for Byzantine Research, 1985.

¹¹ Criticisms on this edition have been voiced by P. Schreiner, "Ein seltsames Stemma Isidor von Kiev, die Leichenrede Kaiser Manuels auf seinem Bruder Theodoros und eine moderne Ausgabe," in *Lesarten: Festschrift für Athanasios Kambylis zum 70. Geburtstag dargebracht von Schülern, Kollegen und Freunden*, ed. I. Vassiss, Berlin, 1998, 211-222.

¹² Much of the information on the history of late fourteenth and early fifteenth century Morea comes from Manuel's *Funeral oration*, a text often used by modern scholars who investigated the political history of the region. D. Zakythinis and C. Maltezou, *Le Despotat grec de Morée*, vol. 1, London: Variorum, 1975, 125-165; N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Latins and the Ottomans*, Cambridge: CUP, 2009, 235-258, J. Chrysostomides remarked that the *Funeral oration* "is one of the most significant documents in a period of Byzantine history, which is scantily documented," Introduction, 27. R.-J. Loenertz, "Pour l'histoire du Péloponnèse au XIV-ème siècle," in *Byzantina et Franco Graeca*, Rome, 1970, vol 2, 234-256, A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονόμος*, G. Page, *Being Byzantine. Greek Identity before the Ottomans*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 249-258.

¹³ Already in the first monograph dedicated to Manuel's works, B. de Xivrey noticed that it had a markedly historical character, *Mémoire*, 41.

¹⁴ The most important monograph is the two volume book by D. A. Zakythinis, *Le Despotat grec de Morée*, London: Variorum, 1975. The most recent treatment is in Nevra Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: politics and society in the late empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

¹⁵ J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction," *Manuel II Palaeologus. Funeral oration on his brother Theodore: introduction, text,*

the personality of the author's, Manuel II, younger brother who had been appointed as Despot of the Byzantine province of Morea in 1379. Both brothers enjoyed a very close relationship, as attested by their collaboration in common military actions and their common friends.¹⁶ Theodore's rule was marked by long conflicts with the Latins, Ottomans, and the local Byzantine *archontes*, yet, at his death in 1407, owing to his diplomatic efforts and to the favorable international conditions, the situation in the province was relatively stable.¹⁷ Manuel elaborated successive versions of the oration¹⁸ and, according to the *lemma* of the text preserved in some manuscripts, he delivered a short version in Mystras in 1408.¹⁹ The text of the oration is also included in the codex Vindob. phil. gr. 98, the *de luxe* manuscript that was produced in the Constantinopolitan court milieu and presents similarities with other manuscripts dedicated to his son, John.²⁰ The extended version, copied by Isidore of Kiev, was performed only later in Mystras in 1415. The delivery of the final, long version constituted a lavish demonstration of imperial authority, as Isidore of Kiev, a close friend of both the emperor and of Guarino,²¹ recounted in a letter addressed to Manuel in 1415. Isidore noticed the impressive size of the audience as well as the performer's efforts to recite in a way that would reflect the complexity of the text:

And when came the date of the oration came and the anniversary of the day of the year on which the praised one moved from the earthly world, a ritual took place on that day, in the presence of our excellent and most brilliant Despot, and also of the metropolitan and of the senate as well as of selected people from the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Also all members of the *dēmos* were present: all people came together to

translation and notes by J. Chrysostomides, 29. On the date of the speech see also Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 40-48.

¹⁶ In 1382-1387 Theodore and Manuel planned an alliance against the Ottomans, G.T. Dennis, *The Reign of Manuel II Paleologus in Thessalonica 1382-1387*, (Rome, 1960), 114 and 119. Demetrios Kydones and Manuel Kalekas, two members of the emperor's, Manuel, literary circle, addressed several letters to Theodore. In Manuel's letter 29, Manuel describes his relation to Theodore in very affectionate terms: ὡς δὲ καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν τοῦ Πέλοπος ἦν οἰκεῖς νῦν, ἔχουσαν γὰρ μοι γλυκύτερον ἀδελφὸν καὶ φίλον καὶ υἱὸν, "Can you imagine how much I desire to see it? You know how passionately I yearn to be able whenever I should wish to see him whom I regard as myself?" Manuel Kalekas addressed Theodore in several letters acknowledging his importance as ruler of Morea. See Kalekas, *Letters* 15, 16, 49.

¹⁷ Cf. J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction," *Funeral oration*, 1-25.

¹⁸ J. Chrysostomides identified two different versions a longer and a shorter, assuming that the latter was an incomplete draft which did not include all the paragraphs or contained modified passages. The manuscript tradition and the differences between the two texts have been analyzed by J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction," in *Funeral oration*, 27-53.

¹⁹ Τοῦ εὐσεβεστάτου καὶ φιλοχρίστου βασιλέως κυροῦ Μανουὴλ τοῦ Παλαιολόγου λόγος ἐπιτάφιος εἰς τὸν αὐτάδελφον αὐτοῦ δεσπότην πορφυρογέννητον κύριον Θεόδωρον τὸν Παλαιολόγον ῥηθεις ἐπιδημήσαντος εἰς Πελοπόννησον τοῦ βασιλέως. On the date of the first performance of the oration see J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction," *Funeral oration*, 30.

²⁰ See Appendix 11.

²¹ *Epistolario di Guarino Veronese*, ed. Remigio Sabadini, vol. 2, 930a and 930b, 678-680. Most likely, Isidore also helped the emperor with the writing of the oration. See C. Patrinelis and D.Z. Sophianos, *Manuel Chrysoloras Epistolary discourse*, 38-39 and J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction," *Funeral oration*, 29.

be part of the audience in higher numbers than the spectators of the Olympic games. It seemed appropriate that the funeral oration be read before the ritual, and the messenger of the book was summoned for this purpose. [...] Good Gazes read the first part in a quiet and even mode, raising his voice little by little, to a piercing tone, inasmuch as it was needed and the order of the *logos* demanded. Ἄλλ' ἐπεὶ τοίνυν ἦκεν ἡ προθεσμία καὶ ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ ἔτους, καθ' ἣν ὁ εὐφημούμενος μετέστη τῶν ὧδε, τελετὴ δὲ ἐπὶ τῆδε γίγνεται, παρῆν μὲν ὁ πάντα ἄριστος καὶ λαμπρότατος δεσπότης, παρῆν δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς καὶ ἡ γερουσία δὲ καὶ πᾶν ὅσον ἔκκριτόν τε καὶ καθαρὸν τοῦ ἱερατικοῦ καταλόγου. Καὶ τοῦ δήμου δὲ οὐδεὶς ἀπῆν· συνέρρεον γὰρ ἅπαντες ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκρόασιν μᾶλλον ἢ τῶν Ὀλυμπίασιν ἀγώνων οἱ θεαταί. Καλὸν τοιγαροῦν ἐδόκει καὶ προσῆκον πρὸ τῆς τελετῆς τὸν ἐπιτάφιον ἀναγινώσκεισθαι, καὶ ὁ τοῦ βίβλου διακομιστῆς ἐπὶ τούτῳ προσεκαλεῖτο [...] ἐπ' ἐκείνῳ δὲ Γαζῆς ὁ καλὸς ἀνεγίνωσκε, τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἡρέμα καὶ ὁμαλῶς τὴν ἡχὴν πέμπων, κατὰ μικρὸν δ' ἔτι τὴν φωνὴν ὑπεραίρων ἐς διάτορον τι καὶ γεγωνός, ὅσον τε ἐχρῆν καὶ ἡ τάξις ἀπῆτει τοῦ λόγου.²²

Like in the case of most of his texts, the emperor circulated the *Funeral oration* among the members of his literary court. No less than five commentaries to this text have survived, pointing to the popularity the emperor wished to assign to the speech. Thus, George Gemistos Plethon wrote a preface (προθεωρία) in which he lists the issues discussed in the *Oration* and gives short descriptions of the main units of the text.²³ Another of Manuel's friends, the monk Joasaph, wrote a shorter preface which he entitled *On the nature of the oration* (Περὶ τοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ λόγου).²⁴ In addition, several manuscripts contain three other short notes in prose or verses, by the emperor himself, Matthew Chrysokephalos, and a certain Demetrios Magistros, perhaps Demetrios Chrysoloras.²⁵ The most substantial commentary, which belonged to Manuel Chrysoloras, was written in the form of an encomium on the emperor's literary skills²⁶ and provides detailed comments on the different aspects of the *epitaphios*: adherence to and departure from, the established model of funeral orations, the personality of deceased person, the participants at the commemoration, etc.²⁷ Chrysoloras listed a wide range

²² Isidore of Kiev, "Lettres du hieromonaque Isidore, dans la suite metropolitain de Kiev," *Analecta Byzantina Rossica*, ed. W. Regel, Sankt Petersburg, 1891, letter 5, 66.24-67.17.

²³ For a translation of Plethon's preface of the *Funeral oration* see Appendix 12.

²⁴ Joasaph the Monk, "Περὶ τοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ λόγου," ed. J. Chrysostomides, *Funeral oration*.

²⁵ These five pieces, among which Plethon's is the most extensive are included in J. Chrysostomides' edition (p. 67-72). In the Vindob. phil. gr. 98 the texts of Manuel Chrysokephalos and Demetrios Magistros were placed at the end of the text.

²⁶ The exact title of Chrysoloras' text is unknown, although it is doubtless addressed to Emperor Manuel II (Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 50.) Commenting on the emperor's literary achievements in the *Funeral oration* Chrysoloras says: σὺ δὲ τὸν βίον τούτου διεθὼν, βασιλικῆς τε καὶ πολιτικῆς παιδείας τύπον ἔφηνας καὶ οὐκ ἐκείνου μόνον στήλην ἀλλὰ καὶ οἷον δεῖ τὸν ἄρχοντα ἀπλῶς εἶναι ἀνδριάντα ἔστησας, ὃν πάσαι μὲν ἔδειξας ἐν σεαυτῷ, αὐτὸς πλάστης καὶ τεχνίτης τούτου καὶ εἰκὼν γενόμενος [...] καὶ τῆς βασιλικῆς αὐτῆς ἀρετῆς ἀνδριάς εἶναι. Δέδωκας δὲ ἡμῖν ἀντ' ἐκείνου καὶ τὴ Πελοποννήσω καὶ τὸν ὁμώνυμον αὐτῷ ἕτερον ὡς πυνθάνομαι ἐκείνου. Ἄλλὰ τὸ μὲν ἡμετέρον μέρος πάντα καλῶς ἔχει (64. 26-30).

²⁷ C.G. Patrinelis and D.Z. Sophianos, ed., *Μανουὴλ Χρυσολωρᾶ Λόγος πρὸς τὸν Μανουὴλ Β' Παλαιολόγο* (Manuel Chrysoloras and His Discourse Addressed To The Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus), Athens: Akademia Athenon,

of qualities of the oration. He started with power, beauty, and honor (δύναμις, κάλλος, and ἀξίωμα) and finished with precision, intensity, solemnity, majesty, inventivity, diversity, order, coherence, etc.²⁸

6.2. The rhetorical template and the compositional structure of the Funeral oration

Like any *epitaphios logos*, one of the chief function of this text was to praise Theodore, the emperor's brother and deceased ruler of Morea. Yet, it is also true that the extent and the variety of the other elements included in the text infuse the oration with new meanings and messages which go beyond sheer eulogy. In this section, I will be mainly concerned with identifying and analyzing the author's strategies and techniques that were used in building political messages. I envisage here two major aspects which pertain to the author's craft: first, the use of a rhetorical template enunciated long before, and, second, the narrative of events in the Peloponnese which, in my opinion, is decisive for formulating and conveying an imperial message. Both these aspects highlight the issues which Manuel constantly plays against each other in this oration: the portraiture of his brother, the history of the Peloponnese, and his own involvement in the politics of the region.

The ancient theory of *topoi* and the *Funeral oration*

In the present case, the principles enunciated by ancient theory of rhetoric represents a valuable hermeneutical device for understanding this text. Most of all, it enables one to chart with a certain degree of precision the changes of form, content, and attitude which were effected by the revival of classical models.

Funeral orations held a prominent place in both the society and the literary culture of the Hellenic world. Ever since Thucydides' rendition of Pericles' speech commemorating the death of the Athenian heroes, texts of this kind have been constantly produced and copied as models.²⁹ The Athenian historian established a model which combined elements from two other genres: panegyrics and biography. As a result, this double determination reflecting both a set of ethical standards and a historical treatment respectively, left deep traces in the fabric

2001.

²⁸ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 74.31-75.28: ἀκρίβεια, δεινότης, σεμνότης, μεγαλοπρέπεια, ἐπίνοια, τὸ ποικίλον καὶ πυκνὸν καὶ καινὸν τῶν νοημάτων, τάξις, συνέχεια, τὸ οἰκεῖον καὶ τὸ καθαρὸν τῆς λέξεως, τὴν διαλάμπουσαν διὰ πάντων ὥραν.

²⁹ Other notable funeral discourses which circulated in the ancient world belong to the canonical orators Lysias, Hypereides, Demosthenes, and Naucrates. Their works are treated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his *Art of Rhetoric* VI.1-4.

of the genre. The implications of this double determination have been extensively treated by L. Pernot in a comprehensive two volume study entitled *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-roman*, which, although treating mainly ancient and late-antique productions, remains relevant for the present analysis.³⁰

A cursory look at the corpus of extant funeral orations reveals a variety of ways to approach the event of an individual's death. Thus, depending on circumstances, some authors focused more on praising the dead person's character while others, in lengthier compositions, preferred to spice up the encomium with a more detailed account of the individual's activities and of their effects on the present state of affairs. In addition, funeral orations included compulsory sections which were meant to express their authors' grief and sentiments of loss. Especially in the introduction and the epilogue, they included elements borrowed from another popular funerary genre, the monody, which was a shorter piece of writing dedicated exclusively to the mourning of a person. On such occasions the mourners would emphasize nothing but the qualities and virtues of the deceased person. In the Palaiologan period, the most extensive treatment of the genre of funeral orations belongs to Manuel Chrysoloras in his commentary on the *Funeral oration*. Significantly, apart from mentioning the different parts which such a text should have, Chrysoloras also noticed the necessity for a funeral oration to have a pedagogical function.³¹

The inclusion of the *epitaphios* in Menander's *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν*,³² a handbook of rhetorics in late antiquity, indicates that the prevailing view was to regard funeral orations as pieces of demonstrative rhetoric. Menander's discussion of *epitaphioi* under the heading of *encomia* touched upon various aspects of the genre like its history, performance, and typology. In addition, the rhetorician gave details on the arrangement and the content of each chapter to be included in a funeral oration. Given the wealth of details about different techniques and strategies, it comes as no surprise that this theoretical text became essential for subsequent generations of writers of funeral orations. In Byzantium, Menander's rules were used as guides for composing different kinds of speeches, while their audience is well attested by a significant number of extant manuscripts dating especially from the later periods. As a matter of fact, most of the late Palaiologan funeral orations, such as Makarios Makres' and the *Anonymous*

³⁰ L. Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-roman*, vol. 1, Paris: Institut d'études augustiniennes, 1993, 110-137.

³¹ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 71.10: καὶ πολλὰ δὲ ἄλλα τῶν χρησίμων ἐν τοῖς ἐπιταφίοις λόγοις παιδευόμεθα.

³² Menander Rhetor, *Treatise 1. Γενεθλιῶν διαίρησις τῶν ἐπιδεικτικῶν. Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν*, ed. D.A. Russel and N.G. Wilson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981, 418.6-422.4.

Funeral oration (Vat. gr. 632) largely followed these prescriptions.³³

In light of these preliminary observations with regard to the genre of *epitaphioi*, the first stage of my discussion of the literary and rhetorical strategies used in this oration will consist of a summary of the oration based on an overview of the ways in which the author complied to the rules of the genre which he adopted. Thus, the ancient theory of *topoi*, defined as thematic rubrics according to which facts were arranged, provide an appropriate and coherent conceptual framework. In Byzantium several lists of such *topoi* circulated together with the above mentioned rhetorical textbooks of Menander, Hermogenes, or Aphthonius. The model established long before especially by Isocrates' *Evagoras* and subsequently theorized in other rhetorical treatises presented the following succession of units:³⁴

- parents of the praised individual;
- country;
- birth;
- childhood: physical and moral qualities;
- adult age: the period until the coming into power and the period of rule;
- general comparison with heroes of the past;
- *makarismos*.

Following this structure, the *Oration* makes use of a similar string of basic elements.³⁵ At the outset of his oration, Manuel states that his speech remained subject to the canons of the panegyric:

*The established norm of panegyrics lays down that before honoring the dead with praise, his country and parents should also be acclaimed, especially when they are indeed men of significant virtue and great fame. Προτρέπει μὲν οὖν ὁ νόμος τῶν ἐγκωμίων, πρὸ τοῦ κοσμεῖν τοὺς προκειμένους εἰς εὐφημίαν, τὴν ἐνεγκαμένην αὐτοὺς καὶ δὴ καὶ τοὺς γονεῆας πᾶσι δηλοῦν, καὶ μάλιστα ὅταν τύχῳσιν οὗτοι καὶ ἀρετῆς οὐ σμικρᾶς καὶ δόξης οὐ μετρίας μετεσχηκότες.*³⁶

This passage which leaves no doubt regarding the nature of the *Oration*, stands as a short definition of panegyrics as it was accepted by any educated Byzantine. With this statement

³³ Makarios Makres, *Epitaphios* (A. Sideras, *Unedierte byzantinische Grabreden*, 309-326) and the anonymous funeral oration edited by Ch. Dendrinis, "An Unpublished Funeral oration on Manuel II Palaeologus," in *Porphyrogenita. Studies in Honor of J. Chrysostomides*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003, 441-451.

³⁴ The scheme is presented and discussed in L. Pernot's *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-roman*, vol.1, 137.

³⁵ The order (τάξις) of compositional rubrics, is strictly respected throughout the oration, according to most generic precepts. Manuel alternates these emotional sections with narrative or descriptive units which entirely neglect Theodore's figure. And with regard to another rhetorical category, ἀκολουθία, or the succession of the compositional sections, transitions are usually marked by anticipating the content of what is to come or by directly addressing the audience.

³⁶ 79.6-10.

Manuel seems to wish to indicate that he avoided any novelty and that he followed strictly the prescriptions enunciated in late antiquity, and consistently assumed by Byzantine writers of *epitaphioi*. From this point of view, the *Funeral oration* does not present any peculiarities. It dealt with the family, education, virtues, deeds, and death of Theodore, Despot of Morea and accordingly it was divided into the following sections: a proem (προοίμιον), accounts of fatherland (πατρίς), family (γένος), nurture (ἀνατροφή), education (παιδεία), ways of living (ἐπιτηδεύματα), deeds (πράξεις), comparison (σύγκρισις), concluding with *topoi* typical of funerary speeches: lamentation (θρήνος) and consolation (παραμυθία).³⁷

The first segment of the speech, the proem established a strong emotional contact with the audience:

What should I say to you who are present here when I myself have no strength to speak, nor do I see you capable of listening attentively to my words? This tremendous calamity has left me speechless and I know that you who have received benefits at the hands of this greatly mourned man, are similarly distressed. Ἄλλὰ τί καὶ φθέγξωμαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ὧ παρόντες, μήτ' αὐτὸς λέγειν ἰσχύων μήθ' ὑμᾶς ὀρῶν δυναμένους καθαρὰν τὴν ἀκοὴν ὑποσχεῖν τοῖς λόγοις; Ἐμέ τε γὰρ ἀφωνία κατέσχευεν ὑπὸ τῆς μεγίστης ταυτησὶ συμφορᾶς ὑμᾶς τε τοῦτ' οἶδα παθόντας, οὐς ὁ νῦν θρηνούμενος διαέγονεν εὖ ποιῶν.³⁸

Unlike other *prooimia*, this one insists on the mourner's emotional outbursts. The author gives details on his sentiment of loss which caused him physical suffering:

From the moment when the man we mourn was snatched away from this world that he might receive the reward of the virtue by which he lived and died, I was cleft in two and can hardly breathe. Ἐγωγε δίχα τμηθεὶς ἀφ' ἧς ὁ νῦν θρηνούμενος ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἐγένετο, ληψόμενος γέρα τῆς ἀρετῆς, ἧ καὶ συμβεβίωκε καὶ συναπελήλυθε, μόγις ἀναπνεῖν ἰσχύω· ἄγχει γὰρ ἡ συμφορά.³⁹

This section is closely connected with the following part, the intention (πρόθεσις),⁴⁰ which bridges the two succeeding sections and brings further explanation on the nature of the following section, the nobility (εὐγένεια) of the deceased. While Manuel admits that traditionally a panegyric should eulogize the nobility of family and place of birth of the individual under focus, he introduces a slight modification: thus he expresses doubts regarding the necessity to comply to this rule in the given circumstances⁴¹ and plainly asserts that the

³⁷ Also listed in the introduction to the edition of the speech by J. Chrysostomides "Introduction," 27.

³⁸ 75.1-79.5. The translations used in this chapter are from the J. Chrysostomides' edition of the *Funeral Oration*.

³⁹ 77.11-13.

⁴⁰ 79.6-24.

⁴¹ 79. 27-30: "Ἴνα γὰρ συνέδραμε τοσοῦτος μὲν σωρὸς ἀγαθῶν καὶ μηδένα λέληθε τῶν ἀπάντων, παρέχει δὲ πᾶσι θαυμάζειν ἐκπληττομένοις τὰ κατορθώματα, οὐκ ἀναγκαῖος ὁ νόμος οὗτος αὐτῷ γε τούτῳ [...] εἶναι δοκεῖ.

this rule was superfluous:⁴²

For who does not know that the fatherland of this man was the great City, I speak of Constantinople? Τίς γὰρ πάντων οὐκ οἶδεν, ὡς εἶη μὲν ἡ μεγίστη πόλις, τὴν Κωνσταντίνου φημί, [...] ὥστε καὶ δεῖσθαι παρ' ἑτέρου τοῦτο μανθάνειν;⁴³

As a consequence of the insistence on the private emotion and of this technical assumption, in the end, Constantinople gets a very brief encomium which includes only a praise for its fame of its founder, Constantine, and of being the reigning City (βασιλεύουσα πόλις).⁴⁴ In order to cut a long story short and move to the following section, Manuel then qualifies Constantinople with two nouns suggesting a complete parental imagery, fatherland and “mother-city” (πατρίς and μητρόπολις).⁴⁵ At this point, the emphasis on the Constantinian model seems contiguous with the early Palaiologan image of Michael VIII as New Constantine. It is also worth noticing here that, by contrast, Isidore of Kiev's panegyric addressed to Manuel's son John included an extensive praise of the City which stood as a core part of the entire panegyric.⁴⁶ As for Theodore's parents and ancestors, they are treated in few lines that stress their role as emperors in an uninterrupted series of rulers.⁴⁷ Manuel's partial overlooking of details pertaining to his brother's nobility (εὐγένεια) also noticed by Manuel Chrysoloras in the *Epistolary discourse*,⁴⁸ mirrors a rather rare habit among ancient authors of panegyrics. Menander himself rebuked those authors who, when praising emperors, started their eulogy *in medias res*.⁴⁹ From this point of view, Manuel seems to have wished both to comply to the rule of a proper encomium and, at the same time, to instill the idea of Theodore's significance in state hierarchy.

The ensuing rubrics, education (παιδεία) and nurturing (ἀνατροφή), which touch more closely on the Despot's personality, received more attention than the previous ones. This rubric begins with the account of his earliest age.⁵⁰ Theodore's qualities were twofold:

⁴² 81.4: περιττόν.

⁴³ 81.5-6.

⁴⁴ 83.13-30. This is not the case with Isidore's slightly later *Panegyric* which goes into the details of the City's glorious past. Further on the praise of Constantinople: A. Rhoby, “Stadtlob und Stadtkritik,” in *Byzantinische Sprachkunst. Studien zur byzantinischen Literatur gewidmet Wolfram Hörandner zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. M. Hinterberger and E. Schiffer, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007, 277-296.

⁴⁵ 83.13.

⁴⁶ 136.14.

⁴⁷ 83.31-85.20.

⁴⁸ Chrysoloras also noticed that the emperor overlooked the parents, *Epistolary discourse*, 95.1: περὶ δὲ τῆς πατρίδος καὶ τῶν γονέων ἴσως τίς ἐρεῖ ὡς πολλὰ εἰπεῖν ἔχων ἔτι περὶ αὐτῶν, καὶ ταῦτα σφόδρα γενναῖα καὶ σεμνά, ταῦτα παρέλιπες. Ἐγὼ δὲ φημί, καὶ οἷς εἴρηκας περὶ αὐτῶν καὶ οἷς ἔχων λέγειν παρέδραμες, ταύτην τε κάκεινους εἰς ὑπερβολὴν κοσμησάι καὶ ἐξῆραι.

⁴⁹ Menander II, 370, 9-10, 12-28. L. Pernot discussed the few cases of ancient panegyrists who neglected to treat εὐγένεια: *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, vol.1, 258-259.

⁵⁰ 85.21: ἐτράφη μὲν βασιλικῶς, ἐκ παίδων δὲ ἐδείκνυ τὴν εὐφυΐαν.

intellectual- he excelled in rhetorical studies like no one else⁵¹ and physical- he proved military abilities.⁵² Such values were also echoed in other contemporary pieces of writing. Demetrios Kydones and Manuel Kalekas addressed Theodore in several letters written in the usual elite idiom which leads one to the conclusion that he possessed the usual educational background of an upper-class Byzantine.⁵³

Like in the previous rubrics, there is little novelty in the discussion of virtues (ἀρέται)⁵⁴ where Theodore is portrayed as wise, righteous, courageous, unswerving,⁵⁵ and, above everything, temperate and maintaining the moderation in his actions.⁵⁶ More substantial than the previous rubrics, the section of ἐπιτηδεύματα⁵⁷ follows as well the usual generic prescriptions:⁵⁸ it embraces the Despot's way of life, the attitude adopted in various situations and towards certain people, the career envisaged since youth, his conduct, and ethical disposition. All in all, so far, the author's attitude is unsurprisingly highly laudatory.

It is the section of actions and deeds (πράξεις),⁵⁹ which theoretically were meant to illustrate Theodore's excellence and which occupy the largest part in the oration. According to his own words in the *incipit* of the section⁶⁰ Manuel, does not recount all of his brother's deeds, but operates a selection of facts beginning from the period before the arrival in the Peloponnese until the recovery of the major strongholds in the region previously sold to the Knights Hospitaller. This section abounds in details not only of Theodore's deeds but also of other episodes from Peloponnesian history: the rebellions of the local *archontes*, the settlement of a significant Albanian population in the region, the Ottoman attempts to increase their

⁵¹ 85.24- 87.3.

⁵² 87.10-87.22.

⁵³ E.g. Kydones, *Letters* 293, 313, 322, 336, 366, 414, 421, 425, 427, 442. On Theodore's education: Demetrios Kydones, *Letters*, 322: Χάρις σοι καὶ τοῦ γράψαι καὶ τοῦ μετὰ κάλλους τοῦτο ποιῆσαι. οὐ γὰρ (4) στρατιώτῃ μᾶλλον ἢ ῥήτορι τοιαῦτα γράφειν προσήκε.

⁵⁴ 87.23-89.21.

⁵⁵ 87.24-25.

⁵⁶ 89.1-21.

⁵⁷ This section is not about the office, but about the usual conduct of the young individual. As the πράξεις were reserved to the adult age, the ἐπιτηδεύματα would be considered as revealing a character and a moral disposition (ἦθος, τρόπος, προαίρεσις).

⁵⁸ Menander II defines it as: ἔνδειξις τοῦ ἦθους καὶ τῆς προαιρέσεως ἄνευ πράξεων ἀγωνιστικῶν, in *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν*. *Menander Rhetor*, ed. D. A. Russel and N. G. Wilson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981: 384, 20-21.

⁵⁹ 97.3-211.12. Concerning the πράξεις, the dominant view has been usually the one formulated by Cicero who recommended that panegyrists should praise only the most recent deeds, *Part.* 75; *Men.* II, 391, 26-27; 415, 19-21.

⁶⁰ *Funeral oration*, 97.3-8: "So far we have spoken only briefly and we think that we have thoroughly proved that your Despot's nature deserved great praise. But though I may need to substantiate this further, as far as possible, I shall speak briefly, since to give a detailed account of this man of blessed memory's achievements is to usurp the task of the historian. For the same reason I shall not recount everything he did, since the magnitude of his achievements prevents me from expatiating on each one singly, and their number-for they are innumerable-makes it impossible to describe them all in proper sequence."

influence in the region, the negotiations with the Latins, and, most of all, the temporary sale of Byzantine cities to the Hospitallers. Although it follows a chronological order, it does not end with the Despot's death which occurred right at the time of a long series of negotiations leading eventually to the pacification of the peninsula.

After the πράξεις comes the comparison (σύγκρισις) with the ancient heroes.⁶¹ Roughly, this rubric supports a division in two parts: one dealing with his deeds comprising a comparison with a series of Homeric heroes and with his ancestors; and a second part which deals with his fatal illness. The latter comparison triggers a further parallel to Job's sufferings.

The lamentation (θρήνος),⁶² in fact an integrated monody, is primarily a description of the mourner's feelings. The emperor enhances this section with a dialog between the author himself and the members of the audience asked to offer emotional support to the emperor in expressing his grief. The use of the dialog in a funeral oration might indicate an influence of the homiletic tradition, the only oratorical genre which included occasional conversations between the performer and the audience.⁶³ The final section, the epilogue (ἐπίλογος), corresponding to the peroration, includes the usual blessing (μακαρισμός) and an exhortation addressed to the audience to endure the loss with dignity and faith in God.

Having identified the main rubrics of the rhetorical template in use in the *Funeral oration*, I will now turn to looking briefly into the ways in which Manuel handled these strict rules in the praise of his brother. In broad terms these rhetorical rules were connected with handling two major categories of rhetorical practice: *inventio* and *dispositio* of subject matter. As Menander had already noticed in the *Περὶ ἐπιδεικτικῶν*, orators often exercised their freedom in complying to these rules.⁶⁴

A way leading to the identification of authorial peculiarities in terms of *inventio* and *dispositio* is to look more carefully at the choice of details provided in the main section of the text, Theodore's πράξεις. Doubtless, the emperor as well as his audience had knowledge of more events than was revealed in the oration; instead, the author selected only a limited number of episodes purged of any negative implications for the Despot's activity. The most

⁶¹ 211.13- 233.14.

⁶² 233.15.

⁶³ M. Cunningham, "Dramatic device or didactic tool? The function of dialogue in Byzantine preaching" in E. Jeffreys ed, *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003, 101-116.

⁶⁴ E.g. the use of formulas like ἔξεστί σοι, οὐδὲν κωλύει, ὡς ἄν τις βούληται in Menander II, 382.4; 384.3; 404.29. For the discussion on the orator's liberties see L. Pernot, "Règles et liberté de composition," in *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-roman*, 251-253.

striking element which he does not mention is the alliance with the “barbarian” Ottomans against the local powerful Byzantines. The selection of details goes hand in hand with the sequence of *topoi*: like many other orators who adjusted the rules according to their subject matter,⁶⁵ Manuel eliminated from his encomium entire rubrics such as γένεσις, or τύχη.

As for the length of the oration, it must first be noticed that while, in general, there was no limit concerning the length of epideictic speeches,⁶⁶ funeral celebrations were commonly regarded as a genre of reduced length. In the case of monodies, the other major funerary type, it was strictly prohibited for authors to exceed a hundred and fifty lines. The primary reason for cultivating brevity was certainly the chagrin of the speaker and of the participants in the ceremony.⁶⁷ Late Palaiologan funeral, orations comply to this model of brevity.⁶⁸ However, in the present case, it appears that Manuel draws equally on the genre of imperial orations (βασιλικοὶ λόγοι) which had no limit for developing each of their constituent *topoi*.⁶⁹ Consequently, the oration often expands in directions departing from the exclusive presentation of Theodore's personality: it praises the Knights Hospitaller for their bravery, it rebukes the Ottomans as savage barbarians, or it highlights different aspects of the larger political context within which Theodore's actions had to be motivated. Nonetheless, despite its considerable length, the speech retains its oral character emerging especially from the references to a group of listeners present at the public delivery of the oration.

So much for the analysis of the *inventio* and *dispositio* of the *topoi* in this speech. The arrangement of rubrics indicates that the oration closely follows a conventional scheme. However, as suggested above, the most substantial rubric, the way of life (ἐπιτηδεύματα) and the deeds (πράξεις), received a very different treatment which, arguably, illustrated a tendency towards altering the genre of funeral orations by Manuel himself.

6.3. The narrator and the narrative

Habitually, these two sections (ἐπιτηδεύματα and πράξεις) included several narrative vignettes

⁶⁵ Pernot gives a long series of examples of omissions of *topoi*: for instance the family is omitted by Dion XXVIII, 9; XXIX, 2-3; Aristides, Eteones, 3 (forerunners and parents); Panegyric of Kyzikos, 23; the fatherland: Aristides, *Alexander* 5; Lucian, *Imagines* 2, *La rhétorique*, vol. 1, 156.

⁶⁶ Lucian, *On authority*. 18. οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ μέτρον νενομοθετημένον.

⁶⁷ E.g. Dion, XXIX, 2.

⁶⁸ Makarios Makres for instance wrote a brief funeral oration on the emperor. Likewise the manuscript Vat. gr. 632 includes another rather brief funeral oration for the emperor.

⁶⁹ J. Chrysostomides also noticed that Manuel's *Funeral oration* was not based exclusively on the tenets of ἐπιτάφιοι but it also borrowed from the βασιλικοί, “Introduction,” 28.

that highlighted the virtuous character of the deceased person.⁷⁰ The account of an individual's deeds represented the main feature which differentiated *epitaphioi* from monodies, consolatory orations (παραμυθητικοὶ λόγοι), or lamentations (θρήνοι), shorter pieces of funeral rhetoric delivered right after the death of an individual in the form of a lamentation. Noticeably, in the case of the *Funeral oration* these narrative constituents take on extended dimensions, which render Manuel's text one of the lengthiest examples of its type in Byzantine literature.⁷¹ Connected to that, there is yet another feature that distinguishes Manuel's *epitaphios* from other similar productions. Thus, while the text is centered around the representation of Theodore's image as a just and capable ruler, the author also unveils two other aspects reflecting his experience as emperor: his own role in the development of events in Morea and a brief history of Morea as part of the Byzantine state.

Indeed, interestingly enough, Manuel provided a wide range of details regarding not only his brother's activities but also the political history of the Despotate.⁷² In doing so, he operated a careful selection of what he presented as relevant political or military events,⁷³ leaving aside equally important pieces of information about Theodore's activities. As a result, in his account only several major episodes receive more attention: the rebellion of Andronikos IV in Constantinople in 1376-1379 during which most of the members of the Palaiologan family were imprisoned, the pacification of Morea after the arrival of Theodore in 1382, Bayezid's attempts to increase his influence, the meeting of the regional Christian leaders in Serres (1393), and the sale of Peloponnesian strongholds to the Knights Hospitaller (1400).

Understanding Manuel's strategy to integrate different rhetorical and ideological elements of an encomium in a narrative thread requires a close reading of the account of events embedded in the oration. Drawing on concepts from the domain of narrative theory, in the following section I will focus on two aspects: the narrator and the narrative technique employed in order to fuse the different reports of events from the history of Morea into a single, yet multifaceted, story.

From the outset, it should be noted that, in many ways, the narratives included in

⁷⁰ See for instance the contemporary anonymous *epitaphios* on Manuel II, Ch. Dendrinou, "An Unpublished funeral oration on Manuel II Palaeologus," in *Porphyrogenita. Studies in Honor of J. Chrysostomides*, 441-451.

⁷¹ A. Sideras described Manuel's oration as the longest Byzantine funeral oration, *Die byzantinischen Grabreden*, (Vienna, 1994), 316. J. Chrysostomides also noticed its unusual length, "Introduction," 27.

⁷² For the use of the term "Despotate" see R.-J. Loenertz, "Aux origines du despotat d'Épire et de la principauté d'Achaïe," *B 43* (1973): 361, n. 3.

⁷³ καὶ ἐν οἷς δὲ τί τῶν ἐκείνω πεπραγμένων παρατρέχεις, θαῦμα τί δεικνύεις διὰ τοῦ παραλείπειν καὶ ὑπερβολὴν καὶ σφοδρότητα ἐπαίνου, ὡς τε, καὶ δι' ὧν λέγεις διαρρήδην καὶ δι' ὧν σιγᾶς δι' ὧν λέγων ἢ σιγῶν εὐστόχως ὑπονοεῖν δίδως, μεγίστας αὐτῷ τὰς εὐφημίας πλέκεσθαι. Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse* 111.6-10.

pieces of public oratory still form a puzzle for the student of ancient Greek and Byzantine rhetoric. Such narratives have been constantly overlooked by the scholars who focused primarily on categories central to the rhetorical analysis usually employed in the investigation of oratorical texts: argumentation and manipulation of technical categories such as figures of speech or *topoi*.⁷⁴ A case in point illustrating the treatment of narratives in Byzantine oratorical texts⁷⁵ is a recent volume on Byzantine narrative.⁷⁶ While it touches on narratives included in texts intended for public performance in religious contexts, it deals exclusively with narrative genres *par excellence*, such as history and hagiography. Similarly, in another recent overview of narrative in Byzantine literature, the authors focused on hagiography, romance, and historiography, downplaying the significance of narrative accounts included in other genres.⁷⁷ A rather singular study on *oratorical narrative* by O.-J. Schmitt investigated the historical content in Isidore of Kiev's *Panegyric for John VIII Palaiologos*. However, while the study acknowledges the role of narrative account in this extensive late Byzantine *basilikos logos*, it is limited to a presentation of the historical information and does not further explore the orator's narrative strategies or the adaptation of narrative to the requirements of an oration.⁷⁸

6.3.1. The narrator

Before proceeding to the investigation of the ways in which these related episodes were connected into a single narrative, I will first consider how the emperor fashioned himself as a narrator. Certainly, Manuel was not an innovator of rhetorical techniques: authors of epideictic

⁷⁴ Another reason for marginalizing the study of narratives in oratory could be that speeches have been customarily judged as non-narrative texts. However, it is no less true that just as many narratives include non-narrative elements, often, speeches embed sophisticated narratives. In fact, already in Antiquity speeches were treated together with the *genus mixtum* of narrative. In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle assigned a central position to narratives in his theory of internal arrangement of speeches, *τάξις*. Aristotle listed *διήγησις* together with other major speech units: preface, *προοίμιον*, proof - *πίστις*, and epilogue - *ἐπίλογος*, and conceived it as a highly argumentative element. Certainly, in practice, substantial or complex narratives rarely attained such a prominent position in oral speeches. Often, orators preferred rather to include narrative snippets in other sections as well, while the *διήγησις* itself was frequently interrupted by panegyric sections or *ψῶγοι*.

⁷⁵ Perhaps, due to these difficulties in the analysis of oratorical narratives, it is only recently that scholars have begun investigating them more systematically. For instance, the volume edited by I. de Jong, *Narrators, Narratees, and Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature*, Leiden: Brill, 2004 sets apart a chapter discussing the features of narratives used by ancient orators like Andocides, Antiphon, Demosthenes, Lysias, or Isocrates used in their texts for purposes of argumentation in civil trials, M. Edwards, "Oratory," in *Narrators, narratees, and narratives*, 317-356.

⁷⁶ J. Burke et alii, *Byzantine Narrative. Papers in Honor of Roger Scott*, Melbourne, 2006.

⁷⁷ "However neatly crafted and indispensable narrative passages, explicit or implied, may be to this or that type of non-narrative literature, they are nevertheless interludes, a contributing but minor key in the formal arrangement and impression of the work as a whole," E.C. Bourbouhakis and I. Nilsson, "Byzantine Narrative: the Form of Storytelling in Byzantium" in *A Companion to Byzantium*, 2010, ed. by Liz James, 265.

⁷⁸ O.J. Schmitt, "Kaiserrede und Zeitgeschichte im späten Byzanz: ein Panegyrikos Isidors von Kiew aus dem Jahre 1429," *JÖB* 48 (1998): 209-242.

rhetoric resolved the tension resulting from the use of both narrative accounts and literary portraits either by relying more on chronological accounts or by classifying deeds in time of peace and war according to ethical values and virtues.⁷⁹ In this vein, Manuel Chrysoloras noticed the paradox of the *epitaphioi* which, despite their sad topic, the death of a virtuous individual, still had to be pleasant for the listeners:

Funeral orations are not only just, good, and useful, but also enjoyable and capable to generate delight. Τοὺς ἐπιταφίους λόγους οὐ δικαίους μόνον εἶναι καὶ καλοὺς καὶ ὠφελίμους, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡδεῖς πῶς καὶ τέρπειν δυναμένους.⁸⁰

For his part, Manuel openly embraced a chronological approach, and it is not only the arrangement of the subject matter which suggests the use of such a strategy but also his own observations. We are fortunate to have the author's *post-factum* remarks on the production of the text, remarks which highlight the chief role of narrative in the funeral oration. The emperor's letter addressed to Manuel Chrysoloras, whom he was asking for feedback on his composition, alluded to the aims and methods of writing an *epitaphios* and revealed the author's poetics of praise by means of narrative. The emperor states that in a laudatory text the account of one's deeds is more eloquent than a sheer enumeration of qualities:

For we consider it exactly the same thing to give a detailed account of the life of good men and by that very fact to adorn them with praise directly. That praise, to be more precise, which the account of a person's deeds evokes is undoubtedly greater than the simple statement that the man in question was brave, intelligent, and possessed of all other virtues. Ἡγούμεθα γὰρ ταύτῳ ἀκριβῶς εἶναι τό τε τὸν βίον τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν διεξέρχασθαι τό τ' εὐφημίαις αὐτοὺς ἀμέσως κοσμεῖν· μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ μείζων ἔπαινος ἀτεχνῶς ὁ διὰ τῆς τῶν ἔργων ἐπιδείξεως τοῦ τὸν δεῖνα ἀπλῶς οὕτως λέγειν ὡς ἀνδρεῖος ἐστίν, ὡς σώφρων, ὡς τὴν ἄλλην ἅπασαν ἀρετὴν ἔχων.⁸¹

Likewise, other contemporary authors noticed the strong presence of a narrative voice.⁸² The preface (προθεωρία) of the funeral oration included in Ms. Vindob. phil. gr. 98, by George Gemistos Plethon, after listing the initial sections of the speech, notices that Manuel recounted events from the recent history of Morea as well as Theodore's activities.⁸³ Another commentator of the oration, Joasaph the Monk, also highlighted the author's extensive use of narratives of events in Morea embedded in the eulogy of Theodore.⁸⁴ Finally, Manuel Chrysoloras' *Epistolary discourse* (1415), mentioned the unusual inclusion of details from the

⁷⁹ L. Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, I, 134-140.

⁸⁰ 73.1.

⁸¹ Manuel, *Letters*, 56.

⁸² In his letter to Manuel, Isidore of Kiev noticed that upon hearing the *epitaphios*, the participants had the impression that they had visualized Theodore's deeds. Cf. "Lettres du hieromonaque Isidore," 67.21-22.

⁸³ For a translation of the George Gemistos Plethon' *Protheoria* see Appendix 12.

⁸⁴ Joasaph the Monk, *Περὶ τοῦ χαρακτῆρος τοῦ λόγου*, in *Manuel II: Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*, 12-14.71.

history of the Peloponnese.⁸⁵

Apart from these observations, in the beginning of the oration the emperor addresses the question of the role of narrative strategy in the economy of praise. He introduces the section dealing with Theodore's deeds in Morea with a brief explanatory preface:

So far we have spoken *briefly* and we think that we have thoroughly proved that your Despot's nature deserved great praise. But though I may need to substantiate this further, as far as possible, I shall speak briefly, since to give a *detailed account* of this man of blessed memory's achievements is to usurp the task of the historian (τοῖς ἔργον ἔχουσιν ἱστορεῖν οἰκειότερον ἂν γένοιτο). For the same reason I shall not recount everything he did, since the magnitude of his achievements prevents me from expatiating on each one singly, and their number - for they are innumerable - makes it impossible to describe them all in proper sequence. My failure to detail them at length is, I believe, contrary to your wishes, for I know, and am entirely convinced, that just like those who yearn to see the portraits of their beloved ones, so you long to see this man's entire life, all of which is worthy of admiration. Perhaps in failing to declare accurately how much he had achieved I might also appear to be committing an injustice towards the chief performer of these deeds. Indeed in so far as mere willingness is concerned, I would agree with you and yet, I shall decline if the arduousness of the task makes it impossible for me to do what I would wish. [...] From the many and fine and great deeds which you all know to have been accomplished by him - who not long ago was still among us but now alas is the subject of our tears - I shall, as I have said, *only actually mention a few of his achievements* and this in a *very brief manner*. Nevertheless these deeds will show clearly that the man who achieved them was a true benefactor to mankind, to whom he brought great honor.⁸⁶

Essentially, this brief *ars narratoria* says that the emperor did not intend to present exhaustively the events in Theodore's life, because, on the one hand, such an attempt would have required the tools of a proper historian and, on the other hand, Manuel claims that it was more important to reflect on Theodore's virtues. Furthermore, he insists that a story like the one about Theodore needs to concentrate only on several basic actions, explaining at the same time what he means by *basic* (καίριον):

... something indicative of the natural character indicating that the soul passionately desires for good. For this reason I shall resist your wish and shall relate only a few of his achievements and as far as possibly briefly. Λέγω δὲ καίρια ὅσα πέρ ἐστι δηλωτικὰ φυσικῶν ιδιωμάτων, δι' ἃ τις ἔχει ψυχὴν εἰδέναι ἐρῶσαν ἀγαθὴν εἶναι. Ὅθεν ἀνθέξομαι τῆς βουλῆς, ὀλίγα τῶν ἐκείνου διεξιῶν καὶ συνελῶν ὡς οἷόν τε.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Καὶ φρερίων δὲ μνημονεύσας εἰς τὸ κοινόν, πολλὰ περὶ τῆς ἐκείνων κατὰ πίστιν ἐπαγγελίας διεξέρχη· καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐκείνοις τὰς ἀφορμὰς τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ τοῦ βίου παρασχόντων θεοφιλῶν ἀνδρῶν καὶ τίνων εἰσὶν οὗτοι ρύακες οἱ παρ' ἡμῖν. Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 85.

⁸⁶ 97. 3-25.

⁸⁷ 99. 4- 7.

Nonetheless, the text does not entirely mirror these initial programmatic statements, as the ensuing section brings in multiple elements specific to a historical account. On the contrary, once he begins to unveil the story the author openly adopts a different method, which contradicts the previous statement:

We must certainly relate *everything and in detail*, all the evils which the cities here suffered from the neighboring Latins and the Turks when they attacked either by land with cavalry or by sea with pirate vessels. In this way the land of Pelops was being destroyed. This happened when my mother's brother, the ruler of this land of Pelops, a man of noble character who knew how to govern well, died without an heir and was succeeded in government by his brother. Πάντα μὲν οὖν καὶ ἕκαστα φράζειν, ὅσα τε ὑπὸ τῶν γειτονούντων Λατίνων αἱ ἐνταυθοῖ πόλεις, ὅσα τε ὑπὸ τῶν Τούρκων ὑφίσταντο κακά, ἐπιόντων μὲν ἵπποις ἐκ τῆς ἠπείρου, ἐπιόντων δὲ ναυσὶ ληστρικαῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ πελάγους, καὶ τίσιν ἢ τοῦ Πέλοπος κατετρίβeto τρόποις, τοῦ μὲν τῆς μητρὸς ἡμῶν ἀδελφοῦ, τοῦ καὶ ταυτησὶ τῆς τοῦ Πέλοπος ἄρχοντος, ἀρίστου μὲν ὄντος τὴν φύσιν, καλῶς δὲ ἄρχειν εἰδότος, ἤδη τὸν βίον ἀπολιπόντος οὐκ ἐπὶ παιδί τινι, τοῦ δὲ ἀδελφοῦ ἐκείνου τὴν ἀρχὴν διαδεξαμένου.⁸⁸

A closer look at the narrative confirms this tendency. Indeed, even if throughout the account the narrator remains aware of the difficulties resulting from the inclusion of narrative vignettes in a piece of epideictic rhetoric,⁸⁹ he amasses numerous details,⁹⁰ implications, and justifications of actions. These elements do not always add further information regarding Theodore's personality but instead emerge as parts of a larger representation of political local history. It is for this reason that, in his conclusions, the author insists to have relied on all possible objective facts⁹¹ which aimed at offering multiple clarifications⁹² and to provide an overview of the situation in the Peloponnese.⁹³ In addition, Manuel does not organize his narrative episodes according to a list of his brother's virtues as was the case in most panegyric

⁸⁸ 115.7-13.

⁸⁹ 151.22-25: "It is impossible to describe in a panegyric the ways and means by which he escaped, showing, as he was bound to do, how much the Sultan deserved to be spat on."

⁹⁰ The account includes many concrete details regarding the geographical background. The story line progresses through different locations: it begins in Constantinople, but shortly afterwards it moves into the Peloponnese. From the peninsula the action returns back on the continent, in Serres and Central Greece in the steps of Theodore's spectacular escape from Bayezid's camp, and then again, it returns to Morea. Minute details on the location of events are provided, such as the name of the river Spercheios where Theodore was kept captive in Bayezid's camp (149.30.) Other examples pertain to descriptions of Moreote towns, such as Corinth depicted as a well fortified and large city, controlling the Isthmus and being provided with defensive works (175.1-3).

⁹¹ 155.11: "The facts clearly show that his survival and happiness were at the same time the salvation and the happiness of a multitude of men."

⁹² 173.6-8: "Moreover I ought to demonstrate more clearly (σαφέστερον) how extensive the disaster would have been had not the situation been dealt with in this way. For if we recollect the precise time and circumstance the city would undoubtedly have immediately perished at the hands of the barbarians."

⁹³ 129.7-9: "I wish to speak of things in general rather than of particular individuals" (Βούλομαι δὲ καθόλου λόγον εἰπεῖν τὸν δεῖνα καὶ τὸν δεῖνα παραδραμῶν.)

texts⁹⁴ but follows a chronological order of events.

Accordingly, Manuel's narratorial voice takes on the features of a *raconteur*, rather than of a historian.

But I am compelled to speak more clearly, as far as I am able, and in the course of my *narrative* (διήγησις) to set out step by step the account of the circumstances surrounding this particular undertaking. It is imperative to show clearly because of whom it was contrived and how as a result of this drama things took a turn for the better. Ῥητέον δὲ ἡμῖν ἂν εἶη σαφέστερον καὶ ἀποδοτέον ἐξῆς τὰς περὶ τοῦ δράματος ὑποσχέσεις μεταξύ τῆς ἄλλης διηγήσεως. Δεῖ γὰρ δηλῶσαι σαφῶς, τίνος τε χάριν τοῦτο συνέστη καὶ ὅπως εἰς τὸ βέλτιον ἀποκατέστη τὰ πράγματα τουτουὶ τοῦ δράματος ἔνεκα.⁹⁵

Manuel does not only constantly picture himself as an omniscient story-teller, but he also emerges as an ubiquitous participant in the Peloponnesian saga of the late fourteenth century. Three episodes illustrate his involvement.⁹⁶ First, during Andronikos' rebellion when Theodore was held captive in prison, Manuel claims to have played a major role in the dynastic drama of usurpation. He agrees with his father on letting Theodore out of prison, but criticizes John V for several other decisions. Second, in the episode of the reunion of the most important Byzantine leaders summoned by Bayezid in Serres, Manuel stresses his awareness of his brother's plans and support for Theodore in his heroic rejection of Bayezid's request of total submission. Third, he asserts again his knowledge and approval of another of his brother's major political moves, namely the sale of Morean strongholds to the Knights Hospitaller. At a closer look it emerges that these three instances provide most of the elements used for Theodore's representation in the oration.

Hence, in terms of narrative theory, the emperor's systematic "intrusion" in the story indicates a *homodiegetic* relationship of the narrator to his account, meaning that he identifies himself as a character in his storyworld.⁹⁷ Following the same terminology of narrative theory the narrator of the *Funeral oration* can be described with the following attributes: 1. *internal* - he participates in the activities he recounts; 2. *primary* - there are no other narratives related by characters in the account; 3. *overt* - he controls and frequently intervenes in the development

⁹⁴ L. Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge*, vol. 1, 172

⁹⁵ 181.27-30. Cf. 97. 6-7.

⁹⁶ An instance of Manuel's expression of his involvement in the Moreote affairs is in 113.13-16 when relating the circumstances in which Theodore undertook his office in the Peloponnese, he added: "and so in accordance with his father's decision, his mother's advice and *my own*, my beloved brother came to you, although it was hard for him to tear himself away from the arms of my father."

⁹⁷ The concept of the *homodiegetic* narrator was introduced by G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method*, Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1980, pp. 212-62. Genette describes the *homodiegetic* narrator as necessarily closer to the action than *heterodiegetic* narrators, who stand outside the storyworld.

of the story; 4. *omniscient* - he appears to know everything about the motivations and the details of the story; 5. *omnipresent* - there are no other narrators; and 6. *dramatized* - he frequently presents his feelings with regard to the events and engages his audience in the story.

It is important to understand the author's strategy to define himself as a narrator because from such a perspective he offers motivations, distributes responsibilities for actions and makes use of his authority on a large scale in order to describe situations, or characters, be they protagonists or secondary characters. Thus, the narrator's strong voice interferes with the account especially in order to shape the necessary connections between the different stages of the story. His meta-narrative interventions have different purposes: they signal the swings between biography, eulogy, and history,⁹⁸ they speed up the narrative flow, anticipate information as proleptic statements, or simply offer off-track comments on the ongoing events.⁹⁹ The variety and frequency of narratorial interventions also underline the narrator's direct involvement in the story and suggest a strict control of its course.

Reflecting this strong narrative voice, the narrator's focus does not remain fixed on Theodore's figure but often shifts to his own person, i.e. the emperor's, or to events from the history of the Peloponnese. By and large, the changes of focus are marked with conclusive or introductory comments.¹⁰⁰ For instance, after presenting the motives behind Theodore's temporary and slightly compromising alliance with the Knights Hospitaller, the account goes on with a passage suggesting the impact of the Despot's actions on the region's capacity to repel further attacks. Thus, the passage opens with a statement squaring off the previous remarks: οὕτως οὖν ἔχων λογισμῶν καὶ περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἰδίων,¹⁰¹ and likewise, in

⁹⁸ E.g. in 133.1: But let us take up our speech and follow events in proper order (ἐχώμεθα τῶν ἐξῆς ἐπαναλάβοντες τὸν λόγον); or in 167.13: let us resume our speech so that we proceed in good order (εὐτάκτως).

⁹⁹ Here are several examples: marking *ellipsis* of information to be filled by the audience, e.g.105.14: "I shall keep silent as to how this came about for it would be superfluous to speak of it," 123.20, "As for the prince's extreme arrogance which was exposed by these events I will keep silent"; 139.28-30, "Therefore being so disposed he accepted a piece of advice- I will not say from whom; let it be from the devil whom he bore his soul;" commentaries marking *parallipsis*, 167.12-13, "We shall proceed to unfold the drama but meanwhile let us resume our speech so that we proceed in good order," 149.8-9, "He succeeded in doing so, as my oration will soon show;" interventions commenting on the structure of the narrative, intended to signal the beginning of a section or to speed up the rhythm of the story, 111.3, "But let us take up our story;" 133.1, "But let us take up our speech and follow events in proper order;" 161.17, "I will now tell you something worthy of tears;" authorial interventions, 163.19, I shall not speak any more about myself, nor shall I draw out my speech by lingering on details and events which took place in that long absence abroad; 191. 9: "I hesitate to say this."

¹⁰⁰ Examples of concluding remarks are frequent: 159.19: *These are the facts* and they are known in many corners of the world; 197.15: *Such were his thoughts* about himself, about his own men, his friends and everybody; 199.12: Such was the enemy and such were his schemes; 127.34: Enough!

¹⁰¹ 197.15.

another passage, Manuel uses the same strategy of changing the focus of the story by unexpectedly turning his attention from his brother to Bayezid's machinations.

6.3.2. The narrative of events

Having identified the major aspects of the narrator's voice, I will now address the nature of the narrative of events in the *Funeral oration*. The account of Theodore's deeds in the *Funeral oration* offers a wide scope for narratological analysis, since, in quantitative terms, narrative occupies more than half of this fairly long text. The two topical narrative sections, ἐπιτηδεύματα and πράξεις, are not isolated from one another but are connected *thematically* - they present facts connected to the political milieu of late fourteenth century, *structurally* - there is no other unit separating them and their connections are clearly marked,¹⁰² and *chronologically* - the actions presented in the πράξεις section follow immediately the ones in the ἐπιτηδεύματα. Therefore they can safely be judged as a single narrative unit. Nevertheless, the accounts included in the two sections differ in two respects: first, the ἐπιτηδεύματα section reflects Theodore's behavior towards his parents and family,¹⁰³ while in the πράξεις, the intention is to reflect more on Theodore's military virtues and achievements.¹⁰⁴ Second, in the much shorter ἐπιτηδεύματα Manuel recounts only one event which ostensibly was intended to reveal Theodore's character and loyalty towards his brother and the legitimate emperor, John V. Chronologically this event dates from the time when the young Despot was still living in Constantinople and took part in the dynastic conflict in which Andronikos IV rose against his father and the rest of the family over the succession to the Byzantine throne.¹⁰⁵ On this occasion, Manuel provides numerous details regarding the actors in the rebellion taking place between 1376 and 1379 when, as a result, most members of the Palaiologan ruling family were imprisoned.¹⁰⁶

Given this type of information, the story included in the ἐπιτηδεύματα section with its emphasis on young Theodore's character, functions as a preamble of the following chapter which unfolds the narrative of the Despot's πράξεις during his rule in Morea. The narrative does not cover the whole period of his tenure as Despot, nor the entire spectrum of the complicated political implications of his local rule, but is limited to a discussion of several landmark moments for the Byzantine state: the pacification of the region in the first years of

¹⁰² 109.6-7: "Our speech must proceed to succeeding events."

¹⁰³ 109.4-5: "these two instances have revealed what sort of man he was to his parents, to us and to the other members of his family."

¹⁰⁴ 109.8-9: "our speech must proceed to succeeding events touching only on a few of those which have the power to reveal his virtue."

¹⁰⁵ John Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus*, 24-50.

¹⁰⁶ 101.1-103.9.

Palaiologan rule by diplomatic and military actions, the rising power of the Ottomans who were beginning to pose a real threat on the fragile Despotate of Morea, and the sale of several strongholds to the Knights Hospitaller with the aim to protect them from an imminent Ottoman attack. Owing to this selection of events, at first glance, it appears that Manuel designed a linear story, an epic where the elements that matter appear to be the exemplarity of the hero and his heroic ethos: Theodore leaves the embattled city of Constantinople and arrives in Morea with the express mission to reassert Byzantine control over a region where Latins and local lords have already created an autonomous provincial political order. This initial moment is signaled in 101.1: “Our troubles had piled up and the disasters of our misfortune had reached the climax” (Ἦν ἐν ἀκμῇ τὰ κακὰ καὶ τὰ τῆς δυστυχίας ἡμῖν ἐς ἄκρον ἐληλακότα).¹⁰⁷ Following this story-line, after two decades of military efforts, punctuated by victories and defeats, the Peloponnese seems indeed to have acquired a certain degree of stability which helped the region maintain its autonomy. Again, the moment of happy ending is marked in the text even if it coincides with the Despot's death: “So a lasting peace was signed” (Καὶ δὴ σπονδῶν γενομένων ἰσχυροτάτων).¹⁰⁸ Based only on these two statements, the narrator seems to have envisioned an action progressing from an unfortunate situation to a much more favorable state of affairs under the beneficial influence of Theodore's virtuous deeds. Surprisingly enough, these commencing and concluding remarks do not mention Theodore, suggesting that what mattered for the narrator from the beginning was the progress of a sequence of different episodes and not primarily the development of characters.

The question here remains whether Manuel really intended to create a clear-cut story with an action starting from a point A and ending in a point B, after passing through meaningful changes of situation. Such a linear story thread would rather resemble a historian's approach and yet, Manuel was, above all, an experienced public speaker who, constrained by the *kairos* of the speech, had to keep story and heroic portrait in balance. An answer to this question can be provided if we look not only at the different episodes themselves, but also at the messages and representations at stake, which may help us understand the specificities of a rhetorician's approach to historical information.

As previously discussed, three major issues seem to matter in this story: the representation of Theodore as arduous military leader and skilled diplomat; the fashioning of Manuel's self-image as capable ruler of the Byzantine state; and the very recent history of the

¹⁰⁷ Cf. also the initial statement in the section dedicated to the situation of Morea, 111.4: “The situation in the Peloponnese was grave.”

¹⁰⁸ 207.5.

Despotate of Morea, as part of the Byzantine state. These three aspects are developed on separate tracks which intersect with each other at certain points in the narrative. For each of them the author creates a different narrative strand or plot, with the result that they provide the picture of a multilayered account where the different representations of the protagonist, the emperor, and the historical province of Morea, while autonomous to a certain extent, often mirror each other.¹⁰⁹

Naturally, the most extensively documented of these three narrative strands of the *Funeral oration* follows the trajectory of Despot Theodore's achievements. As protagonist of all four major episodes he remains constantly in the narrator's focus. His profile is sharply outlined by several observations occurring in the laudatory preamble, when Manuel introduces and praises him for his virtues:

Thus nature, character, education and humaneness produced a man devoted to his parents, repaying in full all that a father could wish from his son. He was greatly loved by his friends, to all a haven and a dispenser of every kind of blessing. Οὕτω τοίνυν φύσεως ἔχων καὶ προαιρέσεως, παιδεύσεώς τε καὶ δεξιότητος ὑπῆρχε μὲν τοῖς αὐτοῦ πατράσι καλῶς πληρῶν ἃ δὴ πατέρες εὐξαιντ' ἂν παρὰ τῶν υἱῶν ἴσχειν, ὑπῆρχε δὲ τοῖς φίλοις ἐρασμιώτατος· ἦν δὲ τοῖς πᾶσι λιμὴν καὶ παντοδαπῶν ἀγαθῶν πρύτανις.¹¹⁰

These virtues are then echoed in the closure of the plot the author builds around Theodore's personality. Yet, while usually in panegyrics or *epitaphioi* the individual episodes were presented under the specific headings revealing categories of virtues, moral or physical, Manuel does not always attach his brother's specific virtues to an episode he presents. After the proem, the plot follows the steps of his early career in Constantinople. The first major event in his life, as Manuel recounts it, was the rebellion of Andronikos backed by the Genoese. During the rebellion, Theodore was supposed to leave Constantinople and take up office as Despot in Thessalonike. Yet, the Despot to-be did not want to leave his wounded brother in prison, and chose to stay there against the will of the father-emperor. It is at this point that the plot constructed around Theodore's personality intersects at times Manuel's plot of fashioning an imperial image, as the emperor suddenly shifts the narrative focus from the Despot to himself.

A brief outline of each of the three narrative strands can help better understand their connections as well as their points of departure or closure.

¹⁰⁹ For an overview of theoretical approaches to story and plot, see H. Porter Abbott, "Story, plot, and narration," in *Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. by D. Herman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 39-50.

¹¹⁰ 95.13.

Outline of Theodore's narrative

111.4-16: Theodore is appointed Despot of Morea but delays his travel to the province because his mother, Helena, was still in captivity.

113.15-16: Theodore arrives in the Peloponnese with the approval of his mother, father, and Manuel himself.¹¹¹

115.24-27: Theodore is warmly received by the local population in Morea.

117.2-30 : Theodore meets the resistance of the local archontes led by the *nephew*, one of Matthew Kantakouzenos' sons.

135.30-31: Upon Bayezid's request, the Despot goes to Serres. There, he meets his brother Manuel and other Byzantine leaders, summoned together as vassals of the Ottoman ruler.

147.9-25: Initially, Theodore accepts to surrender Monemvasia and Argos to the Ottomans.

149.9-11: Theodore sends letters which would entitle the Ottoman envoys to occupy Argos.

149.12-20: With the approval of other legates, Theodore secretly sends several of his trusted men to slow down the surrendering of the city of Argos.

149.14-151.18: At the same time, Theodore flees Bayezid's camp near the river Spercheios and marches to Argos in order to arrive there in time before the Ottomans.

167.9-12: Once arrived in the Peloponnese and sensing the growing Ottoman threat, Theodore conceals his plans of safeguarding the Despotate even to his close counselors.

181.3-30: Theodore initiates secret negotiations with the Knights Hospitaller regarding the cession of a number of Byzantine strongholds.

183.10-12: Theodore invites the Hospitallers from Rhodes and reaches a political agreement with them.

185.3-4: Theodore assumes that the benefits of his plan would be understood by the rest of the Moreotes.

197.28-31: Confronted with a growing discontent regarding his decision to sell the cities to the Hospitallers, the Despot tries to persuade his supporters that this action was appropriate.

199.13-33: Following the agreement with the Hospitallers, Theodore signs a peace treaty with the Ottomans.

207.17-22: Closure: "it is true that at first the difficulties came upon him suddenly and often with violence but this is a further proof of God's favor towards him. For his virtues, God's reward came in the form of a great success."

¹¹¹ "in accordance with his father's decision, his mother's advice and my own (κρίσει μὲν τῆ τοῦ πατρὸς, γνώμη δὲ τῆ τῆς μητρὸς, γνώμη δὲ καὶ ἡμετέρῃ), my beloved brother arrived to you."

While reporting on Theodore's actions, the narrator gradually builds another parallel narrative strand that traces the emperor's concerns and direct involvement in the internal affairs of Morea. Once Theodore left the City for the remote and problematic province of the Peloponnese, Manuel wished to project the image of a ruler concerned with the well being of other parts of his empire, in contact with the other important Byzantine local lords.¹¹² Moreover, in terms of character status, Manuel presents himself not in a minor role or as a helper, a position which he rather assigns to the Knights Hospitaller, but rather as another protagonist.¹¹³

1. *Outline of Manuel's narrative*

113.15-16: Manuel, together with his mother and father, approves of Theodore's appointment as Despot in the Peloponnese.

135.4-5: Summoned by Bayezid Manuel arrives in Serres where he meets Theodore.

139.14-16: While Manuel was present in Serres, his nephew, John VII, leaves his residence in Selymbria and enters Constantinople, thus posing a serious threat to the stability of the empire. In addition, he received Bayezid's support.

149.16: Manuel is one of the few who has been informed by Theodore regarding his intention to simulate the surrender of Monemvasia and Argos.

163.2- 165.9: Manuel presents himself as Theodore's only hope at a time when the Ottoman pressures increased. However, the emperor was unable to help his brother for he was away traveling in search for military support against the same Ottomans. Due to the difficulties encountered during his voyage, he limits himself to advertising his brother's difficulties to assert his authority in the region. While away in the West, Manuel was replaced by John VII, his nephew, with whom he had reached an agreement after a long dynastic feud.

167.19: Manuel consents to the cession of Corinth to the Knights Hospitaller.

171.27-30: Closure: Manuel expresses his consent to Theodore's diplomatic strategies of inviting the Hospitallers to undertake the defense of the Byzantine fortresses. He connects the beneficial intervention of the Hospitallers with the support received from them during his conflicts with his nephew, John VII.

¹¹² His involvement in the affairs of Morea under Theodore's rule, also finds expression in his sole preserved letter addressed to Theodore. Manuel recommends Kananos for a position close to Theodore in Morea, after Kananos supported the emperor against John VII: Manuel, *Letters*, 13, 34-36.

¹¹³ On the theory of narrative characters, including the position of the *helper* in relation to the opponents and the protagonist, see A. J. Greimas, *Structural Semantics: An Attempt at a Method*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983, 207.

The two narrative strands which often run in parallel, of Theodore and of his brother, the emperor, are connected by a common theme: the plan to bring peace to Byzantine Morea. My contention here is that these two threads are in fact fully framed by a different narrative strand, that of a brief history of Morea in the late fourteenth century.¹¹⁴ Thus, when at the outset of the story, Manuel states that his wish was to speak of things in general rather than of individuals,¹¹⁵ he turned his attention to the big picture, that is Morea's situation. The same strategy emerges in the conclusion of the section on Theodore's πράξεις, in 211.13-14; here, the emperor shifts again the focus from his brother to the larger context of the Peloponnesian peninsula:

Yet even if there were a need for a monument to his honor he raised it for himself and set it up and carved it with greater skill than of Pheidias. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ στήλης αὐτῷ προσδεῖ, αὐτὸς ἐαυτῷ ἀνήγειρέ τε καὶ ἔπηξεν, ἀποξέσας δεξιῶς ἄγαν, ἄμεινον ἢ κατὰ τὴν Φειδίου τέχνην, λέγω δὲ τὴν Πελοπόννησον τήνδε.¹¹⁶

In the same passage, by assimilating Morea with his audience of Moreotes, the narrator emphasizes the role of the community in his story:

But I refer to the animate and rational Peloponnese, indeed to you gentlemen whose integrity of character has preserved a monument in everlasting honor of him. Ἀλλὰ Πελοπόννησον ἤδη λέγω τὴν ἔμψυχόν τε καὶ λογικὴν, ὑμᾶς γε δήπου τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας, τύπον ἀνδριάντος ἐκείνῳ σώζοντας τῇ τῶν ἠθῶν εὐκοσμία πρὸς εὐφημίαν τὸν πάντα χρόνον.¹¹⁷

This statement which converts the primary audience of the *epitaphios* into participants in the story, seems to leave aside the protagonist, Theodore. It is coterminous with the rest of the text which discusses the various aspects shaping the history of this Byzantine province: the situation on the ground before Theodore's arrival,¹¹⁸ factors influencing the interior and exterior affairs of the Despotate, and even ideological implications of certain actions such as the alliance with the Knights Hospitaller.

Therefore, arguably, the narrative strand which unveils the history of Morea consists of a series of interconnected narratorial snippets integrated in a chronological sequence centered around a confrontation between the Byzantines and their enemies, predominantly the Ottomans. The outline of this plot provides a picture of how these episodes combine:

¹¹⁴ A methodological discussion on framing in narratives see R. Altman, *A theory of narrative*, New York: Routledge, 2008, 17.

¹¹⁵ 129. 7-9.

¹¹⁶ 211.13-14.

¹¹⁷ 213.4-6.

¹¹⁸ 111.4: Εἶχε τὰ πράγματα κακῶς τῇ Πελοποννήσῳ, "The situation in the Peloponnese was grave."

□ *Outline of Morea narrative*

115.7-10: The Peloponnese had initially suffered extreme losses especially due to Kantakouzenos' rebellion and the action of the Latins. *Pelops' land* has been utterly destroyed (κατετρίβετο).

119.3-5: Kantakouzenos' death brings peace to the peninsula.

119.12-25: Upon Theodore's approval, ten thousand *Illyrians* settled in the mountainous regions of the peninsula. Although members of Theodore's entourage feared that a significant number of foreign newcomers would upset the local social order, it is emphasized that this move of population increased the security of the region.¹¹⁹

133.6-12: Background information concerning the situation in the Peloponnese before Theodore's arrival: the local Byzantine *archontes* allied with the Ottomans and imposed their control in the peninsula.

133.13-24: Stalemate of the Ottomans' schemes to invade the peninsula and possibilities for Ottomans' action.¹²⁰

135.2: Bayezid's plans to eliminate the Byzantine leaders by summoning them all in Serres had direct implications on the situation in Morea.

□ 141.6: The Sultan orders a eunuch to kill the Byzantine lords.

□ 141.15: Before killing the leaders, Bayezid proceeds to torturing second-rank officials.

□ 141.20: Bayezid sends Manuel home in order to detain Theodore afterwards.

□ 143.6: Bayezid moves southward. He passes through Macedonia and Thessaly and camps in Central Greece. He wished to spend sometime here for he saw that the region had rich pasture.

□ 143.13 : Omur, one of Bayezid's generals, is sent to demand Argos and other places in the Peloponnese. Monemvasia and the neighboring villages had already been occupied, as ransom for the Sultan.

153.3-6: Theodore's escape from Bayezid's trap triggers a series of fortunate events in the Peloponnese and beyond, especially in Attica.¹²¹

157.2-19: In the aftermath of Theodore's flight, Bayezid tries to minimize this personal defeat

¹¹⁹ 119.23: "Well then, to have the Illyrians, in addition to the forces of the Peloponnese which in themselves were not small, was of greatest assistance." According to Manuel, the arrival of the Albanians changed the balance of forces in favor of the Byzantines in the Peloponnese.

¹²⁰ "For they perceived that the barbarian army in Europe was wholly engaged there and could not easily march into the Isthmus, while at the same time obeying the Sultan's commands."

¹²¹ "His escape set free the whole of the Peloponnese from impending bondage; it liberated Thebes, Athens, Megara; it liberated the Illyrians and a great number of barbarian nations.

and retreats. During the retreat he plunders Thrace and gathers resources for an army led by his general Evrenos which he later sends against Theodore.

157.23-159.17: The Peloponnesians are besieging the Ottoman possessions in the region close to the Isthmus of Corinth. In their turn, the Ottomans are receiving help not only from the sultan's army but also from many local Byzantines.

161.17-29: A group of local Byzantines, despite their Hellenic ethnicity and Christian faith, sides with the Ottomans.

161.30: The Ottoman threat in the Peloponnese looms larger, especially because of their refusal to accept a truce.

167.14-20: The Hospitallers enter the plans to defend the peninsula from the Turks. They have been already present in the region when they undertook the defense of Corinth with Theodore's permission.

175.1-179.9: Once in possession of Corinth, the Hospitallers try to buy all the strongholds in the region.

177.24-179.2: Negotiations for the sale of strongholds to the Hospitallers.¹²²

185.5: Claiming that not all the details of the deal between Theodore and the Hospitallers have been revealed publicly, the Byzantines of Morea express disagreement: there was an uproar and all kinds of arguments from those who were ignorant of the plan.

187.4-9: The Byzantines' alliance with the Hospitallers prompts the sultan to give up his plans of conquest.

193.33-195. 2: In the meantime, the international political context worsens the situation in the Peloponnese.¹²³

203.23-30. Groups of local people attack the strongholds now held by the Hospitallers, unaware of Theodore's designs.

203.30-205. 14: The attacks against the Hospitallers stop. A peace treaty is signed between the Byzantines and the Hospitallers.

207.1-7: Following the conclusion of this last conflict between the Moreotes and the Knights, the Ottomans propose a truce to Theodore. They only demand that the Hospitallers should go

¹²² "They requested firstly that he should judge them kindly if they spoke their minds against their wishes [...]; secondly, that he should keep secret whatever they were to tell him; and thirdly that he should let them know as soon as possible whether he was willing to act upon their suggestion or not."

¹²³ "For the enemy possessed a great force, coupled with a hostile disposition and a crafty mind, while all the Albanians, Bulgars and Serbs were already conquered and a great army had been routed at Nicopolis. I refer to the army assembled by the Hungarians, Germans, and western Franks whose names alone were sufficient to make the barbarians shudder. However our allies failed, some of them were even defeated by a most evil fate both by land and sea."

back to Rhodes, in their territories: “A lasting peace is signed and he brought the war to an end to your considerable glory... Within a short time the fields of the Peloponnese were waving with corn and the trees were laden with fruit.”

209.11-211. 1: Closure: The Hospitallers hand back the Moreote strongholds to the Byzantines. The whole business is achieved honorably (ὕγιῶς) and without further conflicts.

So much about the three narrative strands brought together in the account of Theodore's achievements. The author's strategy to combine these multiple details in a multilayered account of the history of the region is further substantiated at other levels of the rubrics of ἐπιτηδεύματα and πράξεις; the representation of the narratees, style, characters, and motivation of actions. First, the author envisages his audience not only as listeners to his oration but also in terms of *intradiegetic* narratees, that is to say, they are often represented not only as active listeners but also as characters internal to the account.¹²⁴

It is the oration's prologue that first addressed the *narratees* in a direct way and established a parallelism between the emperor's attitude and his audience: they were both hit hard by the calamity of Theodore's death. Manuel notices the “tears, laments, and all the other signs of mourning.”¹²⁵ He mentions that the wish, and even the reproaches of the listeners “who have received benefits from the hands of this greatly mourned man” (75.10) became the main reason for the delivery of the present commemorative oration.

To judge by certain signs, I feel that you are somewhat displeased at my not having delivered this memorial oration sooner. Ὡς ἐφικτόν, ἐπεὶ καὶ τοῦτό γε τεκμαιρόμεθα ὡς ἀμηγέπη χαλεπαίνετε τῷ μὴ καὶ θᾶπτον εἰρήσθαι γιγνόμενόν τι.¹²⁶

This paragraph, as well as the immediately following ones pointing to Manuel's reasons for performing his brotherly duties, creates familiarity between the author and the listeners. Moreover, direct address, in which apologies are asked for, effaces hierarchical differences:

I ask you to forgive me, for his loss has left me half-dead and I have scarcely the strength to accomplish what you would welcome. Καὶ δότε μοι συγγνώμην, ᾧ ἄνδρες ἡμιθνήτι γενομένῳ τῆ τοῦ οἰχομένου στερήσει καὶ μὴ ῥαδίως ἰσχύοντι.¹²⁷

If this first conventional contact with the audience takes place in the προοίμιον, it is

¹²⁴ In narrative theory the narratees are defined as the primary audience of the narrator, and distinct from both the actual reader and the implied reader of a narrative. D. Herman ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 279.

¹²⁵ 75.16-17.

¹²⁶ 75.12-14.

¹²⁷ 77.2

noticeable that Manuel continuously engages with his audience.¹²⁸ Direct address is used not only to reinforce familiarity, but also more specifically to create a consensus between those present and the speaker, as it happens when explaining Theodore's intricate and dangerous plan to involve the Hospitallers in Moreote affairs:

Are there any among us who object to the stage and the mask? ἔχει τις ἡμῖν
προφέρειν τὴν σκηνὴν καὶ τὸ προσωπεῖον,¹²⁹

This active engagement with his audience emerges in other instances as well, owing to the fact that most probably among those to whom the oration was addressed there were also many of Theodore's collaborators.¹³⁰ He gives his audience credit for the knowledge of many events in which Theodore was involved and for the reasons of his choices. This again might be regarded as a rhetorical strategy but its frequent usage indicates that there existed a certain “intimacy” between the speaker and his listeners, an intimacy which eventually, in the epilogue - μακαρισμός, is substantiated by his engagement in a real dialog with the listeners.¹³¹

The previously mentioned ellipses in information weigh heavily as instances in which the emperor avoids repeating already familiar information. Yet, at times, this type of knowledge was invoked in order to create a smooth passage to more important matters:

It would be pointless to relate all this to you who are well acquainted with these events. Therefore let us take for granted those early events and set out in correct sequence as our main theme those which refer to the period after his arrival in the Peloponnese. Ἄλλως τε καὶ περιέργως ἂν ὑμῖν λέγοιτο, τοῖς ἐν πείρᾳ τῶν πραγμάτων γεγονόσι καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ταῦτα καλῶς εἰδόσιν. Ἐκεῖνα τοίνυν ἐν μέρει κείσθω· τὰ δὲ μετὰ τὴν ἐνταῦθα ἐπιδημίαν τοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἡμῖν ὑπόθεσιν τοῦ παρόντος ἀγῶνος προτεθεοκότος ἐξῆς ἂν εἴη ῥητέα.¹³²

Yet, the fact that Manuel sets apart a series of events as already known by the audience while constantly refreshing his audience's memory produces a series of interesting implications. Given the fact that the narratees most probably knew all the details of Theodore's activities in Morea, there was only one element which the emperor could add to this knowledge, namely a slightly different explanation but, at the same time, the *official* account of already known events.

This common knowledge of events as well as the interests of both the Despot and the

¹²⁸ He has in mind both listeners and readers, 249.32: “I do not feel that I have made a fitting conclusion. I ask forgiveness for my inadequacy from those of you present here and from those who might by chance at some time read this oration.”

¹²⁹ 189.7.

¹³⁰ See above, Isidore's letter addressed to Manuel.

¹³¹ 235.20.

¹³² 115.17-24.

listeners prompts the emperor to represent the narratees the emperor's close officials and agents of historical change. In the episode of the sale of the Despotate to the Hospitallers Manuel addresses the audience as individuals who shared similar ideals:

You had a deep longing for peace even though there seemed very little likelihood of it. You obtained a full peace, far better than that previously enjoyed and bringing with it considerable prestige. Εἰρήνης γὰρ ἐπεθυμεῖτε μὲν ὡς μάλιστα, ἠλπίζετε δὲ ὡς ἥκιστα, αὐτῆς δὲ πάνυ βαθείας τετυχήκατε πολλῶ γε βέλτιον ἢ προτοῦ, προσούσης γε καὶ δόξης οὐ μικρᾶς.¹³³

In other instances, the narratees' representation as direct and responsible participants in the events affecting the region is reinforced by questions which, albeit set in a rhetorical fashion, were intended to establish the correctness of Theodore' s course of action:

What just grounds for complaint, then, did he give his accusers? Would it be easy for any of his slanderers to draw on their usual repertoire? [...] Would it not sew up any mouth whose only use was continually to speak foolishly? Were not his achievements full of common-sense, probity, and knowledge of statecraft (πολιτικὴ ἐπιστήμη)? τίνα δικαίαν ἀφορμὴν παρέσχετ' ἂν κατηγοροῖς; Τίς ἂν τῶν διαβαλλόντων εὐκόλως χρήσαιτο τοῖς εἰωθόσι; [...] Ποῖον οὐκ ἂν ἀπέρραψε στόμα, μηδέν τι προὔργου ποιούμενον ἀλλ' ἢ τὸ κατὰ πάντων ἐξῆς ληρεῖν, ἐρρώσθαι πάσῃ φράσαν αἰδοῖ; [...] Οὐ γὰρ φρονήσεως, οὐ χρηστότητος, οὐκ ἐπιστήμης πολιτικῆς ἅπανθ' ὅσα πέπρακται τῶδε τάνδρι,¹³⁴

or

For me, do you see his practical wisdom, his experience, his knowledge of political issues? Ὅρατε μοι τὴν αὐτοῦ φρόνησιν, τὴν ἐμπειρίαν, τὴν περὶ τὰ πολιτικὰ ἐπιστήμην.¹³⁵

These observations on the narratees' role allow us to make several further observations regarding the strategy the emperor employed here: thus, first he establishes an emotionally contact between the speaker and the listeners who, in any event, have been playing a key role in the regional politics and in the Byzantine landscape. At the next level, he concedes an extensive knowledge of events on which an official interpretation is superimposed. And finally, based on this already established familiarity, the author seems to build in the following sections a certain sense of community of knowledge and action.

Second, at the stylistic level, the large scale use of a paratactic style is noticeable, a marker of a fast developing action. Parataxis, doubled by the use of historical present and of rhetorical questions is most visible in the episode of the sale of Corinth, when the speed of the developing action prompts Manuel to compare it to a dramatic act, a δράμα.¹³⁶ Apart from

¹³³ 187.23-189.6

¹³⁴ 197.17-25.

¹³⁵ 203.28-29.

¹³⁶ 181.27-28: 181.27-28: Ῥητέον δὲ ἡμῖν ἂν εἶη σαφέστερον καὶ ἀποδοτέον ἐξῆς τὰς περὶ τοῦ δράματος ὑποσχέσεις

adding an original element to his narrative technique,¹³⁷ the persistent usage of *theatrical* terminology in this final section of Theodore's πράξεις¹³⁸ adds further meaning to the entire story: Manuel does not only describe his brother's drama, but something more significant, the dramatic and rapidly changing course of the history of Morea. Another particular feature of Manuel's style emerges in the heavy use of rhetorical questions.

Third, at the level of characters the dramatic conflict is built on the basis of a tripartite scheme of typological actors: hero/protagonist - enemy - helper.¹³⁹ These typological distinctions reflected the late Byzantine principles of imperial ideology and conduct in foreign affairs. It is the reason why, in constructing his characters, Manuel privileged explicit characterization instead of implicit characterization and cultivated ideas like dynastic excellence in ruling, Ottoman barbarity of customs, and the Latins' similarity of religious belief. However, ambiguities are not absent from the story, as the author plays with the features of a hero-protagonist which he undertakes when he refers to his actions in the Peloponnese.

For obvious reasons, Theodore stands as the most elaborated character, an incarnation of perfect moral and military duty. Emerging as Manuel's character doublet, he strikes a balance between the justice he shows to all social groups and loyalty for his family, especially his emperor-father and his mother.

Most often, Theodore's virtues are discussed in connection with his actions in service of the Peloponnesian community, which eventually turned him into a popular ruler.¹⁴⁰ For instance in 135.13-23:

Therefore, regarding their happiness as his own and always came to their assistance so that all should do well. Thus he considered their own interests as if they were his own, and his actions benefited others while he bore the suffering and readily endured those dangers which bring glory. Ὅθεν τὴν ἐκείνων εὐδαιμονίαν

ματαξὺ τῆς ἄλλης διηγῆσεως. “But I am compelled to speak more clearly, as far as I am able, and in the course of my narrative to set out step by step the account of the circumstances surrounding this particular undertaking.”

¹³⁷ At one point the entire development of events is assimilated to a theatrical representation: 187.1-2 ταῦτα [...] τελευτήσιν εἰς ἀγαθὸν τὸ δρᾶμα: “his drama would have a happy ending.”

¹³⁸ There are numerous allusions to dramatic acts: 167. 12: τὸ δρᾶμα δηλώσομεν; 185.3-4, 185.6: ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ τοῦ δράματος, 187.1-2 ταῦτα [...] τελευτήσιν εἰς ἀγαθὸν τὸ δρᾶμα, (translated by J. Chrysostomides as *scheme* would have a happy ending), 187.11: τὸ δὲ δρᾶμα ὕμνητο καὶ ἡ σοφία τοῦ ποιήσαντος/ 191.5 δηλονότι τὸ ἡμετέρον τοῦτο δρᾶμα ἄριστα μὲν διανοηθέν, 189.7: σκηνὴ καὶ προσωπεῖον, 191.16: οὐδὲ καθαρῶς εἰοικέναι δράματι ὁ πᾶς ἐκείνου λογισμός, 193.14: οὐδὲ δράματι καθαρῶς ἔοικε τουτὶ τοῦργον, 193.25 τοῦ δράματος ἔνεκα.

¹³⁹ R. Schneider, “Towards a Cognitive Theory of Literary Character.” *Style* 35:4 (2001), 607–40 and U. Margolin, “Character,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, ed. D. Herman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 66-79

¹⁴⁰ 187.14-15: “and it was a pleasure to see the rejoicing Despot among the rejoicing subjects.”

ἰδίαν εἶναι νομίζων τοῖς πᾶσι πάντα ἐγίνετο, ἵνα πάντες εὖ πράξαιεν. Οὕτω τὰ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ὥσπερ τὰ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ ἐνόμιζέ τε καὶ ἔπραττεν εὖ ποιῶν καὶ τὰ ἀλγύνοντα ἔφερε καὶ τοὺς μετὰ δόξης κινδύνους ῥαδίως ὑφίστατο.

or:

And so, neglecting his own safety for the safety of his own people and indeed for the safety of most other people. Ἀφειδήσας ἑαυτοῦ ἔνεκα τῶν ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ δὴ καὶ πλείστων ἐτέρων.¹⁴¹

Theodore's care for the community's well being takes the form of martyrdom:

Indeed of his own free will he became a martyr and surrendered himself for the sake of the many, and endangered himself and went through painful experiences and suffered ignominy. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ μάρτυς οὗτος τῇ προαιρέσει ἀνθ' ὧν καὶ προὔδωκεν αὐτὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν πολλῶν καὶ τῶν κινδύνων ἐγγὺς ἐγένετο καὶ λυπηρῶν πεπεύραται καὶ ἀδοξίαν ὑπέστη.¹⁴²

Owing to the narrative outlook, comparisons with biblical and classical models are rarely used. David is mentioned only once¹⁴³ as well as Odysseus.¹⁴⁴ Much more developed are the instances stressing the Despot's power of reasoning which further support his characterization as a ruler capable of conducting complex negotiations:

He was possessed of powers of reasoning which would have befitted men like Plato or Alexander, he was a father to you, a friend, a teacher, a provider, a guardian, a ruler, one who while he lived both in action and in name admirably acted as physician, shepherd, steersman and in many other roles which succor men and improve situations and, in short, lacked no virtue. Ὅλος οὖν γέμων λογισμῶν, ὧν κἂν Πλάτωνες κἂν Ἀλέξανδροι, ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῖν, ὁ φίλος, ὁ παιδευτής, ὁ φροντιστής, ὁ κηδεμών, ὁ δεσπότης, ὁ τὸν τόπον ἀκριβῶς διασώζων, ἡνίκα σὺν ὑμῖν ἦν, τῶν τε ἰατρῶν, τῶν τε ποιμένων, τῶν τε κυβερνητῶν, τῶν τε σωτηρίων ἐξῆς ἀπάντων καὶ πραγμάτων καὶ προσρήσεων καί, ἵνα τὸ πᾶν εἴποιμι, ὧ μὴδὲν τῶν ἀγαθῶν οὐ παρήν.¹⁴⁵

Likewise, Theodore's representation as a calculated politician with practical wisdom,¹⁴⁶ and who does not act under a momentary impulse but according to a certain vision, has a particular thrust:

But he was not like those people who perceive only what is before their eyes. On

¹⁴¹ 135.29.

¹⁴² 155.6-7.

¹⁴³ 113.13.

¹⁴⁴ "this new Odysseus the ever good and inventive man had experienced many and various wanderings.

¹⁴⁵ 135.24-27.

¹⁴⁶ 179.22-23: πλήρης φρονήσεως; 203.28-29: φρόνησις, ἐμπειρία περὶ τὰ πολιτικά ἐπιστήμη. At 181. 3-30 the negotiations for the sale of the Despotate reveal that Theodore took into consideration all political factors, both internal- the discontent of the local population, and external-the rise of the Ottomans. Or at 193.15-16: How could it be when he was clearly aware of the ambiguity of the situation knowing that his plan might succeed or fail?

the contrary more than any other man he looked ahead into the future and continually took care of everything. Ἄλλ' οὕτως γε οὐ κατ' ἐκείνους τοὺς τὰ ἐν ποσὶ μόνον βλέποντας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ μέλλον προεωρᾶτο εἴπερ τις ἄλλος καὶ περὶ πάντων ἐξῆς ἐφρόντιζε τῶν πραγμάτων.¹⁴⁷

To a large extent, Theodore's heroic portrayal relies on his conflicts with a multifarious *enemy*. His brother, Andronikos IV, the first antagonistic figure in the story, receives a brief treatment, despite the fact that his rebellion had dire consequences for Byzantium. It is possible that the narrator wanted to retain a certain consistency in cultivating the idea of the perfection of the ruling family. It is also possible that Manuel feared that the insistence on Andronikos' rebellion would prompt the audience to think of similarities with his own rebellion in Thessalonike (1382-1387).

Another major enemy character is Matthew Kantakouzenos' son who opposed Theodore upon his arrival in Morea. Yet, his portrait is far from monochrome and includes several ambiguities, perhaps again due to Manuel's hesitations to project a negative light on his mother's family:

In a word, though his courage may have been misplaced and he fought for an unjust cause, in other respects he was not ignoble and he had a subtle and infinitely resourceful mind. Καὶ συνελόντα εἰπεῖν, πλὴν τοῦ παρὰ λόγον θρασύνεσθαι καὶ ἀδίκως μάχης ὑπάρξαι, τᾶλλ' οὐκ ἀγενῆς ὦν οὐδ' ἀμέτοχος μηχανημάτων καὶ ποικιλίας.¹⁴⁸

Furthermore, a regional ruler active during Theodore's rule was Pierre Lebourd de Saint Superan, leader of the Navarrese company, who is depicted in extremely harsh terms. In the narrative, a sole episode suffices to characterize him: during the battle of Leontarion (1395), when he was still boasting of his military prowess, he fled together with his troops when they met in a skirmish few Byzantine soldiers.¹⁴⁹

Also among the enemies one should count the Byzantine deserter *archontes*. They are represented in very dark nuances as opposing the legitimate central authority, in a way as much more dangerous than other adversaries.¹⁵⁰ The arguments against the local elite have

¹⁴⁷ 171.5-8.

¹⁴⁸ 117.23-25.

¹⁴⁹ 123.21: Οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἀκροβατῶν; οὐχ ὑπερνεφῶν; οὐκ εἰς τοῦσχατον ἀφίκτο ἀλαζονείας ἀπάσης; “Was he not strutting about in a haughty manner? Did he not soar above the clouds? Did he not reach the limits of extreme boastfulness?” 125.1-2: καὶ τότε πρώτως, οἶμαι, γυμνώσαντες ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς τὸ ζῖφος, ὁ θρασύς, ὁ γαῦρος, ὁ πολὺς [...] “And who I think first drew the swords against the enemy. Then he, the rash, the haughty, the mighty attacked them.” 125.9: Οὗτος δὲ τίς; ὁ στρατηγός; οὐδαμῶς. “But who was he? A general? Not at all.”

¹⁵⁰ 125.22-127.30: “But what is worse certain noblemen who against all decency were against us were found among the prisoners- an occurrence which created astonishment.”

mainly religious grounds. Manuel is surprised that Orthodox Christians dared to question the authority of the state¹⁵¹ and, most of all, they are disparaged for allying with the pagan Ottomans:

Those who against us desert to the infidel are obviously insane and behave worse than madmen and in fact as they thrust the sword, they are fighting their own souls rather than us. Οἱ καθ' ἡμῶν αὐτομολοῦντες πρὸς ἀσεβεῖς περιφανῶς μαίνονται καὶ τῶν βεβλαμμένων τὰς φρένας χεῖρω ποιοῦσι, καὶ δὴ καθ' ἑαυτῶν τὸ ξίφος ὡσπερ ὠθοῦντες μᾶλλον ταῖς αὐτῶν ψυχαῖς ἢ περ ἡμῖν διαμάχονται.¹⁵²

There were a number of individuals not all of whom belonged to the common people or were considered to be of low rank who joined the enemy [...] They became for us an incurable calamity. I do not know what you would call them: Romans and Christians on account of their race and baptism, or the opposite because of their choice and actions? Ἔνιοι γὰρ οὐκέτι τῶν τελούντων εἰς δῆμον οὐδὲ τῶν φαύλων εἶναι δοκούντων, τοῖς πολεμίοις προστιθέμενοι [...] δυσίατόν τι πάθος ἡμῖν ἐγένοντο· οὐς οὐκ οἶδ' ὅ τι καλέσετε, Ῥωμαίους καὶ Χριστιανούς διὰ τὸ γένος καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ἢ τάναντία διὰ τὴν προαίρεσιν καὶ τὰς πράξεις.¹⁵³

Yet, by far the character who receives the most detailed representation as enemy is Bayezid. At many points in the narrative, the narrator heaps long series of negative epithets. Previously Manuel's lord, Bayezid is constructed here as Theodore's main opponent.

In stark contrast to Theodore's encomium, Bayezid's portray stands as a virulent *psogos*. Manuel was fully aware of his intentions and methods from the time of the exile in Asia Minor and from the six-year siege of Constantinople. First the Sultan is scolded for being of a different religion;¹⁵⁴ from this position he stands as the “agent of Satan” (ὁ τῷ Σατὰν ὑπηρετούμενος),¹⁵⁵ an Αἰθίοψ,¹⁵⁶ since he could not tolerate a Christian ruler.¹⁵⁷ Second, he is an immoral and essentially a weak ruler, “a schemer of deceit by nature,”¹⁵⁸ and fearful of Latins.¹⁵⁹ Third, Manuel reprimands him for his barbarity and from this point of view he is the

¹⁵¹ 131.16: “It was impossible for them to preserve their their confession and faith in Christ inviolate. Why? Because in their union with Christ they promised absolute loyalty to him and enmity against the demons and yet afterwards they did the opposite.”

¹⁵² 131.29-32.

¹⁵³ 161.17-29.

¹⁵⁴ Erich Trapp counts the passage in the *Funeral oration* 128-131 as a significant passage in the polemic between Christians and Muslims. E. Trapp, “Quelques textes peu connus illustrant les relations entre le Christianisme et l'Islam,” *BF* 29 (2007): 448-449.

¹⁵⁵ 135.5.

¹⁵⁶ 141.15.

¹⁵⁷ 127.32.

¹⁵⁸ 135.6.

¹⁵⁹ 185.20.

σατράπης,¹⁶⁰ the ruler of Asia,¹⁶¹ a Persian tyrant (τὸν τύρρανον Πέρσην)¹⁶² and a barbarian (τὸν βάρβαρον);¹⁶³ unlike Theodore, he cannot control his anger.¹⁶⁴ Fourth and most frequently, Bayezid is described as a savage beast¹⁶⁵ or as a negative character from the Greek mythology. Thus, he acts like a snake (ὄφιν ἐκεῖνον),¹⁶⁶ a δράκων,¹⁶⁷ a gaping beast (τὸν κεχίνοντα θῆρα);¹⁶⁸ “he put on a sheepskin though he was a downright wolf”¹⁶⁹ or, by donning the skin of a lion or a fox, and he exchanged the one for the other;¹⁷⁰ he had an *innate ferocity* (ἔμφυτος θηριωδία);¹⁷¹ “this most hostile monster attacked our possessions and, according to the habit of swine when they sharpen their fangs, he goaded them on and was in turn urged on by them.”¹⁷² “In his heart he was a Cyclop with impiety instead of blindness, shamelessness instead of a cave. Indeed the sultan was a shepherd, but not of sheep like those of the Cyclop but of men who did not differ from beasts;”¹⁷³ in addition he was “the man whose jaws gaped like Hades, who desired to swallow us all up in them.”¹⁷⁴ Eventually, when Bayezid was deceived by Theodore, Manuel represents him as a tamed creature:

Having changed from a wild beast into a bleating lamb. He who previously howled fiercer than the wolves now looked like a tamed wild beast. Καὶ ἦν τις ἡμέρος τότε μεταβαλὼν ἐξ ἀγρίου καὶ μονονοῦ βληχῶμενος ὁ πρότερον ὑπὲρ τοὺς λύκους δεινὸν κεχηνώς, καὶ ἐώκει χειροθήσει θηρίοις¹⁷⁵

As for the last of the typological characters present in the oration, the image of the *helper*, just like in the case of the enemy, takes a variety of forms, even if they have only a meteoric appearance. The first in chronological order are his parents: his mother, Helena, is described as a political counselor close to Manuel. For instance, she knows and approves of his plan to flee Bayezid's camp and to sell the city of Corinth. His father, John V, is pictured in more shadowy and ambiguous brushes. Apart from several favorable and conventional

¹⁶⁰ 135.30.

¹⁶¹ 127.31.

¹⁶² 153.7.

¹⁶³ 197.25.

¹⁶⁴ 157.19.

¹⁶⁵ This is also a general description for all the enemies, e.g. 127.22-25: εἰς τοὺς ἐχθροὺς καὶ μετὰ τῶν λύκων γενομένων..

¹⁶⁶ 187.2.

¹⁶⁷ 149.6.

¹⁶⁸ 153.21.

¹⁶⁹ 209.4.

¹⁷⁰ 135.8.

¹⁷¹ 197.13-14.

¹⁷² 127.33-34.

¹⁷³ 145.3-6.

¹⁷⁴ 139.4-6.

¹⁷⁵ 155.24-26.

references in the section dedicated to Theodore's nobility of family and in the narrative,¹⁷⁶ the senior emperor is present in a sole episode, that of Andronikos IV's rebellion. On the other hand, his absence from the following episodes speaks volumes. For the first ten years of Theodore's Despotate in Morea, John V was alive, active as ruler of the state, and surely aware of the implications of his son's activities in Morea. We do not know to what extent he controlled the course of the policy in this region. What is known is that during the 1380s until his death in 1391 he had an open conflict with Manuel, who disobeyed his father and proclaimed himself ruler of Thessalonike.

Hence probably emerged this representation of John V. Thus, at one point during Andronikos' *putsch*, the emperor, his wife, and Manuel himself decided that Theodore get out of the prison and go to Thessalonike as Despot. But, soon thereafter, John changed his mind (μετάμελος) and this seemed to be presented rather as a weakness, as it occurred in the very last moment of the preparations.¹⁷⁷ Even if Manuel concedes that this change of plan was due to his own illness and Theodore's wish to help his brother, he also emphasizes that the alternative of leaving Theodore out of prison was better.¹⁷⁸

Other less represented *helpers* are the general Raoul, who defeated Pierre de Saint Superan¹⁷⁹ and later joined Manuel's army, and the Florentine Nerio Acciaiuoli, the "Despot's father in law, a man of good sense."¹⁸⁰ Yet, the helpers *par excellence* seem to be the Knights Hospitaller. The first encounter with them occurs in 167.14-20. Manuel forges a positive image of the Knights, very much in contrast with the previous negative traits ascribed to the Latins' activities in the region:

There was a community in Rhodes composed of men who had vowed to the Saviour chastity, obedience and poverty and who had also promised to fight those who strove against the Cross, and they were accustomed to bear the sign of the Cross on their clothes, weapons, and flags. Ὑπήρχον ἢ ἐν Ῥόδῳ κοινότης, ἄνδρες ἀζυγίαν, ὑποταγὴν, ἀκτημοσύνην ὑπισχνούμενοι τῷ Σωτῆρι καὶ πολεμεῖν τοῖς τῷ σταυρῷ πολεμοῦσιν, ὃν οἶδε φέρειν εἰώθεσαν κάπὶ τῶν ἐσθήτων, κάπὶ τῶν ὄπλων, κάπὶ τῆς σημαίας ἀπανταχοῦ.

As it can be noticed from the passage just quoted, in the Hospitallers' case, Christian faith

¹⁷⁶ In the εὐγένεια section and in 113. 24-26: he was sent forth most excellently fortified and supported by his father's and indeed also by his mother's and everybody's prayers.

¹⁷⁷ 101.7-10.

¹⁷⁸ Theodore himself seems to have been against this decision, which the author outlines in quite a strong language: 103.4-5: Ἐκάθητο δὴ κατὰ χθονὸς ὄμματα πῆξας καὶ τινα ἀπάνθρωπον δῆμιον φανταζόμενος. So he (Theodore) sat with his eyes fixed on the ground, thinking of a cruel executioner (i.e. John)

¹⁷⁹ The battle of Leontarion 1395.

¹⁸⁰ 153.6.

played a crucial role in choosing them as allies and friends. Thus, they are friends and Christians (φίλοι καὶ χριστιανοί),¹⁸¹ they keep their vows to stand by their faith¹⁸² and “would give all their wealth to achieve great deeds for the glory of Christ.”¹⁸³ Their declared intention to occupy the entire Peloponnese was motivated by their will to defend the Christian faith in the Mediterranean where they had already expanded their sway. In addition to representing a fearsome military force,¹⁸⁴ the Hospitallers, unlike other Latin peoples were “well disposed toward us.”¹⁸⁵

Despite these positive characteristics, a certain degree of ambiguity persists in the portrayal of the Knights Hospitaller. One must never forget, Manuel says, that they were Latins, and that their friendship was rather circumstantial. Thus, eventually they were pictured as the least oppressive solution to Morea's problems¹⁸⁶ while they seem to have caused troubles and grief among the inhabitants of the region:

It seems to me that I have been incorrect in describing them as helpers and saviors. Even if the people of the Peloponnese preferred the Hospitallers, choosing the rule of the Latins instead of the despotism of the Turks, yet they could hardly be called 'saviors and helpers' if they only delivered us from the enemy's yoke to place us against our will under their power. Ἄλλὰ γὰρ ἔοικα οὐκ ἀκριβῶς τοῖς ὀνόμασι χρήσασθαι βοηθούς τε καὶ σωτῆρας ἐκείνους προσαγορεύσας. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ προκρίναι τούτους τῶν ἀσεβῶν καὶ τῆς αὐτῶν δεσποτείας τὴν τῶν Λατίνων ἀρχὴν προθεῖναι, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ παραβάλλειν οἶμαι καλόν, οὕτω πολὺ διειχέτην· οὐ μέντοι γε σωτῆρες καὶ βοηθοὶ κυρίως ἂν οἶδε καλοῖντο, εἰ τοῦ μὲν ζυγοῦ τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἀπήλλαξαν ἅν, ὑπὸ δὲ τὸν σφῶν αὐτῶν μὴ βουλομένους ὑμᾶς ὑπήγαγον.¹⁸⁷

Not only the Ottomans and the local landlords opposed to Theodore receive extremely negative characterizations, but even the Hospitallers, who seem to play the role of the protagonist's *helper*, in the end are slightly criticized on ethnic grounds.¹⁸⁸

Fourth, at the thematic level, the author inserts proleptic enunciations and, most of all, provides elaborate justifications of the eventful history of the peninsula,¹⁸⁹ elements which

¹⁸¹ 171.1-25.

¹⁸² 169.13-15 and 175.6

¹⁸³ 175.7-21.

¹⁸⁴ 185.28-30: “it was rather that he (Bayezid) feared that the Hospitallers, who were stronger than we were, might harm the adjacent cities to the Peloponnese. For they are like streams of mighty and ever-flowing rivers.”

¹⁸⁵ 169.1.

¹⁸⁶ 195.31-32: κακῶν γὰρ δὴ προκειμένων τὸ μὴ χεῖρον βέλτιον.

¹⁸⁷ 199.33-35.

¹⁸⁸ 177. 1-4: “occasionally, on a small pretext they recklessly set themselves in motion and once they start it is hard to hold them in.”

¹⁸⁹ With regard to Manuel's style of argumentation J. Chrysostomides noticed the humanist terms, the clarity, and originality. “Introduction,” 27. Cf. also Isidore of Kiev: “therefore, some celebrated the harmony of your words (ὀνομάτων ὠραν), your style (τὴν συνθήκην τῶν λέξεων), the beauty of your expression (τὸ τῆς φράσεως κάλλος), and the order of the arguments (τὴν τάξιν τῶν ἐπιχειρημάτων)” in “*Lettres du hieromonaque*

introduce a sense of unity of the account. Thus, Manuel's narrative does not always look back to past events but it also anticipates actions by projecting the image of brighter times for the Peloponnese. Occasionally, the narrator includes *prolepses* indicating a better course of events or pinpointing possible alternatives of action. For instance, the alliance with the Hospitallers allowed for an interval of peace and of planning for future times:

And this is what makes us hope that one day good fortune may change and desert them (i.e. the Ottomans), siding with us, as it did in the days of our forefathers. “Ὁ δὴ καὶ θαρρεῖν ἡμᾶς δίδωσι μεταπεσεῖσθαι ποτε τὴν ἀγαθὴν τύχην καὶ μεθ’ ἡμῶν ἐκείνην αὐθις τετάξεσθαι αὐτοῦς ἐρήμους ἀφείσαν, ὡς κάπὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων προγόνων ὑπῆρχε τὰ πράγματα.¹⁹⁰”

The motivation of actions covers a large section of the oration as it supports the enunciation of different political options. It takes a multitude of forms, from the utter vilification of the enemies of Morea to complex lines of argumentation which occupy long paragraphs of text.¹⁹¹ More detailed argumentation, which finds an echo in judicial oratory is provided in two different cases: the settlement of Albanian immigrants in the Peloponnese,¹⁹² and the invitation addressed to the Knights Hospitaller, portrayed as the hero's *helpers* despite their ambiguous role, to undertake the defense operations of the strategic military outposts in the peninsula.¹⁹³

Finally, a considerable number of references to the emperor's elaborated narrative emerge in the texts of contemporary authors. In their prefatory texts Plethon and Joasaph the Monk remarked the inclusion of numerous details pertaining to Theodore's actions.¹⁹⁴ Yet the most elaborate comments pertaining to the emperor narrative treatment of an encomium

Isidore, dans la suite metropolitain de Kiev,”67.17-19.

¹⁹⁰ 161.5.

¹⁹¹ On the uses of motivation in narrative see Brian McHale, “On the (im)possibility of narrating the history of narrative theory,” in *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2005, 65.

¹⁹² 123. Manuel inserts this episode after describing as desperate the situation prior to Theodore's arrival. The “Illyrian” immigration is presented as a fortunate and unique event, despite the fact that it was opposed by a large part of the indigeneous population and in the fourteenth century there had been several successive waves of Albanian settlers (On early Albanian settlers in the Peloponnese, see Zakynthinos, *Le Despotat*, I, 101, and E. L. Vranoussi, “Deux documents byzantins inédits sur la présence des Albanais dans le Péloponèse au XVe siècle,” in *Οι Άλβανοί στο Μεσαίωνα*, ed. Ch. Gasparis, Athens, 1998, 293-305.). The argumentation for the appropriateness of Theodore's consent with regard to the foreigners' settlements, is supported by the Albanians' inherent ethnic virtues: they are all mountain-dwellers, skilled warriors, and always keep to their oaths (123.4-7.)

¹⁹³ The emperor opens his argumentation by presenting the background of the situation noticing that, by that time, the Ottomans were plundering continental Greece. Then he lists three major arguments for the alliance with the Hospitallers: the general unfavorable situation not only in Byzantium but also in the West (193. 33-195. 2); the Ottomans' fear of the Hospitallers; and the Hospitallers' ramifications and good connections in the western world, 167.21-173.28. These arguments coincided with Theodore's arguments for selling the Despotate, 197.14.

¹⁹⁴ See Appendix 12.

belonged to Manuel Chrysoloras. In the extensive *Epistolary discourse on the Funeral oration*, he noticed the novel approach introduced by the emperor in treating the topic of his brother's death.¹⁹⁵ According to the emperor's ambassador, the praise of the deceased person must rely on the deep knowledge of the details in the life of the eulogized individual:

It is necessary that he (the speaker) is knowledgeable of the life and deeds of those whom he praises. For if one praised another one for his military or political deeds, but the praised one is neither a general nor a political man, he would say nothing in accordance with the deeds. Δεῖ δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ ἐπιστήμονα τῶν πραγμάτων ἐκείνων εἶναι περὶ ὧν ἔρεῖ καὶ ἐπαινέσει. Εἰ γὰρ τις ἐπὶ στρατηγικῇ τινὰ ἢ πολιτικῇ ἐγκωμιάζοι, αὐτός, οὐ στρατηγικὸς οὐδὲ πολιτικὸς ὧν, οὐδὲν συμβαῖνον τοῖς πράγμασιν ἀληθῶς ἔρεῖ.¹⁹⁶

Chrysoloras also underlines the importance of history in the oration:

And it is possible to find history in this text as well as accounts of the lives of men; most of the oration deals with such topics. In addition there is praise and narrative of these, as well rebuking of the evil deeds. And there we learn about directions and regulations and about the government and we witness the wars and military actions. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ ἱστορίαν ἔνεστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς εὐρεῖν καὶ ἀνθρώπων τύχας καὶ περιστάσεις καὶ περὶ ἀρετῶν δὲ ὁ πλεῖστος λόγος ἐν αὐτοῖς γίνεται. Καὶ τούτων μὲν **ἔπαινός τε καὶ διήγησις**, τῶν δὲ κακιῶν ψόγος. [...] Καὶ οἰκονομίαν δὲ ἐν τούτοις καὶ πολιτείαν διδασκόμεθα καὶ στρατηγικά δὲ καὶ πολεμικά πολλά ὀρώμεν καὶ ὅλως.¹⁹⁷

The passage-catalog of literary achievements also includes a small section on the narrative:

That he deals well with the narrative accounts, with the antitheses and the refutations; that he was familiar with the examples and the changes in actions and the resemblances. And for each of his well shaped statements he offered many explanations and arguments. Ὅπως μὲν γὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ καλῶς ἔχει τὰ τῶν διηγήσεων, ὅπως δὲ τὰ τῶν ἀντιθέσεων καὶ λύσεων, ὅπως δὲ οἰκείως τοῖς παραδείγμασι καὶ ταῖς τροπαῖς καὶ ταῖς ὁμοιότησιν ἐχρήσατο. Καὶ ἐκάστοις δὲ τῶν λεγομένων εὐφυῶς πάνυ λόγον καὶ κατασκευὴν καὶ αἰτίαν ἀποδίδωσιν.

Following these general observations Chrysoloras often notices that the author made use of detailed narratives in his praise for Theodore:

Since the topics of the speech often required a narrative approach, you spoke about this one <Theodore> in much detail. Τῶν πραγμάτων πολλάκις καὶ τῆς διηγήσεως τοῦτο ἀπαιτούντων ἢ καὶ ἀναγκαζόντων, [...] ὑπὲρ τούτου διαρρήδην εἴρηκας.

Chrysoloras also praises Manuel for not mixing features of monodies in an *epitaphios*; he

¹⁹⁵ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 61. 7-9: σὺ τοίνυν, ὡς περ καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ καλὰ τῶν παλαιῶν, καὶ τὸ βασιλεὺς δὲ καὶ στρατηγὸς οὕτω καλῶς δύνασθαι λέγειν καὶ τοῦτο ἀνεκαίνισας.

¹⁹⁶ 66.5-9.

¹⁹⁷ 71.10.

notices that other authors did so wrongly.¹⁹⁸ Finally, he tries to explain the selection of facts operated by Manuel,¹⁹⁹ and emphasizes that Manuel praised his brother by looking at his brother's actions.²⁰⁰

6.4. Authorial voice

I will end my discussion of the *Funeral oration* with several observations on the authorial voice adopted here. Like in the other texts analyzed so far, here as well the author's individuality was strongly represented. Arguably, as the analysis of the different plots has shown, Manuel adapted the genre of the *epitaphioi* to his needs and introduced numerous elements of self-portrayal by representing himself in various ways and especially as narrator and actor in the events of Moreote history. These different roles Manuel incarnated when writing the text were also noticed by Manuel Chysoloras in his commentary:

You fulfilled your task in many ways. First, as a brother to a brother, second, as a good ruler to a just ruler, third, as a virtuous individual to someone who is striving eagerly to acquire virtue, and finally as a lord and emperor towards someone who made no little effort for the defense of his country and nation. Τὸ δὲ ὀφειλόμενον κατὰ πολλοὺς τρόπους πεποίηκας· πρῶτον μὲν ἀδελφὸς πρὸς ἀδελφὸν, δευτέρου ἄρχων ἀγαθὸς πρὸς ἄρχοντα δεξιόν, τρίτον σπουδαῖος πρὸς ἀρετὴν ζηλώσαντα, ἔτι δὲ δεσπότης καὶ βασιλεὺς πρὸς τὸν ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος καὶ τοῦ γένους οὐκ ὀλίγα πεπονηκότα.²⁰¹

A further mark of this adaptation, the dichotomy between a plain praise for the brother and a biased account of the state of affairs in Morea, which seemingly had implications for the general situation of Byzantium, is reflected in the ways Manuel modulated his authorial voice

¹⁹⁸ ἀλλ' οὐδὲ σοὶ δήπου ἔπρεπεν, ὅπερ ἐν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις οἱ πολλοὶ ποιῶσι, γυναικείας οἰμωγὰς καὶ ὀλολυγὰς μιμεῖσθαι καὶ διὰ τοῦτο, ἐπεὶ κατὰ τὸν μονωδιῶν νόμον 75.28-30 [...] τὴν δὲ ἀλήθειαν τίς σου μᾶλλον ἐτίμησε καὶ ἐν ὑπόσχουσι καὶ ἐν διηγῆμασι καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς, οἷς ἂν καὶ κεφαλῇ μόνον κατανεύσαι;

¹⁹⁹ 80.25: ἀλλὰ πολλὰ τῶν μεγάλων καὶ ἅ μόνον ἄλλοις ἂν ἤρκεσεν ἀσμένως εἰπεῖν, ἐκὼν παρέλιπες ὑπὸ μεγαλοψυχίας· καὶ εἰρηκας δὲ μὴ πάντα δεῖν λέγειν ἐφεξῆς, καλῶς τοῦτο λέγων. Ἐκεῖνο μὲν γὰρ πένησι συμβαίνει λόγοις· πενίας γὰρ ἐν πᾶσι τὸ ἀκριβολογεῖσθαι καὶ μέχρι τῶν μικροτάτων παρεκλέγειν, ὅταν ἀπὸ λυπρῶν καὶ ὀλίγων τί ποιεῖν βουλώμεθα. Ὅταν δὲ ἀφθόνους ἔχωμεν τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις χρῆσθαι, ἔστι τὰ μὲν παραλαμβάνειν, τὰ δὲ τουτων καὶ ἀπορρίπτειν, ἔστιν ὅτε καὶ αὐτὰ μεγάλα, μηδὲν μικρολογούμενον. 81.6: ὅμως, εἴ τις ἀκριβῶς τὰ σὰ σκοποῖ, δίδως τοῖς μετὰ νοῦ ταῦτα θεωροῦσιν, ἐφ' ἐκάστου τῶν εἰρημένων, πλεῖστα ἐννοεῖν καὶ παρ' ἄλλου ἄλλο ἀναλέγειν

²⁰⁰ 83.2: καὶ πολλὰ δὲ χρήσιμα ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου βίου, τοῦτο μὲν πρὸς τύχην, τοῦτο δὲ πρὸς ἦθος καὶ ἀρετὴν, οὐ καθόλου μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ καταμέρος, τοῦτο δὲ πρὸς ἐπιτηδεύματα καὶ πράξεις τούτους ἐπ' αὐτῶν τῶν πράξεων ἐμφαίνειν.

²⁰¹ 99.18. Furthermore, according to Chysoloras, Theodore saw Manuel as his teacher and master: Ἄλλως γὰρ οὐδ' ἂν ἦν μαθητὴς καλὸς οὐδὲ παῖς καλός· καὶ τὰ κατὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκεῖνα πέπραχε σὺν σοι, ὡς περ χορευτῆς ὑπὸ κορυφαίῳ· [...] τὸ γὰρ παρὰ τοιοῦτου καὶ τοιαῦτα μαθόντα οὕτως ἀκριβῶσαι τέλειον ἐκεῖνον δείκνυσιν. Εἰ γὰρ Ἀχιλλεὶ τὸ παρὰ Χείρωνος τὰ πολεμικὰ μαθεῖν ἔπαινον φέρει, πηλίκον ἐκεῖνω τὸ παρὰ σοῦ τοιαῦτα παιδευθῆναι; ἔπραττε δὲ οὐ παρὰ σοῦ μόνον διδασθεῖς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆ σῆ γνώμη [...] γινώσκων ὅτι Ὀδυσσεὺς Ἀθηναῖς ἐδεῖτο, ἐπεὶ καὶ τοῦτο ἦν αὐτῷ. (74.1–6).

in this text. On the one hand, when dealing with portrayal, be it encomiastic or critical, the author's voice becomes highly emotional. Overall however, this emotional voice present especially in the beginning and the end of the oration does not have an influence over the representation of the main course of action which seems to unfold independently from the rest of the oration.

On the other hand, as I have already suggested, Manuel adopted a voice that would help him construct his narrative plots which account not only for the exemplariness of the hero and the heroic ethos but also for the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century political situation of Morea. Certainly, these elements do not combine in a history proper, nor a chronicle-type writing. Accordingly, when dealing with such topics, Manuel created a language that used the heroic past for legitimizing contemporary issues.²⁰² The author is not a historian, but he rather assumes the voice of a story teller. This voice nevertheless retains strong political overtones pertaining to problems of dynastic continuity and defense against centrifugal forces such as Ottomans, Latins, and independent Byzantine landlords. Furthermore, this voice seems tuned to the process of narrativization of public orations that took place in late Byzantium (as argued in the introduction of the present unit of my dissertation) and also to the tradition of ancient speeches in the forensic genre. The texts of the ancient Greek orators included narrative accounts clearly marked by metanarrative interventions, and various other types of concluding remarks. The narrative accounts of the forensic orations were divided in several sections dealing with different thematic aspects or temporal stages of the story. There as well, the narrators are internal, overt, and often comment on the recounted events while the *narratees* are addressed on a regular basis and invited to judge a situation based on the narrator's presentation of facts.²⁰³ As Manuel's purpose was to convey a political message which defended his own political position in the late Byzantine political sphere, it is not far fetched to say that in forging his authorial voice he consciously made use of this particular tradition of judicial rhetoric in his poetics of praise.

Conclusions

The above analysis has suggested that the encomium for the deceased brother was integrated into an account of the political and military affairs of Morea. Manuel appears to have tried to

²⁰² See following chapter.

²⁰³ M. Edwards, "Oratory," in *Narrators, narratees, and narratives in Ancient Greek Literature*, ed. Irene de Jong, Leiden, 2004, 317-356.

emulate both the traditions of the panegyric oration and of the epic/chronicle. The subject matter, the praise for his brother, is treated in the form of a narrative account and to a large extent the author is precise about the events he recounts. By this account, the unit dealing with the Despot's achievements was not conceived as a sheer list of glorious deeds illustrating Theodore's virtues but as a string of interconnected episodes, truly an account of Morea and not only of the brother. Certainly, these elements did not combine in a composition resembling a historical chronicle. They were primarily intended not just to describe military situations but also to convey a political message, as various stylistic devices such as the configuration of a strong narrative voice or the usage of criticism indicate. As it stands, based on the peculiarities of the author's literary strategies, this narrative of Theodore's deeds takes the form of a sanitized, official account of events which puts forward a message with wide ideological implications within the late Byzantine political context.

The *Funeral oration on brother Theodore* was thus the most ideologically driven text the emperor composed. To a certain extent, narrative and ideology have a similar function. They both involve the acceptance of an authoritative, integrative explanation of actions that orders the world and provides meaning, often manifesting itself as a sort of canonization. The present study examined the form and contents of the narrative included in the *Funeral oration*, by highlighting the dichotomy between a plain praise for Theodore, the author's brother, and an official account of the state of affairs in Morea. The emperor-narrator engaged rhetorically in a dialog with the political elite of Morea and introduced elements altering the function of funeral orations in order to advertise a political statement of dynastic authority in a situation determined by several important military and social factors which were specific not only for the region but also for Byzantium at large. By and large, these elements corresponded to the developments within the literary milieu of late Byzantine Constantinople.

Although the story is chronologically structured, its three different plots run at different paces and intersect each other only at certain points in the text, as in the case of the meeting in Serres or the episode of the sale of Moreote strongholds to the Hospitaller Knights. In such cases, it appears that the narrator is more interested in weaving different plots than in depicting characters, who, in any case, never attain a fully-fledged profile but remain rather schematic.²⁰⁴ For this reason, the narrative of events looks at Theodore's *ethos* from a different angle only partly correlated to the long lists of virtues enunciated in the introduction and

²⁰⁴ It is easy to discern here V. Propp's famous functions of various characters: the hero (Theodore and Manuel)-the enemy (the Latins, the Ottomans, and Byzantine local individuals)-the helper (the Hospitallers and the Albanians). See V. Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, Austin: Texas University Press, 1968.

peroration. Likewise, closure of the narrative is avoided or deflected until the situation in Morea becomes politically and socially stable.

More than two decades ago, Julian Chrysostomides, the editor of Manuel's oration, confidently opened the historical introduction of the text in the following way:

“The theme of the funeral oration is Theodore Palaeologus Porphyrogenitus, Despot of Mistra, and his deeds which he performed as ruler of the Despotate between the years 1382 and 1407.”²⁰⁵

Doubtless, Theodore represented the central figure of the text and was portrayed as the hero of many episodes. But it is no less true that, from Manuel's perspective, he stood for something else: a younger brother acting always in accordance with his elder brother's will, and thereby an embodiment of the ideal local ruler loyal to the authority emanating from the City. The study of the narrator's perspective reveals that the construction of Theodore's personality was not the sole concern of the text which still manages to follow all the steps required by a funeral oration. Manuel tried to tune his expression of grief according to a message that would soothe the concerns of the Moreotes loyal to Constantinople by eloquently framing the rhetorical representation of his brother into a wider picture of regional history. The Byzantine and the Italian readers of the text, like Manuel Chrysoloras and Guarino of Verona, were probably right to admire the literary merits of the text, yet the emperor's skillful integration of narrative into praise also involved a far reaching statement of his political outlook.

²⁰⁵ Julian Chrysostomides, “Introduction,” 15.

Conclusion of the unit

In this second unit of my dissertation my objectives have been: 1) to document the features of presentation and argument typical of Manuel's persuasive speech; and 2) to develop a critical interpretation of the tone and function of orations that display these features. I noted in particular the strategies of adapting the rules of different genres, dialog, *hypothekai*, diatribe, or funeral oration to given circumstances and the shifts of the authorial voice. The following general picture has emerged: first, all these texts have been transmitted and conceived as different modalities of expressing moral and political advice: conversational, “gnomic,” based on diatribe, and narrative. The elaborate construction of political advice surfaces in their deliberative contents, the moral *ethos* which the emperor strove to construct, and, not least, by their inclusion in a single codex, the Vindob. phil. gr. 98, dedicated to John VIII and part of a series of four manuscripts which comprised most of the emperor's literary texts. From this viewpoint, it can be suggested that the texts were conceived as elements in a comprehensive didactic project envisaged by Emperor Manuel II. Second, in terms of the form of their political message several common features can be grasped such as the *psogoi* directed against the enemies in the *Dialog* (John VII and Ottomans), the *Orations* (the Persians as a representation of the Ottomans), and the *Funeral oration* (the Ottomans and the local landlords)²⁰⁶ or the problematization of the ruler's office. This last aspect is well demonstrated by the emperor's interventions in the *Dialog on marriage*, by the raising of several issues regarding the ruler's education in the *Foundations* and the *Orations*, and by the emphasis on the intervention of the central imperial authority in the affairs of a distant province. Third, the author often subverted the common tenets of the imperial representation by presenting himself as a “defeated” interlocutor in the debate of the *Dialog*, as a teacher-rhetorician of his son in the *Foundations* and the *Orations*, or as his brother's helper in the *Funeral oration*. Furthermore, noticeably the emperor constantly suggested and even explicitly stated that rhetoric and the ability to speak in a persuasive manner were correlates of power. In light of these observations, his strategy to configure a strong authorial voice can be interpreted as an attempt to persuade by means of a dual authority: both as political power and as oratorical virtue. In the ensuing and final unit of my dissertation I will look into the contents of Manuel II's political discourse as mirroring themes of other contemporary political discourses and putting forward an

²⁰⁶ And also in the *Prosopopoiia*.

alternative political discourse.

Unit Three: No triumphs, just words: competing political discourses during the reign of Manuel II

Introduction

With these thoughts about the underlying socio-political developments and the authorial rhetorical strategies, it is now possible to turn to other issues: the ideological claims that shaped the different approaches to the nature and exercise of political authority. The starting point of the discussion must be the observation that different groups of individuals adhered to specific goals suiting their needs and interests. Consequently, we cannot speak of a single type of approach to the sphere of late Byzantine political authority but of several such approaches, sometimes competing against each other but sometimes intersecting. Each of these corresponded to a specific group of individuals united by their common preoccupations or political outlook. The discussion of these different approaches will draw benefit from the toolbox of historical discourse analysis, which can further help us identify the political attitudes and social representations in the period. The statements in the texts analyzed so far, aside from their strict integration into the Byzantine rhetorical tradition, reflect relations of social and cultural power and at the same time allow us to grasp the major concerns of the late Byzantine political establishment. My analysis of the process of discourse formation in late Byzantium will consider several principles: that although discourses seek to reinforce established traditions and dominant ideologies, they can be exploited for subversive purposes; that they are self-regulating systems and, to this extent, characterized also by creating rules of exclusion; and that, owing to the oral performances and the circulation of the manuscripts containing the texts analyzed here, they are materially bound and thus spatially and chronologically limited. Thus, an investigation of the discursive aspects of the political attitudes and representations emerging during Manuel's reign will be set to provide an insight into the strategies used to produce and reproduce old or new ideological assumptions.

The first goal of this unit will therefore be to identify and analyze the major topics used in the texts of two different groups of writers with whom the emperor interacted: the ecclesiastics, defined as members of the Church hierarchy who took a stance in doctrinal matters, and the court rhetoricians. The study of these two groups' political programs will

reveal both the hierocratic claims developed in this period as well as a contextualized use of traditional claims about imperial power. Based on this analysis, the second aim will be to detect the differences between, on the one hand, the discourses of the ecclesiastics and court rhetoricians and, on the other hand, the discourse put forward by the emperor in the texts analyzed in the previous chapters. Given their points of departure, I will also try to identify the lines of convergence and common genealogies that unite these disparate types of discourse. Finally, I would like to suggest that Emperor Manuel II, in reaction to the challenges to imperial authority often expressed in his texts, envisaged a different type of approach to the question of political authority, centered on an representation of the emperor's role which was tuned to the late Byzantine realities. Thus, I will argue that, in his speeches, he operated with an aestheticized concept of empire which relied much on the power wielded by rhetoric in general and by the skills of speaking well in particular. This model raised more questions of ethical values associated with education rather than of government and political administration.

My exploration of these aspects involves two basic procedures: an initial mapping of the discourse aimed at identifying a series of common basic topics which are seen to emerge across a range of fourteenth and fifteenth century contexts. Within this analytical framework I can identify four major themes of discourse which were common to almost all the authors of the period and shaped their political programs: 1) the approach to existing social divisions, which became a major concern due to the regional and internal economic transformations that saw the emergence of a new class of local entrepreneurial aristocracy seeking to exert more influence. 2) The formulation of the Byzantine specificity whereby one can perceive how authors understood general features, such as ethnicity and religion, defining the community in a historical context. Previous scholarship on the issue of Byzantine identity has pointed out that, at various points in time, mostly depending on political factors, the Byzantines selected several elements from a large cultural reservoir that combined Romanness, Greekness, and the Christian tradition.¹ At times, Byzantine authors emphasized only a limited number of aspects which historically constituted elements of the Byzantine identity.² Nevertheless, since, due to

¹ A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: the Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, G. Page, "Introduction," in *Being Byzantine*, Cambridge, CUP, 2009. Cf. D. Nicol, *Church and Society in the Last Centuries of Byzantium*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, 8: "this book may be described as an attempt to explore identity, a series of reflections on the Byzantine character."

² For instance, Theodore Balsamon, the twelfth century canonist, defined Byzantine identity as standing on three pillars: the emperor, the capital, and the church, M. Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium Under the Comneni, 1081-1261*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 508.

the chronological limitations of the present project, it is difficult to assess in a comprehensive way all the parameters of a Byzantine “national identity” (e.g. memory, performance, community, ethnicity or continuity),³ I will limit myself here to discussing the instances of the authors' self-identification⁴ which alternately becomes cultural (Hellenic), religious (Orthodox), or imperial (Roman) and which is generally delineated by three sometimes overlapping terms: ἔθνος, γένος, and πατρίς. Noticeably however, to a large extent, this self-identification relied on the past coherence of the Byzantine political system which nevertheless in the last century of Byzantium's history was threatened with utter dissolution.⁵

3) The designation of the enemies and allies of Byzantium, an issue which has to take into consideration the growing presence of the Ottomans and the Latins in the region;⁶ and finally

4) the conceptualization of imperial authority. In one form or another each of these four issues have come into the focus of many historians of later Byzantium, yet they were always treated separately and never contextualized or considered as interdependent aspects of competing and sometimes conflicting political discourses.⁷ I chose to look at these particular themes because they are predominant in the texts of the late Palaiologan period and their analysis can offer answers to several major political question of the late empire: who should control the state's stance vis-à-vis regional political developments? What were the criteria of *Byzantine-ness*, an identity aspect which often offered ground for justifying the stance vis-à-vis the Latins and the Ottomans? What was the appropriate political behavior internally and externally?

³ A. Kaldellis, “Introduction,” *Hellenism in Byzantium*, x. Kaldellis' thesis is that Byzantium was not a “universal, Christian, multi-ethnic” empire but a nation-state of the Romans similar to modern nation-states (Ibid., 5). Nevertheless, his investigation stops in the thirteenth century.

⁴ Instead of the term “identity,” here I use more often the term “identification.” In this, I follow R. Brubaker's amendment and critique of this category in his book *Ethnicity Without Groups*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004, 1-20. Although his study is a product of sociological research on modern societies, he problematized the category of “identity” with correctives useful for scholars of pre-modern societies. He argues that “identity” evolved into a soft and nondescript term. According to Brubaker, more useful is to shift this word into its verbal form, “identification.”

⁵ The idea that the Byzantine “identity” derived from the coherence of Byzantium's political system was put forward in C. Wickham, “Introduction,” *The Inheritance of Rome. A History of Europe from 400 to 1000*, Toronto: Penguin, 2010, 19.

⁶ For an overview of these attitudes see for instance N. Necipoğlu, “Introduction,” in *Byzantium between the Latins and the Ottomans*, 1-39.

⁷ For the social and economic differences see N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium. Between the Ottomans and the Latins*, and K.-P. Matschke, “Ökonomische Substanz und ökonomische Politik zwischen 1402 und 1422,” *Die Schlacht bei Ankara, 142-238*; for an analysis of different theoretical aspects of the concept of the Byzantine ethnos see G. Page, *Being Byzantine. Greek Identity before the Ottomans*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, especially ch. 1: “Ethnic Identity,” 11-26. In discussing ethnicity and its correlative, identity, Page highlights four principles: ethnicity refers to a group identity with strong associations of race and of the past; the definition of ethnicity requires the existence of a contrasting other and is a feature of conflict situations rather than of stability; and ethnicity is a subjective act of faith by members of a group, rather than an objective and quantifiable aspect of a group (11).

Thus, a comparison between the emperor's texts and those of his contemporaries will offer a key to an understanding of how Manuel conceived his role on the political stage. If these four themes common to the discourse put forward by different groups seem slightly disconnected among each other, it is also because one has to take into consideration the difficulty of reconstructing political ideologies of pre-modern states. There are no clear-cut guidelines or constitutions that would list the aims or the means of certain political groups, just as we have in the case of modern political parties for instance; nor is there anything similar to an abstract market of ideas similar to the modern discipline of political sciences. Yet, as M.I. Finley put it, “political reflection need not be systematic analysis and rarely is.”⁸

While the analysis of the political discourses circulating in this period will help us better understand the role of rhetoric in the articulation of the relations between the different power brokers, this unit is also intended as a direct contribution to the debate on the conceptualization of empire before its fall. It does so by exploring primarily the practice of oratory and investigating the strategies whereby Manuel and other contemporary authors made rhetoric a politically effective tool. It also probes into the different attitudes towards imperial authority developed as part of a general understanding and within a general approach to the political and social sphere.⁹

Before beginning the discussion of the different types of discourse, as a general observation, it can be said that the political discourse in late Byzantium underwent a noticeable shift. Unlike in previous periods, there emerged a trend towards a confrontation with political reality, and in particular with questions of power, a confrontation facilitated by the extreme conditions in which the Byzantines lived. Social and political reality became more and more the touchstone of political thought: acceptance of it, adjustment to it, attempts to change it or to propose what should be done. And, as a matter of fact, the last decades of the fourteenth century were noteworthy for producing texts which in their treatment went beyond the traditional boundaries of Byzantine political thought.¹⁰

⁸ M. I. Finley, *Politics in the ancient world*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, 123.

⁹ On the uses of rhetoric as a tool of imperial ideology, cf. J. Connolly, “The New World Order: Greek Rhetoric in Rome” in *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, ed. I. Worthington, Oxford: Blackwell, 2007, 139-165. Connolly argues that in Augustan Rome Greek Rhetoric was cultivated as it offered an instrument to present the world as a knowable, ordered system, and thereby became a key to the stability of imperial government.

¹⁰ Cf. the observation in I. Toth, *Imperial orations in late Byzantium (1261-1453)*, PhD Dissertation, Oxford University, 2003, 160.

Chapter 7:

The ecclesiastics

On examining the writings of the early fifteenth century churchmen, it becomes apparent that they often included references to ongoing political and social processes in Byzantium. Such issues were not entirely new as many of them had been debated during the fourteenth century as well and they continued to be debated until the Fall of Constantinople. Byzantine church writers began to assume a stronger stand concerning the political administration and to voice their opinions regarding the affairs of the state mainly for two reasons: on the one hand, political decisions such as those concerning temporary alliances with the Ottomans or the Latins increasingly affected the integrity of the Byzantine Church;¹ on the other hand, in the second half of the fourteenth century, a group of clergymen oriented towards a traditional Orthodoxy, expressed in the cultivation of hesychasm acquired an influential position within the church hierarchy. Noticeably, after 1351, the year when Hesychasm was declared the official doctrine of the Byzantine Church, most patriarchs were recruited from hesychast circles: Philotheos Kokkinos (1353-1354 and 1364-1376),² Neilos Kerameus (1380-1388),³ Anthony IV (1389-1397),⁴ Kallistos II Xanthopoulos (1397),⁵ Matthew I (1397-1410)⁶ and Euthymios II (1410-1416).⁷ These high ranking clergymen adopted a strong anti-Latin position, probably also in reaction to the growing influence of the Latin Church in many former Byzantine territories, such as the islands of the Aegean or Crete. In addition, the high interest of churchmen in the social realities of Byzantium can be explained by the role the churchmen increasingly took especially in the legal courts of Byzantine cities ever since the early Palaiologan period.⁸

¹ Especially the negotiations for union had a bearing on the Church attitude to the political dealings of the time. D. Nicol, *Church and Society*, 98-128.

² PLP 11917.

³ PLP 11648.

⁴ PLP 1113.

⁵ PLP 20820.

⁶ PLP 17387.

⁷ PLP 6268. On the late Byzantine Palamite Patriarchs see D. Krausmüller, "The Rise of Hesychasm," in M. Angold, *Cambridge History of Christianity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, 125.

⁸ See ch. 1.

As I suggested in the first unit of the dissertation, individuals who belonged to the higher echelons of the ecclesiastic hierarchy were connected among themselves and had a strong group consciousness based on their common intellectual preoccupations and theological views. From the texts that we have at our disposal, it appears that in general the ecclesiastics followed several courses of action: they sought to defend and increase the autonomy of the Church, they rejected most forms of unionism with the Roman Church, adapted themselves to the Ottoman regime within whose framework they claimed responsibility for the common people, and focused on promoting their spiritual and cultural tradition especially in texts of polemics against the Latins and Islam. A rather inward-looking group of individuals, as the study of the numerous homilies of these decades suggests, they remained in close touch with the common people, and disregarded the many proposals of the self-interested Latins whose power had been significantly reduced by the Turks.

References to political changes in Byzantium emerge in very diverse texts of the ecclesiastical writers of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries: homilies, letters, treatises, or orations. In addition to the information I presented in the second chapter of this dissertation, I think it is necessary to give a brief overview of the major texts I will be dealing with here and of several further biographical details which can help us understand the positions adopted by various clergymen. Several authors who held high-ranking positions in the Church hierarchy stand out. The earliest writer I will consider here is Isidore Glabas, metropolitan of Thessalonike first during Emperor Manuel's rebellion in Thessalonike and then again during the first years of Thessalonike's Ottoman occupation (1380-1384 and 1386-1396). He was a prolific writer of homilies and orations of exhortation addressed to the Thessalonians during the difficult years of the end of the fourteenth century. One of his numerous homilies is particularly important from a historical point of view as it includes the earliest reference to the Turkish practice of *devshirme*, the seizure of young Christian boys to serve in the Sultan's army.⁹ Isidore's ideological stance knew a shift from a strong support for Manuel's actions during his rebellion in Thessalonike (1382-1387) to an appreciation of the Ottoman policies of non-intervention in the city's affairs and especially in Church affairs. During the siege of Thessalonike he also opposed the use of ecclesiastical assets for military purposes.¹⁰ His successor as metropolitan of Thessalonike, Gabriel, also wrote numerous

⁹ B. Laourdas in "Ἰσιδώρου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Θεσσαλονίκης ὁμιλία εἰς τὰς ἐορτὰς τοῦ ἁγίου Δημητρίου," *Hellenika*, 4 1953: 389-98. See also S. Vryonis, "Isidore Glabas and the Turkish *devshirme*," *Speculum* 3, 1956: 433-443.

¹⁰ He recounts how most Byzantine officials remained in their position even after the occupation of Thessalonike, R.-J. Loenertz, "Isidore Glabas, métropolitaine de Thessalonique (1380-1396)," *REB* 6 (1948): 181-87.

homilies, many of them still unedited. Under the Turkish occupation Gabriel seems to have further improved the Thessalonians' condition and to have adopted a position against Matthew I's patriarchate supported by the emperor. The last metropolitan of Thessalonike from this period, Symeon, is also the last Byzantine author who dealt extensively with the rituals of Byzantine liturgy. He is the author of a lengthy historical oration on St. Demetrios as well as of two epistolary orations addressed to Despot Andronikos of Thessalonike, one of Manuel's younger sons. Born in Constantinople,¹¹ Symeon was a hesychast who lived in the imperial capital until 1416 when he was appointed metropolitan of Thessalonike. He led the church of this city in a critical period of its history, when it was completely surrounded by the Turkish armies. Symeon unsuccessfully defended the autonomy of the Byzantines and rejected both the solution of the sale of Thessalonike in 1423 to the Venetians as well the possibility of an alliance with the Ottomans. The contemporary patriarchs of Constantinople, Anthony IV (1389-1396), Matthew I (1397-1410), Euthymios II (1410-1416), also took a stance on the various political developments which they expressed in their official documents including letters and testaments.¹² Apart from these high ranking clerics, Thessalonian metropolitans and Constantinopolitan patriarchs, several other ecclesiastic writers are of importance here. One of them, Joseph Bryennios, a Byzantine anti-union priest from Crete, once he moved to Constantinople, attached himself first to the Charsianites monastery¹³ and then to the imperial court. From the position of court-preacher he wrote and performed homilies on theological issues such as the Trinity or the Procession of the Holy Spirit, as well as different moralizing *Oration*s among which some exhorted the emperor and the court audience to reject the union with Rome.¹⁴ In a deliberative oration, he urged the Constantinopolitan populace to finance the reconstruction of the city while in another text, a collection of forty-nine chapters, he provided a list of the major moral flaws of his contemporaries.¹⁵ Bryennios, who, as priest in Crete and Cyprus, was much aware of the attitudes of the lower social classes and of the

Further on Isidore Glabas see G. Dennis, "The Second Turkish Capture of Thessalonica," *BZ* 57 (1964): 56-58 and Idem, *The Reign of Manuel II Palaeologus in Thessalonica*, 16-18 and 89-95.

¹¹ On Symeon's biography, see D. Balfour, "Saint Symeon of Thessalonike as Historical Personality," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 28 (1983): 55-72; D. Balfour, "Ο ἅγιος ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Θεσσαλονίκης (1416-1429). Ἔργα θεολογικά," Thessalonike, 1981, 29-76.

¹² E.g. H. Hunger, "Das Testament des Patriarchen Matthaios I," *BZ* 51 (1958): 288-309.

¹³ A description and a typikon of this monastery founded in the fourteenth century by a supporter of the Kantakouzenos family was included by Patriarch Matthew I in his testament, H. Hunger, "Eine spätbyzantinische Bildbeschreibung der Geburt Christi, mit einem Exkurs über das Charsianites-Kloster in Konstantinopel," *JÖBG* 7 (1958): 126-40, esp. 136-39.

¹⁴ Joseph Bryennios, *Admonitory oration on the union of the Churches* (Λόγος συμβουλευτικός περὶ τῆς ἐνώσεως τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν), in *Ta heurethenta*, 469-499.

¹⁵ Joseph Bryennios, *Forty-nine chapters* (Κεφάλαια ἐπτὰκις ἐπτὰ), in *Ta paraleipomena*, 49-124.

difficult relations with the Latins,¹⁶ successfully fought the tendency to open negotiations with the Latin Church over a union council.¹⁷ Another ecclesiastical writer active in this period who approached political problematics was Makarios, a hieromonk whose expertise in canon law was highly appreciated and who acted as appointed metropolitan of Ankara for a brief period of time (1397-1405). His treatises written on the occasion of the debates over Matthew I's patriarchate questioned the legitimacy of imperial authority in ecclesiastical matters. Finally, Makarios Makres, an author of homilies, saints' vitae, and prayers and hieromonk of Mount Athos who moved to Constantinople to become the *hegoumenos* of the monastery of Charsianites and later on ambassador to Rome in the negotiations for the union (1430) took a stance in favor of the emperor Manuel II.¹⁸

I have consciously eliminated from this group picture of late Byzantine ecclesiastics authors like Manuel Kalekas and Maximos Chrysoberges who, once they converted to Catholicism, adopted a pro-Latin stance.¹⁹ Despite their connections to the political sphere and special interest in doctrinal theological issues, they lacked the political influence of the strictly Orthodox group. At the same time, their references to the political situation in Byzantium remain scarce and in general are concerned only with the union of the Churches seen as sole solution for the safeguarding of the state.²⁰ Nevertheless, one should keep in mind that, sometimes, the radical positions of the Orthodox clergymen emerged in response to the action of these Byzantine converts to Catholicism, particularly at a time when the Latin Church was exerting a growing influence into the former Byzantine territories such as the Aegean islands or Crete.²¹

Topics in the ecclesiastics' discourse

Several scholars have used the texts of the authors enumerated above in their accounts of

¹⁶ His closeness to the lower social classes becomes apparent in the style of his letters far from the sophisticated Attic language of his educated contemporaries. N. Tomadakes, "Ἐκ τῆς βυζαντινῆς ἐπιστολογραφίας. Ἴωσήφ μοναχοῦ τοῦ Βρυεννίου Ἐπιστολαὶ Α' καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν Γ'," *ΕΕΒΣ* 46 (1983-1986): 283-362.

¹⁷ In 1422 he persuaded the emperor to reject the offer of Pope Martin V.

¹⁸ S. Kapetanaki, "Un unpublished Supplication on Barren Olive-Trees," Ch. Dendrinios ed, *Porphyrogenita*, 457-460. On Makarios Makres biography see Eadem, *An annotated critical edition of Makarios Makres' Life of St. Maximos Kausokalyves, Encomion on the Fathers of the Seven Ecumenical Councils, Consolation to a sick person or reflections on endurance, Verses on the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos, Letter to hieromonk Symeon*, PhD dissertation, University of London, 2001, 9-44.

¹⁹ See in particular Manuel Kalekas' *Against his opponents*, Kalekas-Loenertz, 318-319.

²⁰ Manuel Kalekas, *Apology*, R.-J. Loenertz, *Correspondance de Manuel Calecas*, Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1950, 321-323.

²¹ See for instance the correspondence on doctrinal issues between Joseph Bryennios and Maximos Chrysoberges.

Byzantine political theology.²² The most detailed and focused one, D. Angelov's chapter included in his study on late Byzantine imperial ideology focused on late thirteenth and early fourteenth century authors whom he analyzed in the *longue durée* of the Byzantine ecclesiology. Angelov rightly concluded that “Byzantium began its historical existence with the emperor-priest, Constantine the Great, and (...) ended its existence with the annunciation of the contrary idea of the priests as true kings.”²³ By comparison, the following section will be much narrower because it deals with a restricted period of time: the last decade of the fourteenth century and the first two decades of the fifteenth. It will be, however, larger in scope because I will not limit myself to the authors and texts dealing exclusively with the issue of imperial authority but I will take into account other key themes introduced above and occurring in the ecclesiastics' texts as well. Thus, the central issue of imperial authority will be treated not only as echoing previous similar theoretical claims but also as an element in a set of more general discursive concepts and strategies emerging during the rule of Manuel II.

7.1. Moralization and social divide

Perhaps the most visible aspect of these ecclesiastics' discourse was its highly moralizing character. Frequently, many late Byzantine homilies were dedicated to blaming individual sins, such as drunkenness (μέθη) or despair (ἀπόγνωσις) generated by the economic situation.²⁴ The social and political crisis thus accounted for frequent appeals to the amelioration of the people's mores and for the emergence of a certain tendency towards doctrinary fundamentalism.²⁵ In Palaiologan hagiography, for instance, this tendency was reflected in the cultivation of ascetic models such as Maximos Kausokalybes, a fourteenth century Athonite monk who drew the attention of Makarios Makres, author of one of his most extensive *vitae*.²⁶ Especially in their homilies, the authors mentioned above, increasingly made clear that they

²² D. Nicol, *Church and society in the last centuries of Byzantium*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, 223-312 and D. Angelov, “The emperor-subject to the church: late Byzantine hierocratic theories,” in *Imperial ideology and Political Thought in Late Byzantium*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 351-416.

²³ D. Angelov, “The emperor- subject to the church,” *Imperial Ideology*, 416.

²⁴ E.g. the homilies of Gabriel of Thessalonike: B. Laourdas, “Γαβριήλ Θεσσαλονίκης, Ὁμιλία,” *Athena* 57 (1953): Homily 1 and 7.

²⁵ D. Krausmüller, “The Rise of Hesychasm,” 126.

²⁶ S. Kapetanaki, *An annotated critical edition of Makarios Makres' The life of Maximos Kausokalybes*, PhD. Dissertation, University of London, 2001, 146-182. Makarios Makres also authored an encomium for the athonite monk David, A. Argyriou, *Μακαρίου τοῦ Μακρῆ συγγράμματα*. Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Research, 1996: 85-100. The tendency towards cultivating ascetic models in Palaiologan hagiography has been noticed by R. Macrides, “Saints and Sainthood in Early Palaiologan Period,” in S. Hackel, *The Byzantine Saint*, St. Vladimir Seminary Press: New York, 2001, 86-87.

considered the low ethics of their contemporaries and their manifold sins as responsible for the catastrophic situation of the state.²⁷ In his sermon on the defeat of the Turks Gabriel of Thessalonike states that all the problems and defeats of the Byzantines represented in fact divine trials for the people's sins:

Therefore, my beloved, whenever you see an *archon* of this world or a Bishop, unworthy or knavish, do not be surprised and do not blame the divine providence, but notice and believe that we have been deserted because of our lawlessness, and the man-loving righteous God left us sinners to our enemies not in order to be destroyed but in order to be disciplined, in the same way as Jeremiah said to Israel: "Be of good comfort, O people of God, the memorial of Israel: You have been sold to the Gentiles, not for your destruction: but because you provoked God's wrath, you are delivered to your adversaries. For you have provoked him who made you. (*Baruch*, 5-7)" Δι' ὅ, ἀγαπητέ, ἡνίκα ἴδῃς ἀνάξιόν τινα καὶ πονηρόν, ἢ ἄρχοντα κοσμικὸν ἢ ἐπίσκοπον, μὴ θαυμάσῃς, μηδὲ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν διαβάλλῃς, ἀλλὰ μάθε καὶ πίστευε ὅ, τι διὰ τὰς ἀνομίας ἡμῶν παραδιδόμεθα καὶ ὁ φιλάνθρωπος καὶ δικαιοκρίτης θεὸς ἀμαρτάνοντας ἡμᾶς παραδίδωσι τοῖς ὑπεναντίοις, οὐκ εἰς ἀπώλειαν, ἀλλ' εἰς παιδείαν, ὡς δι' Ἰερεμίου πρὸς τὸν Ἰσραὴλ φησί· «θαρσεῖτε λαός μου, μνημόσυνον Ἰσραὴλ· ἐπράθητε τοῖς ἔθνεσιν οὐκ εἰς ἀπώλειαν, διὰ δὲ τὸ παροργίσει ὑμᾶς τὸν θεὸν παρεδόθητε τοῖς ὑπεναντίοις· παρωξύνετε γὰρ τὸν ποιήσαντα ὑμᾶς.»²⁸

This link between the contemporaries' wrongdoings and the reality of economic and social decline is particularly manifest in the texts of Joseph Bryennios.²⁹ One of the most emphatic expressions of this view can be found in a chapter called *On the causes of the pains which afflicted the Byzantines* and included in his more extensive hortatory text, *Forty-nine chapters* where he sets forth his views on religious and social causation.³⁰ Like so many other moralists throughout history, Bryennios bemoaned the fact that the morals of his own times were far below those of the 'good old days,' and for this reason God had punished the Christians

²⁷ Surely, it was an age-old assumption that the individuals are responsible for their sins, yet, I believe that the multifariousness of the numerous parallels between the low ethics of the contemporaries and the dire situation of Constantinople and Thessalonike has to do with the atmosphere prevailing in Byzantium at that time. On this, see also N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 221.

²⁸ B. Laourdas, "Γαβριὴλ Θεσσαλονίκης, Ὁμιλία," *Athena* 57 (1953): homily no 6. 82-92. Cf. Διὰ ταῦτα, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί, κἂν ἄρτι κατανοήσωμεν ἡμᾶς αὐτοῦς· γινώμεν ὅτι διὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν παρεδόθημεν· (Ibid. 119-120).

²⁹ On Bryennios' moralizing discourse see M-H. Congourdeau, "Un procès d'avortement à Constantinople au quatorzième siècle," *REB*, 1982:40, 103-115; on the influence of Marcus Aurelius' stoic ethics on Bryennios, D. Rees, "Joseph Bryennios and the text of Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*," *Classical Quarterly* 2000: 50, 584-596. See also Sp. Vryonnis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century*, Berkeley: California University Press, 1971, 419.

³⁰ This section of Bryennios' *Chapters* has been edited by L. Oeconomus, "L'état intellectuel et moral des Byzantins vers le milieu du XIVe siècle d'après une page de Joseph Bryennios," in *Mélanges Charles Diehl*, Paris, 1930, I, 225-233. The entire text of *The forty-nine chapters* (κεφάλαια ἐπτάκις ἐπτὰ) is in Joseph Bryennios, *Ta paraleipomena*, 49-124.

through the Turks.³¹

Within the same moralizing framework, Bryennios deplored a series of novel irregularities in religious life. He gave several examples of sacrilege when Church rituals were disregarded: some were baptized by single immersion, others by triple immersion; many Christians refused to make the sign of the Cross or simply did not know it. For their part, priests were asking for cash payments in order to remit sins, perform ordinations, and administer communion. Moreover, they lived with their wives before marriage, while the monks cohabited with the nuns. Bryennios bitterly noticed that there was no blasphemy which Christians did not employ:

We grumble at God whenever it rains and whenever it does not rain; because He creates summer heat or cold weather; because He gives wealth to some and leaves others in poverty; because the south wind rises; because a great north wind blows, and we simply appoint ourselves irreconcilable judges of God. Γογγύζομεν πρὸς Θεόν, ὅτε μὲν πῶς βρέχει, ὅτε δὲ πῶς οὐ βρέχει. Πῶς καύσωνα ποιεῖ, πῶς ψῦχος ἐργάζεται [...] πῶς νότος ἠγέρθη, πῶς πνέει μέγας βορρᾶς καὶ ἀπλῶς κριταῖ καθιστάμεθα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀδιάλλακτοι.³²

In the same text, Bryennios notices that the morality of laity, both men and women, is not superior to that of the clergy:

Not only men but the race of women also, are not ashamed to sleep as nakedly as when they were born; to give over their immature daughters to corruption; to dress their wives in men's clothing; they are not ashamed to celebrate the holy days of the feasts with flutes, dances, all satanic songs, carousels, drunkennesses, and other shameful customs. Γυμνοί, ὡς ἐγεννήθησαν, οὐ μόνον ἄνδρες ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τῶν γυναικῶν φύλον, καθεύδειν οὐκ ἐπαισχύνονται· ὅτι τὰς θυγατέρας αὐτῶν ἀνήβους παιδοφθορία παραδιδόασιν· ὅτι στολαῖς ἀνδρिकाῖς τὰς ἑαυτῶν γυναῖκας ἐνδύουσι· ὅτι τὰς ἱεράς τῶν ἑορτῶν, αὐλοῖς καὶ χοροῖς, καὶ σατανικοῖς πᾶσιν ἄσμασι, κώμοις τε καὶ αἰσχροῖς ἄλλοις ἔθεσιν ἐπιτελεῖν οὐ καταισχνυόμεθα.³³

Yet, despite the general social criticism, Bryennios clearly imparted far more negative traits to the higher social echelons, both lay and ecclesiastic, which he considered responsible for the fact that the Byzantine state was coming apart and disintegrating:

our rulers are unjust, those who oversee our affairs are rapacious, the judges accept

³¹ J. Bryennios, *The forty-nine chapters*, 65: “if one who views the chastisements inflicted upon us by God is astonished and perplexed, let him consider not only these but our wickedness as well and then he will be amazed that we have not been struck by thunderbolts. For there is no form of evil which we do not anxiously pursue through all our life.” Cf. also Symeon's oration for St. Demetrios, where he reproves the Thessalonians for their ungratefulness towards God and moral corruption: Ἄλλὰ ὁ ῥαθυμεῖν περὶ τὰ καλὰ κεκώλυκε τοῦτο καὶ ἀγνωμονεῖν καθιστᾷ ὡς καὶ τὸ ὑπεραίρεσθαι καὶ ἀχαριστεῖν καὶ οἰκεία τὰ τῆς δωρεᾶς νομίζουσιν καὶ τῷ εὐεργέτη Δεσπότῃ μήτε ἔργοις μήτε λόγοις χάριν εἰδέναι μήτ' οὖν ὑποτάσσεσθαι. (Symeon-Balfour, 47. 1-38).

³² Joseph Bryennios, *The forty-nine chapters*, 120.

³³ Joseph Bryennios, *The forty-nine chapters*, 120-121.

gifts, the mediators are liars, the city dwellers are deceivers, the peasants are unintelligible, and all are useless. Our virgins are more shameless than prostitutes, the widows more curious than they ought to be, the married women disdain and keep no faith, the young men are licentious and the aged drunkards. The nuns have insulted their calling, the priests have forgotten God, the monks have strayed from the straight road. Many of us live in gluttony, drunkenness, fornication, adultery, foulness, licentiousness, hatred, rivalry, jealousy, envy, and theft. We have become arrogant, braggart, avaricious, selfish, ungrateful, disobedient, irreconcilable [...] It is these things and others like them which bring upon us the chastisements of God. Ὅτι οἱ ἄρχοντες ἡμῶν ἄδικοι, οἱ ἐπιστατοῦντες τοῖς πράγμασιν ἄρπαγες, οἱ κριταὶ δωροληπταί, οἱ μεσῖται ψεύδεις, οἱ ἀστικοὶ ἡμπαῖκται, οἱ ἀγροῖκοι ἄλογοι καὶ οἱ πάντες ἀχρεῖοι. Ὅτι αἱ παρθένοι ἡμῶν ὑπὲρ πόρνας ἀναίσχυντοι, αἱ χῆραι περίεργοι τοῦ δέοντος πλέον αἱ ὕπανδροι καταφρονοῦσαι καὶ μὴ φυλάττουσι πίστιν, οἱ νεώτεροι ἀκόλαστοι καὶ οἱ γηράσαντες πάροινοι. Αἱ κανονικαὶ καθύβρισαν τὸ ἐπάγγελμα. Οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐπελάθοντο τοῦ Θεοῦ, οἱ μοναχοὶ πάντῃ ἐτράποντο τῆς εὐθείας ὁδοῦ. Ὅτι γαστριμαργίαις, μέθαις, πορνείαις, μοιχείαις, ἀκαθαρσίαις, ἔχθραις, ζήλοις, φθόνοις καὶ κλοπαῖς, συζῶσι πολλοὶ ἐξ ἡμῶν. Ὅτι ἐγενόμεθα ὑπερήφανοι, ἀλαζόνες, φιλάργυροι, φίλαυτοι, ἀχάριστοι, ἀπειθεῖς, λιποτάκται, ἄρπαγες, προδόται, ἀνόσιοι, ἄδικοι, ἀμετανόητοι, ἀδιάλλακτοι.³⁴

Often, criticism against immoral behavior was specifically targeted against the economic and political elites, the *archontes*. Isidore Glabas urged the rulers of Thessalonike to be more careful with the common affairs of the city.³⁵ Another contemporary author, Symeon of Thessalonike, expressed similar views particularly in his prayers published by I. Phountoules.³⁶ These liturgical texts are replete with references not only to the catastrophic situation of the city and indeed of the whole Byzantine world but also to the need of moral reform. For instance in one of these prayers, Symeon offered a description of the malpractices of judges, the abuses committed by the powerful *archontes* and money-lenders, the social atmosphere of hatred and strife, which eventually led him to conclude:

Because of these, we are shattered and encounter difficulties and have few allies and are prosecuted, and, alas, we have become the slaves of impious and cursed peoples. διὰ ταῦτα συντριβόμεθα καὶ στενοῦμεθα καὶ ὀλιγοστοὶ γεγόναμεν καὶ διωκόμεθα, φεῦ, καὶ καταδουλούμεθα ἔθνεσιν ἀσεβέσι καὶ ἐναγέσι.³⁷

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Isidore Glabas, *Homily on St. Demetrios*, 5.65.22-24: Διὰ ταῦτα λοιπόν, ἀδελφοί, ὅσοι τῶν τῆς πολιτείας προΐστασθε πραγμάτων, δέος ἅπαν τῆς ψυχῆς ἐκβαλόντες καὶ ὅ, τι ἄλλο τῶν ἀηδῶν, προθύμως ἀντέχεσθε τῶν κοινῶν, ἀκίβδηλον ποιούμενοι τὴν τῆς φροντίδος ταύτης διακονίαν.

³⁶ I. Phountoules, *Τὸ λειτουργικὸν ἔργον Συμεῶν τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης*, Thessalonike: Idryma Meleton Chersonesou, 1966, 23.

³⁷ I. Phountoules, *Συμεῶν. Τὰ λειτουργικὰ γράμματα*, Thessalonike: Hetaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, 1968, 54. Cf. *ibid.* 39, 19-26 on the horrors of the Turkish slavery. In particular Symeon seems harsher with the *archontes* whom he accuses of accumulating richness in excess: καὶ ἄρχοντες μὲν κατασπαλῶσι, θησαυρίζουσι τε καὶ ὑπεραίρονται κατὰ τῶν ὑπὸ χεῖρα, πᾶν ἀδικίας ἔργον ἀνέδην διαπραττόμενοι (Symeon-Balfour, 47. 9-11). Then he addresses the issue of the attitude of the poor people of the city: πτωχοὶ δὲ πάλιν τὸ ἄρχον μιμούμενοι κατ' ἀλλήλων ὀπλίζονται καὶ ἀρπακτικῶς καὶ πλεονεκτικῶς ζῶσι καὶ αὐτοὶ κατὰ δύναμιν ἀχάριστοί τε περὶ Θεόν εἰσι καὶ καταφρονηταὶ ναῶν θείων καὶ ὕμνων καὶ προσευχῶν. Ἐορτὴ δὲ τούτοις καὶ ἀργία ἢ μέθη καὶ τὸ

This moralizing approach going back to the early fourteenth century³⁸ which targeted mainly the *archontes* gave way to further reflection over an issue that affected the Byzantine society before the Fall of Constantinople, namely the social divide between the poor and the rich, a phenomenon which threatened the already fragile stability of Byzantium.³⁹ Many Church writers noticed the accelerated impoverishment of a large part of the population. Frequently, within this moralizing framework, the clergymen adopted a position against the rich who lived in luxury and showed off their possessions at a time when large parts of the population suffered from deep economic and social problems. Already by the middle of the fourteenth century in a letter he sent to his flock from Asia Minor at the time of his captivity among the Ottomans (1354–1355), Gregory Palamas urged those “who love money and injustice” to practice equity and temperance.⁴⁰ Palamas' successors in Thessalonike, Isidore Glabas and Symeon of Thessalonike, continued to complain about injustices and offenses which the more well-off individuals committed, such as the breaking of laws or the malpractices of officials. At the same time they pointed to the conflicts between the powerful rulers and their powerless subjects.⁴¹ The frequency of such assertions in the early fifteenth century, despite their typical exaggerations, can be correlated with the intensified Ottoman attacks which, during this period, produced trade opportunities for certain groups of people who took advantage of the circumstances. Therefore ecclesiastics like Isidore Glabas and Symeon of Thessalonike reacted to the new socio-political conditions characterizing the internal divisions of Thessalonican society; these conditions were considered the major cause for the city's failure to defend itself before the enemy. Confronted with this situation they tried to provide a solution for the lack of unity and social cohesion among the Byzantines weakened by their resistance to the Ottomans.⁴² Reflecting on this situation, Symeon of Thessalonike

ἀκαθάρτως ἅμα ζῆν (Symeon-Balfour, 47. 13-17).

³⁸ A. Philippidis-Braat, “La captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs, dossier et commentaire,” *TM* 7 (1979): 164.

³⁹ Earlier in the fourteenth century, John Charsianites, the founder of the Charsianites monastery expressed his rather negative opinion towards the wealthy. He was said to have believed that “wealth is a cause for spiritual destruction for those who do not divert it to needful purposes,” in A.-M. Talbot, “Charsianites: Testament of Patriarch Matthew I for the monastery of Charsianites Dedicated to the Mother of God Nea Peribleptos,” in *Byzantine Monastic Typika*, 1625.

⁴⁰ N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 42.

⁴¹ See, for example, Isidore *Homilies* 19, 21, 22, in Ch. Christophorides, *Ἰσιδώρου Γλαβᾶ Ὁμιλίες*, Thessalonike: Aristotle University, 299–300, 329–30, 344–7; C. N. Tsirpanlis ed, “Συμβολή εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης, Δύο ἀνέκδοτοι ὁμιλίας Ἰσιδώρου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Θεσσαλονίκης,” *Theologia* 42 (1971), 567–70, Homily 31, 85–95; Symeon of Thessalonike, I. Phountoules, *Συμειών. Τὰ λειτουργικὰ συγγράμματα*, nos. 16 and 22.

⁴² Isidore “Homily 30,” in Christophorides, *Ἰσιδώρου Γλαβᾶ Ὁμιλίες*, vol. I 77–8, 79–80, 82; Isidore, “Homily on St. Demetrios,” in “Ἰσιδώρου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Θεσσαλονίκης ὁμιλίας εἰς τὰς ἐορτὰς τοῦ ἁγίου Δημητρίου,” *Hellenika* 5 (1954): 32, 56–7; Isidore, *Letters in “Ἰσιδώρου μητροπολίτου Θεσσαλονίκης ὀκτώ ἐπιστολαί,” Neos Hellenomnemon* 9 (1912): 349–50, 385; Symeon-Balfour, pp. 47, 53, 55–6; I. Anagnostes, *Διήγησις περὶ τῆς τελευταίας ἀλώσεως τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης*, Thessalonike, 1958, 8–12.

noted that, “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and this is what happened.”⁴³

The representation of the conflict between the need to ensure proper defense of the city and the private interests of a small group of individuals with commercial relations with the Latins emerges in Joseph Bryennios' deliberative oration *On the rebuilding of the City*.⁴⁴ As a matter of fact, this conflict between public and private interests stood at the core of Joseph Bryennios' oration concerning the defense system of Constantinople. On this occasion, Bryennios reminded his audience that unless they gave priority to the common good and contributed financially to the restoration of the walls, their personal prosperity, reflected by the lavish mansions of the rich, would cause the city's submission.⁴⁵

The divide between rich and poor was also noticed by Symeon of Thessalonike in several of his homilies addressed to the Thessalonians. In a long passage, after blaming the wrongdoings and ingratitude of the citizens towards God, Symeon concluded with the following words:

The archontes live wantonly, hoard their wealth, and exalt themselves above the ones under their authority, freely performing injustices, not only offering nothing to God, but also stealing away from God. They believe this to be their power, and they consider the poor citizens and their subordinates as scarcely human. But the poor, too, imitating those in authority arm themselves against each other and live rapaciously and greedily, and they are ungrateful to God and disdain the divine churches, the hymns, and the prayers. Καὶ ἄρχοντες μὲν κατασπαταλῶσι, θησαυρίζουσί τε καὶ ὑπεραίρονται κατὰ τῶν ὑπὸ χεῖρα, πᾶν ἀδικίας ἔργον ἀνέδην διαπραττόμενοι, οὐ μόνον οὐδὲν ἀποδιδόντες Θεῷ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀφαρπάζοντες καὶ τοῦτο εἶναι ἀρχὴν ἡγούμενοι ἑαυτῶν καὶ τὸ τοὺς πενομένους καὶ ὑπ' αὐτοὺς μηδὲ φύσεως ἀνθρωπίνης σχεδὸν εἶναι νομίζουσιν· πτωχοὶ δὲ πάλιν τὸ ἄρχον μιμούμενοι κατ' ἀλλήλων ὀπλίζονται καὶ ἀρπακτικῶς καὶ πλεονεκτικῶς ζῶσι καὶ αὐτοὶ κατὰ δύναμιν ἀχάριστοί τε περὶ Θεόν εἰσι καὶ καταφρονηταὶ ναῶν θείων καὶ ὕμνων καὶ προσευχῶν.⁴⁶

⁴³ Symeon-Balfour, p. 53, lines 32–3.

⁴⁴ Δημηγορία συντομωτάτη εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ ῥηθεῖσα Παλάτιον, ἐπὶ παρουσίᾳ τοῦ Πατριάρχου καὶ τῶν ἐν τέλει, καὶ τοῦ κλήρου, καὶ πάσης τῆς πολιτείας, περὶ τοῦ τῆς πόλεως ἀνακτίσματος, in J. Bryennios, *Ta heurethenta*, vol II, 277–283.

⁴⁵ Joseph Bryennios, *On the reconstruction of the City* (Περὶ τοῦ τῆς Πόλεως ἀνακτίσματος), in *Ta heurethenta*, 278, διὰ ταῦτα οὖν σπεύσωμεν θάπτον ἀντιλαβέσθαι αὐτῆς. Μὴ εἴπηρ, διατὶ ὁ δεῖνα πλούσιος, καὶ ὁ δεῖνα μέγας πλεῖστα δυνάμενοι οὐ θέλουσι τοῦτο ποιεῖν; 280, ἀλλὰ λογίσασθε τάληθές, ὡς εἰ δέκα τινὲς ἀφ' ὑμῶν τῶν πλουσίων ἀρχόντων, πρὸ τῶν τριάκοντα τούτων ἐτῶν ἐναρξάμενοι τῶν ἤδη παρωχηκότων, τοσαύτην περὶ τὰ τεῖχη τῆς πόλεως κατεβάλλοντο σπουδὴν καὶ δαπάνην, ὅσην περὶ τὸ κτίζειν τριώροφα ἑαυτοῖς, οὐδὲν ἂν ἦν μέρος τῆς πόλεως τὸ τήμερον ἀκαινούργητον. And 281, πρὶν οὖν πάντα ἀθρόον ἐλθεῖν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς τὰ δεινά, ἀσφαλισώμεθα ἑαυτοῦς. Ἔχομεν ἔτι καιρόν· ἀκμὴν δυνάμεθα ἐν οἷς ἐσμέν, σὺν Θεῷ, ἐπιμεῖναι καὶ ἴσασθαι μόνον βάλωμεν ἀρχὴν· μόνον διεγερθῶμεν οἱ πάντες πρὸς τὴν ἀνάκτισιν. Οὐκ ἐγὼ τε, καὶ σὺ, καὶ ὁ δεῖνα, ἀλλὰ πάντες ὅτι καὶ πάντες ὡσαύτως τῷ αὐτῷ καὶ ἐνὶ τείχῃ περιφρουρούμεθα.

⁴⁶ *Historical oration on the miracles of St. Demetrios*, Symeon-Balfour, 47, 9–20.

7.2. Enemies and allies

The fifteenth century Byzantine ecclesiastics were preoccupied not only with the ethical standards and social welfare of their flocks but also by the ways in which the state could retain its autonomy while threatened by the growing influence of the Ottomans and the economic interests of the Latins. In a homily titled *On the saving crucifixion*, Bryennios bitterly noticed the hopeless circumstances of the Byzantines in both state and ecclesiastical affairs:

We have been scattered through all the kingdoms on the face of the earth, other peoples rule us, we do not rule, and the foreigners devour our country before our eyes, and the country was deserted and subdued, and there is no one to help; the young girls of our nation and the young men were given to all other peoples, and every day our eyes see these things, and our hand has no strength, but only a dispirited heart has been given to us, and the failing eyes and a weakened soul. People look down on the affairs of the church, the empire's affairs are in ruin, the frontiers are erased, and everything is upset. On the one hand, the Muslims are chasing us, on the other hand the Tatars inflict indignities upon us, the Ishmaelites gather from the West, and the Turks root out from the East. We ran away from the dragon and found the Basilisk. We avoided the lion but now we are facing the bear. We escaped the lion but we met the bear: he from among us who escaped death fell into slavery, and he who freed himself from slavery has been slaughtered. Wherever there are sea battles and confrontations by land, or plunderings and kidnappings, a part of us disappears. Wars, incessant enslavings, frequent sieges, killings, plagues, famines, suffocation, unbearable difficulties, numerous unending destructions, and from everywhere comes God's wrath. But all of us are insensitive, as if nothing new has happened. But what wise man would be able to describe our misfortunes as it should be? διεσκορπίσθημεν ἐν πάσαις ταῖς βασιλείαις τῆς γῆς, καὶ ἄρχει τὰ ἔθνη ἡμῶν, ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἄρχομεν, καὶ τὴν χώραν ἡμῶν ἐνώπιον ἡμῶν ἀλλότριοι κατεσθίουσι, καὶ ἡρήμωται καὶ κατέστραπται καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ βοηθῶν. αἱ νεανίδες τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν, καὶ οἱ νεανίσκοι πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσι δεδομένοι, καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἡμῶν ὁσημέραι βλέπουσι ταῦτα, καὶ ἡ χεὶρ ἡμῶν οὐκ ἰσχύει, ἀλλὰ καρδία ἀθυμοῦσα δέδοται μόνον ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐκλείποντες οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ τηκομένη ψυχή. Καταπεφρόνηται τὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, διέφθαρται τὰ τῆς βασιλείας, συγχεῖται τὰ πέρατα, καὶ δονεῖται τὸ πᾶν. Ἐνθεν Ἀγαρηνοὶ διώκουσιν ἡμᾶς, ἐκεῖθεν Σκυθαὶ λυμαίνονται, ἀπὸ δυσμῶν Ἰσσηλίται τρυγῶσι καὶ Πέρσαι ἐξ ἀνατολῶν ἐκριζοῦσι. τὸν δράκοντα φεύγομεν καὶ βασιλίσκῳ συναντῶμεν. ἀποδιδράσκομεν Λέοντα καὶ τῇ Ἄρκτῳ προσπίπτομεν· ὁ τὸν θάνατον φυγῶν ἐξ ἡμῶν περιπίπτει δουλεία, καὶ ὁ τῆς δουλείας ἀπαλλαγείς τῇ σφαγῇ παραδίδοται· ὅπου ἄν, καὶ ἡνίκα ναυμαχίαι τε καὶ πεζομαχίαι, ἢ λεηλασίαι καὶ μετοικεσίαι γίνωνται, μέρος ἡμῶν φθείρειν. [...] πόλεμοι, ἀνδραποδισμοὶ ἄπαστοι, τειχομαχίαι συχναί, σφαγαί, λοιμοί, καὶ λιμοί, πνιγμονή, στενοχωρία οὐ φορηταί, ἀπώλειαι μυρία κύκλῳ, καὶ πανταχόθεν ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὀργὴ ἀφικνεῖται· ἡμεῖς μὲν τοι ὡς μηδενὸς καινοῦ γενομένου, ἀναλγήτως ἅπαντες διακεῖμεθα [...]. ἀλλὰ τίς ἄρα σοφὸς ἐκτραγωδήσει ὡς δεῖ τὰ ἡμέτερα;⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Joseph Bryennios, *Third Oration on the Crucifixion* (Λόγος τρίτος Εἰς τὴν Σωτήριον Σταύρωσιν), in *Ta heurethenta*, 247-248.

Thus, with the threats against the state there often came along threats against the Church itself which saw its very existence in jeopardy.⁴⁸ On many occasions, the clergymen voiced their concern vis-à-vis the attempts of the political authority to forge alliances with its neighbors. Despite the virulence of the attacks against the Ottomans, often dubbed as the impious and non-religious people (οἱ ἀσεβεῖς καὶ οἱ ἄθεοι), N. Necipoğlu' s recent study on the political attitudes towards Ottomans and Latins in late Byzantium has unveiled a whole range of nuances in the positions the ecclesiastics adopted with regard to the foreigners: anti-Latin, anti-Ottoman, pro-Latin, pro-Ottoman, or anti-Latin/Ottoman.⁴⁹ Sometimes the ecclesiastics changed their position to a more radical or a more moderate one. Isidore Glabas, once a supporter of an anti-Ottoman/anti-Latin position, witnessed the subjection of Thessalonike to Ottoman domination and, in the end, he recommended a more flexible attitude towards the Turks. Likewise, Symeon of Thessalonike, a fierce opponent of both the Ottomans and the Latins, eventually came to accept the city's transfer to Venetian rule as an act that prevented its betrayal to the Ottomans.⁵⁰

More frequently the ecclesiastics formulated plain opinions vis-à-vis the Latins or the Ottomans. To a certain extent, the oft-quoted statement falsely attributed to Luke Notaras, that the Turkish turban was better than the Latin tiara, echoed the early fifteenth century opinions among the group of stricter Orthodox who regarded the renunciation to their doctrinary foundations as unacceptable. Yet, in many cases the predominant attitude towards the Ottomans was negative to the extreme. Prayers for the delivery of Constantinople from the enemy abounded. Symeon of Thessalonike wrote a series of four model prayers to be used not only in situations of extreme necessity such as drought but also during the enemies' destructive raids (ἐπὶ ἐθνῶν ἐπιδρομῆ).⁵¹ Apart from prayers, many other ecclesiastical authors wrote about the Ottoman incursions. In a series of four *Orations addressed to those offended by the success of the "impious ones,"* (i.e. the Ottomans) Makarios Makres argued vehemently against the

⁴⁸ For a detailed investigation of the Ottoman attacks against the Byzantine Church and particularly of the difficulties encountered by the clerics in the provinces occupied by the Ottomans in Asia Minor and in Europe see T. Papademetriou, "The Turkish Conquests and Decline of the Church," in D. Angelov ed., *Church and Society in Late Byzantium*, Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, 2009, 183-197. Cf. S. Vryonis, *The decline of medieval Hellenism*, 302 who compares the lists from the *Notitiae episcopatum ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* with the list of the actual Byzantine bishops and notices the disappearance of many bishoprics.

⁴⁹ N. Necipoğlu, "Introduction," *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 4.

⁵⁰ G. T. Dennis, "The late Byzantine metropolitans of Thessalonike," *DOP* 57 (2003): 255-64.

⁵¹ Symeon of Thessalonike, *Τὰ λειτουργικά συγγράμματα. Εὐχαὶ καὶ ὕμνοι*, ed. I. Phountoules, Thessalonike: Hetaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, 1968: 9. Εὐχὴ ἐξομολογήσεως καὶ αἰτήσεως λεγομένη ἐπὶ σεισμῶ καὶ αὐχμῶ καὶ ἐθνῶν ἐπιδρομῆ καὶ ἐπὶ πάσῃ αἰτήσῃ (23-25), 10. Εὐχὴ λεγομένη ἐπὶ αὐχμῶ καὶ λιμῶ καὶ ἐθνῶν ἐπιδρομῆ (26-27), 16. Εὐχὴ εἰς ἐπιδρομὴν ἐθνῶν καὶ εἰς πᾶσαν αἴτησιν (38-41), 24. Εὐχὴ κατὰ ἐθνικῶν πολεμίων ἐν παντὶ καιρῶ ἀναγκαία τῆς αὐτῶν ἐπιθέσεως (58-61).

Islamic customs:

What else can be said about their unlawful and barbaric law and about the multiple sacrileges and nonsense and rumors? What else about their wonderful and kind prophet, and legislator and savior, as they say? Τί χρή λέγειν περὶ τοῦ κατ' αὐτοῦ ἐκθέσμου καὶ παρανομωτάτου νόμου καὶ τῶν μυρίων ἀσεβημάτων καὶ φλυαριῶν καὶ μύθων; Τί δὲ περὶ τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ καὶ γενναίου τούτων προφήτου καὶ νομοθέτου καὶ σωτῆρος, ὡς φασίν;⁵²

In their attacks against the Ottomans, these Orthodox Church authors focused on the obvious religious differences and on their customs which they presented as savage and discussed in several polemical texts and Dialogs on Islam.⁵³ Already in the fourteenth century the Latin translation of the Qu'ran, the *Improbatio Alcorani* by the Florentine Dominican Rinaldo da Monte Croce (d. 1320), provided Byzantine polemicists with a fresh arsenal of doctrinal details and arguments. By the mid-fourteenth century the Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos also wrote a text of religious polemics against Islam. Later on, towards the end of the fourteenth century, just like the emperor Manuel II, Joseph Bryennios, Isidore Glabas, and Makarios Makres composed fictitious dialogs with Muslims.⁵⁴ The nature of the polemics with Islam was consistently concerned with the debates over the veracity of the revelations in the Qu'ran and in the Bible. At the same time, they included arguments concerning the doctrine, ethical commands, and ritual practices of both religions.⁵⁵

Of course, the less spiritual fact of the Ottoman conquest also occupied a significant place. The texts written against Muslims incorporated a great many statements which slandered Islam on political grounds. In the *First oration addressed to those offended by the success of the infidels*, Makarios Makres spoke about the wrongdoings of the Muslims and about the falsity of their prophet:

<Their prophet> possessed by a wicked and ugly demon and absolutely devoid of rationality by that <demon> could not comprehend his own words and was

⁵² Makarios Makres, *Four Orations for those offended by the success of the infidels*, in A. Argyriou, *Macaire Makrès et la polémique contre l'Islam*, Vatican: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1986, I. 5.

⁵³ The polemic between Christian priests and Muslims emerges especially from the the synodal documents of the 15th c. Matthew, the 15th c. metropolitan of Ephesus, complained that his religious debates with the Muslims of Ephesus provoked the hostility of the Turks: "and if we undertake to come to words, we refute them as silly concerning the prophet himself and in [their] laws and legislation. We freely declare that all their religious beliefs are of use only to the eternal fire and worm. Seeing these things, the accursed ones always cry out, giving way to their desire to taste flesh and blood, and they would not have abstained if they had not seen that their chieftain was not at all permissive to their madness, not easily joining the assault. Accordingly, what they are able to do, this they dare to do in the previously mentioned manner with rocks, throwing them at night" (Matthew of Ephesus, in M. Treu, ed, *Matthaios metropolit von Ephesos*, Postdam, 1901, 57:). Tr. By S. Vryonis jr, *The Decline of Hellenism*, 425.

⁵⁴ A. Argyriou ed., "Ἰωσήφ τοῦ Βρυεννίου μετὰ τινος Ἰσραηλίτου Διάλεξις," *ΕΕΒΣ* 35 (1968): 141-95.

⁵⁵ E. Trapp, "Quelques textes peu connus illustrent les relations entre le Christianisme et l'Islam," *BF* 29 (2007): 437-450.

confused and fought with himself. As if in a night battle, he put forward and then denied his beloved and highly prized doctrines, and he confused everything and mixed notions which cannot be joined together. Ἄλλὰ πονηρῶ καὶ μιαρῶ δαίμονι κάτοχος γεγονῶς καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν καθάπαξ ὑπ' ἐκείνου ἀφηρημένος, οὐδὲ συνεῖδεν ἑκασταχοῦ τῶν αὐτοῦ λόγων περιπίπτων ἑαυτῶ καὶ μαχόμενος, καὶ ὡς ἄν ἐν νυκτομαχίᾳ βάλλων καὶ ἀνατρέπων τὰ ἑαυτοῦ φίλτατα καὶ περιμάχητα δόγματα καὶ πάντα μίγνυς πράγματα καὶ φύρων τὰ ἄμικτα.⁵⁶

About 1400, in a similar attempt to defend the political preeminence of Christianity over the Muslims, Joseph Bryennios gave a long list of twenty-eight Christian peoples, including other nations of the Latin West.⁵⁷ As for the Byzantines, he claimed, their enslavement came from the fact that their religion was superior to that of the other Christians. Knowing this, he claims, the Devil had singled them out as the special target of his hatred.⁵⁸

However, other texts which focused on doctrinal issues indicate that, beyond the standard arguments and slanders repeated on other occasions, in the opinion of some of the staunchest supporters of Orthodoxy, the Ottomans deserved admiration and respect on account of their religion. As a matter of fact, Isidore Glabas, despite his opposition to the Ottoman authority in Thessalonike, eventually had to admit the benefits of the peaceful Turkish rule of the city. Even Bryennios in his *Dialog with the infidel* showed awareness of the Byzantines' decline and raised some doubts over the Byzantines' capacities to defend themselves, acknowledging indirectly the Ottoman military superiority.⁵⁹

If it was easier to reject an alliance with the Ottomans, on the basis of the differences of religion, the discursive approach to the presence of the Latins at the gates of Constantinople posed some difficulties. Due to the similarities of doctrine and to the fact that the Latins were the only force which could provide the defensive means against the Ottomans, the Byzantine clerics were forced to restrain their attacks and put forward a discourse based on religious differences. Although a group of pro-union and pro-Latin clerics seemed to have been promoted by the Emperor Manuel II once the moderate Patriarch Joseph II was installed on a position previously occupied by strict Orthodox ecclesiastics, this group did not succeed in influencing decisions during Manuel's reign.⁶⁰ Thus, the pro-unionists failed to convince the

⁵⁶ Makarios Makres, *Four Orations for those offended by the success of the infidels*, I. 6-7

⁵⁷ I. Ševcenko, "The Decline of Byzantium Seen through the Eyes of Its Intellectuals," *DOP* 15 (1961): 179.

⁵⁸ N. Tomadakes, "Ἰωσήφ Βρυέννιος," *Συλλαβος Βυζαντινῶν Μελετῶν*, Athens: 1961, 591-594.

⁵⁹ J. Bryennios, *Μετὰ τινος Ἰσμαηλίτου Διάλεξις*, in *Ta heurethenta*, 149.

⁶⁰ In his own *Dialog with the Pope* Makarios Makres alluded to Manuel's treatise *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit* when commenting that the negotiations with the Latins failed: Ὁ κατὰ πάντα ἄριστος βασιλεὺς προήκεν ὑμῖν διαλεξόμενον ἀμφοτέροις, συνοίσοντά με οὐ φθαρτῶν τε πραγμάτων περὶ οὐδὲ πρόσκαιρον τὴν ὄνησιν κεκτημένων, ἀλλ' εἵνεκα συμβιβάσεως τῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ συμφωνίας, συχνὸν ἤδη χρόνον ἀπορραγείσης ἐκ δὴ τινῶν λυμεῶνων καὶ τὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ποίμνιον λυμαινομένων, in *Dialog with the Pope*, ed. A. Argyriou, in

other, stricter ecclesiastics of the necessity to intensify the negotiations for a Church union. This failure was even more notable because it happened at a time when the newly installed Pope Martin V, after the end of the western Schism, showed more favorable for a solution of the schism than his predecessors.⁶¹

On the contrary, after 1415, and particularly around 1422 when these negotiations intensified, authors like Joseph Bryennios or Symeon of Thessalonike became increasingly defensive with regard to the Orthodox doctrine. In his *Historical oration on the wonders of St. Demetrios*, Symeon of Thessalonike underscored the connection between the misfortunes of the Byzantines during the siege of 1422 and the previous alliance with the Latins effected through the marriage of the emperor's successor, John VIII, to a Latin woman:

Constantinople still had its gates closed and was melting away from famine. Now this, I think, was a disciplinary chastisement inflicted on her by God for other reasons, but also to teach us not to have communion of any kind at all with those who are excommunicated by the Church. For you know what things happened at that time: how that woman of Italian race (i.e. Sophia of Montferrat, wife of John VIII) who had neither submitted to the Church nor become its daughter, nor publicly recognized the Church's hierarchs as her fathers, nor confessed the Symbol of Faith of the Fathers in the right form in which it was drawn up, was simply received and proclaimed empress of the Orthodox together with the faithful emperor in violation of the sacred canons. Now this was something which many persons scrupulous about divine matters found hard to stomach at the time; they testified that an ordeal would follow [...] Everyone knows what initiatives detrimental to the Romans' interest the men from Genoa were up to at that time. Ὅμως δὲ καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν τῆς πολλῆς ἐκείνης πολιορκίας ἔτι τὰς πύλας ἐγκεκλεισμένας ἔχει καὶ λιμῶ τήκεται, παιδείαν, ὡς οἶμαι, τοῦτο ταύτη ποιησαμένου Θεοῦ καὶ δι' ἕτερα μὲν, καὶ ὡς ἂν γινώμεν μὴ τοῖς ἀκοινωνήτοις τῆς ἐκκλησίας κατὰ τι κοινωεῖν ὅλως. Ἴστε γάρ, ὅσον τὸ τότε γέγονε, καὶ τὴν ἐξ Ἰταλῶν οὕσαν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ μὴ ὑποκύψασαν, μηδὲ θυγατέρα γεγεννημένην, μηδὲ τοὺς ἱεράρχας τῆς ἐκκλησίας πατέρας ἀνειποῦσαν, μηδὲ τῶν πατέρων τὸ τῆς πίστεως σύμβολον, ὡς παρ' ἐκείνων ὀρθῶς ἐξετέθη, καθομολογήσασαν, ἀπλῶς ὑποδεγεμένην καὶ βασιλίδα τῶν ὀρθοδόξων μετὰ τοῦ πιστοῦ βασιλέως ἀναγορευθεῖσαν παρὰ τοὺς ὄρους τοὺς ἱερούς. Ὁ καὶ πλείστοις τῶν εὐλαβουμένων τὰ θεῖα βαρὺ ἐδόκει τότε, καὶ πειρασμὸν ἔψεσθαι ἔτεκμήραντο· καθὰ δὴ καὶ γέγονε, καὶ παρ' Ἰταλῶν τὰ τοῦ πειρασμοῦ κατεσκεύαστο μετ' ὀλίγον τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν. Ἴσασιν ἅπαντες, ὅσα οἱ ἐκ τῆς Γενούας τότε, ὡς εἴρηται, καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς ἕτεροι κατὰ Ῥωμαίων συνεσκευάσαντο.⁶²

In addition to such allegations, Symeon heavily criticized the Latins' religious art and accused them of representing the saints in an irreverent manner.⁶³ Among the fifteenth-century

Μακαρίου τοῦ Μακρῆ συγγράμματα Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Research, 1996, 237.

⁶¹ G. Patacsi, "Joseph Bryennios et les discussions sur un concile d'union 1414-1431," *Kleronomia* 5, 1973.

⁶² Symeon-Balfour, *Historical oration on St. Demetrios* (Λόγος ἱστορικός), 53.

⁶³ Symeon of Thessalonike, *Against heresies*, in PG 155, 112 a-b: "What other innovations have they [the Latins]

clergymen Joseph Bryennios' political-religious position against the union with the Latins was seemingly the most influential. His arguments were in the end successful as the negotiations with Rome were interrupted until Manuel II's death. Bryennios wrote several lengthy orations in which he combined political and purely doctrinal issues such as the use of leavened bread in liturgy or the procession of the Holy Spirit. One of them was entitled a *Hortatory oration against the Church union* and was delivered in 1422 on the occasion of the initiation of negotiations for a Church union after another Ottoman siege of the City.⁶⁴ The leading court polemicist made it clear that a union could not insure sufficient military support from the Latins.⁶⁵ While he admitted the importance of the connections between Byzantines and Latins, his main criticism against the project of Church union concerned the planned submission of the Byzantine Orthodox Church to the pope.⁶⁶ Most probably, Bryennios' mistrust vis-à-vis the Latins' support came also from the fact that he was probably aware that at that time Europe witnessed the long conflict between the French together with the English, and the pope aimed to acquire influence over the Byzantines.

It appears therefore that the question of the *filioque*, bitterly debated at the Ferrara-Florence Council (1438-1439), partially masked the vital, underlying problem of the hostility between Greeks and Latins. Bryennios' rigorous position regarding the union became nevertheless predominant among the Byzantine theologians of the last decades of Byzantium. John Eugenikos, for instance, wrote several treatises and public addresses against the union and in one of them he specifically addressed the emperor Constantine XI *as if from the Orthodox community*.⁶⁷

7.3. The formulation of Byzantine specificity

The ecclesiastics' concern for the growing influence of the Ottomans and the Latins in the Byzantine realm generated a flurry of renewed claims of Byzantine individuality. To some extent, these claims shaped the relations between church and society and reflected the ways in which the self-identification of the Byzantines was being reshaped in an anti-Latin and anti-

introduced contrary to the tradition of Church?," (τί δὲ καὶ ἄλλο αὐτοῖς παρὰ τὴν ἐκκλησιαστικὴν ἐκαινοτοίηθη παράδοσιν;)

⁶⁴ *Admonitory oration on the union of the Churches*, in *Ta heurethenta*, vol. 2, 469-499. The political issue of an alliance with the Latins was discussed especially in the first part of the discourse (472-478) while doctrinal issues that concerned the disputes with the Catholics (the leavened/unleavened bread and the *filioque*) are addressed in a systematic way in the second part (479-499).

⁶⁵ In N. Kalogeras, *Μάρκος ὁ Εὐγενικός καὶ Βησσαρίων ὁ Καρδινάλης*, Athens, 1893, 70.

⁶⁶ Bryennios speaks about a refusal to address the Pope as *holy* (ἅγιος) during the liturgy. *Admonitory oration on the union of the Churches*, 473.

⁶⁷ *PP*, 4, 151-153: ὡς ἀπὸ τῆς κοινότητος τῶν ὀρθοδόξων.

Muslim sense. By and large, in their definition of Byzantine specificity, the late Byzantine ecclesiastics themselves introduced a limited set of themes and older beliefs which crystallized into a new combination capable of expressing the churchmen's political outlook. On the one hand, they continued to use the term *Rhomaioi* when referring to themselves. The texts of Joseph Bryennios, Makarios Makres, or Sylvester Syropoulos include references to the Byzantines' *Romanness*.⁶⁸ On the other hand, in opposition to the barbaric peoples of the Ottomans and to the related Latins, Italians, or Franks the same authors identified themselves as *Hellenes*.⁶⁹ For this reason they were careful not to define themselves exclusively as Christians, for they took into account the Latins' Christianity as well.

For Bryennios, like for many other Palaiologan authors, the Hellenes, despite the decline and the defeats, remained Orthodox in faith, τὸ εὐσεβέστατον γένος πάντων καὶ τῷ Θεῷ τὰ μάλιστα προσανέχον.⁷⁰ These writers stressed the continuity between the problematic present and the Hellenic past. Yet, unlike the previous authors, the early fifteenth century ecclesiastics appear more interested in emphasizing the Hellenic features not just for their cultural value but, most of all, for the underlying ideological belief in the Church's mission to maintain the unity not only of the Orthodox but of all the Byzantines as well. Thus, when arguing against the attempts of union with the Church of Rome, the ecclesiastics often identified themselves as Hellenes.

Often, Bryennios contended that, in such times of distress, the Church remained the only institution which had the means to maintain the unity of the Hellenes against the attempts of the political elites to push for a Church union. Moreover, the Orthodoxy of the Church was conceived as the common denominator of the many different surrounding peoples which other lay authors perceived as barbaric. In the Συμβουλευτικὸς λόγος Bryennios enumerates the list of all the Orthodox peoples who, unlike the Latins, used leavened bread in their Church services:

Even to this day, the Romans, the Melchians, the Syrians, the Ethiopians, the Alans,

⁶⁸ Joseph Bryennios: ὑμεῖς ἐστε μόνοι τῶν Ῥωμαίων τὸ ἄνθος, οἱ τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης ἀπόγονοι, καὶ τῆς νέας ταύτης (Κωνσταντινουπόλεως) υἱοί, N. Tomadakes, "Joseph Bryennios," in *Σύλλαβος βυζαντινῶν μελετῶν*, Athens, 1961, 604-606.

⁶⁹ According to Bryennios, the Ἰταλοὶ are the Franks contemporary, living in Italy. The Λατίνοι are the ancient Romans: πιστεύεται κακῶς τῶν νῦν Ῥωμαίων οἱ ἄρχοντες "Ἕλληνες εἶναι, Ἰταλῶν δ' ἅπαν τὸ φύλον Ῥωμαῖοι· ὧν οἱ μὲν πρῶτοι τῶν Ῥωμαίων τὸ ἄνθος, κἂν φωνῆς τῆς πατρίου, τῷ τὴν "Ἕλληνα προελέσθαι, ὡς περ ἄρα καὶ τῆς σφῶν γῆς ἀπέστησαν· οἱ δὲ δεῦτεροι τῶν πάλοι Λατίνων ἀπόγονοι καθεστῶτες, κἂν τὴν τῶν Ῥωμαίων γλῶτταν, ὡς καὶ τὴν πόλιν αὐτῶν ἐκληρώσαντο, ἡμεῖς δέ, Ῥωμαῖοι, φημί, καὶ Λατίνοι, τρία πρὸ τοῖς χιλίοις ἔτη ὑπὶρχομεν ἠνωμένοι, N. Tomadakes, "Joseph Bryennios," in *Σύλλαβος βυζαντινῶν μελετῶν*, Athens, 1961, 604-606.

⁷⁰ Joseph Bryennios, *Ta paraleipomena*, 18.

the Abasgians and Iberians, Colchidians, Russians, Goths, Dacians, Paeonians, Mysians, Triballians and other very many peoples which live in various places and differ in race and language, offer to the God of all the sacrifice by leavened bread, not because they previously used unleavened bread and afterwards changed to leavened bread, but because the leavened bread has been introduced by them in the divine service. Εἰσέτι Ῥωμαῖοι, καὶ Μελχοὶ καὶ Σύροι καὶ Αἰθίοπες, Ἄλανοί, Ἀβασγοί, καὶ Ἰβήρες, Κόλχοι, Ῥῶσοι, Γότθοι, Δάκες, Παίονες, Μυσοί, Τριβαλλοί, καὶ ἄλλα γένη πλεῖστα, καὶ τόποις διστάμενα, καὶ ἔθеси, καὶ γλώσσαις, δι' ἐνζύμων τὴν θυσίαν ταύτην προσφέρουσι τῷ τῶν ὄλων Θεῷ, ὅτι οὐκ ἐκ τῶν ἀζύμων εἰς τὰ ἐνζυμα ἦλθον, ἀλλ' ἀφ' οὗ τῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὀνόματι ὑπεκλίθησαν, ὁ ἐνζυμος ἄρτος εἰς τὴν θεῖαν τελετὴν τούτοις παρείληπται.⁷¹

On the contrary, according to him, the discussions over a Church union with the Latins could not provide a real union of the Churches but could only generate the division of the Byzantines into separate factions or a process of “Latinization” of the Greeks.⁷² In another oration he added that the differences of faith and ethnicity between the Latins and the Byzantines would bring further damages.⁷³ It thus appears that Bryennios envisaged the Byzantine Church as the essential element of the unity of the Byzantines, the only successors of the Hellenes. Eventually, proceeding from his discussion of ethnicity, Bryennios preached the unity of the Church by a return to the traditional doctrine of the Church:

How shall we bear the change of faith? And these after we escaped so many dangers and suffered so terrible things? We have been stripped of all goods in this world for our true faith: cities, provinces, lands, vineyards, honors, and we have been blamed by all other peoples, and now we shall stand aloof? In no way, Lord, you will allow this to happen. But take to yourself from here all those who live in Orthodoxy, those who are the sons of the true believing fathers. Μετάθεσιν πίστεως πρᾶξι ἀνεξόμεθα; καὶ ταῦτα μετὰ τὸ παραδραμεῖν τοσοῦτους κινδύνους, καὶ ὑπομεῖναι τοσαῦτα δεινά [...]; Πάντα ἡμεῖς τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καλὰ σχεδὸν ἀφηρεθήμεν δι' εὐσέβειαν· πόλεις, χώρας, ἀγρούς, ἀμπελῶνας, τιμάς, πρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄνειδος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις γεγόναμεν, καὶ νῦν γε ταύτης ἀποστησόμεθα; μηδαμῶς, Κύριε πάντων, ἐάσης τοῦτο γενέσθαι. Ἄλλ' ἐν ὀρθοδοξίᾳ πάντας ἐντεῦθεν παράλαβε, τοὺς τῶν ὀρθοδόξων πατέρων υἱούς.⁷⁴

When evoking such claims in favor of the Church's increased role for shaping the Byzantine individuality, Bryennios certainly spoke from the experience of the period he spent in Crete and in Cyprus.⁷⁵ The precedents of the situation in Crete and in Cyprus as well as in other

⁷¹ Joseph Bryennios, *Admonitory oration*, 486.

⁷² *On the union of the Cypriots* (Περὶ τῆς τῶν Κυπρίων ἐνώσεως) in *Ta heurethenta*, 2, 13-14: “Ἡ λατινίσαι τοὺς πάντας, ἢ εἰς μυρία σχίσματα μερισθῆναι τὸ ἡμέτερον γένος.

⁷³ *On the union of the Cypriots*, 2, 14: Καὶ ἀπλῶς οὐδὲν ἔσται τὰ τῆς ἐνώσεως, εἰ μὴ ἀπάτη πρότερον ἡμετέρα, καὶ ὕστερον τῶν Κυπρίων πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐπικαύχῃσις, καὶ τοῦ κοινου γένους ὄνειδος. Cf. τὸ ἡμέτερον γένος ἀφανισμῷ παραδίδοται, *On the joint contribution* (Περὶ Συντελείας), *Ta paraleipomena*, 244.

⁷⁴ *Ta heurethenta*, 129-130. Cf. Tomadakes, 609.

⁷⁵ On Bryennios' activities in Crete and in Cyprus see I. Tomadakes, “Ἰωσήφ Βρυέννιος,” *Σύλλαβος Βυζαντινῶν*

Latin-held territories like the Aegean islands, where Byzantine Orthodoxy was continuously challenged, showed that the Latins sought to assimilate the local populations by forcing them to convert to Catholicism. While the Ottomans did not attack Orthodoxy, the Latins did. For this reason, in the eyes of many ecclesiastics, Orthodoxy increasingly became a core element that was assimilated to their self-identification as Byzantines. In promoting these opinions which drew on the centrality of Orthodoxy within the process of the Byzantines' self-identification, the late Byzantine ecclesiastics continued a process that started after 1204, for, with the fall of Constantinople, the struggle against the Latins gave the church renewed popular approval and support.⁷⁶

7.4. Imperial authority

One of the most important elements in the ecclesiastics' discourse was the approach to authority in general and to imperial authority in particular. During Manuel's reign this approach underwent many fluctuations from positive to negative attitudes. Several factors of these changes can be identified. On the one hand, unlike his predecessors, Michael VIII and John V, who, due to their close relations with the Latin Church, had a hostile approach towards part of the Byzantine clergy, the emperor Manuel II was more preoccupied with the religious affairs of the Byzantine state. He was well known for his awareness of religious issues and interest in the theological debates of his time and, as mentioned, he authored two major theological treatises, *The Dialogs with a Muslim* and *A Treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*. This more favorable attitude was mirrored by his close relations and friendship with several popular hieromonks of Mount Athos, such as his spiritual fathers, David and Damian, as well as by the fact that the emperor, despite the financial constraints, continued to offer tax exemptions and other financial privileges to the Athonite monasteries.⁷⁷ On the other hand, through its actions, the church acquired a stronger societal and political position in Byzantium reflected also in the challenges to imperial authority.⁷⁸ I have already mentioned the role which the churchmen gradually assumed in the civil judicial system as General Judges (καθολικοί κριταί, beginning in the early fourteenth century. There are other instances pointing to the Church's growing strength and influence in political matters. For instance, in 1396 Patriarch

μελετών, Athens, 1972, 509-517.

⁷⁶ D. Angelov, "Introduction," in *Church and State in Late Byzantium*, 1.

⁷⁷ See "Patriarch Matthew I's Testament," *Byzantine monastic foundation documents: a complete translation of the surviving founders' typika and testament*, ed. Angela Constantinides Hero, Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000, 1662.

⁷⁸ These challenges have been discussed in detail in the first chapter of the dissertation.

Anthony IV exceptionally summoned a synod intended to reinforce the hesychast doctrine, at a time when the number of Byzantine supporters of the Latin Church increased. The result of this synod unveiled the influence which the Church could exert at that time: Constantine Asanes, a prominent member of the court and *theios* of Emperor John V was forced to make a public statement of his adherence to Orthodoxy, owing to his well-known support for the pro-Latin party in Constantinople. Following the same synod, a number of scholars and ecclesiastics were forced to leave Constantinople. Another example involved the influence of churchmen in blocking and delaying the negotiations with the church of Rome after the accession of Martin V as pope.⁷⁹

These considerations allow us to distinguish two major approaches to imperial authority. If some ecclesiastics appreciated the emperor's domestic policies, others contested his entanglement in the ecclesiastical realm. In the first category can be included several of his closest collaborators, Patriarch Matthew I, Makarios Makres and Joseph Bryennios.⁸⁰ In his testament, Matthew expressed his high regard for emperor Manuel's support awarded to the monastery of Charsianites.⁸¹ Makres, much appreciated by Emperor Manuel for his ascetic profile, wrote an *epitaphios* at the emperor's death, and during the emperor's life addressed to him another short poem in which he praised him for his intellectual and diplomatic skills.⁸² In the funeral oration Makarios included both conventional and personal elements of praise, insisting on the emperor's intellectual merits:

Oh, philosophy and literature and Muses and Graces, Aphrodite of the rhetoricians and of the writers, the elixir and enjoyment of the Attic language! [...] By no means we shall be different from a herd of irrational individuals, since <once you, emperor, died> philosophy, knowledge, reason, and literature left from among us, activities without which it is not possible to live. Ἄλλ' ὧ φιλοσοφία καὶ λόγοι καὶ Μοῦσαι καὶ Χάριτες καὶ ῥητόρων καὶ λογοποιῶν Ἀφροδίτη καὶ τῆς Ἀττικῆς ἦτις ἀμβροσία καὶ ἡδονή! [...] Οὐδὲν διοίσει λοιπὸν ἀλόγων ἀγέλης τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς, φιλοσοφίας καὶ ἐπιστήμης καὶ νοῦ καὶ λόγων ἐξ ἡμῶν οἰχομένων, ὧν ἄνευ οὐκ ἔνι ζῆν.⁸³

⁷⁹ See in particular G. Patacsi, "Joseph Bryennios et les discussions sur un concile d'union," 73-96.

⁸⁰ On their collaboration with the emperor in literary matters see ch. 2.

⁸¹ "I also petitioned on their behalf the holy emperor, who with great kindness granted this concession, referring the favor to my Virgin, that the imperial treasury would collect only three hyperpera annually on every hundred-measure of wine produced at the dependency, and, of the two *zeugaria* of land which we own, that one *zeugarion* should be maintained in perpetuity completely exempt and not liable for the customary tithe of the crops harvested, and that absolutely all our land should be free of tax, just as we had it previously," (translation in A.-M. Talbot, *Byzantine Monastic Typika*, 1659) in H. Hunger, "Das Testament des Patriarchen Matthaios I," *BZ* 1958: 321-328.

⁸² S. Kapetanaki, *An annotated edition of Makarios Makres' texts*, 254.

⁸³ A. Sideras, *Unedierte byzantinische Grabreden*, Thessalonike: Parateretes, 1990: 306.

For his part, Joseph Bryennios addressed the emperor in a letter from Crete and in a funeral oration in the usual encomiastic terms of the panegyrists. Apart from the texts of these two writers we find appreciation of the emperor even in some of the texts of ecclesiastics who later voiced their discontent with the emperor's actions. In an early treatise titled *Against the Latins*, probably written during Manuel's visit to Paris in 1400, Makarios of Ankara made a convincing exposition of traditional ideas of imperial priesthood.⁸⁴ At that moment, Makarios took a stand in favor of the idea that the emperor was entitled to preside over a unionist church council which would bring the schism to an end.⁸⁵ He attributed to the emperor the titles of both *dephensōr ekklēsias* and *epistemonarchēs*, titles which denoted the priestly power of the emperor to summon and participate in church councils.⁸⁶ If the title *dephensōr ekklēsias*, apparently derived from the term *ekklēsiekdikos*, was quite common, Makarios' use of the epithet *epistemonarchēs* is unique for this period.⁸⁷ Following a similar trend of appreciation of the imperial power, Makarios presented historical and canonical pieces of evidence indicating, even before Lorenzo Valla's argumentation, that the document known as the *Donation of Constantine*, often used for the argumentation of the ecclesiastics' superiority, was not authentic.⁸⁸

Another author, Symeon of Thessalonike, who later also contested the imperial authority, did not however deny the fact that the emperor's anointment entitled him to be designated holy (*hagios*).⁸⁹ Nevertheless, he maintained that this kind of holiness conferred to the emperor only the special right to enter the sanctuary of the church on the day of his coronation.⁹⁰ Such examples indicate that good relations with the emperor did not always represent a condition for a favorable attitude towards the emperor. Even the Patriarch

⁸⁴ This appears to have been inspired from the pro-imperialist texts of the previous famous Byzantine canonists, Theodore Balsamon and Demetrios Chomatēnos *Πονήματα διάφορα*, 106.271-272 (ed. G. Prinzing, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002): Ἐντεῦθεν, λοιπόν, τῶν μὲν ἐξουσιαστικῶν νόμων ὁ βασιλεὺς καθόλου ὑπέρκειται. Τῆς ἐξουσίας γὰρ αὐτὸς τὸ ὑπέρτατον καὶ κατ' ἐξουσίαν καὶ λέγειν καὶ πράττειν κέκτηται δύναμιν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ οἱ νόμοι τῆ τούτου αὐθεντία ἐκεῖνο τὸ νόμιμον, τὸ ὁ βασιλεὺς νόμοις οὐχ ὑπόκειται, ἀπεκλήρωσαν καὶ τὸ δόξαν αὐτῷ ἀρεστὸν ὡς νόμου τυγχάνειν ἐθέσπισαν.

⁸⁵ The treatise was published in Patriarch Dositheos, *Τόμος καταλλαγῆς*, Iași, 1692, 1-205.

⁸⁶ Makarios of Ankara, *Against the Latins* (*Κατὰ Λατίνων*), in *Τόμος καταλλαγῆς*, 194-195.

⁸⁷ The imperial epithet of *δεφένσωρ ἐκκλησίας* was coined after that of *ἐπιστημονάρχης*, which initially referred to the disciplinarian officer in monasteries. Cf. J. Darrouzes, *Recherches sur les OFFIKIA de l'église byzantine*, Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1970, 323.

⁸⁸ Makarios' main argument was that Constantine could not possibly have been the author of the *Donation*. Κατὰ Λατίνων, 8-10. J. Levine, "Reginald Pecock and Lorenzo Valla on the Donation of Constantine," *Studies in the Renaissance*, 20 (1973), 118-143; D. Angelov, "The Donation of Constantine and the Church in Late Byzantium" in *Church and Society in Late Byzantium*, 91-157.

⁸⁹ Symeon of Thessalonike, *Explanation on the Divine Temple* (*Περὶ τοῦ ἱεροῦ ναοῦ*), PG 155, 353.

⁹⁰ Symeon of Thessalonike, *Explanation on the Divine Temple*, PG 155, 352 cd. See *On the sacred ordinations*, *ibid.* 432ab.

Euthymios II who shared with the ruler similar literary preoccupations,⁹¹ opposed him vigorously in the affair of the nomination of the metropolitan of Moldavia. To this list of positive attitudes towards the emperor, it should be added that some ecclesiastics had a very positive attitude for Manuel's nephew, John VII during his rule in Thessalonike. In addition to the positive references in the *Synodikon* and Symeon of Thessalonike homily on Saint Demetrios,⁹² a sixteenth century patriarchal chronicle praises his administrative skills and devotion to the cause of the Church.⁹³

Positive reactions to Manuel's actions in the church came also much later from ecclesiastics who, after the council of Ferrara-Florence, confronted with the political emergence for a union, appreciated Manuel's role in not taking any concrete steps towards such an action. John Eugenikos, in an address to Constantine XI, urged the emperor to follow his father's model in ecclesiastical matters.⁹⁴

Despite the favorable attitude of a part of the clergy towards the emperor, as expressed at various moments during his reign, the noticeable tendency of the ecclesiastical writers was to put emphasis on their hierocratic claims and to minimize the significance of imperial authority within the state. Already in the early fourteenth century Theoleptos, the metropolitan of Philadelphia defied the Emperor Andronikos II's orders stating that it was not an emperor's prerogative to discipline a priest.⁹⁵ As for the later periods, I have already noticed that the ecclesiastics' attitude towards the life-style of the *archontes*, especially after the end of the Ottoman siege in 1402, was far from favorable. Joseph Bryennios expressed this general criticism for political authority when he noticed that *the rulers (archontes) are unjust, those who oversee our affairs are rapacious, and the judges accept gifts.*⁹⁶ Many ecclesiastics thus adopted a rather radical position on the key issues of the preeminence of the Church over the emperor with the result that, during Manuel's reign, the moderate views on the universalism and

⁹¹ See ch. 1.

⁹² See ch. 1.

⁹³ ἦν δὲ ὁ ἀνέψιμος αὐτοῦ ἐν πᾶσιν ἐπιτηδειότατος καὶ εὐλαβής, in M. Philippides ed., *Emperors, Patriarchs and Sultans of Constantinople, 1373-1513, An anonymous Greek Chronicle of the Sixteenth Century*, Brookline MA: Hellenic College Press, 1990, 2. 25.

⁹⁴ John Eugenikos, "Oration to Constantine," *PP* 3, 130.21: καὶ ἐξ' ἐκείνου μέχρι πρώην τοῦ σοῦ ἁγίου πατρός, τοῦ μακαριωτάτου καὶ ἀοιδίμου βασιλέως ἡμῶν, κατὰ διαδοχὴν ὡσπερ τις πατρῶος κληρὸς ὁ πρὸς τὴν εὐσέβειαν ζῆλος καὶ τὸ τῆς πίστεως ἀκραιφνὲς παρεπέμφθη τε καὶ διεφυλάχθη.

⁹⁵ See Gabalas' letter to Patriarch Niphon, ed. D. Reinsch, Letter 62, 11.4-13. Cf. "Introduction" in *The Life and Letters of Theoleptos of Philadelphia* ed. A. Constantinides Hero, Brookline: Hellenic College Press, 17.

⁹⁶ Joseph Bryennios, *The forty-nine chapters*, 122. Cf. Gabriel of Thessalonike: ἡνίκα ἴδης ἀνάξιόν τινα καὶ πονηρόν, ἢ ἄρχοντα κοσμικὸν ἢ ἐπίσκοπον, μὴ θαυμάσης, μηδὲ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν διαβάλης (*Homily* 6. 83-84).

freedom of the church which can be identified in the previous century⁹⁷ disappeared completely. As mentioned in a previous chapter of this dissertation,⁹⁸ Manuel's reign witnessed a number of crises caused by the dissent of the ecclesiastics to his policies. Isidore Glabas, who in the early 1380s defended Manuel's rebellious government in Thessalonike, adopted a more favorable attitude towards the Ottomans.⁹⁹ Around 1393, in two sermons for Saint Demetrios the metropolitan mentions that the Ottomans offered to the Thessalonians gifts and a more bearable slavery.¹⁰⁰ Isidore's successor, Gabriel, also vehemently opposed the installation of Matthew I as Patriarch in Constantinople and emperor Manuel's favorite.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, the most important episode of ecclesiastic dissent had to do with the emperor's involvement in the nomination of patriarchs and metropolitans, acts which triggered a strong opposition as it emerges in several treatises.¹⁰²

Hierocratic political thought

If already in 1393, Patriarch Anthony IV suggested that the spiritual power of Byzantium had become more significant than the secular one,¹⁰³ the first document disputing Manuel's authority is a notice about the position of the metropolitans of Nikomedeia and Corinth. They demanded from the emperor further explanations for his actions when the emperor intervened in a synod in order to impose his will in a certain ecclesiastical matter:

After the most holy and honorable metropolitans of Nicomedeia and Corinth were asked to give their opinion about the emperor's authority in the debates in the Holy Synod concerning the accusations, we <the metropolitans> did not put forward any statement, neither wrote anything. Yet, now we say that whenever the emperor asks <to intervene in the synod> with an investigation, if it turns out that the emperor is right on that matter, we <the metropolitans> shall agree in the holy synod. But if nothing is found, we shall necessarily be content with the result. ἐρωτηθέντες οἱ ἱερώτατοι ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ ὑπέρτιμοι, ὃ τε Νικομηδείας καὶ ὁ Κορίνθου, [...] περὶ δὲ τοῦ ἵνα ἔχη ἄρχοντας ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὰ λαλούμενα ἐν τῇ ἱερᾷ συνόδῳ ἐπὶ

⁹⁷ In the fourteenth century, Patriarch Athanasios in his letters addressed to Emperor Andronikos II expressed a more temperate position. He refused the extreme view according to which the patriarch was the emperor's superior and did not question the emperor's sacerdotal charisma. For Patriarch Athanasios the ruler continued to exercise a divine ministry. Yet, Athanasios constantly reminded the emperor the idea of the liberty of the church and that the church was an eternal institution in contrast to the imperial office. See D. Angelov, "The emperor subject to the church," in *Imperial Ideology*, 393-410.

⁹⁸ Unit I, ch.1.

⁹⁹ Cf. G.T. Dennis, "Late Byzantine Metropolitans of Thessalonike," *DOP* 57 (2003): 257.

¹⁰⁰ Isidore Glabas, *Homilies 4 and 5*, in B. Laourdas, "Ἰσιδώρου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Θεσσαλονίκης ὁμιλία εἰς τὰς ἑορτὰς τοῦ ἁγίου Δημητρίου," *Hellenika* 5 (1954): 55-65 and 56-7. Reference to the Ottomans' grand gifts to the people of Thessalonike is also made by John Anagnostes in his text on the *Siege of Thessalonike*, *Διήγησις περὶ τῆς τελευταίας ἀλώσεως τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης*, ed. G. Tsaras, Thessalonike: Tsaras, 1958, 60.

¹⁰¹ G.T. Dennis, "Metropolitans of Thessalonike," 259-260.

¹⁰² See ch. 1. Cf. Patriarch Euthymios II's letter of refusal of the installation of the metropolitan of Poleainina as metropolitan of Moldavia, J. Darrouzes, *Regestes*, vol 7, no. 3296, 6.

¹⁰³ J. Darrouzes, *Regestes*, vol. 6, no. 2931, 210-211.

ἐγκληματικῶν ὑποθέσεων, οὔτε γνώμην ἐδώκαμεν εἰς τοῦτο, οὔτε ἐγράψαμεν τοιοῦτό τι, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον μὲν οὖν λέγομεν νῦν, ὡς ὅταν ζητήσῃ αὐτὰ ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ ἅγιος μετὰ ἐξετάσεως, ἐὰν ἀποδειχθῇ ὅτι ἔχει δίκαιον ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τοῦτο, μέλλομεν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀκολουθεῖν τῇ ἱερᾷ συνόδῳ. Ἐὰν δὲ οὐδὲν εὔρεθῇ, στέργομεν καὶ ἡμεῖς τοῦτο κατὰ πᾶσαν ἀνάγκην.¹⁰⁴

Although it represented only a short notice response, this document dated to 1396 echoed the increasing Church's claims to autonomy of decision and freedom (*eleutheria*) from the secular power as well as its claims to universalism. In the following decades, such claims came to be expressed especially in treatises that dealt with the appointment of bishops and with the political theology of imperial unction.

Building on previous insights in late Byzantine hierocratic political thought,¹⁰⁵ I will focus here mostly on the texts of two authors: the first one is Makarios of Ankara's polemic treatise occasioned by the debate over the canonicity of Patriarch Matthew I' appointment which was provocatively titled:

A partial exposition that the emperor should abide by and observe the canonical ordinances and should respect and defend the canons, something which he also promises at his anointing and that he neither rules nor exercises authority over canonical and priestly matters, but does so only over political matters. And about other such chapters. Ἐκλογή μερική περὶ τοῦ ὅτι ὀφείλει ὁ βασιλεὺς στοιχεῖν καὶ ἐμμένειν τοῖς κανονικῶς ὀρισθεῖσι, στέργειν τε καὶ δεφενδεύειν τοὺς κανόνας· ὁ καὶ ὑπισχνεῖται χριόμενος· καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἐξάρχει ἢ ἐξουσιάζει τῶν κανονικῶν καὶ ἱερατικῶν, μόνων δὲ τῶν πολιτικῶν, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἐφεῖται αὐτῷ παραλύειν κατάστασιν τινα ἐκκλησιαστικήν· καὶ περὶ ἄλλων τοιούτων κεφαλαίων.

The treatise was included in his collection of polemical texts - Paris. gr. 1379 (f. 98v-148r) occasioned by the controversy over the installation and deposition of Matthew I as patriarch, a move in which Manuel II had a direct contribution.¹⁰⁶ Symeon of Thessalonike's orations, letters, and liturgical treatises will also serve my purpose here. He was the author of a "handbook" of Orthodox faith and practice, titled *The Dialog in Christ*, dealing with a range of subjects such as church rites, heresies, and the theology of prayer.¹⁰⁷ Of particular interest here are the sections *On the sacred church* (Περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ ναοῦ)¹⁰⁸ and *On ordinations* (Περὶ τῶν ἱερῶν χειροτονιῶν),¹⁰⁹ where Symeon gave a comprehensive account of Byzantine ecclesiastical

¹⁰⁴ *MM*, 2.271-272.

¹⁰⁵ G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, M. Angold, *Church and State*, D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium*.

¹⁰⁶ Laurent, "Trisépiscopat," 25-27; On imperial power and the appointment of bishops in Makarios of Ankara's view see also *Ibid.* 89-93.

¹⁰⁷ On Symeon see I. Phountoules, *Τὸ λειτουργικὸν ἔργον Συμεῶν τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης*, Thessalonike, 1966.

¹⁰⁸ *PG* 155, 305-361.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 361-469.

usage. In these two texts, Symeon not only described Church rituals, but he also explained its meanings and frequently criticized other rival interpretations. Apart from the liturgical treatises, the letters he addressed to Andronikos, Despot of Thessalonike, also constitute important documents of the ecclesiastics' view on imperial power.¹¹⁰

Noticeably, both authors, Makarios and Symeon, were very popular in their days. Makarios played the role of a champion of church interests in the face of imperial power as his views were supported by a large number of bishops and necessitated no less than five synods in order to be completely refuted.¹¹¹ In particular, Symeon's texts enjoyed a very wide readership. The editor of Symeon's liturgical works, I. Phountoules lists more than a hundred manuscripts (second half of the fifteenth century) of the texts dealing with the rituals which involved the emperor and the patriarch, *On the sacred church* and *On ordinations*.¹¹² Furthermore, the popularity of his ideas is illustrated by a sixteenth century Greek vernacular text describing the emperor's coronation, which bears the influence of Symeon's account, as it reproduces *verbatim* a passage from Symeon.¹¹³

Makarios' and Symeon's ideas were not altogether new since both authors grounded their claims on previous allegations recorded particularly in texts dating from the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries. The anonymous *Life of Patriarch Arsenios*, written by an Arsenite monk probably by the end of the fourteenth century, stated that the patriarch did not depend on the emperor for his election and that, in fact, the patriarch was higher in rank than the emperor.¹¹⁴ In his text, Arsenios' biographer highlighted the idea of the grace of God granted by the patriarch to the emperor. According to Arsenios' encomiast, the emperor Theodore II Laskaris was 'obedient to the patriarch, doing everything according to his wishes, yielding the state to the Church.' This happened because:

For the head of the church is Christ, of whom the patriarch bears the imprint, and, since he anoints with imperial oil the emperors, he would reasonably have them [the emperors] as his subordinates who yield to his will. For he who anoints is greater than the anointed, in the same way that the one who sacrifices is greater than the sanctified. It is by all means necessary that the emperor who is sanctified and anointed by the patriarch, because he [the emperor] lacks this grace, should obey like a servant the church, and its leader. Ταύτης γάρ ἐστι κεφαλή ὁ Χριστός, οὗ

¹¹⁰ Symeon-Balfour, 77-82.

¹¹¹ G.T. Dennis, "The Deposition and Restoration of Patriarch Matthew I, 1402-1404," *BF* 2: 1967, 100-106.

¹¹² I. Phountoules, *Τὸ λειτουργικὸν ἔργον Συμεὼν τοῦ Θεσσαλονίκης*, Thessalonike, 1966, 17-19. Most of the manuscripts dating from the fifteenth century have been preserved in the monastic libraries of Mt. Athos.

¹¹³ See P. Schreiner "Ein volkssprachlicher Text zur byzantinischen Kaiserkrönung aus der Zeit der Turkokratia," *Byzantiaka*, 1 (1981): 55.

¹¹⁴ "Life of Arsenios," 460.331-461. 343. Cf. D. Angelov, "The emperor subject to the church," *Imperial Ideology*, 386.

τύπον φέρων ὁ πατριάρχης καὶ τῷ βασιλικῷ χρίων ἐλαίῳ τοὺς βασιλεύοντας πειθηνίους ἂν τούτοις εἰκότως ἔχοι καὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ θελήμασιν εἰκοντας. Τὸ γὰρ χρίον μείζον ἐστὶ τοῦ χρισμένου ὡσπερ καὶ τὸ ἀγιάζον δήπου τοῦ ἀγιαζομένου. Εἰ δεῖ οὖν τὰ ἐλάττω τοῖς μείζοσι πείθεσθαι, μείζων δὲ ἡ ἐκκλησία ἥς ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλή, οὗ τὴν εἰκόνα φέρει ὁ πατριάρχης, πάντως δεῖ καὶ τὸν ὑπὸ τούτου ἀγιαζόμενον καὶ χρισμένον βασιλέα ὡς ἐνδεῆ τῆς τοιαύτης χάριτος ὄντα, δοῦλος δὲ πείθεσθαι τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ.¹¹⁵

The encomiast's attitude to imperial authority seems to have persisted in the following decades for, around 1430s, Theodore Agallianos (1400-1474), wrote another encomium for Arsenios. There, like in the anonymous life of Arsenios, Agallianos, listed several arguments on the superiority of the patriarchal position and of the Church in general over the imperial office.¹¹⁶ Drawing on a similar idea, other contemporary strong-minded ecclesiastics used the document known as the *Donation of Constantine*, a forged Roman imperial decree in which the emperor Constantine I supposedly transferred authority over Rome and parts of the western Empire to the pope. Despite being essentially an anti-Byzantine writing, the *Donation* supported the ideological status of the patriarch of Constantinople. This document served the claims to authority of fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Byzantine ecclesiastics such as Patriarch Athanasios (1289-1293 and 1303-1309) who considered Pope Sylvester as a model to imitate and regarded the alleged submission of Constantine to the pope as a political matrix for the relationship between the emperor and the patriarch.¹¹⁷ Following this tendency, in the early fifteenth century Symeon of Thessalonike used the *Donation* in his description of the ecclesiastical ritual of the election of the patriarch when he gave an account of an electoral practice similar to the traditional one.¹¹⁸ At the same time he reinforced the idea of the emperor's submission to the patriarch's power by adding new elements to the well-known ceremony of imperial coronation interpreted on the basis of the *Donation of Constantine*. The emperor chose the patriarch from among three nominees proposed by the synod. However, as noticed,¹¹⁹ in Symeon's account the ensuing festive procession presents several differences

¹¹⁵ Ibid. Cf. also R. Macrides, "Saints and Sainthood in the Early Palaiologan period," in S. Hackel, *The Byzantine Saint*, San Bernardino, CA: Borgo Press, 1983, 78.

¹¹⁶ These arguments were: Arsenios' reinstatement in Hagia Sophia, the office celebrating him as a champion of the truth, and his perfectly preserved body a source of healing compared to the "bloated" body of Michael VIII lying in a Church in Selymbria and witnessing his excommunication. See *Τόμος χαρᾶς*, 625, 25.

¹¹⁷ D. Angelov discussed the several late Byzantine versions of the Donation attributed to both Orthodox apologists and to Latin converts: of Balsamon, of Matthew Blastares, of Demetrios Kydones, and of Andrew Chrysoberges. He also offered an account of the different competing interpretations (legalistic and politic) of this text in the last centuries of Byzantine history. D. Angelov, "The Donation of Constantine and the Church in Late Byzantium," in *Church and Society in Late Byzantium*, 91-158.

¹¹⁸ Symeon of Thessalonike, *On the sacred ordinations*, PG 155, 429d- 433a and 437c-440a. Cf. D. Angelov, "The Donation of Constantine," 112.

¹¹⁹ D. Angelov, "The emperor subject to the church," *Imperial Ideology*, 384-391.

from the one related by the roughly contemporary *Treatise on offices* by Pseudo-Kodinos. In Pseudo-Kodinos' account the patriarch led the imperial officials and the dignitaries towards the church of St. Sophia after he had previously mounted his horse outside the courtyard. On the other hand, in Symeon's text, following his investiture, the patriarch mounted his horse inside the imperial courtyard;¹²⁰ in addition, the emperor's son and a special servant who held the so-called *officium stratoris* leads the patriarch's horse from the imperial palace to the building of the patriarchate near St. Sophia. According to Symeon, this servant stood for the emperor and gave the patriarch the homage that Constantine had once done to Pope Sylvester.¹²¹ Pseudo-Kodinos also pointed to another aspect that revealed the increase of the ecclesiastical power over imperial authority. Thus, prior to the ceremony of his coronation the emperor was supposed to sign a confession of orthodox faith, which he gave afterwards to the patriarch and the synod. The emperor took an oath to respect the doctrine of the church, and made the following statement:

Likewise, I promise to remain and constantly to be faithful and a genuine son and servant of the holy church, and, in addition, to be its dephensor and vindicator, to be well-disposed and philanthropic toward the subjects in accordance with the principles of reason and propriety, to abstain as much as possible from murder, mutilation, and similar acts, and to incline always toward truth and justice. Ὡσαύτως ὑπισχνοῦμαι ἐμμένειν καὶ διηνεκῶς εὐρίσκεσθαι πιστὸς καὶ γνήσιος δοῦλος καὶ υἱὸς τῆς ἁγίας ἐκκλησίας. Πρὸς τούτοις εἶναι καὶ δεφένσωρ καὶ ἐκδικητῆς αὐτῆς, καὶ εἰς τὸ ὑπήκοον εὐμενῆς καὶ φιλόανθρωπος κατὰ τὸ εἶκός τε καὶ πρέπον, καὶ ἀπέχεσθαι φόνων, ἀκρωτηριασμῶν καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων αὐτοῖς κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν, κατανεύειν τε εἰς πᾶσαν ἀλήθειαν καὶ δικαιοσύνην.¹²²

In their texts, both Makarios and Symeon treated in detail the process of electing the patriarch which, according to their interpretation, clearly showed his preeminence over the emperor. For Makarios, the emperor, as he handed over the staff of the patriarch, represented a "servant of the church of a low order," mirroring the clerical rank of *deputatos*. Even if the emperor invested the patriarch, this act did not automatically mean that the former had any

¹²⁰ Symeon of Thessalonike, *On the sacred ordinations*, PG, 155, 437-444.

¹²¹ PG 155, 441d: καὶ ὑπὸ πεζοῦ κόμητος τὸν χαλινὸν τοῦ ἵππου κατέχοντος ἄντι τοῦ βασιλέως αὐτοῦ, ὡς ὁ μέγας ἐν βασιλεῦσι Κωνσταντῖνος τῷ ἱερῷ πεποίηκε Σιλβέστρω. Nevertheless, it remains unknown whether Symeon's addition reflects real practices or the ecclesiastic made up the entire story of the groom in accordance with his hierocratic agenda. Cf. Pseudo-Kodinos, *On offices*, 281-282.

¹²² Pseudo-Kodinos, *On offices*, 253.22-254.3 (tr. D. Angelov). In his *Histories* John Kantakouzenos (I, 196-203) gave a similar account of the protocol of Andronikos III's coronation as co-emperor in 1325 omitting nevertheless the confession of faith. P. Charanis translated the text of the oath, "Coronation and its Constitutional Significance in the Later Roman Empire," *B*, 15 (1941), 57-58. John Eugenikos also mentioned the emperor's confession (ὁμολογία) in his imperial oration addressed to Constantine XI: τὴν σὴν εὐεργεσίαν καὶ ὁμολογίαν, *PP* 4, 124.35.

spiritual power over the latter. In fact, Makarios argued, when handing the staff to the patriarch, the emperor simply showed his secular power for the patriarch already possessed spiritual power before this act:

When the emperor entrusts the patriarch with the staff commonly called *dekanikion*, he acts as one of those who belong to the inferior orders and to the ranks of those who serve the Church. Ἐγχειρίζοντος τότε τῷ πατριάρχῃ τοῦ βασιλέως τὸ κοινῶς λεγόμενον δεκανίκιον ὡς καὶ ἐνὸς ὄντος τῶν ὑποβεβηκότων ταγμάτων καὶ ἐξυπηρετούντων τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ.¹²³

Symeon of Thessalonike approached the issue of the patriarch's investiture in similar terms. He argued that the emperor simply acted as the synod's servant in handing over the staff to the patriarch for only the synod conferred active power (ἐνεργεῖ) on the patriarch. For the emperor was anointed by the church not in order to be its master but to be one of its associates and faithful servants:

Therefore, the messengers speak in the following way: “Our mighty lord and emperor and the divine and holy and great synod invite your holiness onto the highest throne of the patriarchate of Constantinople.” In doing so, they confirm that the emperor does not rule by himself, but only that the emperor is subordinate to the synod. Διὸ καὶ οἱ τὸ μήνυμα λέγοντες οὕτω φασίν· Ὁ κραταῖος καὶ ἅγιος ἡμῶν αὐθέντης καὶ βασιλεύς, καὶ ἡ θεία καὶ ἱερά καὶ μεγάλη σύνοδος προσκαλοῦνται τὴν ἀγιωσύνην σου εἰς τὸν ὑψηλότατον θρόνον τοῦ πατριαρχείου τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως. Μαρτυροῦντες, ὡς οὐχ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀφ’ἑαυτοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὰ τῆς συνόδου μηνύει, καὶ μόνον ὑπηρετεῖ.

Against those who say that the emperor appoints the patriarch. Those who are driven by envy in their innovations and say that the emperor appoints the patriarch are speaking non-sense. For, in no way the emperor, but the synod is acting in this case, while the pious emperor is only assisting the process. Not only that the emperor is a defender of the Church and was anointed by the Church, but he has to collaborate, serve, love, and maintain the Church affairs. At the same time he must act within the limits of Orthodoxy, for the peace of the Church. Κατὰ τῶν λεγόντων ὅτι ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν πατριάρχῃν ποιεῖ· Φλυαροῦσι τοίνυν οἱ λέγοντες καινοτόμοι φθόνῳ βαλλόμενοι, ὡς ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν πατριάρχῃν ποιεῖ. Οὐδαμῶς γὰρ ὁ βασιλεὺς, ἀλλ’ ἡ σύνοδος ἐνεργεῖ, ἐξυπηρετουμένου μόνον τοῦ βασιλέως εὐσεβοῦς ὄντος. Οὐ μόνον ὅτι ἔκδικός ἐστι καὶ βασιλεὺς χρισθεὶς ἐκ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ἀλλ’ ἵνα καὶ συνεργῶν εἴη καὶ ὑπηρετῶν καὶ στέργῃ καὶ βέβαια τηρῇ τὰ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ὀφειλομένου καὶ τούτου ἐν τοῖς ὀρθοδόξοις τηρεῖσθαι, διὰ τὴν εἰρήνην τῆς Ἐκκλησίας¹²⁴

Following in the steps of Arsenios' representation, Makarios of Ankara asserted that since God anointed the head of the emperor through the hands of a priest, the priest acquired a higher

¹²³ Paris. gr. 1379, f. 46 v. Cf. V. Laurent, "Le rituel de l'investiture du patriarche byzantin au début du XVe siècle," *Bulletin de la Section Historique de l'Académie Roumaine* 28 (1947): 232.

¹²⁴ Symeon of Thessalonike, *On the sacred ordinations*, PG 155, 440 cd.

rank:

The authority of priesthood is higher than the emperor's, because the emperor is in charge of the individuals' bodies, whereas the priest of the souls. For this reason, in olden times the priests anointed the emperors; and now God sets the emperor's head under the priest's hands, and thus he teaches us that <the priest> has more authority than the emperor. ἡ τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἀρχὴ τῆς βασιλικῆς καὶ τοσοῦτῳ μείζων, ὅτι ὁ μὲν βασιλεὺς σώματα ἐμπιστεύεται, ὁ δὲ ἱερεὺς ψυχάς. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐν τῇ παλαιᾷ οἱ ἱερεῖς τοὺς βασιλεῖς ἔχριον· καὶ νῦν τὴν κεφαλὴν τοῦ βασιλέως ὑπὸ τὰς χεῖρας τοῦ ἱερέως φέρων τίθησιν ὁ Θεός, παιδεύων ἡμᾶς, ὅτι ἐκείνου μείζων ἄρχων.¹²⁵

Even later, in an oration addressed to Emperor Constantine XI, John Eugenikos also offered a forceful representation of the emperor as servant and defender of the church, and as subordinate of the patriarch:

Your majesty is the vindicator and defender of the Church, <while> the patriarch is the Church's shepherd and the one who crowns you and anoints you with the divine myron. ἐκκλησίας ἐκδικητὴς ἐστι καὶ ὑπέρμαχος ἡ βασιλεία σου, [...] ὁ ταύτης ποιμὴν καὶ ὁ στέψων σε πατριάρχης ὅτεδήποτε καὶ τῷ θείῳ μύρῳ χρίσων.¹²⁶

Yet, Symeon of Thessalonike further expanded this argument. In his treatise *On the Sacred Ordinations*, Symeon compared the two types of anointing- the material unction of the emperor and the spiritual unction of bishops. If the emperors were “anointed by the church thus receiving from the church their position of potentates (*archontes*),” by contrast, “the bishops were anointed by the grace of the Holy Spirit.” Symeon thus concluded that the bishops were the true holders of the spiritual power:

And now the emperors are anointed by the church. And the bishops are anointed with the grace because of the power and authority they take from the Holy Spirit. As it is said, *You will appoint rulers upon the whole face of the earth* (Psalm 44:17). Καὶ νῦν οἱ βασιλεῖς χρίονται παρὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας. Καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς δὲ διὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ Πνεύματος τῇ χάριτι χριόμενοι. Καταστήσεις γὰρ αὐτούς, φησὶν, ἄρχοντας ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν (Psalm 44:17).¹²⁷

In the commentary on the meaning of the emperor's coronation in his treatise *On the Holy Temple*, Symeon repeated the common notion that the unction of the emperor echoed the model of Christ's anointment and represented an act of the Holy Spirit. Yet, significantly he added that it was the priest performing the ritual of anointing who conferred the emperor a special “grace of imparting and giving” (*metadotikē charis*) on the emperor which gave the

¹²⁵ Makarios of Ankara, Paris. gr. 1379, f.102r. Cf. D. Angelov, “The emperor subject to the Church,” in *Imperial Ideology*, 392.

¹²⁶ *PP*, 125.5-10.

¹²⁷ Symeon of Thessalonike, *On the sacred ordinations*, PG 155, 416c.

latter the power “to appoint secular officials and generals.”¹²⁸

Symeon's account was slightly different from the one included in the anonymous *Life of Arsenios*, as the latter did not describe the grace bestowed by the priest, but refrained from investigating into the further consequences of the patriarch's transmission of grace to the emperor.¹²⁹ Thus, what Symeon meant was that the power granted to the emperor by the patriarch through the ritual of anointing became an active grace which ultimately gave the emperor the necessary authority to govern and administer his empire. From this perspective, Symeon envisaged the emperor's being anointed by the priest as an essential act of legitimization which marked profoundly the moment of the emperor's inauguration of rulership.

Symeon rejected the idea that the emperor could have been anointed with the same kind of spiritual power as the patriarch.¹³⁰ In the *On the sacred Church* he stressed the separation between the imperial and the priestly office by bringing into play a strict interpretation of Christological symbolism. At the ceremony of coronation which used to take place in the church, after receiving the signed confession of Orthodox faith from the ruler, the patriarch gave him the symbols of power and proceeded to anointing him. In this way, the patriarch made clear that the Spirit was bestowed upon the emperor by Christ through the patriarch's power. In the treatise *On the sacred ordinations*, Symeon further attacked the idea of imperial sanctity: while the patriarch possessed an intrinsic sanctity due to his consecration in the Holy Spirit, the term “holy” for the emperor was used only because of the unction by myron.¹³¹ Therefore, the emperor cannot be said to possess any of the sacerdotal *charismata* bestowed on apostles or prophets. If the patriarch is holy by the prayers of consecration, the emperor becomes holy only by anointment with myron.

Symeon used an extensive set of arguments and hostile comments to minimize the significance of the coronation ceremonial and to prove that the patriarch alone could provide the emperor with the symbols of power and with a *limited holiness*. According to the ecclesiastical writer, the unction of the emperor by the patriarch pointed to his inferior position: through anointment the emperor was bestowed with the ecclesiastical rank of

¹²⁸ Symeon of Thessalonike, *Explanation of the Divine Temple*, PG 155, 353 bc: καὶ μεταδοτικὴν διὰ τῆς εὐωδίας τοῦ μύρου χαριζόμενος αὐτῷ χάριν, εἰς τὸ ἄρχοντας κατὰ κόσμον καὶ στρατηγοὺς καθιστᾶν.

¹²⁹ D. Angelov, “The Emperor Subject to the Church,” in *Imperial Ideology*, 392.

¹³⁰ In the *Explanation of the Divine Temple* (PG 155, 353), he asked: “Why is the emperor anointed with the myron and consecrated with prayers?”

¹³¹ Symeon compares the use of *holy* in this context with the way in which St. Paul called all baptized Christians, *holy brothers*.

deputatos, who, according to the church hierarchy, was directly answerable to the patriarch.

Consequently, Symeon concluded that the emperor had to serve the synod and the Church:

And he acquired the imperial honor by being ordained *deputatos* of the holy Church and by being called *dēphensōr* of the Church and elected emperor of Christ the Lord, of the Christian people, and of the entire *oikoumene*. Καὶ ταύτην εἴληψε τὴν τιμὴν διὰ τὸ χρίσμα τῆς βασιλείας, ὡς καὶ δεποτάτου τῆς ἱερᾶς Ἐκκλησίας τὸπον λαβῶν καὶ δεφένσωρ ταύτης ἐπικληθεὶς καὶ ὡς Χριστὸς Κυρίου καὶ τοῦ Χριστωνύμου λαοῦ βασιλεὺς προχειρισθεὶς καὶ πάσης τῆς οἰκουμένης.¹³²

The emperor does service to the synod as *dēphensōr* and *servant* of the Church, according to the anointment and to his promise. Ὁ βασιλεὺς δὲ τὰ τῆς συνόδου ὑπηρετεῖ, ὡς καὶ δεφένσωρ καὶ ὑπηρετῆς τῆς Ἐκκλησίας καταστάς ἐν τῷ χρίσθαι καὶ τοῦτο καθυποσχεθεὶς.¹³³

Later in the treatise *On the sacred ordinations* he repeated the idea arguing that emperors possessed no priestly powers:

But the emperor does not have anything of the priesthood, neither of the apostles or of the prophets or of the teachers. He is declared sacred (*hagios*) only on account of the anointment with the myron. Καὶ ὁ μὲν βασιλεὺς τὰ τῆς ἱερωσύνης οὐκ ἔχει, οὐδὲ τὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν καὶ διδασκάλων χαρίσματα. Μόνον δὲ ἀναγορεύεται ἅγιος τῇ χρίσει τοῦ μύρου.¹³⁴

As they lacked priestly power, they could not enjoy important administrative rights in the church such as the right to transfer bishops.¹³⁵ Symeon of Thessalonike remarked that this had been a judgment characteristic of corrupt people and criticized the contemporary practice of bishops who, after ordination, came to Constantinople in order to kiss the emperor's hand and thus show their servile position.¹³⁶

Similarly, in his *eklogē merikē* Makarios of Ankara made use of the same argument when he quoted the clause of the emperor's promise to be the Church's servant and argued that this promise compelled the emperor to abide with the canons of the church.¹³⁷ The claim survived even after the end of Manuel's reign. Several decades later, John Eugenikos argued that an emperor who broke the oaths taken during the coronation ceremony lost his legitimacy.¹³⁸

¹³² "Explanation of the divine Temple," in *St. Symeon of Thessalonika. The Liturgical Commentaries*, ed. and tr. S. H. Teeple, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2011, 133.

¹³³ *On the sacred ordinations*, PG 155, 440b. Cf. Περὶ τοῦ ἱεροῦ ναοῦ, col 353 AB where Symeon referred to the justice clauses in the coronation promise.

¹³⁴ *On the sacred ordinations*. PG 155, 417 ab.

¹³⁵ This constituted a practice which much earlier canonists like Demetrios Chomatenos had supported in his canonical writings, Πονήματα διάφορα, 86.55 in G. Prinzing ed, *Demetrios Chomatenos. Πονήματα διάφορα*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002.

¹³⁶ *On the sacred ordinations*, Ibid., cols 432A-433A.

¹³⁷ Paris. gr. 1379, f. 98r, f.142 r.

¹³⁸ *PP*, vol 1, 124-25.

Once more this opinion found in the texts of the late Byzantine ecclesiastics significantly departed from the views expressed two centuries earlier by Theodore Balsamon, who had noted that the emperor was not bound to any canons: ὁ βασιλεύς, ὁ μὴ ἀναγκαζόμενος ἀκολουθεῖν τοῖς κανόσι.¹³⁹ The difference from earlier views becomes even clearer when compared with the texts of another thirteenth century canonist, Demetrios Chomatenos, who stated that the emperor was a most exalted bishop, a successor of the Roman *pontifex maximus*, who possessed unique privileges in the church, including the right to transfer a bishop from one see to another.¹⁴⁰

The hierocratic claims supported by a large part of the clergy were not limited to the argumentation included in liturgical treatises or works of canonical treatment. In the section dedicated to the sanctity of priesthood (περὶ ἱερωσύνη) of his collection of *Two Hundred Theological and Ethical Chapters* Joseph Bryennios states that the priestly authority was higher than the emperor's: εἰ γὰρ βούλει ἱερέα πρὸς βασιλέα τὸ διάφορον ἰδεῖν, τῆς ἐκατέρω δεδομένης ἐξουσίας τὸ μέρος ἐξέταξε· πολλῶ τοῦ βασιλέως ὑψηλότερον τὸν ἱερέα καθήμενον.¹⁴¹ In two hortatory letters addressed to Despot Andronikos of Thessalonike, Symeon reiterated the idea that the ruler should be obedient to the church:

My lord, the priesthood establishes your authority as sacred and accomplishes it by prayers. Therefore the emperors are anointed and are proclaimed by the hierarchs' voices and ordain by divine laws, so that the divine designs be fulfilled. Δέσποτά μου, ἡ ἱερωσύνη τὴν βασιλείαν καθιεροῖ καὶ εὐχαῖς αὐτὴν τελειοῖ [...] Διὸ καὶ χρίονται βασιλεῖς καὶ ἱεραρχικαῖς τελεσιουργοῦνται φωναῖς καὶ νομοθετοῦσι τοῖς θείοις, ὥστε τὰ θεῖα συνίστασθαι.¹⁴²

The downplaying of Manuel's authority in the ecclesiastics' texts by promoting radical hierocratic ideas were supplemented by the attacks against the emperor Manuel himself. Makarios circulated a series of denigratory pamphlets against the emperor which seem to have acquired a relative popularity since the emperor himself considered necessary to answer them in a series of letters which he delivered publicly. In Makarios' legal battle against Matthew I it is clear that many clerics created a group opposed to the emperor. Probably the clearest expression of hostility for the Emperor Manuel's actions in the church came from a later author, Sylvester Syropoulos. His words from the beginning of his *Memoirs*, prove the enduring

¹³⁹ See Balsamon's view in Rhalles-Potles, *Σύνταγμα*, Athens, 1859, vol. 3, 350.

¹⁴⁰ Demetrios Chomatenos (*Πονήματα διάφορα* 631-632) refers to the transfer of Eustathios of Thessalonike at the request of Manuel I Komnenos.

¹⁴¹ J. Bryennios, *Two hundred theological and ethical chapters*, Vindob. theol. gr. 235, f. 47 v.

¹⁴² Symeon-Balfour, 77, 2-7.

legacy of his tendency to act in accordance to the old views that gave the emperor preeminence in the church:

I have always admired the deeds of this wonderful emperor, and I never considered myself capable enough of praising him. Nevertheless, in one respect I cannot praise him: for it is unworthy of his virtue and the wisdom of his much tried soul to bring Christ's Church into slavery. Ἐγὼ δὲ πάντα τὰ τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ βασιλέως θαυμάζων καὶ οὐδὲ ἱκανὸν ἑμαυτὸν κρίνων πρὸς τοὺς ἐπαίνους ἐκείνου, ἔν τοῦτο καὶ μόνον ἐπαινεῖν οὐκ ἔχω ἀνάξιον γὰρ τῆς ἀρετῆς καὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ τῆς συντετριμμένης ἐκείνου καρδίας ἡγοῦμαι, τὸ δουλεῖα ὑποβαλεῖν τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν Χριστοῦ.¹⁴³

In addition to the claims of the two authors, Makarios and Symeon, who dealt extensively with the church-emperor relations, can be adduced the claims of the less attested “group of patriarchal officials,” whose presence was nevertheless felt rather immediately before the Fall of Constantinople. It has been argued that this group constructed its hierocratic agenda around the idea of an “orthodox utopia” with political implications that also pertained to claims of authority over other territories where Orthodoxy was in place.¹⁴⁴ This notion essentially denied the emperor the traditional role of an omnipotent ruler and it also denied the political existence of an 'empire of the Romans,' as it was promoted by the last Palaiologan emperors (and not only by them).¹⁴⁵ As illustration for this idea one can notice most of the ecclesiastics' texts which touch on political issues and which surprise by their tendency to overlook the role of imperial power.¹⁴⁶

Conclusion: why did the ecclesiastics' discourse become more radical?

In an article published several decades ago, I. Ševčenko suggested that the Byzantine authors were much aware of the decline of their state.¹⁴⁷ If this attitude can be illustrated by references in their texts, it is no less true that the Byzantine ecclesiastics seriously engaged in the process of identifying political means of ensuring the administration of Byzantium at a time of crisis. The above analysis has shown that the main argument of the early fifteenth century ecclesiastics did not only concern hotly debated doctrinal matters, such as the *filioque* or the

¹⁴³ Sylvester Syropoulos, *Memoirs*, 2.4.

¹⁴⁴ See above the passage in Bryennios' Λόγος συμβουλευτικός listing the Orthodox peoples who use leavened bread in Church services. Cf. also Joseph Bryennios, *On the rebuilding of the City*, 134 saying that the contribution of all Constantinopolitans who will defend the generations to come: μυριάδας ἀνθρώπων τούς τε νῦν ὄντας καὶ γεννηθῆσόμενους εἰς τὸ ἔξῃς.

¹⁴⁵ P. Gounaridis, “Ἰωσήφ Βρυέννιος, προφήτης τῆς καταστροφῆς, (Joseph Bryennios, prophet of catastrophe)” in *1453: Η ἀλωση τῆς Κωνσταντινούπολης καὶ ἡ μετάβαση ἀπὸ τῶν μεσαιωνικῶν στοὺς νεωτέρους χρόνους*, ed. A. Kioussopoulou, Herakleion 2005, 133-145. See also the recent article by A. Kioussopoulou, “Les hommes d'affaires byzantins et leur rôle politique à la fin du Moyen Âge,” *Historical Review* 7 (2010): 18.

¹⁴⁶ A relevant example here is Joseph Bryennios' admonitory oration, *On the rebuilding of the City*, 2, 273-282.

¹⁴⁷ I. Ševčenko, “The Decline,” 186.

truth of Christianity versus Islam, but that it also included a major social and identity component. In their attempt to construct a political program that would provide solutions during times of dire straits, the churchmen envisaged themselves both as defenders of the social order and as promoters of specific features which they considered the core aspect in defining the Byzantine specificity against the Latin and the Muslim advances.

More importantly for my purposes here, the ecclesiastics active in Manuel's reign grounded their notions of political theology on a radical hierocratic agenda. In particular, the description of the patriarch's nomination indicates that, in the early fifteenth century, the political theology embraced by Pseudo-Kodinos and the anonymous author of the *Life of Arsenios*, was further modified and expanded into a radicalized hierocratic reasoning which claimed that the emperor was given authority by the church while the patriarch was his anointer.¹⁴⁸ To a certain extent the attacks on the imperial authority expressed in the radicalization of the ecclesiastics' discourse are somewhat since the emperor Manuel, unlike his predecessors, was truly knowledgeable of doctrinal religious issues and had close relations with many clerics, both monks and priests. Primarily, the radicalization of discourse was the result of the fact that the church gained not only in prestige vis-à-vis the imperial office, but also in concrete power prerogatives such as the substantial rights as high judges in civil matters.¹⁴⁹ Yet, the scholars who dealt with the issue of the hierocratic claims in Byzantium did not further investigate the other factors which led to the radicalization of discourse. In order to better understand why this process of radicalization took place in the early fifteenth century it is therefore useful to look into the social context and the other themes identifiable in the church writers' texts.

Several factors contributed to this phenomenon. First, well versed canonists and high-ranking ecclesiastics like Makarios and Symeon used the Byzantine awareness of the events of the previous century which generated a negative attitude toward emperors like Michael VIII and John V. Second, the ecclesiastics developed a strong consciousness as a close-knit group which emerges particularly from contemporary accounts such as the intense correspondence and collaboration evident in manuscripts as well as in their common agenda against the

¹⁴⁸ D. Angelov, "The emperor subject to the church," *Imperial Ideology*, 391.

¹⁴⁹ This process which started in the early Palaiologan period became more prominent during the reign of Manuel II who tried to regulate the activity of these *general judges*. He formulated the principles of their activities, according to which all subjects and all cases came under their jurisdiction. See E. Schilbach, "Die Hypotyposis der Katholikai Kritai Ton Romaion vom Juni 1398," *BZ* vol. 61 (1968): 44-70 and P. Lemerle, "Le juge général des Grecs et la réforme judiciaire d'Andronic III," in *Mémorial Louis Petit*, Paris: Mélanges d'histoire et d'archéologie byzantines, 1948, 292-316.

successive attempts of a Church union.¹⁵⁰ Third, the radicalization of their discourse concerning imperial authority was also underpinned by their criticism against contemporary social and political problems.

Their increased awareness of the economic differences and the general criticism of the archontic power had probably a strong bearing on their predominant attitude toward imperial power. The ecclesiastics set the imperial power on an equal footing with the archontic power which in turn was regarded as responsible for the misfortunes of the state and unable to provide the resources for defense and survival. An illustration of the extent to which the imperial authority was considered incapable of providing the Byzantines with the proper means of defense is Symeon's consideration of Emperor Manuel's policies of alliances with the Ottomans and the Venetians as destructive in the Thesalonians' attempts to defend the city's autonomy.

The process of radicalization of the ecclesiastics' discourse continued after the end of Manuel's reign and especially in the reign of the last two emperors who intensified the negotiations of union. As a consequence, several decades later, Mark Eugenikos could emphatically assert his liberty of faith: Οὐδεὶς κυριεύει τῆς ἡμῶν πίστεως, οὐ βασιλεύς, οὐκ ἀρχιερεὺς, οὐ ψευδῆς σύνοδος, οὐκ ἄλλος οὐδεὶς.¹⁵¹

Thus, in the political scheme conceived by the ecclesiastics, the emperor continued to be active but with a considerably diminished role, for the ecclesiastics did not entirely discard the imperial institution. As mentioned previously, earlier in 1393 in a letter addressed to Basil, grand duke of Russia, Patriarch Anthony IV reminded him that the emperor and the church cannot exist separately.¹⁵² In this way, the churchmen redefined the basis of the Byzantine identity, not only in opposition to the Latins and Islam, but also by revisiting and questioning central aspects of political authority. Ultimately, having dissociated the figure of the emperor from their idea of Byzantine identity and having placed it in a secondary position, the Byzantine ecclesiastics provided for Orthodoxy the central place which they reclaimed from the emperor. Indeed, they clearly departed from the views expressed not only by the twelfth century canonists Theodore Balsamon and Demetrios Chomatenos' but also by the fourteenth century ecclesiastics.

¹⁵⁰ See ch.1.

¹⁵¹ Mark Eugenikos, *Letters*, ed. L. Petit, Rome, 1977, 4.2.20-32.

¹⁵² J. Darrouzes, *Regestes*, vol VI, no. 2931, p. 210-211. The same demand addressed to the Russian rulers and ecclesiastics to honor the name of the Byzantine emperor during their liturgies was repeated in another letter to Cyprian, metropolitan of Russia, *ibid.*, no 2937, 215.

Chapter 8:

The imperial rhetoricians

Recent scholarship on late Palaiologan political history has noticed a conflict between a part of the clergy and the non-ecclesiastic elites, particularly the entrepreneurial aristocracy, over various political issues including the nature of the ruler's limits of authority.¹ Thus, unlike the ecclesiastics who rejected the idea of the emperor's omnipotence, a different contemporary group of individuals continued to support and promote the idea of a powerful ruler, much more in tune with the traditional Byzantine theories of kingship. Their support also came at a time of significant political challenges to imperial power. Since, as it will be shown in this section, the members of this group followed rather different career paths, for the sake of simplicity here I will refer to them as *imperial rhetoricians*. By and large, they were skilled lay writers associated with the imperial court who, at different points in their careers, addressed the emperor in public orations, epideictic ones that sought to praise the imperial persona and deeds or deliberative ones that provided counsel for the emperor on specific courses of action. To a large extent, the political project of these public orators was certainly driven by their personal interests. Yet, they also drew the contemporaries' attention to the burning political issues of the day and strove to convert the listeners to their viewpoint. They displayed a high degree of social engagement and were aware that they were acting within a political sphere with its own rules and practices. Such a separate sphere has been defined by John Chortasmenos in terms of court conflicts between ambitious and “vainglorious” officials,² while Isidore described it rather in terms of a fully-fledged *science*, ranking among the highest human preoccupations:

¹ On their social status in the Palaiologan period see I. Toth, “Status and Role of the Imperial Encomiasts in Late Byzantine Society,” in *Imperial Orations in Late Byzantium (1261-1453)*, PhD dissertation, 2003, 190-192. On the idea of the opposition between the ecclesiastics and the entrepreneurial aristocracy see A. Kioussopoulou, “Η πολιτική εξουσία τον 15ο αιώνα,” in *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 81-158. The idea is further investigated in A. Kioussopoulou, “Les hommes d'affaires byzantins et leur rôle politique à la fin du Moyen Âge,” *Historical Review* 7 (2010): 15-21.

² John Chortasmenos, *Moral counsels (Ἠθικά παραγγέλματα)*, in Chortasmenos-Hunger, 238-242. Cf. also the idealized image of the political realm in his *Letter* 51, Chortasmenos-Hunger, 207, 2-4 Τῷ ἐνδοξοτάτῳ ἄρχοντι κυρῷ τῷ Μελισσηνῷ): Τίς μὲν ἐστὶν ὁ τῆς πολιτικῆς ἀρετῆς ὄρος, Πλάτων ἂν εἴποι σαφῶς, ἐμὲ δὲ εἴ τις ἔροιτο, τίνα μάλιστα τῶν νῦν ὄντων ἀνδρα χρηὴ πολιτικὸν καλεῖν. Cf. also, *ibid.*, 22-26 on the πολιτικός ἀνὴρ.

The study of all good things, the education and knowledge of everything, the experience of philosophy, both theoretical and practical, this is the political sphere, on which legislation and justice depend in addition to theology, learning, and natural sciences. Ἀλλὰ τὴν μάθησιν τῶν καλῶν πάντων, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐν πᾶσι παιδείαν καὶ τὴν ἐπιστήμην τῶν ὄλων πραγμάτων καὶ πείραν καὶ τῶν τῆς φιλοσοφίας αὐτῶν ὅσα τοῦ θεωρητικοῦ ταύτης καὶ τοῦ πρακτικοῦ, τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ τὸ πολιτικόν, οὗ τὸ νομοθετικόν καὶ δικαστικόν ἐξήρτηται, κάκεινου τὸ θεολογικόν καὶ μαθηματικόν καὶ φυσιολογικόν.³

So far, a good many studies on Byzantine ideology and political thought have tried to identify the sources and key themes of the official imperial propaganda which, to a great extent, were embraced by the late Palaiologan rhetoricians as well. The older as well as the more recent general overviews of H. Ahrweiler, F. Dvornik, D. Nicol, or S. Takacs provide exhaustive analyses on topics such as the image of the emperor as imitator of God or ruler of the *oikoumenē*.⁴ For the later periods in particular C. Zgoll and H. Hunger pinpointed the major common issues of imperial ideology and propaganda in the second half of the fourteenth century, such as the sacrality of the imperial authority and the connections with the Old Testament models.⁵ Particular attention to the ideological tenets upheld by the court rhetoricians was paid by D. Angelov in his volume on Nicaean and early Palaiologan imperial ideology. He discusses the developments in the court rhetoricians' political thought in the Laskarid and early Palaiologan period and concludes that the militaristic view prevailing in the so-called Empire of Nicaea gave way to a more aristocratic conception. As a specific element of court panegyrics, his analysis revealed the development of different theories of imperial succession.⁶

This section, which aims at supplementing the discussion of the various political discourses taking shape in the late Palaiologan period, will follow the structure of the previous one. After a brief presentation of the main sources used in my discussion,⁷ I will proceed to

³ Isidore, *Panegyric*, 182.27-30.

⁴ H. Ahrweiler, *L'idéologie politique de l'empire byzantin*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1975; F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, 1967; D. Nicol, "Byzantine Political Thought," in *Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, 31-62, S. Takacs, *The Construction of Authority in Ancient Rome and Byzantium*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

⁵ C. Zgoll, "Sakralität von Herrschaft bei Demetrios Kydones" *Heiligkeit- Ehre- Macht. Ein Modell für den Wandel der Herrschaftskonzeption im Spätmittelalter am Beispiel der byzantinischen Kydonesbriefe*, Köln: Böhlau, 2007, 34-123; H. Hunger, *Prooimion: Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiseridee in den Arengen der Urkunden*, Wien: Böhlau, 1964.

⁶ D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology*, particularly chs. 2. "The imperial idea: continuity and change in the imperial image; 3. Rhetorical theories of succession;" 4. "The ideology of imperial government;" 5. "The panegyrist as lobbyists;" 78-183.

⁷ A thorough discussion of the authors biographies and texts in the Palaiologan period is provided by I. Toth, *Imperial Orations in Late Byzantium (1261-1453)*, PhD dissertation, Oxford, 2003, 120-168.

treating the four issues which I dealt with in the previous section on the ecclesiastics' political discourse: class divisions within society, attitudes towards the enemies and the allies of Byzantium, formulation of the Byzantine ethnic particularities, and, finally, the conceptualization of imperial authority. All these elements will help us understand the meaning of imperial authority within this group's discursive practices.

One conspicuous feature of the biographies of the members of this group was that most of them had close connections with the emperor or with the imperial house of the Palaiologoi.⁸ These close relationships were due to common interests in literature (Demetrios Chrysoloras), mentorship (Demetrios Kydones), or service for the emperor (Manuel Chrysoloras, Isidore of Kiev). By the end of the fourteenth century these court rhetoricians were not confined anymore by the constraints of the official oratorical court performances prescribed in the annual series of rhetorical addresses usually delivered on religious feasts.⁹ This relative flexibility and independence allowed them to pursue more openly both their individual interests¹⁰ as well as a political agenda which included, but was not limited to, the glorification of the emperor. Thus, often we find such rhetoricians in the service of other members of the political and social elites. We know for instance that Demetrios Chrysoloras fulfilled the role of *mesazōn* of John VII for several years. Likewise, many of John Chortasmenos' texts, especially the ekphrastic poems and the letters, indicate that he entertained close connections with the Kantakouzenos and the Asanes families.¹¹

The first author to be listed in this group of rhetoricians is Manuel's mentor from his youth years, **Demetrios Kydones**. His family connections with the Kantakouzenoi and later with the Palaiologoi insured him the high ranking position of *mesazōn* as well as the possibility to assert considerable influence on John V's attitude towards an association with the Latins in the 1360s. His early commitment to the doctrine of the Latin church and subsequent

⁸ See ch. 1.

⁹ See I. Toth, *Imperial Orations* and D. Angelov, "Byzantine imperial panegyric as advice literature (1204-1350)," in *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. E. Jeffreys, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003, 55. This situation was largely due to the context of post-1204 rhetorical performance. On the contrary, many imperial panegyrics have survived from the reign of Manuel I Komnenos and the Angeloi emperors (1185-1204). On this type of rhetorical recitations see also P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, 248.

¹⁰ Instances of requests addressed to the emperor can be identified in the letters addressed to the emperor by John Chortasmenos and Demetrios Chrysoloras. Throughout the late Palaiologan period panegyrics continued to constitute platforms used for requesting benefits. E.g. see Michael Apostoles' *prosphōnēma* addressed to Constantine XI: Ταῦτά μοι νῦν, θειότατε βασιλεῦ, ὑπὲρ ὧν ὑβρίζομην ἀδίκως καὶ ἴσως γε παρωρώμην ἀπ' εὐσεβοῦς εὗ μάλα διανοίας πρὸς τὸ σὸν εἴρηται κράτος. Σὺ δ' αὐτός, δικαστὴς ἀκριβῆς τῶν πραγμάτων γενόμενος, ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀδικουμένῳ καὶ κακῶς ἔχοντι περὶ τὰλλα βοήθησον, ἐκείνους δὲ ὡς διαβάλλοντας ἴσθι καὶ ἀπεριμερίμνως ὑβρίζοντας (*Prosphōnēma* 2, 87.5-10).

¹¹ On these connections see Chortasmenos-Hunger, 45.

conversion was expressed in both his letters addressed to various people in power as well as in a series of orations which arguably positioned him as the foremost representative of the pro-Latin and anti-Ottoman position.¹² His disciple, **Manuel Chrysoloras**, the emperor's most active ambassador in the West, seemingly supported a similar strategy of *rapprochement* between the Byzantines and the Latins especially in his *Comparison between the Old and the New Rome*. In another text addressed to the emperor, an epistolary discourse, the ambassador praises the emperor for the literary achievements in his *Funeral oration for brother Theodore* and at the same time summed up the major tenets of imperial authority.¹³ Another Chrysoloras, **Demetrios**, was known for his friendship with the Emperors Manuel II and John VII as well as for his refined literary skills displayed at the court in several texts. Two of his texts, *The Comparison between the ancient rulers and the ruler of today*, and *A hundred letters to Emperor Manuel*, were addressed to the emperor. The first text had the aspect of a panegyric and the second drew more on the genre of the so-called princely mirrors. **John Chortasmenos**, another late Byzantine learned scholar and manuscript collector, was well connected with the members of the ruling elite, as indicated by his epistolary collection. Apart from his letters and the poems addressed to Byzantine aristocrats, he also authored a panegyric which he addressed to the emperor upon his return from Thessalonike in 1416.¹⁴ **Isidore**, who later became the Latin cardinal of Kiev, was the emperor's copyist and later on remained at court in the service of John VIII to whom he addressed an extensive imperial oration in 1429 but which heavily praises Manuel II as well.¹⁵ The last of these authors, **George Gemistos Plethon**, a scholar who benefited from his connections with the Palaiologan Despots of Morea, retains a special profile in this series and among Byzantine scholars in general. In several of his texts written during Manuel's reign he strove to provide an outline for a reform of the system of government focused on the Peloponnese but which could also be applied to the entire Byzantine state. Three of his texts, the *Advisory Address to the Despot Theodore on the Peloponnese*, the *Address to the Emperor Manuel on the affairs in the Peloponnese*, and a *Letter to the Emperor on the Isthmus* reveal his political outlook and beliefs which envisioned social and political reforms. The motivation behind these three writings dating to the period between 1407 and 1418 most

¹² F. Tinnefeld, "Plädoyer für eine Zusammenarbeit mit den Lateinern gegen die Türken," *Die Briefe des Demetrios Kydones. Themen und literarische Formen*, Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2010, 206-214

¹³ This lengthy text is sharply divided in different sections treating both issues of literary and rhetorical theory and effectiveness (e.g. the rules of funeral orations, Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 65-83) as well as matters of ethical-religious importance (e.g. God, faith, virtue, justice, legislation, human nature, *Ibid.*, 83-94).

¹⁴ The oration (Chortasmenos-Hunger, 217-224) has been dubbed by the author πανηγυρικός and προσφωνηματικός. For summaries of the oration see *Ibid.*, 125-126 and I. Toth, *Imperial orations*, 149-150.

¹⁵ *PP*, vol 3, 132-199.

probably originated in the events surrounding the visits of Manuel II to the Peloponnese.¹⁶ These three compositions probably stood as the basis of the famous but now partially lost *Book of laws* by Plethon.¹⁷ To all these texts and authors, there can be added two further anonymous texts: an oration upon the emperor's arrival (ἐπιβατήριος λόγος) transmitted in Vat. gr. 914 and a panegyric oration preserved in Vat. gr. 632, which cannot however be attributed with certainty to any of the above writers.¹⁸ In addition, the histories of fifteenth century Byzantium as well as other shorter texts, like John Anagnostes' *History of the siege of Thessalonike*, the satirical text of *Mazaris' journey to Hades*, or the *Anonymous account of the liberation of Constantinople* edited by P. Gautier can provide further elements on the rhetoricians' approaches to the issues enumerated above.¹⁹

The texts of these court authors must not be discarded as merely propagandistic. Some of these authors were influential amongst contemporaries. For instance, Plethon's political social and political ideas found an echo in the texts of his students: Laonikos Chalkokondyles, who studied under Plethon at Mistra in the 1440s and wrote after the Ottoman conquest, looked forward to a day when a Greek king and his successors would administer their own affairs and become sole rulers of their countries.²⁰ John Argyropoulos, an admirer of Gemistos, addressed John VIII as 'Sun Emperor of Greece.'²¹ Likewise a letter of Cardinal Bessarion to Constantine XI on the fortification of the Isthmus of Corinth, includes the description of a political system that would imitate the Lacedemonians' polity.²² The fame and ideas of the late

¹⁶ For a discussion of the dates of composition of these works, see C. M. Woodhouse, *Gemistos Plethon: The Last of the Hellenes*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 92; I. Mamalakes, *Ὁ Γεώργιος Γεμιστός Πλήθων*, Athens, 1939, 73; F. Masai, *Pléthon et le platonisme de Mistra*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1956, 205; D. A. Zakythinis and C. Maltezos, *Le Despotat grec de Morée*, vol. 1, London: Variorum, 1975, 176; N. P. Peritore, "The Political Thought of George Gemistos Plethon," *Polity*, 10 (1977): 171. Manuel's visits in the Peloponnese have been investigated by J. Barker, *Manuel II*, 273-280, 301-318.

¹⁷ *Œuvres Complètes de Gennade Scholarios*, ed. L. Petit, X. A. Sideridès and M. Jugie, vol. 4 (Paris, 1935), 180.

¹⁸ The anonymous panegyric of Vat. gr. 914 has been recently edited by I. Polemes, "Two praises of the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos: Problems of authorship," *BZ* 2011: 699-714. The text in Vat. gr. 632 was edited by Ch. Dendrinis (*Porphyrogenita*, 423-456) as a funeral oration addressed to Manuel. However, I. Polemes argued that this was actually a panegyric (Polemes, *ibid.*). I. Polemes tentatively attributed the texts to writers from the emperor's entourage, Makarios Makres and Isidore of Kiev, yet, a definitive attribution can be assigned to none of them (*ibid.*).

¹⁹ G. Tsaras, Ἰωάννου Ἀναγνώστου Διήγησις περὶ τῆς τελευταίας ἀλώσεως τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης. Μονωδία ἐπὶ τῇ ἀλώσει τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης. Thessalonike: Tsaras, 1958: 70-76. P. Gautier, "Un récit inedit du siège de Constantinople par les Turcs," *REB* 23 (1965): 103-110.

²⁰ Laonikos Chalkokondyles, *Historical Expositions*, I.2

²¹ Ὡ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἦλιε βασιλεῦ, John Argyropoulos, *A monody on Emperor John VIII Palaiologos*, in Ἀργυροπούλεια, ed. S. Lampros, Athens, 1910, 318.19.

²² Σὸν οὖν ἐστὶν ἡγεμονικώτατε ἄνερ, κανόνας αὐτοῖς βίου καὶ στάθμην παραδόντα, τὴν εὐνομωτάτην Λακεδαιμονίων πολιτείαν ἐπανασώσασθαι. Καὶ γάρ, εἰ μὴ φιλόσοφος γεγονῶς ἐβασίλευσας, ἀλλὰ βασιλεὺς ὢν ἐφιλοσόφεις τε καὶ φιλοσοφῶν οὐ πάντη. διὸ τὸ μὲν τοῖς πολεμικοῖς, τὸ δὲ τοῖς εἰρηνικοῖς καὶ πολιτικοῖς πολιτεύμασι, τὴν θρυλλομένην ἐκείνην εὐδαιμονίαν ἀποδώσεις ταῖς πόλεσι καὶ τὸ αἶδιον ὄνομά τε καὶ εὐκλειαν ἔξεις καὶ ζήσεις παρὰ τῇ μνήμῃ τῶν ὀψιγόνων ἀνθρώπων ἀθάνατος, οὐδὲ συναποθανεῖται σου τῷ

Palaiologan panegyrists also went beyond Byzantium: for instance in Italy, Plethon was appreciated for his knowledge of Platonic philosophy and Manuel Chrysoloras' *Comparison between the Old and the New Rome* was translated into Latin later on.²³

8.1. Education and social divide

Although the Byzantine political thinkers rarely advocated reforms of political institutions, they nevertheless tended to prize education and individual moral reform, be it conservative or devoid of an ideological background. Their criticism against contemporary dominant cultural values and social realities largely shaped their political attitudes. In the late Palaiologan period, just like the ecclesiastics, the imperial rhetoricians became well aware of the difficult social and economic situation faced by the empire, particularly during the siege of 1394-1402. In an anonymous account of the siege of Constantinople, the author justified the Byzantine weakness during the Ottoman siege of 1394-1402 by reminding the audience of the inhabitants' immoral excesses (*hybris*):

This virtuous emperor was forced to submit to a most impious barbarian and the Roman Empire became so weak during those times that the affairs of the Romans were left with no other resources but the City of Constantinople. Under these circumstances, as the situation constantly worsened, the Romans suffered all kinds of misfortunes due to their excesses. Ὁ τοιοῦτος τὴν ἀρετὴν βασιλεὺς εἴκειν ἠναγκάζετο βαρβάρῳ δυσσεβεστάτῳ καὶ οὕτω τὰ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐταπεινώθησαν ἐν ἐκείνοις τοῖς χρόνοις ὡς μηδὲν ἄλλο σχεδὸν ὑπολειφθῆναι τῇ βασιλείᾳ πρὸς ἀφορμὴν προσόδων ἢ μόνην τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν [...] Ἐπεὶ δέ, τούτων οὕτω γινομένων, αἰεὶ τὰ χεῖρω προὔβαινε καὶ μυρίων ἀνεπίμπλαντο Ῥωμαῖοι συμφορῶν, ὕβρεως ἔνεκα.²⁴

But if the ecclesiastics disapproved of the low ethics and the improvisations in matters of Orthodox faith, in addition to the moral decline of the state, the imperial rhetoricians bemoaned the deterioration in the levels of knowledge and education. In the section dedicated to *paideia* from his *Epistolary discourse* Manuel Chrysoloras urged the emperor to support education in Constantinople, at a time when many Byzantine teachers preferred to move to

σώματι ἢ φήμη τε καὶ τὸ ὄνομα ὡς τῶν πλείστων βασιλέων τε καὶ ἀρχόντων, ἀλλὰ τῇ νῦν εὐφημίᾳ ἀνάλογον καὶ τὴν μετὰ θάνατον εὐκλειαν ἔξεις, ἃ παντὸς ἀργύρου τε καὶ χρυσοῦ πρότερα ποιεῖσθαι ἀνάγκη, L. Mohler, *Aus Bessarions Gelehrtenkreis*, Paderborn, 1942, 446, 1-10.

²³ On the knowledge of Plethon's political and philosophical ideas in Italy see P.-R. Blum, "Et nuper Plethon'-Ficino's praise of George Gemistos Plethon and his rational religion," *Laus Platonici Philosophi. Marsilio Ficino and his Influence*, ed. S. Clucas, P.-J. Forshaw, Leiden: Brill, 2011, 89-104. The Latin translation of Manuel Chrysoloras' *Comparison* belongs to Francesco Aleari and was edited by F. Niutta in *Manuele Crisolora. Le due Rome confronta tra Roma e Constantinopoli*, Bologna: Patron Editore, 2000.

²⁴ P. Gautier, ed., "Un récit inédit du siège de Constantinople," 104.28-106.1.

Italy and undertake teaching positions there:

It is paradoxical that in Italy, as well as in other places certain people study our literature and have become knowledgeable in this, but in Greece and in Constantinople it is neglected. This must not happen, for the love of God: but despite this situation, help the common people, support the men of old who wrote something so that their texts and their good and honorable efforts would not disappear. ἄτοπον δὲ καὶ ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ μὲν, ἴσως δὲ καὶ ἄλλοθι, τινὰς σπουδάζειν περὶ ἡμετέρους λόγους καὶ νῦν εἶναι τοὺς γινώσκοντας, ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς Ἑλλάδος καὶ τῆς μητροπόλεως ἀμελεῖσθαι. Μὴ δὴ τοῦτο, πρὸς Θεοῦ, γινέσθω· ἀλλὰ κἂν τούτῳ βοήθησον μὲν τῷ κοινῷ γένει, βοήθησον δὲ τοῖς παλαιοῖς ἀνδράσι, τοῖς τε συγγραφοῖσιν, ὡς τε μὴ τὰ αὐτῶν ἔργα καὶ τοὺς αὐτῶν πόνους, οὕτω καλοῦς καὶ τιμίους ἀπολέσθαι.²⁵

In his letters, Kydones showed himself particularly bitter regarding the impossibility to find individuals knowledgeable of the ancient rhetorical skills in Constantinople. This attitude persisted until the last decades of Byzantium. Likewise, Bessarion, another high profile Byzantine scholar, asserted that the Byzantines, once considered highly educated individuals by their western peers, were now frowned upon as ignorants. In a deliberative address to the emperor Constantine XI, Bessarion noted that the technical knowledge and the wisdom of the Byzantines had almost completely vanished or had been transferred to the Latins. The level of education, Bessarion concluded, could be raised only by inviting Latin specialists to Constantinople or by sending Byzantine students to Italy.²⁶

To a large extent, these remarks on the state of learning and education in Byzantium were connected with proposals to introduce social reforms meant to improve the economic situation of large impoverished categories of the population. Ever since the early fourteenth century, rhetoricians noticed the increasing social gap between the rich and the poor. For instance, in an address to the Thessalonians, Thomas Magistros (1275-1347) advocated the idea of harmony and concord of the interests among the members of social and political elites and the rest of the population (οἱ προὔχειν λαχόντες) and the less well off (οἱ πολλοί). Magistros thus urged the elites, that is the citizens-*politai*, to maintain their group cohesion and called

²⁵ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 119. Cf. the entire section dedicated to education, the section titled *paideia*, 117-123.

²⁶ According to Bessarion, these half dozen students should not be too young, nor should they be too old, for otherwise it would be difficult for them to learn a foreign language. Their program of study should be technological: metallurgy, mechanics, armaments, shipbuilding; the manufacture of what we would today call consumer goods might be looked into also, but this was less important. Cf. I. Ševčenko, "The Decline," 177-180. Ševčenko argues that all of Bessarion's proposals must have sounded strange to some members of the Byzantine upper classes. When they were young, they had had to memorize the elegant periods of Aelius Aristides and Libanius, not a manual on shipbuilding, in order to qualify for important positions. Therefore Bessarion had to temper his advice. He explained that no loss of fame was involved in learning from the Latins.

upon a humane attitude towards the city's economically disadvantaged population.²⁷ The scholar noticed that the actions of both these groups were responsible for the political situation of the city. Likewise, Alexios Makrembolites' (fl. 1342-1349) opinions on the redistribution of wealth expressed in his text dealing with the social divisions in Byzantium the *Dialog between the rich and the poor* (1343) seem to have found an echo in the attitude developed by the end of the fourteenth century.²⁸ Like their ecclesiastic contemporaries, Isidore Glabas or Symeon of Thessalonike, John Anagnostes or Demetrios Kydones presented the economic divisions in Byzantine society as one of the major reasons for the empire's failure to defend itself properly. Both authors noticed that the difficult political situation was largely due to internal social gaps especially within Thessalonian society.²⁹

Important hints at the intellectuals' awareness of the social divisions were offered by other authors as well. In his *Thanksgiving oration for the Mother of God*,³⁰ which celebrated the delivery of the City from the Ottoman siege (1403) Demetrios Chrysoloras observed that in order to further enjoy divine protection it was necessary to establish a certain level of social and economic fairness. Chrysoloras wrote:

If we offer the proper things to the all-pure one [the Virgin], she will deliver us not only from our present misfortunes, but also from those expected in the future. And how will this happen? If those who possess do not revel in their possessions by themselves, but share them with those who do not possess. For it is wrong that some live in luxury while others perish of hunger, and those who suffer cannot rejoice easily, seeing that some enjoy all pleasures, whereas they themselves have a share in nothing. "Ἄν γὰρ τὰ εἰκότα προσφέρωμεν τῇ πανάγνῳ, ἀπαλλάξει μὴ μόνον ἡμᾶς τῶν παρόντων, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἐλπιζομένων κακῶν ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι. Ἔσται δὲ τοῦτο πῶς; Ἄν μὴ καθ' αὐτοὺς οἱ ἔχοντες ἐορτάζοιεν, ἀλλὰ κοινωνοῖεν τῶν ἀγαθῶν τοῖς μὴ κεκτημένοις. Ἄτοπον γὰρ τοὺς μὲν τρυφᾶν, τοὺς δὲ λιμῶ διαφθεῖρεσθαι καὶ οἱ πάσχοντες οὐκ ἂν ἐορτάζοιεν εὐχερῶς, τοῖς μὲν τὸ πᾶν, αὐτοῖς δὲ μηδὲν

²⁷ N. Gaul, "Rhetor: Eintracht in den Städten," in *Thomas Magistros*, 144-159.

²⁸ I. Ševčenko, "Alexios Makrembolites and his 'Dialog between the Rich and the Poor'," *ZRVI* 6 (1960): 187-228.

²⁹ Kydones, *Letters* 273 (addressed to Rhadenos, 1384), 299. 8-17 (addressed to Emperor Manuel, 1384), Οὐ νῦν πρῶτον πόλις μεγάλη βαρβάρων ὕβριν ἠνέσχετο, οὐδὲ φόβῳ πολεμίοις ἔκλεισε πύλας, οὐδ' ἀπὸ τῶν τειχῶν εἶδε τεμνομένην αὐτῇ τὴν περιοικίδα, οὐδ' ἀγορᾶ πτωχεύουση ἀντὶ τῆς πρὶν ἀνθούσης ἐχρήσατο. οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ νῦν πρῶτον ὑπὸ τῶν χειρόνων εἶσω τειχῶν κατεκλείσθησαν οἱ βελτίους, καὶ σκωμμάτων ὑπὸ τῶν πολλακίς ἠττημένων οἱ νικῆσαντες ἤκουσαν; See also John Anagnostes, *The Siege of Thessalonike*, Ταύτη τοι οὖν τῶν πολεμίων διὰ πάντων ἰσχυρῶν δεικνυμένων, τοῦ πολέμου τε μηδαμῶς ἀμελούντων καὶ πάντων ἡμῶν ἐν ταραχῇ πολλῷ καὶ φόβῳ καθεστηκότων καὶ τῶν μὲν παύσασθαι τοῦ πολεμεῖν τὸν Μουράτην ὑπονοούντων, τῶν δὲ τὴν ἡμετέραν ἀπώλειαν προσδοκόντων καὶ διατεινομένων μὴ ἂν ἄλλως γενέσθαι ἢ τὴν πόλιν ἀλῶναι, —οὕτως οὖν τῶν πραγμάτων διακειμένων καὶ πολλῆς ἐν ἡμῖν συγχύσεως οὔσης, τῶν μὲν πρὸς τὸ πολεμεῖν ἴσως ἀσχολουμένων, τῶν δὲ καταναρκωθέντων καθάπαξ, ἑτέρων δὲ τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν βελῶν τραύμασιν ἐναποθανόντων, ἐνίων δὲ καὶ φευγόντων ἀπὸ τῶν τειχῶν, ed. K. Tsaras, *Ἰωάννου Ἀναγνώστου Διήγησις περὶ τῆς τελευταίας ἀλώσεως τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης. Μονωδία ἐπὶ τῇ ἀλώσει τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης*. Thessalonike: 1958, 12.

³⁰ P. Gautier, ed. "Action de grâces de Démétrius Chrysoloras à la Théotokos pour l' anniversaire de la bataille d'Ankara (28 Juillet 1403)," *REB*, 19 (1961): 348-356.

μετεῖναι τῶν ἡδέων ὀρῶντες.³¹

Accordingly, Demetrios then urged his fellow citizens to adopt an austere way of life and not to indulge themselves in luxuriousness:

Let us not eat excessively. Let us not become like southern Libya, an arid and infertile land. Now, when we blame depravity, drunkenness, and love of money, let us not practice these. Now, when we exhort others to tell the truth, let us not turn our tongue and tell lies. Now, let us not allow pleasure to be an enemy in our words and let us not strive to defeat Epicure in pleasure, but let us bring gifts as sacrifices to the Virgin the one who gave us gifts, for she will rejoice upon seeing our gifts. What does this mean? Faith and humility in love. Μὴ οὖν δειπνῶμεν πολυτελῶς. Μὴ γενώμεθα νότια Λιβύης, γῆ διακεκαυμένη καὶ ἄκαρπος. Μὴ, λαγνείας καὶ μέθης καὶ φιλαργυρίας ἤδη κατηγοροῦντες, ἐκμελετῶμεν ἔργοις αὐτά. Μὴ, ἀληθεύειν ἄλλους προτρέποντες, κινουμένης δὲ τῆς γλώττης, ψευδῶμεθα. Μὴ τῷ λόγῳ μὲν ἡμῖν ἐχθρὸν ἡδονὴ καὶ τὸν Ἐπίκουρον ἐν τούτῳ νικᾶν σπουδάζωμεν, ἀλλὰ θύσωμεν Παρθένῳ μεγαλοδώρῳ δῶρα, οἷς αὐτὴ χαίρει. Τί δ' ἐστὶ; Πίστις καὶ ταπεινῶσις ἐν ἀγάπῃ.³²

Regardless of its moral undertones, Chrysoloras' text composed at a time when Constantinople had been saved from destruction by Tamerlane's attack against Bayezid, pointed to the deep economic and social differentiations among the residents of the capital. The solution he envisaged regarded mainly the re-distribution of wealth from which would benefit the majority of inhabitants struck by poverty. According to Chrysoloras, in addition to divine action³³ the wealth-redistribution represented a solution for stopping the Constantinopolitans from fleeing the city into the enemies' territories. However, at the same time, Chrysoloras, following the propagandistic trend in the court genres, was clearly trying to draw a positive picture of the situation in Constantinople in contrast to the account of Clavijo which described the city's ruined houses, churches, and monasteries, its conspicuously sparse population, and the rural appearance of this once glamorous urban center.³⁴

Kydones' and Chrysoloras' remarks on the necessity of social reform based on the redistribution of wealth found a fully fledged elaboration in a completely new political and

³¹ "Action de grâces," 356, 142-8.

³² Ibid., 149-156.

³³ Ibid., 105-110: 14. Ἀγωνίζεται γὰρ καὶ νικῶμεν· λύει δεσμὰ Ῥωμαίων, συντρίβει τοὺς πολεμίους· κλείει πύλας πόλεων ἀλλοτρίων, ἀνοίγει τὰς ἡμετέρας· νεκροὶ τυράννου, τυραννευομένους ζωογονεῖ· δεσμεύει γένος ἀλλότριον, ἐλευθεροῖ τὸ ἡμετέρον· καταργεῖ τὴν ἐκείνων ἀνάβασιν, ἀνυψοῖ κατάβασιν εὐσεβῶν· ἐξορίζει τὴν δυναστείαν ἐχθρῶν, πορίζει βασιλείᾳ Ῥωμαίων δύναμιν· διώκει γένος τῶν ἀλλοφύλων, τῶν εὐσεβῶν ὡς δέον ἐφέλκεται.

³⁴ Demetrios Chrysoloras in his *Oration to the Mother of God* presents a triumphalist vision of the Mother of God's protection of the City: Ibid: "Ὡ ξένον θαῦμα. Τίνα τρόπον ἐπαινέσω τὴν κόρη; Ὅτι δουλείας ἡμᾶς ἠλευθέρωσεν ἢ ὅτι καὶ τοὺς πολεμίους διέφθειρε καὶ ταῦτα μετὰ πολλῆς προσθήκης ἐκάτερον; Ὅτι γὰρ ἀνοίγεται πολιορκουμένη πόλις θαυμαστὸν ἴσως ὅτι δὲ καὶ ὁ διώκων ὄχρετο δράκων θαυμαστότερον· τὸ δὲ καὶ παρὰ τῶν ὁμοφύλων αὐτὰ συμβαίνειν, τοῦτο παντὸς ἐπέκεινα θαύματος.

social system imagined by Plethon and presented to the emperor and his son, Theodore II Palaiologos, Despot of Morea, in several advisory texts.³⁵ In his attempt to provide a solution for the Byzantine political crisis, Plethon envisaged a political system inspired by Plato's *Republic* that put forward the idea of an ideal society where every citizen belonged to a particular class with a specific social function: τὸ αὐτουργικόν, τὸ διακονικόν, and τὸ ἀρχικόν φύλον.³⁶ The first class was to be made up of husbandmen, that is, farmers, shepherds and those who could work the land by their own hands; the second was to consist of day-labourers, but also of the craftsmen, merchants and dealers, and of all those who supply services; and the third class was to include the guardians or protectors in charge with governing and administration. Within his system, Plethon emphasized the idea of social justice, arguing for the belief in a deity whose main feature was the disposal of justice.³⁷ The social division which he envisaged would have insured a righteous distribution of wealth according to each individual's role. More exactly, Plethon's texts proposed radical agrarian reforms according to which the land would belong to all its inhabitants, and no one would have the right to claim any part of it as private property. Instead, land resources were supposed to be redistributed to those who could best make use of them, with each individual, according to his abilities, putting an area under cultivation and making it productive.³⁸ Tax should not take the form of ill-treatment similar to enslavement, but be such as will seem light and appropriate to the taxpayers, as well as of a nature sufficient to provide appropriate means for the affairs of the state.³⁹ Instead of extraordinary taxes, whose level and time of collection could change significantly, Plethon proposed that there should be one tax calculated according to a single set formula, and imposed annually during the season which the contributors will find least

³⁵ On Plethon's social and political reforms see T.S. Nikolaou, *Αἱ περὶ πολιτείας καὶ δικαίου ἰδέαι τοῦ Γ. Πλήθωνος*, Thessalonike: Center for Byzantine Research, 1989. Likely Gemistos was also aware of earlier developments regarding social and political reforms. Significantly, Gemistos seems to have known Demetrios Kydones well. See F. Masai, *Pléthon et le platonisme de Mistra*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 62; I. Mamalakes, Ὁ Γεώργιος Γεμιστὸς Πλήθων, Athens: Verlag der Byzantinisch-neugriechischen Jahrbücher, 1939, 18; C. M. Woodhouse, *George Gemistos Plethon: the Last of the Hellenes*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986, 22.

³⁶ On Plethon's social-political and religious utopia and its possible connections with similar ideas in the fifteenth century Muslim world see N. Siniossoglou, "Sect and Utopia in shifting empires: Plethon, Elissaios, Beddredin," *BMGS* 36 (2012): 38-55.

³⁷ *Admonitory Oration for Despot Theodore* (Συμβουλευτικός λόγος πρὸς τὸν Δεσπότην Θεόδωρον), 119-20. See also N. P. Peritore, "The Political Thought of Gemistos Plethon: A Renaissance Byzantine Reformer," *Polity* 10 (1977): 160-172 and C. P. Baloglou, "The Institutions of Ancient Sparta in the Work of Pletho," in *Proceedings of the International Congress on Plethon and his Time*, Athens : Diethnēs Hetaireia Plēthōnikōn kai Vyzantinōn Meletōn, 2003, 311-326.

³⁸ Plethon, *Address to Emperor Manuel Palaiologos* (Εἰς Μανουὴλ Παλαιολόγον), in *PP*, 3, 260-1.

³⁹ Plethon, *Admonitory oration addressed to Despot Theodore* (Συμβουλευτικός λόγος πρὸς τὸν Δεσπότην Θεόδωρον), in *PP*, 3, 123.

burdensome.⁴⁰ With this in mind, and also considering the need to determine the most efficient way for the apparatus of government to gather funds, Gemistos listed a number of possibilities like forced labour, fixed payments in cash or kind, a tax of a percentage of production. He proposed that a third of production should go to the guardians or ruling class, while the other two thirds should remain with those who provide labour and capital.⁴¹ The tax, he suggested, should be paid not in money but in kind, while those drawing their income from public funds should also draw it in kind, decreasing the need for the circulation of money.⁴²

In addition to the idea that commercial exchange should be limited, and primarily take the form of barter, Gemistos strongly rejected consumerism. All desire for luxury items must be restricted, he claimed, for ‘the way of life of citizens, and notably of those who govern, should not be luxurious but measured’.⁴³ He especially argued against the purchase of foreign clothing and other useless objects, arguing that it is much more appropriate for people to dress in clothes made locally, out of native fabrics, rather than in woollen stuff brought ‘from the Atlantic Ocean’ and manufactured into garments ‘beyond the Ionian Sea’.⁴⁴ In any case, the Peloponnese, according to him, was capable of producing goods sufficient to cover the needs of its inhabitants provided that export is avoided; for this reason, whatever was produced should remain in this country and not reach the hands of foreigners.⁴⁵ Such a policy could be easily achieved through the imposition of a prohibitive tax upon the said foreigners, who will then be heavily disadvantaged and unable to compete when seeking to acquire goods.⁴⁶ All in all, despite their singularity it appears nevertheless that Gemistos' detailed measures of reforming the state apparatus reflected some of the concerns of the late Byzantine scholars.

8.2. Enemies and allies

Such texts which provided solutions and explanations for the sudden changes occurring in Byzantine society indicate that the late Byzantine imperial rhetoricians did not regard the political decline as an irreversible process.⁴⁷ The defeat of Bayezid's armies in 1402 made the

⁴⁰ Plethon, *Address to Emperor Manuel Palaiologos*, in *PP*, 3, 255-6.

⁴¹ Plethon, *Admonitory oration addressed to Despot Theodore*, in *PP* 122-3, 132; Plethon, *Address to Emperor Manuel Palaiologos*, in *PP*, 3, 253-5.

⁴² Plethon, *Address to Emperor Manuel Palaiologos*, in *PP*, 3, 255-6.

⁴³ Plethon, *Admonitory oration addressed to Despot Theodore*, in *PP*, 3, 124.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*;

⁴⁵ Plethon, *Address to Emperor Manuel Palaiologos*, in *PP*, 3, 263.

⁴⁶ Plethon, *Admonitory oration addressed to Despot Theodore*, in *PP*, 3, 128, 157; *Address to Emperor Manuel Palaiologos*, in *PP*, 3, 264.

⁴⁷ *PP*, 3, 246-265, IV, 32-45. See also A.G. Keller, “A Byzantine Admirer of Western Progress; Cardinal Bessarion,”

Byzantines hopeful that the end was still far away despite the temporary disasters.⁴⁸ The attempts to provide solutions consisted not only in preaching moral and economic reforms but also in rhetorically emphasizing the destructive role of the forces hostile to Byzantium⁴⁹ or identifying a reliable military ally. A topic that repeatedly occurred in their texts was Bayezid's military pressure and his siege against Constantinople in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. In his panegyric Isidore described it in detail emphasizing the contrast between Bayezid's boasting on his strength and his humiliating defeat by Tamerlane:

At that time Tamerlane ruled over Persia and Media, Hyrkania, and Bactria, and over many other peoples in the Caucasus and attacked with a great army and chivalry and around Ankara he crashed Bayezid and chased him away and his entire army, and put in chains that arrogant ruler. And then a miracle takes place. Ἦρχε δὲ τηνικαῦτα Περσίδος ἐκεῖνος καὶ Μηδικῆς, Ὑρκανίων τε καὶ Βακτριῶν καὶ πολλῶν ἑτέρων γενῶν τῶν καὶ ἐς Καυκάσια ὄρη ἀνηκόντων, καὶ ὄρμᾳ δυνάμει πολλαῖς καὶ πάσαις ἵππικαῖς, καὶ περίπου τὴν Ἄγκυραν συντρίψας αὐτὸν καὶ κατατροπώσαμενος αὐτοῖς παισίν, αὐταῖς δυνάμει πάσαις, αἰρεῖ τὸν ἀγέρωχον ἐκεῖνον καὶ ὑψαυχένα δεσμεῖ. Καὶ δείκνυται θέαμα.⁵⁰

Unlike the ecclesiastics who, to a great extent, dismissed the foreign support, which could have come only from the Latins, and suggested that the Byzantines alone should defend themselves, most imperial rhetoricians supported the idea of an alliance with the more powerful Christian neighbor, despite the differences of doctrine. The idea of an alliance with the Latins became increasingly popular among the panegyrists of the late Palaiologan period, with the result that the reign of John VIII Palaiologos saw the development of a deep conflict between, on the one hand, the clergy, and, on the other hand, the aristocracy and the emperor whose ideas of Church union were conveyed by the court rhetoricians.⁵¹

The main supporter of an alliance with the Latins against the Ottomans was Demetrios Kydones.⁵² This idea, which fueled many of Kydones' diplomatic efforts was the major theme of

The Cambridge History Journal, 11 (1953-1955): 343-248. See Kydones' exhortation to the Byzantines to shake off their apathy and to halt the Turkish advance by a greater display of vigor.

⁴⁸ Cf. Demetrios Chrysoloras' *Oration to the Mother of God*, a text written to thank the Mother of God for the unexpected outcome of the siege of Constantinople: Φρίττει πάσα πόλις τοῦ μυστηρίου τὴν δύναμιν. Ὡς θαυμαστὰ τὰ ἔργα σου, δέσποινα. Ἐταπείνωσας ἡμᾶς, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξέτριψας· ἠσθενήσαμεν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπεθάνομεν· ἐφθάρημεν, ἀλλ' οὐ κατεφθάρημεν [...] «ἔσωσας ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀλλοφύλων» κενούς ἔδειξας αὐτοῦς κατὰ τῆς σῆς μελετήσαντας πόλεως (*Action de grâces*, 47.21-34).

⁴⁹ An example of earlier rhetorical treatments of enemies is identifiable in Thomas Magistros' orations, N. Gaul, "Lehrer und Gelehrter: Polemon und die Türken vor Thessalonike," in *Thomas Magistros*, 136-144.

⁵⁰ *PP* 3, 161.26-163.9.

⁵¹ I. Djuric, *Le crépuscule*, 239-319.

⁵² "De non reddenda Gallipoli," *PG*, 154, 977d, Kydones praised the Latins and assimilated them to the Byzantines: Who are the more familiar allies of the Romans than the Romans? Or who are more trustworthy than those who have the same fatherland? Τίνες Ῥωμαίοις Ῥωμαίων οικειότεροι σύμμαχοι; ἢ τίνες ἀξιοπιστότεροι τῶν τὴν αὐτὴν ἐχόντων πατρίδα;

most of his texts, including the admonitory speeches, the *Oratio pro subsidio Latinorum* and *De non reddenda Callipoli*.⁵³ In the former composition, as in other texts,⁵⁴ Kydones used the term βάρβαροι assuming that the Ottomans represented an uncivilized, impious, and cruel people. He provided a long list of their crimes and immoral acts, concluding that their aggressiveness provoked the Byzantines' present situation.⁵⁵ Furthermore, in condemning the Ottoman action Kydones insisted on the opposition between the idea of freedom and the idea of slavery. In the other oration, *De non reddenda Callipoli*, he treated the same themes, identifying the Ottomans as the major threat of the Byzantine state and defending the idea that Gallipoli was a strategic place for the Byzantines.⁵⁶ Demetrios' treatment of the Turkish menace combines aspects of ideological opposition, an assessment of the military and strategic situation, as well as disapproval of pro-Ottoman views among the Byzantines. As for the allies which the Byzantines could engage with, Kydones discarded the help of Bulgarians and Serbians, who, despite the similarities of faith, had proved to be unreliable allies in the past.⁵⁷ On the contrary, the Latins, apart from the numerous cultural ties, possessed the necessary military experience required in such circumstances.⁵⁸ Unlike the Bulgarians and the Serbs, Kydones claimed, the Latins have no record of deceit, and they always acted in good faith as liberators.⁵⁹

Kydones was not the only author who supported an alliance with the Latins. In his *Comparison between the Old and the New Rome*, by praising the Latins and their connections with the Byzantines, Manuel Chrysoloras similarly suggested that a political and military alliance between Latins and Byzantines was a legitimate act. Certainly, the assumptions and suggestions included in this text mirrored with his activities as teacher of the Italian humanists in Florence and ambassador in many Latin western countries.⁶⁰

The court rhetoricians did not deal exclusively with the external threats and the possibilities for alliances, but they equally treated the growing internal opposition to the central authority, a topic that was not entirely new for Byzantine panegyrists. I had already pointed out that, in his political texts, Plethon stated that only an internal reform of the social

⁵³ PG 154. See J. Ryder, *The Career and Writings of Demetrios Kydones. A Study of Fourteenth-Century Byzantine Politics, Religion and Society*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, 57-82.

⁵⁴ On the *Apologiae*, see J. Ryder, *Kydones*, 42-49.

⁵⁵ PG 154, 964b: οὔτοι γὰρ μόνοι σχεδὸν τῶν ἡμετέρων κακῶν εἰσὶν αἰτιώτατοι, καὶ οἷς τὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας συμφορᾶς δικαίως ἂν τις λογίσαιτο.

⁵⁶ PG 154.

⁵⁷ J. Ryder, *Kydones*, 63-69.

⁵⁸ J. Ryder, *Kydones*, 71-73.

⁵⁹ Kydones, "Pro subsidio Latinorum," PG 154, 961-1008.

⁶⁰ Manuel Chrysoloras' *Comparison* of the two cities identifies many common points among them. For a discussion of Chrysoloras' approach to the description of Rome and Constantinople see A. Kioussopoulou, "La ville chez Manuel Chrysoloras: Σύγκρισις παλαιᾶς καὶ Νέας Ῥώμης," *BS* 59 (1998): 71-79.

and political groups, not an alliance with the Latins, would save Byzantium from Ottoman occupation. Yet, apart from several assertions claiming moral and political reforms, the rhetoricians also highlighted concrete instances in which Byzantine aristocrats refused to acknowledge the imperial authority.⁶¹ Thus, Plethon's preface to Manuel's *Funeral Oration* and, most of all, the panegyrics addressed to Manuel, by Demetrios Chrysoloras, John Chortasmenos, and Isidore, describe at length the emperor's deeds against those who posed a threat to the imperial authority.⁶² They called the attention to the increased disobedience in various territories of the empire of the local landowners, who preferred foreign tutelage to the Byzantine authority. In his *Synkrisis*, Demetrios Chrysoloras related that some of those who resisted the reconstruction of the Hexamilion attacked and occupied several fortresses, hence testifying to the efforts of Peloponnesian magnates to extend their control over new regions.⁶³ The event was mentioned by other contemporary sources as well: the writer of *Mazaris' journey to Hades* noticed that the Emperor recaptured some of these fortresses from the aristocratic segment of society, who showed “stubbornness,” “ingratitude,” “plotting and deceit.”⁶⁴ Probably alluding to such imperial achievements, Isidore of Kiev then stated that Manuel II, during his stay in the Morea, re-established order and “relieved certain people who had been seized by tyrannical power.”⁶⁵

While many attacked the actions of the land-owners in the remote Morea, in Constantinople court orators adopted a favorable position towards the members of the ruling family and other aristocrats. Although in his texts there is no suggestion whatsoever, it is known that Demetrios Chrysoloras, as intimate of John VII Palaiologos, supported many members of the aristocracy with business connections in the Latin world.⁶⁶ For his part, John Chortasmenos had numerous connections with Byzantine aristocrats and many of his texts,

⁶¹ S. Trojanos, “Einige Bemerkungen über die finanziellen Grundlagen des Festungsbaues im byzantinischen Reich,” *Byzantina* 1 (1969), 54–5; E. Vranoussi, “Notes sur quelques institutions du Péloponnèse,” *Études Balkaniques* 6 (1978) 82–8; M. Bartusis, *Late Byzantine Army. Arms and Society (1204-1453)*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992, 288–90.

⁶² See Plethon, *Protheoria*, 1–3.

⁶³ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 243.

⁶⁴ *Mazaris' Journey to Hades*, 82–85: “However, even before this illustrious work [i.e. reconstruction of the Hexamilion] had been completed, the local barons, that turbulent, subversive crowd, who spend all their lives upsetting the peace in the Peloponnese, men delighting in battles, riots, and bloodshed, always full of deceit, treachery and falsehood, arrogant barbarians, fickle, perjured and forever disloyal to their Emperors and Despots [...] had the insolence, the impudence, to rise against their benefactor and savior, each of them planning to usurp power on his own behalf, and they conspired and schemed with each other, hatching plots against his Majesty (tr. A. Smithies).”

⁶⁵ Isidore, *Panegyric*, 166, 2–3. On the Moreote magnates' opposition to Manuel's control see N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 261–262.

⁶⁶ See ch. 1.

such as poems or ekphrastic epigrams, were addressed to the members of the Palaiologan family.⁶⁷

Arguably, therefore, while reflecting previous concerns of identifying solutions for the ongoing military crises by calling on Latin help, the late Palaiologan panegyrists also supported and lobbied for the Byzantine entrepreneurial aristocracy based in Constantinople and with trading interests in the Mediterranean. At the same time, this aristocracy, apart from the support in matters of state, continued to engage in patronage of intellectual activities.⁶⁸

8.3. The formulation of Byzantine individuality

The approach to Byzantine specificity in the texts of the imperial rhetoricians falls into two broad categories: on the one hand, one finds multiple references to the Hellenic roots and, on the other hand, there emerges a tendency to stress the connections between Latins and Greeks. In both cases, the rhetoricians added the splendor of the glorious Byzantine past while, owing to each author's outlook and interests, the emphasis on one element or another differed.

At the extreme end of these variations of the idea of a Byzantine individuality one finds the national ideal of Gemistos Plethon reflecting the potential plan to create a Greek nation (τὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων γένος) with a well defined history and mythology.⁶⁹ In his three texts written during Manuel's reign Plethon outlined a kind of political utopianism and openly supported the idea of Hellenism. While he rejected Romanness, his focus was on the Peloponnese which he saw as the cradle of a reborn Greek nation. Plethon sharply identified Sparta as model for his ideal polity and paralleled himself to the legendary Lacedemonian legislator Lykourgos.⁷⁰ On many occasions, he also praised the ancient Greek way of life,⁷¹ while in the *Admonitory oration addressed to Manuel on the situation in the Peloponnese* he detailed his program of returning to the values of ancient Sparta.⁷²

⁶⁷ See the poems-ekphraseis on the palaces of Theodore Kantakouzenos, Chortasmenos-Hunger, 190-195.

⁶⁸ See ch. 2. Cf. Chortasmenos-Hunger, 45.

⁶⁹ *Admonitory Oration to Theodore, Despot of Morea*, 117.4. Cf. also H.-G. Beck, "Reichsidee und nationale Politik im spätbyzantinischen Staat," *BZ* 53 (1960): 86-94, and N. Siniossoglou, "Intellectual and Spiritual Utopias," *Radical Platonism in Byzantium. Illumination and Utopia in Gemistos Plethon*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, 327-394.

⁷⁰ See T. Shawcross, "A New Lycourgos for a New Sparta," in *Viewing the Morea*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2013 (forthcoming).

⁷¹ *Ibid*: ὥστε μὴ οἰκειότητος μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα ἐπιμελητέον εἶναι τῆς χώρας, εἴ γε περὶ τῶν κτημάτων τὰ ἀμείνω μᾶλλον τι καὶ σπουδαστέον

⁷² *PP*, 3, 248-249.

In contrast to Plethon's Hellenism, for other contemporary Palaiologan authors the Empire remained essentially Roman. For instance, in his *Panegyric*, Isidore of Kiev associated the idea of fatherland with the Roman identity: τὴν πατριὸν καὶ ῥωμαϊκὴν ἐλευθερίαν.⁷³ The occurrences of the terms Roman and Hellen/Hellenic in the panegyrics illustrate this situation:

| Author & Text | Roman | Hellen |
|---|---|---------------|
| Anonymous, <i>Panegyric</i> , Vat.gr.632 (ed. Dendrinios) | 443.47, 444.85 | 446.23 |
| Anonymous, <i>Panegyric</i> , Vat.gr.914 (ed. I. Polemes) | - | - |
| Chortasmenos, <i>Panegyric</i> | l. 26, 108, 73, 98, 115, 170, 173, 94, 169 | l.4. |
| Isidore, <i>Panegyric</i> | 176.28, 156.12, 160.12, 176.11, 152.3, 176.27, 198.23, 163.24, 145.31, 151.8, 151.30, 152.9, 152.12, 155.17, 157.15, 159.9, 160.20, 162.18, 162.23, 165.29, 179.27, 172.29. | 174.28, 158.3 |
| Demetrios Chrysoloras, <i>Synkrisis</i> | 229.5, 224.23, 226.8, 234.20, 237.5, 245.14 | 222.2, 239.28 |

A strong statement of Byzantium's brilliant past centered around Roman ideals emerges in forging the literary image of Constantinople as a unique city and (still) capital of the *oikoumenē*. Two of the lengthiest *laudes Constantinopolitanae* date from the time of Manuel's reign: Manuel Chrysoloras' *Comparison between the Old and the New Rome* in the form of a letter addressed to Emperor Manuel, and Isidore of Kiev's detailed description of the urban settlement of Constantinople included in the rubric of fatherland (πατρίς) of his panegyric for John VIII.⁷⁴ Owing to their topic both texts seem to have followed in the steps of the early Palaiologan rhetors who put forth a series of ideological claims pertaining to Constantinople as center of the *oikoumenē*.⁷⁵ As the title of his writing indicates, Chrysoloras discussed the parallels between the new and the old Rome and dedicated a lengthier praise to Rome's architectural wonders.⁷⁶ In his text Chrysoloras insisted on the representation of

⁷³ Isidore, *Panegyric*, 176, 11, Cf. τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν εἰπεῖν τῶν Ῥωμαίων καὶ παντὸς ἐλευθερίαν χριστιανικοῦ γένους Ibid., 162, 24.

⁷⁴ On Constantinople see also Isidore's *Encomium on John VIII Palaiologos*, in *PP*, 3, 202-203.

⁷⁵ D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology*, 114.

⁷⁶ A. Kioussopoulou, "La ville chez Manuel Chrysoloras: Σύγκρισις Παλαιᾶς καὶ Νέας Ῥώμης," *Byzantinoslavica* 59

Constantinople, founded by both Greeks and Romans, as a reflection of the Old Rome.⁷⁷ After describing in detail Rome's monuments he then offered an account of Constantinople's geographical position and architecture. The author's astonishment in front of the physical beauty of Rome and its reflection, Constantinople, is closely associated with an appreciation of the Latin spirituality and of the Roman political establishment. In Chrysoloras' view, the Byzantines were the descendants of the Romans and, for this reason, he underlined the political model which the Latins could have provided for Byzantium. Chrysoloras noticed that many of the ancient monuments came into being with the contribution of the population:

Sanctuaries, statues, temples, columns of those ancient and famous men were built for them on public expense. Καὶ ἱερὰ καὶ ἀγάλματα, καὶ ἀνδριάντας, καὶ τεμένη, καὶ στήλας τῶν παλαιῶν ἐκείνων καὶ περιφανῶν ἀνδρῶν, ἐκείνοις παρὰ τοῦ δημοσίου γενομένας.⁷⁸

Eventually, he highlighted the advantages of the political organization of ancient Rome which made possible the accomplishments of the early Roman emperors.⁷⁹

Isidore of Kiev's accounts of Constantinople in his two imperial orations addressed to John VIII also eulogized its sights and splendid past. The City of Constantinople received an extended praise in the eulogy that emphasized its universality and centrality within the *oikoumenē*.⁸⁰ In another panegyric, the starting point of Isidore's extensive *laus Constantinopolitana* attached to the praise of John VIII and of the Palaiologan house (*Panegyric*, 1429) is an account of the City's fortunate geographical position between two continents, close by the sea, and of its history populated by heroes.⁸¹

(1998): 79.

⁷⁷ PG 156, 45: "Had I wished to enumerate the memorials, the tombs, the monuments and statues that are or have been in our city [Constantinople], I would not have been at a loss to do so. I might have to acknowledge that there are fewer of them than there are in here [in Rome]." ἀλλοῦδὲ μνήματα, ἢ τάφους, ἢ στήλας, ἢ ἀνδριάντας, ἐπὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας πόλεως ὄντας ἢ γενομένους βουλόμενος ἂν εἰπεῖν ἠπόρουν ἴσως. Ἄλλ' ἐλάττω μὲν ἴσως ἔμελλον τῶν παρὰ τούτοις λέγειν, καλλίω δὲ ἔνια καὶ περιφανέστερα πολλῶ τῶν τῆδε.

⁷⁸ PG 156.28b.

⁷⁹ Ἐπὶ πᾶσι δὲ τούτοις γράμματα μεγάλα λέγοντα, Ἡ βουλή τῶν Ῥωμαίων καὶ ὁ δῆμος (=SPQR), Ἰουλίω εἰ τύχοι Καίσαρι, ἢ Τίτῳ, ἢ Οὐεσπασιάνῳ, ἀρετῆς καὶ ἀνδραγαθίας ἔνεκεν, νικήσαντι ἀπὸ τῶν δεινῶν, ἢ φυλάξαντι τὴν πατρίδα, ἢ ἐλάσαντι τοὺς βαρβάρους, ἢ τι τοιοῦτον ἕτερον τῶν εἰνουμενῶν, PG 156, 45.

⁸⁰ PP 3 202: τὴν μὲν οὖν θέσιν καὶ τὸ σχῆμα τῆς Πόλεως τὰς ὠρῶν ἀμοιβὰς τε καὶ ἀλλιώσεις μὴ προΐεναι πέρα τοῦ μετρίου τῷ κοινῶν ἀλλήλοις τὰς θ' ὑπερβολὰς καὶ ἐλλείψεις τὸ μὲν ἐκ τοῦ περιττεύειν [...] Κάλλους μὲν καὶ μεγέθους πόλεως καὶ ῥώμης σωμάτων καὶ χρημάτων περιουσία, ἐξ ὧν ἀπάσαις τὸ εὐμοιρεῖν καὶ ὧν τὸ φιλοτιμῆσθαι καὶ νῦν καὶ τῶν πῶποτε αὕτη μόνη τὸ κράτος ἐπὶ πάντων καλῶς καὶ ὡς προσῆκεν διὰ πάντων ἀτέχει χρημάτων μὲν ἀφθονία τὴν εὐσεβίαν, κάλλει δὲ καὶ μεγέθει τειχῶν καὶ ῥώμῃ καὶ εὐτολμῖα σωμάτων αὐτὸ τὸ ἄνθος τῶν λόγων καὶ τὴν σοφίαν προβαλλομένη καὶ τὸ βασίλειον [...]

⁸¹ 136.13: γέγονε τοιγαροῦν πατρίς τῷ μεγάλῳ τούτῳ βασιλεῖ οὐχ ἦν ἂν εἴποι τις πόλιν ἀπλῶς, οὐδ' ἦνπερ ἂν τις ἐξαιρῶν τῶν ἄλλων πασῶν οἷς βούλεται λόγους καὶ οἷς ἔχει δεικνύειν ἐκείνων ὑπερκειμένην ἰκανῶς καὶ τὰ πρῶτα φέρουσαν. 141.4: τοιαύτην εἴληφεν εὐαρμοστίαν καὶ εὐαέριαν ὁ ὑπερκεῖμενος ἐκείνης ἀήρ, μέτριος ὄλος, φαιδρός, κύκλῳ περιρρέων πᾶσαν τὴν πόλιν, διαφεύγων τὸ λυποῦν καὶ ὑπερβάλλον ἅπαν, καὶ ὑπερεκκέχεται τῆς πόλεως πάσης ὑγιεινότητος καὶ καθαρώτατος καὶ λαμπρότατος οὐδὲν ἀποπνέων γεῶδες

In fashioning the image of Constantinople Isidore emphasized the features that render it the center of the *oikoumenē*, a place where the contrasting civilizations of Europe and Asia meet.⁸² The same idea is repeated several times as Isidore underlines Constantinople's high status among other cities and nations:

This city, the queen of all cities, the capital of the the inhabited lands, the hearth of the nation, the mother, and nourisher of our race, the glory of the entire world's faith, the great fame of the Romans, the beauty of the earth, the column that is as high as the sky, the world's brilliance and celebrity. Ἡ δὲ πόλις αὐτή, ἡ βασιλις τῶν ἀπασῶν, ἡ τῆς οἰκουμένης μητρόπολις, ἡ κοινὴ τοῦ γένους ἔστια καὶ μήτηρ καὶ τροφός, τὸ οἰκουμηνικὸν τῆς εὐσεβείας ἄγαλμα, τὸ μέγα κλέος τῶν Ῥωμαίων, τὸ ἐπίγειον κάλλος, ἡ οὐρανομήκης στῆλη, ἡ κοσμικὴ λαμπρότης καὶ περιφάνεια.⁸³

Finally, the City's omnipotence, prompts Isidore to describe the Genoese colony of Galata as Constantinople's suburb.⁸⁴

The above passages indicate that both Chrysoloras and Isidore insisted on the Roman aspect of Byzantine specificity. If in Chrysoloras' text this is only suggested by the parallels between the two capitals, Isidore is more straightforward as to putting forth the Byzantines' Romanness. He often implies that the Roman Empire was the predecessor of the Byzantines⁸⁵ and draws the contours of a consistent picture of the Roman glorious past when both Asia and Europe were under its authority. Eventually, in order to express the ties between Byzantines and Romans, Isidore uses a compound term, *Romhellenes* to define the Byzantine *ethnos* which underlines the Latin element:

After Constantine the Great brought there the noble and courageous Romans he united and associated with the most noble of the Hellenes. As a result, out of the entire *genos* of men living in this city there emerged the purest race, the most worthy of honor, and above everything, the noblest one. And this came into being in a harmonious way. For there is nothing as highly esteemed as the Hellenes and the Romans living under the sun, nor another more significant race.[...] Thus, two similar elements were adapted and combined in a good and appropriate way, and

οὐδὲ σιραγγῶδες, ὥσπερ ἕτεροι ἀπὸ βαράθρων τινῶν. 149. 23-26: Γέγονε τοίνυν οἰκιστὴς τὸ πρῶτον Βύζας ἐκεῖνος, Ἑλλήν ἀνὴρ, γένος τῶν ἀφ' Ἑρακλέους μέγα ὄνομα ἐπ' ἀρετῇ κεκοσμημένος τινικαῦτα τῶν ἐπὶ δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἀνδρίᾳ καὶ σοφίᾳ ὑμνουμένων.

⁸² Isidore, *Panegyric*, 137.21-25: Ἀσία δὲ καὶ Εὐρώπη, τὰ μεγάλα τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐπὶ τε ἀνδρίᾳ ἐπὶ τε σοφίᾳ ἐπὶ τε ταῖς ἄλλαις ἀρεταῖς ὀνόματα, ἐκ παντὸς αἰῶνος τὴν ἔριν ἐνστησάμεναι, μεγάλας ἐπιδείξεις καὶ τρόπαια καὶ νίκας ἀραμένα κατ' ἀλλήλων, οὐδέπω καὶ τήμερον διελυσάτην μέχρις, ἀλλ' ἐφ' ἅπασιν ἀντισπῶσαι καὶ ἀντερίζουσαι καὶ νικῶσαι ἀλλήλας ἐν τῷ μέρει καὶ ὑπ' ἀλλήλων ἡττώμεναι.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 145.27.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 146.19: καὶ τὴν μὲν κυρτὴν ὁ περίβολος μέχρι πολλοῦ τῆς πόλεως, τὴν δ' ἐντὸς ἐκείνου περιφέρειαν ἡ τῆς πόλεως ἀντιπέραν ἡπειρος ποιεῖ, παρ' ἣν πόλις κεῖται νῦν. Γαλατᾶς ὄνομα τῇ πόλει: καὶ πρὸς μὲν τὰς ἄλλας πόλεις ἰκανὴ καὶ αὐτάρκης, πρὸς δὲ τὴν βασιλίδα προάστειον καὶ ὄν αὐτῆς καὶ φαινόμενον.

⁸⁵ *PG* 156, 70, Καὶ πρῶτον μὲν δεῖ σκοπεῖν τίνες τε εἶεν ἄρα καὶ ὅπου ταύτην εὐμοίρησεν ἕκαστος τῶν μάλιστα εὐδοκιμηκότων: [old and new Rome] τὰ μέντοι πρεσβεῖα τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς γε νέα ταῦτα περιφανῶς ἔοικεν ἀπενεγκαμένη καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐδαμῶς δεῖται λόγου πρὸς ἀπόδειξιν τῶν τοιούτων.

from both these prominent nations one single *genos* emerged, at the same time splendid and excellent, and which could be rightly designated as the race of the Romhellenes. [Ὁ μέγας Κωνσταντῖνος] καὶ τοὺς ἄνωθεν εὐγενεῖς καὶ ἀνδρείους φέρων Ῥωμαίων, ἐνοῖ καὶ συνοικίζει τοῖς εὐγενεστέροις τῶν Ἑλλήνων, καὶ γίγνεται τοῦ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένους παντὸς τῆσδε τῆς πόλεως τὸ γένος εἰλικρινέστατον καὶ τιμιώτατον καπὶ πᾶσιν εὐγενέστατον. Καὶ ἀρμοζόντως ἄρα. Ἑλλήνων γὰρ καὶ Ῥωμαίων τῶν ὑφ' ἡλίῳ πάντων οὐδὲν ἄλλο γε ἴσον, οὐχ ὅτι μεῖζον, τῷ γένει [...] καλῶς ἄρα καὶ εὐλόγως τὸ ὅμοιον ἡρμόσθη τῷ ὁμοίῳ καὶ προσετέθη, καὶ γέγονε γενοῖν ἐξ ἀμοιβῶν τοῖν ἐπισήμοιιν γένος ἕν τὸ ἐπισημότατόν τε καὶ κάλλιστον, οὐς καὶ εἴ τις Ῥωμέλληνας εἶποι, καλῶς ἂν εἶποι.⁸⁶

The term occurs several more times in late Byzantine court oratory, namely in Michael Apostoles' *prosphōnēma* addressed to Emperor Constantine XI whereby he denoted the unionists, a usage which suggests that Isidore took a strong position in favor of Church union.⁸⁷

Such approaches to the Byzantines' Romanness were not at all new for the Byzantine authors. In his deliberative oration, *Pro subsidio Latinorum*, Kydones reminded his audience of the past possessions of the Romans which at that point were held by the Ottomans:

Once, you <Romans> ruled over the entire Bithynia, the entire Ionia, Caria, and Pamphylia; the entire Phrygia and Paphlagonia. You possessed many cities and incomes around Pontos. Ὑμεῖς τοίνυν ἤρχεστε μὲν πάσης Βιθυνίας, πάσης δὲ Ἰωνίας, καὶ Καρίας, καὶ Παμφυλίας: πάσης δὲ Φρυγίας, καὶ ὅσων νέμονται Παφλαγόνες. πολλαὶ δὲ καὶ καλαὶ περὶ τὸν Πόντον ὑμῖν ἦσαν πόλεις τε καὶ πρόσοδοι.⁸⁸

Kydones' emphasis on the multiple links between Byzantines and Romans prompts him to exclude from any envisaged defense plans other surrounding Christian peoples: Bulgarians (οἱ Μῦσοι) and Serbians (οἱ Τρίβαλοι). Thus, unlike the kin Romans and despite their similarities of the Orthodox faith, the neighboring Christian Slavs were regarded as barbarians:

It is difficult to compare the Mysians' savagery to that of someone else. Τὴν δὲ Μυσῶν ὠμότητα χαλεπὸν ἑτέρῳ τῷ παραβάλλειν.⁸⁹

Finally, a similar double Greco-Roman national and cultural identity whose cornerstone was education emerges later on in Manuel Chrysoloras' *Epistolary discourse* as well:

Let us remember that we were born from such men like the ancient Greeks and from those who came after the Greeks, our forefathers, the Romans, whose name we now have. Rather both these races coexist in us, and whether one wishes to call us Greeks or Latins, we are both Romans and the inheritors of Alexander's race. Μεμνώμεθα οἷων ἀνδρῶν ἔκγονοι γεγονάμεν τῶν πρεσβυτάτων καὶ παλαιῶν

⁸⁶ Isidore, *Panegyric*, 152

⁸⁷ H. Noiret ed., *Lettres inédites de Michel Apostolis*, Paris, 1889, 102, Michael Apostolios, *Prosphōnēma addressed to the emperor*, 2.86.26: λῆρον τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἡγούμενος.

⁸⁸ PG 154. 964C.

⁸⁹ PG 154. 973c-976d: οὐκοῦν εἰ τὸ Σκύθας μὲν ἡμῖν βοηθεῖν ἔωλον, γέλως δὲ ἡ Τριβαλῶν συμμαχία, ἀνέλπιστα δὲ τὰ Μυσῶν.

Ἑλλήνων ... [καὶ] τῶν μετ' ἐκείνους γενομένων ἡμῖν προγόνων, τῶν παλαιῶν Ῥωμαίων, ἀφ' ὧν νῦν ὀνομαζόμεθα [...] μᾶλλον δὲ ἄμφω τούτῳ τῷ γένει ἀφ' ἡμῖν δῆπου συνελήλυθε καὶ εἴτε Ἑλληνας βούλοιτό τις λέγειν εἴτε Ῥωμαίους, ἡμεῖς ἐσμὲν ἐκεῖνοι καὶ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου δὲ [...] ἡμεῖς σώζομεν διαδοχῆν.⁹⁰

8.4. Imperial authority

The above analysis has shown that the ecclesiastics' political contestation of imperial power (as I have pointed out in the first chapter of the dissertation) was largely accompanied by attempts to offer a response to the political events which triggered the questioning of the emperor's position within the Byzantine political system. In general, despite their acute sense of a declining authority of the imperial office,⁹¹ the rhetoricians supported traditional ideological notions such as the Byzantine Roman-ness as well as the emperor's absolutist and universalist claims reflected in the attempts to subdue the centrifugal forces within the empire. This section will try to answer the question as to how these individuals defined the emperor's role in the late Byzantine political realm.

By and large, the rhetoricians' texts delivered at Manuel's court such as panegyrics, encomia, or deliberative orations relied on a set of core representations common to most Byzantine propagandists.⁹² They reflected longstanding ideas and notions of official ideology which were also normally used in the *prooimia* to chancery documents or in Byzantine legislation.⁹³ In these authors' texts the imperial argument prevailed and, like in other periods of Byzantine history, an articulated alternative discourse of political thought is absent. Yet, just as in the early decades of the fourteenth century,⁹⁴ in the late Palaiologan period, awareness of different other forms of government was present.⁹⁵ In his admonitory oration addressed to Theodore II Palaiologos, Plethon associated his proposals on social reform with the statement that monarchy remained the best form of government:

There are three forms of government, monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy, each of them with many variations whereby a community can be administered better or

⁹⁰ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 117.4-13.

⁹¹ See Demetrios Kydones, ἴσμεν γὰρ καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς νῦν ἡ τύχη καὶ τοῖς βασιλεῦσι πάντα συνέστειλεν (*Letters*, 397. 31-32). For a discussion of the Byzantine intellectuals' perception regarding the decline see I. Ševčenko, "The decline of Byzantium," 172-175.

⁹² See also Appendix 10.

⁹³ H. Hunger, *Prooimion: Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiseridee in den Arengen der Urkunden*, Vienna: Böhlau, 1964, 49-158. See also Appendix 5 with last page of *Vindob. Phil. gr.* 42.

⁹⁴ Theodore Metochites, *Miscellanea*, and Thomas Magistros, *On Kingship*.

⁹⁵ Cf. Metochites' discussion on the different forms of government in E. Barker ed., *Social and Political Thought in Byzantium: From Justinian to the last Palaiologos*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957, 192ff.

worse. Yet, the wisest men regarded monarchy as the best form of government, for it makes use of the best laws and capable rulers. Τριττὰ τὰ πρῶτα πολιτείας εἶδη, μοναρχία τε καὶ ὀλιγαρχία καὶ δημοκρατία, καὶ τούτων ἐκάστων πλείους αὖ τρόποι, καθ' οὓς ἔστιν ἢ ἄμεινον ἢ χειρὸν πολιτεύεσθαι. παρὰ μὲν τοῖς τὰ βέλτιστα φρονοῦσι κράτιστον κέκριται μοναρχία, συμβούλοις τοῖς ἀρίστοις χρωμένη νόμοις τε σπουδαίοις κυρίοις.⁹⁶

The court propaganda developed during the last decades of the Palaiologan period was not as systematic and coherent as before, since occasions for political celebrations started to reappear only sporadically in the first two decades of the fifteenth century. As pointed out previously, for various social and economic reasons, in the last decade of the fourteenth century the imperial propaganda declined and no panegyric dates from this period. On the contrary, after the end of the siege in 1402, and especially after 1410, the texts performed at the court or addressed to the emperor multiplied. What is more significant, counsels set forth in hortatory language pertaining to specific policies also found a place in the panegyrics.⁹⁷ Owing partly to these irregularities in the performance of imperial propaganda and to some extent to the rhetoricians' interests, there can be traced several particularities of their discourse vis-à-vis Manuel's imperial authority.

A general feature of the panegyrists' approach to imperial authority consists of their attempt to provide political solutions by means of praise and advice. Noticeably, unlike in the early decades of Manuel's reign the court oratory of this period lacks any instances of *Kaiserkritik*.⁹⁸ This attitude was reflected by Demetrios Chrysoloras' praise regarding the increased level of individuals' participation in public debates where personal political opinions could be expressed:

The emperor is gentle in his anger and mild when chastising others. He accomplishes everything in a rightful manner and it is now possible for the Romans to speak in opposition, to pass judgments, and to make use of any argument one considers appropriate, if only the words and the deeds are right. Thus, he restored the private and the public affairs of the cities which often were in decay. Ὁρῆ μὲν ὁ βασιλεὺς ἥπιος, κολάσει δὲ πρᾶος. [...] πάντα κατορθοῦται δικαίως, καὶ Ῥωμαίοις ἔξεστιν ἀντιλέγειν, δικάζειν, χρῆσθαι πᾶσιν οἷς ἂν τις βούλοιοτο ὡς ἔχει δυνάμεως ἕκαστος, εἰ μόνον εἴη τὰ λεγόμενα καὶ πραττόμενα δίκαια. [...] Οὕτω τὰ ἴδια καὶ τὰ κοινὰ πόλεων πεσόντα πολλάκις ἀνῶρθωσε.⁹⁹

Within the same context of late Palaiologan reactions to the challenges to Byzantine

⁹⁶ *PP*, 4, 118-119.

⁹⁷ E.g. Gemistos Plethon's *memoranda* on the situation in the Peloponnese. The use of court oratory as instances of edification and advice for emperors had important precedents in the period of late antiquity.

⁹⁸ C. Zgoll, "Kaiserkritik," in *Heiligkeit-Ehre-Macht*, 23-122.

⁹⁹ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 229.3-11.

political authority should be understood the above mentioned reform of the political system as envisaged by Gemistos Plethon.

Advice for the emperor emerged especially in exhortations to acquire many different virtues. In the *Epistolary discourse* addressed to Manuel II Palaiologos, Manuel Chrysoloras offered elaborate definitions of virtues and urged the emperor to follow them.¹⁰⁰ Here, Chrysoloras identified justice as the most important virtue (εἰ μὲν οὖν τὸ ἄθροισμα τῶν ἀρετῶν καὶ τὴν ὅλην ὡς εἰπεῖν δικαιοσύνην τίς <scil. Menander> καλοῖ). For his part, in the *Synkrisis*, Demetrios Chrysoloras places humbleness (ταπεινοφροσύνη) on top of the list of the most important virtues, thus paralleling the emperor's view on virtues as it will be analyzed in the final section of this unit. Echoing the social and economic conditions of the state, he advises the emperor to remain poor but, at the same time, just and helpful for his subjects.¹⁰¹

Yet, the approach to imperial virtues¹⁰² was largely underlined by claims specific to the panegyrist's discourse and related to the centrality of the imperial office within the state. This view was also inspired by the idea of universal domination of the imperial office over the *oikoumenē*. According to Manuel's court rhetoricians, the emperor enjoyed unlimited authority, an idea which contrasted with the ecclesiastics' claims of the emperor's submission to Church authority. Likewise, coinage and court ceremonies continued to highlight these aspects common in imperial representations.¹⁰³

Most virtues attributed to Manuel when praised in prose panegyrics were drawn from a common reservoir of imperial features used on various occasions by Byzantine rhetoricians.¹⁰⁴ These virtues which defined the Byzantine *Kaiseridee* had to do with the emperor's compassion, piety, philanthropy, generosity, shrewdness, gentleness, and goodness.¹⁰⁵ In addition, the panegyrist compared the emperor to powerful animals like lions and presented him as a saviour, a doctor, a helmsman, shepherd of the people, and philosopher.¹⁰⁶ In the *Epistolary discourse*, Manuel Chrysoloras recounts some of the qualities a ruler should be endowed with, among which the emperor's ability to legislate:

And what else represents a ruler if not a living law. The ruler has to create appropriate laws, and rather it is possible to say that, whatever the ruler decides, it

¹⁰⁰ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse* 86.8-91.3. Cf. 91.25 ἡ ἀρετὴ τῆς τιμῆς βελτίων.

¹⁰¹ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 229, "Ἐνεστι καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ πλοῦτος ὀλίγος μὲν, ἀλλὰ δίκαιος.

¹⁰² By and large, the panegyrist relied on the four imperial virtues identifiable in Menander. See Appendix 10.

¹⁰³ P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection. Michael VIII to Constantine XI 1258-1453*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, 1999, Plates 71-80.

¹⁰⁴ A. Kioussopoulou, "Ἐγκωμιαστικοὶ καὶ ἐπιτάφιοι λόγοι," *Βασιλεὺς ἢ οἰκονόμος*, 163-181 and D. Angelov, "The imperial idea: continuity and change in the imperial idea," *Imperial ideology*, 78-115.

¹⁰⁵ See Appendix 10.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

becomes a law. καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ ἄρχων τί ἄλλο ἢ νόμος ἔμψυχος [...] δεῖ τὸν ἄρχοντα νόμους ἀληθῶς τίθεσθαι, μᾶλλον δὲ ἕξεστι λέγειν, ὃ ἂν ὁ ἄρχων θεῖτο, νόμον εἶναι.¹⁰⁷

The emperor was also presented as a lover of truth,¹⁰⁸ a lover of peace,¹⁰⁹ an impartial judge and, a righteous individual.¹¹⁰

This set of virtues remained in the use of the imperial panegyrist until the very last years of Byzantium. In his *On kingship* (1440) John Argyropoulos continued to use some of the most laudative terms of praise. He compared Constantine XI's reign with a golden age and Constantine's personality with an unexpected solution for the Byzantine state.¹¹¹ Argyropoulos' *basilikos logos* proceeds in a traditional manner to attribute to the emperor the usual imperial virtues: he has prudence (σωφροσύνη), bravery (ἀνδρία), and he is most just (δικαιώτατος), and gentle (ἡμερός).¹¹² It is important to stress that this set of imperial virtues and ideological values corresponded to the centuries-old Byzantine representation of emperors.

Within this set of standard imperial virtues, several values ascribed to Emperor Manuel II in the panegyrics received more attention than others. Their analysis is important for our understanding of the particularities of these rhetoricians' conceptualization of imperial office. First, most panegyrics emphasized the emperor's political and military prowess displayed especially in quelling revolts or in repelling the enemies' attacks.¹¹³ Owing to the requirements of the genre,¹¹⁴ the panegyrist generally adopted a triumphalist attitude vis-à-vis the emperor's actions, which is visible only after 1403 (the year of Manuel's return from the West after Bayezid's defeat). This event was celebrated in the panegyrist's texts as a triumph which entailed Manuel's march from the Peloponnese through continental Greece in guise of a

¹⁰⁷ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 92.28.

¹⁰⁸ τὸ δ' ἀληθεύειν οὕτως ἤρμοσεν ἑαυτῷ, ὡς τοὺς λόγους ὄρκους ἐκάστῳ νομίζεσθαι, Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 236.11.

¹⁰⁹ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *A hundred Letters*, 31 to Emperor Manuel: You kindly welcome the peace which is more secure than movement, you love peace thus suffering damage rather than the war which brings profit. ἄριστε βασιλεῦ, σὺ μὲν ἀσπάζη τὴν ἡρεμίαν ἀσφαλεστέραν οὕσαν κινήσεως, φιλεῖς δὲ τὴν εἰρήνην ζημιούμενος μᾶλλον ἢ σὺν κέρδει τὸν πόλεμον.

¹¹⁰ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 91.21. ὀφείλεται δὲ τῷ ἄρχοντι, φύλακι τοῦ δικαίου ὄντι καὶ τοῦ ἴσου, πάλιν γὰρ τοὺς ἐκείνων ἐρῶ λόγους, τιμῆ.

¹¹¹ John Argyropoulos, *On kingship* (*Περὶ βασιλείας*), ed S. Lampros, *Ἀργυροπούλεια*, Athens: Sakellariou, 1910, 29.11-30.4: Ἐγὼ δέ, μέγιστε βασιλέων, σοῦ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀγαθῆ τύχη νυνὶ βεβασιλευκός, χρυσοῦν μὲν ἄντικρυς γένος σκοπῶν εὐρίσκω τοὺς εὐρισκομένους, χρυσοῦς δ' αὐτὸν χρόνους καὶ βίον οἷον ἦσαν ἐκείνοι, τᾶλλα δὲ πάντα χρυσᾶ, φαίην δ' ἂν καὶ χρυσοῦ παντὸς προτιμότερα .

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 37.15. On gentleness see *Ibid.*, 40.18-20.

¹¹³ Cf. Makarios Makres' *Epitaphios*, praising Manuel for the ability to foresee political developments: γνώσεως τῶν μελλόντων; ἐγγὺς ὁ τούτων προφήτης καὶ στοχαστής (A. Sideras, *Grabrede*, 306.1-2).

¹¹⁴ Not only Menander's handbook (*Menander*, Oxford, 1986, 181.), but also the fourteenth century *Synopsis Rhetorike* of Joseph the Philosopher advised authors of panegyrics to praise the emperor's military virtues (*Rhetores Graeci*, vol.3, 524).

liberator.¹¹⁵ Likewise, Demetrios Chrysoloras praised Manuel as a warrior capable of great military achievements comparable to the deeds of the heroes of the past.¹¹⁶

The panegyrists recounted in detail the emperor's military achievements especially in pacifying Thessaly (1411-1416) and the Peloponnese (1415) after the return from his European journey.¹¹⁷ Isidore's panegyric describes Manuel's deeds and especially his activity in Morea.¹¹⁸ The same kind of depiction can be encountered in Demetrios Chrysoloras' *Synkrisis* which also emphasized the emperor's ability to ward off the attacks of the Peloponnesian landlords against the central imperial authority, and praised it as an act that made the emperor look more capable than the heroes of the past.¹¹⁹ Moreover, Chrysoloras ended the section dedicated to the emperor's *praxeis* with quite a detailed account of Manuel's rebuilding of the Hexamilion wall in the Isthmus of Corinth, an action that also implied several military and diplomatic campaigns.¹²⁰ Accounts similar to Chrysoloras' *Synkrisis* and Isidore's *Panegyric* can be found in the Anonymous Panegyric Vat.gr. 632 and John Chortasmenos' *Panegyric* delivered upon the return of Manuel, both of them detailing the emperor's military achievements. Both texts stress the emperor's capacities to repel the enemies' attacks.¹²¹

These detailed descriptions of military campaigns as well as the flow of praises generated by the emperor's defense actions can be explained both through an appeal to the history of court oratory and through the political contextualization of these texts. Thus, on the one hand, the late Palaiologan panegyrists' continued the tendency to replace the miracles and

¹¹⁵ PP 3.164.3—6: καὶ πόλεις εὐθὺς ἀπολαμβάνει πολλάς, τὰς μὲν θρακικὰς, τὰς δὲ θετταλικὰς, καὶ φόρου ὑποτελεῖς βαρβάρων οὐκ ὀλίγοι γίνονται. Καὶ μετὰ μικρὸν διευθετεῖ τοὺς ἡγεμόνας αὐτῶν, καὶ συμπιπτόντων ἀλλήλοις περὶ τῆς ἡγεμονίας καὶ ἀρχῆς.

¹¹⁶ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 237.22-25: τὰ γοῦν αὐτῷ πεπραγμένα περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν καὶ τὴν Εὐρώπην, ἔτι τὴν Πέλοπος καὶ τὴν Μακεδόνων, καὶ οὓς πολέμους κατῶρθωσε προσέτι καλοκάγαθίας καὶ ἀρετῶν εἶδει πᾶσαν ὑπερβάλλει λόγων τὴν δύναμιν.

¹¹⁷ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 239: ὅταν ἐκ Βρεττανῶν ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκείαν ἐπαλινδρόμει.

¹¹⁸ Isidore, *Panegyric*, 162.1-13: καὶ τοίνυν ἄρας ἐκεῖθεν στόλῳ παμπληθεῖ, ὃν ἐκόμισεν αὐτῷ Γαλάτης ἀνὴρ τῶν εὐγεγονότων, Μανεσκάλος ἐκεῖνος, καὶ τὰ μέγιστα δυνάμενος παρὰ βασιλεῖ τῶν Γαλατῶν ἦκεν εἰς Πελοπόννησον, ἦκεν εἰς Μονεμβασίαν, πόλιν τῆς Πελοποννήσου τὴν ἐρυμνοτάτην.

¹¹⁹ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 242.4-24: καὶ τέλος ὡς νικηφόροι στεφάνων ἀξιοῦσιν αὐτοὺς καὶ κληρονόμους εἶναι τῶν παρ' αὐτῶν γε πεφονευμένων, οἷς βέβηλα μὲν καὶ τὰ χρήματα, εἰ καὶ τοῖς χαρακτῆρσι δόκιμα, πράσιμα δὲ καὶ τὰ κτήματα καὶ τὰ ζῶα, εἰ καὶ τὰς προσόδους μεγάλα καὶ τίμια. Ταῦτα διαστροφῆς ταῖς ψυχαῖς συνερχόμενοι καὶ ῥαδίως τοὺς τρόπους διαπλάττοντες καὶ τὰ ἦθη, οἱ μὲν ἀθέοις ἐχρῶντο καὶ ἀνοσίοις, οἱ δ' ἔπασχον ἐλεεινῶς ἢ μᾶλλον, εἰ χρῆ τάληθές εἰπεῖν, οἱ αὐτοί, ποτὲ μὲν δρῶντες, ποτὲ δὲ καὶ πάσχοντες κακὸν ὅμοιον ὧν διέθεντο παθόντες, οὐδενὸς αὐτὰ κωλύσαι τῶν ἀρχόντων ἰσχύσαντος πώποτε, καὶ ταῦτα πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων ἐκεῖσε γεγεννημένων, ἕως ἂν ὁ θαυμάσιος βασιλεὺς οὗτος αὐτοῖς ἀνατείλας ἄφνω, εὐδαίμονάς τε καὶ μακαρίους τοὺς πρὶν ἀπέφηνε κακοδαίμονας καὶ τὸν εἰς ἀλλήλους διέλυσε πόλεμον καὶ μάχην ἔρρηξε τὴν αὐτῶν καὶ τὸ γένος ἅπαν αὐτοῖς ἡμέρωσε γενναίως καὶ θαυμαστῶς, τοῖς μὲν ὑγιεινὰ τὰ σώματα καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς ἐρρωμένως ἔχειν, πᾶσι δὲ τὰ κάλλιστα πεποιημένους καὶ δέοντα.

¹²⁰ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 241.27-30.

¹²¹ The panegyric in Vat.gr. 632 was edited by Ch. Dendrinis under the title, "Un unpublished funeral oration on Manuel II Palaiologos," *Porphyrogenita: essays on the history and literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in honour of Julian Chrysostomides*, ed. Ch. Dendrinis, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003, 423-451.

divine omens of the previous panegyrics with detailed accounts of military campaigns and achievements particularly of liberation of Byzantine territories in Thessaly or the Peloponnese. From this point of view, to a certain extent, the panegyrics addressed to Manuel marked a return to the militaristic ideas that dominated the court rhetoric of the Nicaean period. On the other hand, the long descriptions of military campaigns had an ideological function, namely to create the image of an emperor successful in wars particularly after the defeat of the Ottomans in 1402, an image intended to compensate for the previous defeats.

The second topic common to imperial propaganda, that of *imperial succession*, received a rather ambiguous treatment during Manuel's reign. Unlike in the first decades of the fourteenth century, the rhetoricians of Manuel's reign did not develop different theories of succession.¹²² John VII's claims to legitimate succession were usually overlooked or treated from a negative perspective.¹²³ For this reason, many rhetoricians in charge of praising the emperor overlooked the ties with his father and previous ruler, John V, most probably on account of their bitter disputes concerning Andronikos IV's and his dynastic line's legitimate succession. Perhaps it was for this reason that Demetrios Chrysoloras produced a text where Manuel was compared to past heroes and less with the members of the Palaiologan family.¹²⁴ In his panegyric, John Chortasmenos also dismissed the treatment of fatherland (πατρίς) and family (γένος) as irrelevant while Manuel Chrysoloras considered that these two rubrics were not important in a panegyric.¹²⁵ Likewise, the anonymous author of the panegyric in Vat. gr. 632 (ed. Ch. Dendrinis) announced in the beginning of the text that he would omit the aspects concerning the emperor's fatherland and family. In addition, in his description of the emperor's achievements, the author uses rather vague terms when relating the circumstances of Manuel's rise to the “sovereignty of the Greeks.”¹²⁶ These passages combined with the evidence regarding the emperor's support for these rhetoricians suggest that Manuel himself could have subtly encouraged them to operate such changes. The only author who reminded Manuel of his obligations to his father John V was Demetrios Kydones who, in a letter addressed to Manuel, rebuked him for disregarding the emperor-father's authority.¹²⁷ To a

¹²² Cf. D. Angelov, “Rhetorical theories of succession,” *Imperial Ideology*, 116-133.

¹²³ There is in fact only such negative reference to John VII in the Anonymous Vat. gr. 914, 708.14: καὶ κατεπραθυμμένως πάνθ' ὑπολέγοντός τε καὶ διαχειρίζοντος.

¹²⁴ See Appendix 10.

¹²⁵ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 58.

¹²⁶ *Anonymous panegyric*, Vat. gr. 632, ed. Ch. Dendrinis under the title “Un unpublished funeral oration for Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos,” *Porphyrogenita*, 442, 1-2.

¹²⁷ Noticeably, in his panegyrics addressed to both John V and John VI, Demetrios Kydones underlined the rulers' relations with their parents, Kydones-Loenertz, 1-23.

certain extent his admonitions to Manuel were understandable, as he was closely connected with Emperor John V and the ruling family. This contrast in eulogizing the emperor's immediate ancestors between Manuel's panegyrists and Demetrios Kydones, whose career developed mostly during the reign of John V, reveals a shift in the understanding of imperial authority in the first decades of the fifteenth century. Now, Manuel enjoyed the support of a new group of public orators who were not anymore connected with the previous rule of John V.

On the other hand, while overlooking John V, most rhetoricians stressed the connection between Manuel and his first-born son, John. Although there can be noticed attempts to rehabilitate John VII,¹²⁸ probably for reasons of presenting the image of dynastic harmony, it was Manuel's son who was consistently promoted as legitimate successor:

So great is our emperor: we have also been blessed, oh emperor, with your inheritor and successor (John VIII). Τοιοῦτος ἡμῖν ὁ βασιλεύς· τηλικούτον, ὧ βασιλεῦ, εὐτυχίκαμεν τὸν τῆς σῆς βασιλείας καὶ ἀρετῆς κληρονόμον τε καὶ διάδοχον.¹²⁹

In the same vein, Isidore's *Panegyric* recorded with plenty of details Manuel's decision to leave behind his son John as co-emperor and ruler in Constantinople while he went into the island of Thassos.¹³⁰ A later panegyrist John Dokeianos, in a *prosphōnēmatōn* addressed to the Despot Theodore II accentuated the connection between ruler and the immediate ancestors, reflected in their common virtues.¹³¹

A third issue approached by the rhetoricians, the sacral rulership, was fundamental in the Byzantine imperial ideology as it had a long history which went back to late antiquity and the Hellenistic period.¹³² If the relations with the Church and the clergy were tense for most of his reign, the panegyrists consistently described the emperor's office as possessing more authority than the Church. The emperor, Isidore claimed, receives the power directly from

¹²⁸ See ch. 1.

¹²⁹ Chortasmenos-Hunger, *Panegyric*, 205.46. As a matter of fact the last section of Chortasmenos' panegyric dealt with the co-rule of Manuel II and John VIII.

¹³⁰ Isidore, *Panegyric*, 165.24: βασιλεὺς γὰρ ἦν καὶ βασιλεύειν ἔκρινε τὸν μὴ τούτου φροντίζοντα μηδαμῶς, τὴν μὲν πόλιν καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῷ νέῳ βασιλεῖ καὶ υἱεῖ παραθείς, μᾶλλον δ' αὐτὸν ἀναθείς ἅμ' ἐκείνοις θεῶ [...]. παρὰ τὴν νῆσον γίνεταί θάσσον καὶ πολιορκήσας ταύτην, τῇ Ῥωμαίων ἐπανεώσωσεν ἡγεμονία.

¹³¹ John Dokeianos, *Προσφωνημάτιον τῷ κρατίστῳ καὶ ἀγίῳ ἡμῶν αὐθέντῃ καὶ δεσπότη Θεοδώρῳ πορφυρογεννήτῳ*, 237.15-17: τῆς γὰρ πατρῶας κληρονομεῖς ἀρετῆς, ὡσπερ καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας αὐτῆς, μεγαλόφρονι μὲν τῇ γνώμῃ πρὸς ἅπαντα κεκρημένος, ὀξεῖ δὲ τῷ τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐπιβάλλων, εὐσταθὲς δὲ τὸ ἦθος ἐδεικνύς, τὸν δὲ λόγον προσφέρων κατὰ ποταμοὺς ῥέοντα.

¹³² F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine political philosophy: origins and background*, Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1966, vol. 2, 320-344.

God's hands.¹³³ His encomium to John VIII alludes to the honours which the church offered to the emperor upon his return from a military campaign.¹³⁴ The ruler was regarded as judge in matters of faith, an element which Isidore probably introduced in order to push for the union of Churches.¹³⁵ To some extent this view was underlined by the categories commonly applied in Byzantine imperial propaganda: as emperor of the Romans (βασιλεὺς τῶν Ῥωμαίων) and also as an imitator of God (μιμητῆς Θεοῦ).¹³⁶ Moreover, rhetoricians stressed that the emperor received earthly power directly from God.¹³⁷

According to them, the emperor's authority derived directly from God empowered him to anoint directly his successor on the Byzantine throne, namely John VIII. Many authors, when describing the ceremony of John's coronation, referred to Manuel's chief role in this ceremony and completely overlooked the patriarch's or the Church's function in this act. Thus, Isidore describes the ceremony of John VIII's crowning by Manuel as an anointment of the son by the father-emperor.¹³⁸

In a similar way, the late Byzantine historian, Laonikos Chalkokondyles, when describing the coronation of John VIII, stated that the latter was appointed as ἀρχιερεὺς τε καὶ βασιλεὺς.¹³⁹ This might very well have been a stylistic twist, but it also pointed to the rhetoricians' predominant attitude regarding the imperial office seen as sacred and above all other offices including the patriarch's office. Thus, it appears that their approach to the old *basileus-hiereus* debate¹⁴⁰ differed significantly from the contemporary ecclesiastics' approach. Despite the limitations which many members of the high clergy sought to impose on the imperial authority, the rhetoricians in the court milieu privileged a model reflecting not only the absolutist claims of imperial propaganda but also elements of Manuel's actual style of government.

¹³³ Cf. Demetrios Chrysoloras, *A hundred letters*, 32, σὺ μὲν ἰσχὺν καὶ χρήματα καὶ τιμὴν ἐκ Θεοῦ λαβῶν.

¹³⁴ Isidore, *Encomium for John VIII*, PP, 3, 296.20-23: Ἐπαναζεύξαντος τοίνυν τοῦ θειοτάτου βασιλέως μετὰ γε τῆς νίκης καὶ τῶν τροπαίων ἐκ τῆς τοῦ Πέλοπος, λαμπρῶς εἰσήει τὴν βασιλεύουσαν, τὸν ἐπινίκιον πάντοθεν δεχομένου ἐκ τοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας πληρώματος.

¹³⁵ *Encomium for John VIII*, 306: ἔχοντες τοίνυν ἔξαρχον τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς πίστεως τὸν τὰς ἡνίας κατέχοντα τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων βασιλείας, οὗτινος ἡ ἀρετὴ καὶ τὸ τῆς θεολογίας μυστήριον τὴν οἰκουμένην ἅπασαν ὡς ἀστὴρ φαινὸς ἐναπήστραψεν, αἴρεσιν μὲν παντοίαν ὡς ἐνὸν ἐξορίζων, εὖ εἰδῶς, ὅτι ῥᾶον κακίας μεταλαβεῖν ἢ ἀρετῆς μεταδοῦναι, μιμεῖται τοίνυν Πέτρου τὴν ὁμολογίαν, Παύλου τὴν διδασκαλίαν, Ἰωάννου τὴν θεολογίαν, Μουσέως καὶ Δαυὶδ τὸ πρᾶδόν τε καὶ γαληνὸν καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἀμαρτάνοντας συγγνωμονικόν.

¹³⁶ Both appellations appear for instance in Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 245.13-14.

¹³⁷ E.g.: ἄριστε βασιλεῦ, σὺ μὲν ἰσχὺν καὶ χρήματα καὶ τιμὴν ἐκ Θεοῦ λαβῶν, τοῖς μὲν ἔρεισμα τοῖς δὲ χρηστὴ δόξα τοῖς δὲ θησαυρὸς ἄσυλος ἐγένου, διαθεῖς ὁ πέπονθας ἐπὶ τῇ χαρισαμένου μιμήσει, Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Hundred letters*, letter 32.

¹³⁸ Isidore, *Panegyric*, 166.7-9: καὶ χρεῖται τὸν καὶ πρὸ τοῦδε προσήκοντα τῇ βασιλείᾳ βασιλέα καὶ τὴν ἡγεμονίαν τῷδε παρατίθεται καὶ ἀρχὴν.

¹³⁹ Laonikos Chalkokondyles, *Historical Expositions*, vol 1. 192. 18.

¹⁴⁰ G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, 319.

The emperor-didaskalos

If the above issues can be encountered in a variety of forms in other panegyrics from all periods of Byzantine history, one particular imperial feature received a special treatment in the contemporary panegyrics: the emperor as a skilled rhetorician praised not only for being the author of a great many texts but also as a teacher - *didaskalos* of his son and of his subjects.¹⁴¹ In Byzantium, the term *didaskaloi* designated teachers, either lay or clerics who taught both profane and religious subjects. The *didaskalos* also had the special connotation of teacher affiliated to Saint Sophia and in charge with the instruction in matters of faith.¹⁴² The appellation *didaskalos* used for Manuel II occurred even in the early letters addressed by the emperor's mentor, Demetrios Kydones, and survived in the later panegyrics on John VIII and Constantine XI where orators continued to remind their addressees of their father's, Manuel II, intellectual and pedagogical skills. In these texts, the encomiasts remarked the influence which the emperor father had on the moral and intellectual education of his sons, a unique feature of late Byzantine panegyrics.

Certainly, to some degree this feature corresponded to the conventional and heavily used notion of philosopher-king. Furthermore, the idea of an educated emperor was not at all new among the Byzantines. Demetrios Kydones was aware that it was not uncommon that emperors ornated their office with intellectual luster.¹⁴³ As a matter of fact, many late Byzantine emperors cultivated their intellectual skills: for instance, Theodore II Laskaris and John VI Kantakouzenos wrote extensive orations, histories, or theological treatises.¹⁴⁴

Yet, the many authors surrounding Emperor Manuel, including satyrists like *Mazaris*, probably sensed that rhetoric was not just a side-preoccupations of the emperor, but a central one which he adopted from his youth years.¹⁴⁵ Demetrios Chrysoloras noticed that the emperor

¹⁴¹ E.g. Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Hundred letters*, 77: τῷ κράτει λόγων ἐστέφου μᾶλλον ἢ ταινία καὶ διαδήματι.

¹⁴² R. Macrides "Didaskalos" *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. Ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan, *ODB* vol. 1, 619.

¹⁴³ Kydones, *Letters*, 397. 20-21: πάντως δὲ καὶ οἱ βασιλεῖς αὐτοῖ τε ἡσθήσονται ἔχοντες παρ' ἑαυτοῖς τὸν τὸ κοινὸν σχῆμα τῆ σοφίᾳ κοσμοῦντα.

¹⁴⁴ Earlier, in the twelfth century, Niketas Choniates ironically commented on the efforts of the emperor Manuel I Komnenos to demonstrate his wisdom along his other skills necessary for governing: "It is not enough for most emperors of the Romans simply to rule, and wear gold, and treat common property as their own and free men as slaves, but if they do not appear wise, godlike in looks, heroic in strength, full of holy wisdom like Solomon, divinely inspired dogmatists and more canonical than the canons- in short, unerring experts in all human and divine affairs-they think they have suffered a grievous wrong... And this emperor, who happened to have a ready tongue and a natural way with words not only issued numerous ordinances, but composed catechetical orations, which they call silentia, and delivered them in public," Niketas Choniates, *Histories*, 209-210. Translation in P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 10.

¹⁴⁵ Manuel Chrysoloras (*Epistolary discourse*, 73) draws on the emperor-philosopher idea: πρὸς σὲ δέ, οὐ βασιλέα μᾶλλον ἢ φιλόσοφον ὄντα, λέγω μετὰ παρρησίας. Also, Chrysoloras (74.17-20) commented on both the emperor's style of writing and his eloquence in public, alluding to the fact that Manuel was involved in daily intellectual activities: τὴν γε μὴν ἐν σοὶ δύναμιν καὶ δεινότητα τῶν λόγων δείκνυσι μὲν τὰ ἄλλα, ἃ λέγεις τὲ

was more inclined to pursue the study of theology or a contemplative life than to get involved into practical matters:

For who if not him appreciated theology or theoretical sciences or the moral life more than he did? Τίς γὰρ αὐτοῦ θεολογίαν ἐφίλησε πλεον ἢ θεωρίαν ἐτίμησεν ἢ τὸν ἠθικὸν βίον διεπόνησεν;¹⁴⁶

But if the notion of *philosopher-king* continued to retain a place in the panegyrists' eulogies,¹⁴⁷ a fact which rather represented a conventional feature of the imperial orations,¹⁴⁸ it is noticeable that, in Manuel's case, authors often drew a distinction between *rhetor* and *philosopher*.¹⁴⁹ In many passages from the imperial orations under scrutiny here, the authors added to the Platonic notion of a philosopher-king the representation of the *emperor* as *rhetorician* often with its associated meaning of *didaskalos*.¹⁵⁰ In his panegyric, Isidore of Kiev extolled the primordial role of rhetoric in a ruler's education:

It (rhetoric) brings together on the one hand grammar and poetics by which it trains the speech and confers sweetness and pleasantness to the speech, while removing the lexical barbarisms and soloecisms, and on the other hand, it brings history and offers precepts and admonitions, urging the listener to good deeds and turning him away from evil moral habits. [...] It also educates and trains by philosophical arguments and abstract speculations. Γραμματικὴν μὲν οὖν καὶ

καὶ γράφεις καθημέραν καὶ δημηγορεῖς, ἦν δὴ τέχνην τοῦ δημηγορεῖν κάκεῖνος θαυμασίαν καὶ ὑπὲρ τοὺς πολλοὺς εἶχε. Cf. Makarios Makres who in his *Epitaphios* (305.27-31) for Manuel praises the emperor's intellectual capacity and various talents: αὐτὸς γὰρ ἦν ἡ τῶν ἱερῶν δογμάτων ἀκρίβεια, τῆς ἀνωάτω φιλοσοφίας ἡ στάθμη, τῶν ἀρίστων καὶ καλλίστων λόγων ὁ γνῶμων, τῆς ἀρετῆς ὁ κανὼν, ὁ τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἔμπνους καὶ ἀκίνητος νόμος, πάσης ἀρίστης ἕξεως ὁ ταμίαι, τῶν ποικίλων ἀγαθῶν ἡ πηγὴ, νοῦς ψυχαῖς, ψυχῇ σώμασι [...] 306, 1-3, ὁ θαυμαστός σύμβουλος αὐτὸς ἦν γνῶσεως τῶν μελλόντων; ἐγγὺς ὁ τούτων προφήτης καὶ στοχαστὴς ἔργων ἀρίστων, λόγων καλλίστων; ὁ σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων παρῆν.

¹⁴⁶ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 238, 25-29.

¹⁴⁷ Kydones' letter 438 addressed to the emperor in 1393 bears the title in the manuscript, Τῷ φιλοσόφῳ, *to the philosopher*. Demetrios Chrysoloras, *A Hundred letters*, 29: ἄριστε βασιλεῦ, σοὶ μὲν ὁ πλησιάζων λόγους καὶ δόγμασι τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀεὶ νοθετεῖται καὶ παντοίοις ἀγαθῶν εἵδεσιν ἀρίστην ὁδὸν ἀληθείας καρποῦται, ὧν αὐτὸς ἀποστάς ἀνάγκη φέρεσθαι τοῖς ἐναντίοις καὶ τὸ ἔγκλημα πάντως ἐμὸν οὐ τοῦ βασιλέως. Χαίροις. Cf. also *Anonymous panegyric* (Vat.gr. 632, ed. Ch. Dendrinos, *Porphyrogenita*), 449. 266: οὕτω καὶ βασιλεύων ὑπερβάλλει φιλοσοφία καὶ φιλοσοφῶν οὐκ ἀφίσταται στρατηγῶν.

¹⁴⁸ Praising an emperor for his knowledge of philosophy and learning has been a common topos for Byzantine panegyrists. Even the panegyrists of Constantine XI praised him in this way: οὐδὲ παρωράθη σοι, τῷ βασιλέῳ ἀρίστῳ, φιλοσοφία καὶ λόγοι, says Michael Apostoles in an address to the emperor. Yet, in such cases, it is quite difficult to assess whether such praise correspond to the reality, since we do not have any conclusive information regarding Constantine's intellectual activities. During the early Palaiologan period, Andronikos II was regarded as philosopher-king. In the Nicaean period it was Theodore II Laskaris who was praised for this role due to his many rhetorical and philosophical compositions.

¹⁴⁹ In using the notion of rhetor when praising Emperor Manuel, they seem to have eliminated the negative connotations of the rhetorician's trade which was conjured up by Mazaris (*Journey to Hades*) or Chortasmenos (*Ἠθικὰ παραγγέλματα*). In a passage from his oration, Demetrios Chrysoloras contrasted the emperor's sincerity with the rhetoricians' hidden agendas: ἔτι διαλέγεται καθεστῶτι μὲν βλέμματι, παραπλησίω δὲ καὶ φωνῇ μετὰ λογισμοῦ καὶ φρονήματος, οὐ δεινότητι λόγων, ὡς ῥήτορες ἢ σοφισταί, παρεπιδεικνύμενος, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς νοήμασι διηρευνητικῶς καὶ διερμηνεύων ἀκρίβειαν, ἥτις δι' ἀκοῆς ἐπὶ ψυχὴν ἵκει (Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 236.15-19).

¹⁵⁰ E.g. *Anonymous oration* (Vat.gr. 632, ed. Dendrinos, *Porphyrogenita*), 449.270.

ποιητικὴν, ὧν ἡ μὲν γλῶτταν παιδεύει καὶ πρὸς ὁμιλίαν καὶ συνουσίαν εὐγλωττίαν τινὰ καὶ εὐστομίαν χαρίζεται, τὸ βάρβαρον τῶν ὀνομάτων ἀποδιοπομπουμένη καὶ σόλοικον ἐκείνης, ἡ δὲ ἱστορίαν συνάγει καὶ γνώμας ὑποτίθησι καὶ παραινέσεις καὶ βίων αἱρέσεις, προτρέπουσα μὲν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀγαθὰ, ἀποτρέπουσα δὲ τὸν ἀκροατὴν καὶ ἀπάγουσα τῶν μοχθηρῶν καὶ φαύλων ἠθῶν. [...] Καὶ μετ' ἐκείνα ῥυθμίζει καὶ παιδεύει λόγοις φιλοσοφίας καὶ θεωρήμασι.¹⁵¹

An exemplification of the addition of the image of the emperor-rhetorician, is the anonymous panegyric of cod. Vat. gr. 914 (1403) where the author first introduces the conventional idea of the emperor-philosopher.¹⁵² The anonymous writer praises the emperor for having acted as a teacher in Constantinople at a time when education was deemed unimportant:

Because, despite its brilliance, this great City of yours also lacked teachers, which represented a great loss for those who longed for education, and among others to me, you gave us immediately the teacher as a medicine, which is a very good deed. Ὡς γὰρ μετὰ τῶν πολλῶν τε καὶ καλῶν ἡ μεγάλη σοὶ πόλις αὕτη καὶ διδασκάλων ἐστέρετο, τοῦτο δὲ μέγιστον ζημίας ἦν τοῖς λόγων ἐπιθυμοῦσι, καὶ πολλῶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐμοί, φάρμακον ἡμῖν εὐθύς τὸν διδάσκαλον δέδωκας, ὅ, τι κάλλιστον.¹⁵³

Finally, in the last passage of the panegyric, the anonymous author clarifies the difference between philosopher and rhetorician, praising the emperor for his literary skills:

When you act as emperor you also speak as a rhetorician, and when you speak as the rhetoricians, you act as the best emperor; you teach philosophy with Plato, and when speaking philosophically you speak as a rhetorician. Both <the art of rhetoric and of ruling> were offered to you, in a divine manner, I take here Hesiod as your witness. [...] Yet, a clearer evidence of the truthfulness <of these statements> are your writings which, by no means are inferior to Libanius' texts, and which are more pleasant than the music of Terpanndros from Lesbos. καὶ βασιλεύων ῥητορεύεις, καὶ ῥητορεύων, βασιλεύεις ὅ τι κάλλιστα, καὶ μετὰ Πλάτωνος φιλοσοφεῖς, καὶ φιλοσοφῶν δημηγορεῖς ῥητορικότερα. [...] Σοὶ δ' ἄμφω δέδοται παρὰ Θεοῦ, ὅτι δέ σοι δέδοται, θείῳ τρόπῳ, παρέξωμαι σοὶ καὶ μάρτυρα τὸν Ἡσίοδον. [...] Ἐτι δὲ τεκμήριον ἀληθείας σαφέστερον τὰ γράμματά σοι, ἃ κατ' οὐδέν εἰσιν ἐλάττω τοῖς σοφοῖς κρινόμενα τῶν Λιβανίου, καὶ προσέτι τῆς Τερπάνδρου τοῦ Λεσβίου μουσικῆς ἠδῆς, ἣν ὁ μῦθος καὶ λίθους ἔφασκε κινεῖν, τῇ τῶν κρουμάτων μελωδίᾳ.¹⁵⁴

The panegyrist's consideration of the emperor's literary activity in their orations was not merely incidental or conventional but it often stretched over substantial passages of text. Apart from the above example of the anonymous panegyric of Vat. gr. 914 there are many other such instances. In his *Synkrisis*, Demetrios Chrysoloras identified the emperor's intense

¹⁵¹ Isidore, *Panegyric*, 171. 7-24.

¹⁵² 707.13. Cf. *ibid.*, 708.13: βασιλεῖ θειοτάτῳ καὶ φιλοσοφοτάτῳ.

¹⁵³ 709. 77-80.

¹⁵⁴ 710. 105.

literary activity as the central feature which differentiated him from other rulers¹⁵⁵ and so, in order to strengthen his argument, he provided the entire list of the emperor's works which earned him the title of a *philosopher king*:

<The emperor> creates new kinds of speeches, he rejoices in skillful literature. What are the reasons for which he does so? For the people's benefit and because ignorance flourished here. What has been previously said is confirmed by the great number of different kinds of letters, admired for their unusual arrangement and style; by his learned chapters of exhortations which surpass the letters on account of their vigor and number¹⁵⁶; and by the various orations, both numerous and extensive, some of which deal with natural matters, while some are filled with theological discussions. Among the emperor's theological writings one finds several <orations> against the Persians,¹⁵⁷ several others against western <Latin theology>,¹⁵⁸ some with moral character and joy,¹⁵⁹ and others appropriate for funeral laments or monodies.¹⁶⁰ I will not speak here about metrical verses, hymns, and rhetorical descriptions,¹⁶¹ which would bring no little benefit both to you and to those happening to listen to them; the accomplishment of both the ideas and the words is piety. Only a ruler can be deemed worthy of such a prize more important than any other in the world. All these everlasting philosophical creations confer the <imperial> crown. Λόγους καινούς γεννᾷ καὶ λόγοις γλαφυροῖς χαίρει. Πότε δὲ καὶ πρὸς τίνας; Ὅτε μᾶλλον ἤνθησεν ἀλογία καὶ πρὸς ὠφέλειαν ἅπαντι. Καὶ μαρτυρεῖ τοῖς εἰρημένοις πλήθη διαφόρων ἐπιστολῶν, ἄρμονία ξένη καὶ τέχνη θαυμαζομένων· κεφάλαια δὲ τὰς ἐπιστολὰς ὑπερβαίνοντα δυνάμει καὶ ἀριθμῶ, ἃ γνώσεως γέμει καὶ παραινέσεων ἀπασῶν· ἔτι λόγοι διάφοροι, πολλοὶ καὶ μεγάλοι ἅμα, ὧν οἱ μὲν φυσικῶν, οἱ δὲ τῆς θεολογίας ἀνάμεστοι. Καὶ τούτων ἄλλοι μὲν ἦδη κατὰ Περσῶν, κατὰ δὲ τῶν δυτικῶν ἕτεροι, καὶ οἱ μὲν ἠθικῶ τε καὶ τῆ χαρᾶ, ἄλλοι δὲ θρήνοις καὶ μονωδίαις ἀρμόδιοι. Ἐμμέτρους δὲ σιγῶ στίχους καὶ ᾄσματα καὶ ἐκφράσεις, ἃ μὴ μόνον αὐτόν σε, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς αὐτοῖς ἐντυγχάνοντας οὐ μικρὸν ὠφελοῦσι· τέλος γὰρ καὶ νοημάτων καὶ λέξεων αὐτῶν ἡ εὐσέβεια. Τοῦδε τοίνυν τοῦ γέρως, οὗ μείζον ἐν τοῖς οὔσιν εὐρεῖν οὐκ ἔστι, μόνος ὁ κρατῶν ἀξιοῦται. Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα στέφανον ὀρέγει τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀΐδια δράγματα.¹⁶²

The above passage, despite its exaggerations, indicates that Manuel intended his texts to have a high impact, for, according to Chrysoloras, by circulating this multitude of texts, he was claiming that his aim was to dissipate the prevailing ignorance (ἀλογία) of his subjects. Furthermore, Chrysoloras states, the emperor's rhetorical abilities were more important than

¹⁵⁵ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 234, Ὁ δὲ νῦν αὐτοκράτωρ πολλοῖς μὲν ἀγαθῶν ὑπερβαίνειν οἶδεν ἀληθεία πολλούς, λόγῳ δὲ καὶ σοφίᾳ πάντας.

¹⁵⁶ Chrysoloras refers here to the emperor's *Foundations*.

¹⁵⁷ Reference to the *Dialog with a Muslim*.

¹⁵⁸ *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, ed. Ch. Dendrinis, "An annotated edition of the treatise *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*," PhD dissertation, Royal Holloway, London, 1996.

¹⁵⁹ *The Seven ethico-political orations*, PG 156, 387-562.

¹⁶⁰ *Funeral oration for brother Theodore*, ed. and tr. J. Chrysostomides, Thessalonike, 1985.

¹⁶¹ *Psalm on the dangers of the Turcs* (ed. E. Legrand, 1893), *Ethopoiia: What Tamerlane might have said to Bayezid* (ed. E. Legrand, 1893), *The Image of the Spring on a Royal Tapestry*, (ed. and tr. J. Davis, *Porphrogenita*, 2003).

¹⁶² Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 232. 8-26.

his being born in purple:

And it is clear that, since he reached the first summit of true happiness, he crowned himself with the power of words rather than with the imperial diadem, and he put on a purple garment of rhetoric which is much better than that which he put on in the palace. Thus, he can say what he thinks, and act according to what he said. Καὶ δῆλον, ὡς, ὅτε πρῶτον ὄρον ἔφθασεν εὐδαιμονίας, τῷ κράτει λόγων ἐστέφετο μᾶλλον ἢ ταινία καὶ διαδήματι, καὶ τὴν πορφύραν ἐνδέδεται λόγων, πολὺ τῶν ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις βελτίω, λέγων μὲν ἅ φρονεῖ, πράττων δὲ τοῖς λεγομένοις ἀκόλουθα.¹⁶³

If scholars have completely overlooked this imperial virtue attributed to Manuel, that of acting as *didaskalos*,¹⁶⁴ a survey of the panegyrics dating from the Palaiologan period indicates that this feature was ascribed exclusively to Manuel. In his speech delivered upon the emperor's return from the Peloponnese, John Chortasmenos offers an insight into the kind of moral education Manuel provided to his son, John.¹⁶⁵ Isidore's panegyric juxtaposes the position of the emperor to the teacher's (οὕτως ἐνετετύπωτο πρὸς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῷ καὶ διδασκάλου καὶ βασιλέως ἢ ψυχῆ) and insists on the emperor's role in his son's theoretical and moral education:

That one (Manuel II) guided and initiated him into the mysteries, into the precise principles of the doctrines, into the sublimity of theology, into the depths of theoretical thinking, and into any type of moral or philosophical virtue. Ἐκεῖνος ἦν ὁ μυσταγωγῶν καὶ τελῶν αὐτῷ τὰ ἀπόρρητα, δογμάτων ἀκρίβειαν καὶ θεολογίας ὕψος καὶ βάθος διανοημάτων θεωρητικῶν καὶ πᾶσαν ἠθικὴν καὶ ἐμφιλόσοφον ἀρετήν.¹⁶⁶

Similarly, Manuel Chrysoloras praised Manuel as teacher for his brother Theodore:

You became not only a teacher of military strategies but also of virtue and of all the good things. And you acted as a teacher not only by using words, but also by your deeds, so that you yourself call that one <i.e. Theodore> your student and child. For you are his brother and teacher in all the virtues, either in his speech or deeds. Οὐ στρατηγικῆς μόνον λέγω ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ὅλης ἀρετῆς καὶ πάντων αὐτῶν γέγονας διδάσκαλος, οὐ λέγων μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ οἷς αὐτὸς ἔπραττες ὑποδεικνὺς καὶ προβιβάζων, ὡς περ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκεῖνον, μαθητὴν καὶ παῖδα ὀνομάζεις. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν οἶδα σὲ ἀεὶ ποιήσοντα. Εἶ γὰρ ἀδελφὸς καὶ διδάσκαλος ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς πᾶσιν, εἴτε λόγοις εἴτε πράγμασιν ἐκείνου.¹⁶⁷

Further evidence for Manuel being regarded as a teacher-rhetorician comes from multiple

¹⁶³ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 232.23-26.

¹⁶⁴ See for instance J. Barker, *Manuel II*, When listing the virtues and characteristics of Isidore's panegyric, O. J. Schmitt overlooks *didaskalos* in his list of virtues, "Kaiserrede und Zeitgeschichte im Späten Byzanz: Ein Panegyrikos Isidore von Kiew aus dem Jahre 1429," *JÖB*, 48: 1998, 219, footnote 54.

¹⁶⁵ Chortasmenos-Hunger, *Panegyric*, 199-225.

¹⁶⁶ Isidore *Panegyric*, 171, 25-28.

¹⁶⁷ Manuel Chrysoloras, *Epistolary discourse*, 130.26.

sources dating from various moments of his life. Kydones praised the emperor's encyclopedic education.¹⁶⁸ Early on, in a letter addressed to young Manuel, who had just fled Constantinople and settled as ruler in Thessalonike, Demetrios Kydones exhorted Manuel to become a real teacher for his subjects and citizens. In this case, to be more specific, Kydones used the term παιδοτρίβης, (trainer):

And by representing yourself as a good trainer, teaching the young men by your example, do not cease to improve the citizens' lives. Καὶ παραδεικνύς ὡσπερ ἀγαθὸς παιδοτρίβης τῷ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ὑποδείγματι τοὺς νέους διδάσκων, οὐκ ἐπαύου πάντας ἀγαθοὺς πολίτας ποιῶν.¹⁶⁹

Like the anonymous author of Vat. gr. 914, Isidore mentions that upon his return in Constantinople after the trip to the West, Manuel returned to Constantinople and dealt with both literary activities and with ruling the empire:

And, as it was needed, having firmly secured that city <Thessalonike>, he comes back to Constantinople and, on the one hand, he engages in delivering and writing learned speeches, and, on the other hand, he governs and administers the political and imperial apparatus, and takes care of everything in the city, embellishing the city's monuments. Sometimes he discusses with the philosophers and rhetoricians, while at other times he sits with the judges and decides upon judicial matters. In addition, he takes part in the doctrinal debates together with the high ranking ecclesiastics, and his opinions are highly respected by the others. καὶ στηρίζας τὴν πόλιν ἐκείνην εὖ καὶ ὡς ἔδει, τὴν βασιλίδα καταλαμβάνει καὶ τὰ μὲν φιλοσοφεῖ λόγοις καὶ συγγράμμασιν εὖ πεφυκόσι τὰ δὲ κυβερνᾷ καὶ διθύνει τὴν πολιτικὴν καὶ βασιλείον ἀρχὴν καὶ πάντα συνίστησι τῇ πόλει, τὰ δὲ πρὸς κάλλος, ὅσα πέφυκε τέρπειν ὄμματα. Καὶ νῦν μὲν ὁμιλεῖ φιλοσόφων καὶ ῥητόρων χοροῖς, νῦν δὲ δικαστὰς καθίστησι καὶ νομοθετεῖ πῶς δεῖ χρῆσθαι νόμοις καὶ δικαστικῇ, καὶ δογμάτων τοῖς προῖσταμένοις κοινωνεῖ μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ τούτους γίγνεται στάθμη τις καὶ κανὼν ἀκριβέστατος.¹⁷⁰

Arguably, the notion of an emperor-rhetorician as applied to Manuel by these different contemporary scholars stemmed from earlier statements with regard to the role of oratorical skills and education in Byzantine political transactions. In the Palaiologan period, this idea began to appear in the texts of the early fourteenth century scholars, like Theodore Metochites or Thomas Magistros who in their texts approached political issues and showed awareness of the fundamentals of political theory.¹⁷¹ By the mid-fourteenth century, in the introduction to

¹⁶⁸ Kydones, *Letters*, 82, 82-90: οὐ γὰρ εἰς γραμματιστοῦ πρῶτον φοιτήσας καὶ παρ' ἐκείνου τὰ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἀκριβωσάμενος, ἔπειτα ῥήτορα διδάσκαλον προστησάμενος, ἀκείνου προβλήματα δόντος καὶ τρόπους τάξεως καὶ δεινότητος ὑποδείξαντος, καὶ πολλῶν μὲν ἐν οἷς ἀπετύγχανες ἐπιτιμήσεων καὶ σκωμμάτων ἀκούσας.

¹⁶⁹ Kydones, *Letters* 220.

¹⁷⁰ Isidore, *Panegyric*, 165. 6-10.

¹⁷¹ Theodore Metochites, *Miscellanea*, ch. 96, where the Byzantine scholar indicates knowledge of Aristotle's *Politics*; Thomas Magistros, *On kingship* and *On polity*. Cf. N. Gaul, *Thomas Magistros*, 134-144.

his admonitory oration *De non reddenda Callipoli*, Kydones voiced his view on the orator's social and political function at a time when the Byzantines had to cope with major threats.¹⁷² This was not a singular statement for, in a letter dating from 1382 and addressed to Manuel, Demetrios Kydones also commented on the value of rhetoric in approaching and influencing social phenomena:

Those rhetoricians who talk with outspokenness and who can thus grasp the problems of different situations, were able to restore the cities. Οἱ ῥητορικῆ παρρησίας μεταδιδόντες καὶ μετὰ ταύτης τῶν πραγμάτων ἀπτόμενοι ὤρθουν τὰς πόλεις.¹⁷³

Thus, according to his loyal panegyrists, Manuel fulfilled the role of a teacher, which would further have an impact on society, as teaching (διδασκτική) was regarded as one of the most virtuous imperial activities since it could benefit both the ruler and the subjects.¹⁷⁴ Eventually, in his panegyric - comparison, Demetrios Chrysoloras reiterated this idea, that the knowledge and the encouragement towards education provided by the emperor can lead to a fortunate and stable situation:

Democritus and Anaxagoras are highly admirable among the wise men. I admire them even more than other valuable possessions. Yet, the emperor of today seems much more admirable, as he prompts many others towards the study of philosophy, he prefers the elevation of thought to intellectual negligence, he offers precious things and does not destroy them, in order that he himself and others would benefit and thus from needy people become again prosperous. Ἔτι θαυμάσιοι Δημόκριτος καὶ Ἀναξαγόρας ἐν σοφοῖς. Ἄγαμαι τοὺς ἄνδρας καὶ γὰρ χρημάτων κρείττους γεγεννημένους. Ἄλλ' ὁ νῦν αὐτοκράτωρ πολὺ τούτων ὀραταί θαυμασιώτερος, χρησάμενος οὐκ ἐλάττωσι ταῖς πρὸς φιλοσοφίαν ὀρμαῖς, μεγαλόνοιαν δὲ προτιμήσας ὀλιγωρίας καὶ χαριζόμενος τὰς οὐσίας οὐ διαφθείρας, ἰν' ἄλλους καὶ αὐτὸν ὠφελήσῃ, [...] ἐξ ἀπόρων εὐπόρους πεποιημένους.¹⁷⁵

Conclusion

To sum up, the above analysis suggests that, within a framework of reference often determined by their individual concerns, the rhetoricians in the emperor's entourage largely supported Manuel's position by following the traditional tenets of Byzantine imperial ideology. Even Plethon's imagined *politeia* set at the center of its governing system the monarchic idea. At the

¹⁷² PG 155, 1015: ἐπεὶ δὲ τὸ μὲν εὐτυχεῖν καὶ μεγάλα πράττειν ἡμᾶς ὑπολέλοιπεν ἤδη, πεπράγαμεν δὲ οὕτω κακῶς, ὥστε τοῖς παρ' ἡμῖν ῥήτορσιν ἔργον εἶναι τῶν προτιθεμένων ἀεὶ κακῶν τὸ κουφότερον ἐξευρίσκειν.

¹⁷³ Kydones, *Letters*, 236.

¹⁷⁴ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *A Hundred letters*, 63: ὁ νοῦς κέκληται καὶ λογισμός, τούτῳ μόνῳ προσχρώμενος εἶ, καὶ διδασκτικὴν ἔχων ἅπασαν ἀρετὴν εἰς τελείωσιν ἄθλων ἡκεις πίστει τῇ πρὸς θεόν.

¹⁷⁵ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Synkrisis*, 230, 12-17. Cf. also 238.30-239.3: πάντα μὲν οὖν τὰ πεπραγμένα τῷ καλῷ βασιλεῖ περιττὸν ἂν εἶη διεξιέναι, ὀλίγων δὲ τινῶν ἀναγκαῖον ἐπιμνησθῆναι, ἃ ῥηθῆναι μὲν ἴσως ῥάδιον, ἔργῳ δὲ βεβαιωθῆναι ξένα καὶ λόγων ἀληθῶς ἀπιστότερα.

same time, the fact that Plethon could have proposed an ideal polity was probably the effect of the increased awareness of the dangers faced by Byzantium and of the contemporary concerns to find political solutions for safeguarding the state. Such concerns can be traced back to the texts of the earlier Palaiologan authors, Theodore Metochites, Thomas Magistros or Demetrios Kydones. After all, there can be identified several connections between the early fourteenth century and the early fifteenth century scholars and rhetoricians. Thus, George Gemistos Plethon was said to have held Metochites in very high esteem: in a manuscript, his disciple, Raoul Kabakes, member of a family that claimed to have descended from the Metochites, quoted Plethon arguing that Metochites remained unrivaled.¹⁷⁶

By supporting the emperor, this group of skilled rhetoricians set itself in stark opposition with the ecclesiastics. If both groups resembled in preaching the idea of wealth redistribution as solution to the social problems affecting Byzantine society, they also had many issues on which they disagreed. Unlike the ecclesiastics, most imperial rhetoricians preached the necessity of an alliance with the Latins as a sole solution for defending the state and based their notion of Byzantine identity either on an ancient Hellenic core of values or on the representation of Byzantium as direct descendant of ancient Rome. Even the political utopias that emanated from the members of these two groups differed fundamentally: if Joseph Bryennios cultivated a kind of Orthodox universalism, Plethon imagined an ideal polity and saw himself as a new Lykourgos in a new Sparta.¹⁷⁷

With regard to their treatment of imperial authority, the rhetoricians maintained the idea of the ruler's omnipotence. They also supported Manuel II in his promotion of his son, John, as co-emperor, and cultivated the sacrality of the imperial office. To a large extent, their attachment to Manuel II Palaiologos and to the imperial idea can be correlated with their narrow individual interests: the emperor was still one of the major patron of literary activities and he could also provide positions at the court or other benefits. In this respect, John Chortasmenos' letters asking Manuel II for money and material support for his mother are telling.¹⁷⁸

On the other hand, remarkably, most of their texts added to the standard set of imperial virtues detailed descriptions of the emperor's activity as rhetorician and educator of both his

¹⁷⁶ N. Siniossoglou, *Radical Platonism in Byzantium. Illumination and Utopia in Gemistos Plethon*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, 89.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. T. Shawcross, "A New Lycourgos for a New Sparta," in *Viewing the Morea*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library (forthcoming).

¹⁷⁸ Cf Unit 1, ch. 2.

son and of his subjects. They also reworked the idea of *philosopher-king*, a conventional and much used image in imperial orations, into an idea of emperor-rhetorician who acted as a teacher in order to improve the act of governing and to bring prosperity to his subjects. Finally, their intense activity in promoting the emperor is indicative of the emperor's efforts to cultivate court-rhetorical activities, a situation which contrasted with the approach of his father John V.

Chapter 9:

The emperor's discourse

All the texts analyzed so far seem to legitimate, authorize, or justify actions and attitudes adopted by two major social groups in the course of emperor Manuel's reign. This last section will deal with the process of formation, and the contents of the political discourse which the emperor set forth in his rhetorical compositions written at moments of significant political changes: the *Dialog on marriage* during the siege of Constantinople (1394-1402), the *Foundations of imperial conduct* and the *Seven ethico-political orations* were written at a time marked by the rule of John VII in Thessalonike (1403-1408); the composition of the *Funeral oration* coincided with the recovery of the Byzantine rule in the Peloponnese (1407). Under the given social and political circumstances of the early fifteenth century, Manuel was forced to advertise his intentions and reassert his role on the Byzantine political stage. While in the previous chapters¹ I dealt with the literary and rhetorical aspects of the emperor's political texts without treating in detail the entire range of implications of the problems raised, in this section my aim will be twofold: first, to discuss Manuel's ideological stance considered from the viewpoint of his political discourse continuously adapting itself to given conditions; and second, to argue that one of the most important elements of his insignia of power and of his political discourse consisted of a conception of rhetoric as a civic activity intended to provide amelioration both of the act of ruling and of his subjects' lives. Ultimately, this aspect will help us rethink the representation of Byzantine imperial power in the last decades of Byzantine history. In addition, I would like to address the question of what this ideological stance might suggest for the developments taking place in late Byzantine society at large.

In the attempt to probe into how the emperor approached the issues discussed above central for the political discourses developed by the ecclesiastics and the imperialists, the present analysis will follow in the footsteps of the previous two sections. On the one hand, I assume that the emperor's discourse emerged as a reaction to several political and social phenomena: the birth of a new entrepreneurial aristocracy, the changes in the political

¹ The texts analyzed in the second unit of the present dissertation will form the focus of the analysis but occasionally, reference to his other texts will be made.

institutions of decision making, the disputes with the Church, or the dynastic conflicts with John VII. On the other hand, previously discussed rhetorical markers such as genre and authorial voice will help us understand Manuel's discursive strategies whereby he introduced innovations or illustrated the general trends of Byzantine ideology. This analysis will unveil the terms that Manuel negotiated in his texts with his audience composed of individuals with different backgrounds and interests. It will also highlight his strategies to present an idea of rulership acceptable for groups like those of the hard-line Orthodox or of the Latinophile.

Before proceeding to the discussion proper a look at the emperor's understanding of the Byzantine political sphere is needed. Just like in the case of other contemporary authors, in his political texts which have been hitherto analyzed, Manuel showed a certain degree of political realism reflected in his awareness of the decline in state authority, as alluded to in his arguments against marriage,² in the detailed letter sent to Kydones from the Turkish camp, or in other letters expressing his hopes for western support.³ Even more so, occasionally, in the *Foundations* a pessimistic outlook permeates the text.⁴ Manuel was also aware that the lack of economic means persisted from the reign of his father, John V. Voicing such an awareness of economic troubles, in a letter addressed to Kydones he tried to reconcile his former mentor with the emperor-father accused of not having paid him the due salary on time:

He who gave you no hope that you would receive even one hundred staters has now unexpectedly poured out twice that amount, as Zeus once rained down upon the Rhodians from a cloud. Now don't tell us that it is easy for an emperor to give a thousand staters and to give that amount frequently, when it is difficult for him to assert his power over the nation, which in a way he has been serving for quite some time. For that is the way things are by the nature of the situation. Ὅστις σε τοὺς ἑκατὸν στατηῆρας ἤκιστα πάντων λήψεσθαι ἐλπίζεις ποιήσας, ἔπειθ' ὕσεν ἐξαπίνης σοι δις τοσοῦτους καθά ποθ' ὁ Ζεὺς Ῥοδίους τὸν διὰ τῆς νεφέλης χρυσόν. καὶ μὴ λέγε ῥᾶστον μὲν εἶναι καὶ χιλίους βασιλέα δοῦναι στατηῆρας καὶ πολλάκις τοσοῦτους, ἔθνους δὲ τοῦτον κρατῆσαι οἷς ἀμηγέπη συχνὸν χρόνον δουλεύει ἐπιεικῶς χαλεπὸν. τῇ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ πράγματος φύσει ὡδί πως ἔχει.⁵

Likewise, the author's ironical remarks in the final passage of the *Dialog on marriage* disclosed the emperor's perception of the situation:

² *Dialog on marriage*, 70-72.

³ Manuel, *Letters*, 16 to Kydones, in which he describes how he was forced to participate as vassal in the Ottoman military operations. In other letters the emperor shows himself enthusiastic about the possibility to obtain help from western rulers.

⁴ *Foundations*, 54: Ἐν δὲ τὸ βίῳ τὰ τῆς ἀτυχίας πλεονεκτεῖ. Καὶ πολλὰ τις ἐλπίσας εὐρήσειν, ὀλίγων μόλις ἐπιτετύχηκε. Τουτί δέ ρίζα τοῦ τήκεσθαι.

⁵ Manuel, *Letters*, 12. See also Kydones, *Letters*, 70, 8-10 rebuking the emperor John V over a payment issue: σὺ δ' οὗτ' ἄρχων, ὃ μάλιστα σπουδάζεις, δικαίως κεκλήρη, καὶ πονηρὸς καὶ ἔση καὶ δόξεις, χρημάτων ὀλίγων τὸ δίκαιον ἀποδόμενος.

Come on, then, as the winning argument is on your side, let us present the prize. It will not be though a golden award as we said earlier. Golden crowns are at present in short supply. Ἄγε οὖν, στεφάνῳ σοὶ τὸν νικητὴν ἀναδήσωμεν λόγον· πλήν γε οὐ χρυσῶ, ὡς πρόσθεν εἴρηται μοι· σπάνις γάρ νῦν τούτου γε.⁶

Alongside these concrete details to contemporary circumstances, Manuel's texts analyzed so far certainly represented elements within a wider process of creating a politico-didactic *persona*. They not only reflect his political experience but also indicate an awareness of his notion of the political sphere. In the first speech of his *Orations* Manuel discussed the notion of political wisdom (πολιτικὴ σοφία) and noticed that ancient legendary rulers such as Odysseus, Nestor, and Solon possessed it, while Croesus, the Lydian king, did not.⁷ As for his awareness of the variations within the political system, Manuel seems to have favored the idea of a governing body larger than the emperor himself, a system that would have included a council of *aristoi* with the emperor as *primus inter pares*. This idea resulted from another passage in the first oration extolling the benefits of Solon's institutional system.

Because of these <Solon> was held as the best man among the best ones and the greatest among the greatest, and even now he is regarded in a similar way. Διὰ ταῦτα ἄριστος ἀρίστοις καὶ μέγιστος μεγίστοις ἀνὴρ ἀνδράσι νομίζοιτο, καὶ νῦν γε πᾶσιν ἔτι δοκεῖ.⁸

The passage implies a strong connection between the ruler and his immediate council of advisors which to a large extent coincided with his literary court. Further on, Manuel asserts that Solon surpassed the others not on the basis of his economic means or military resources but exclusively because of his practical wisdom.⁹ Again, this statement seems to allude to the contemporary situation when the local and Italian businessmen's political influence often overwhelmed the emperor's authority. This stands as an example of Manuel's strategies to approach contemporary issues within a framework dominated by symbolic representations or even theoretical considerations. For, as I have pointed out,¹⁰ in his political texts which addressed contemporary issues Manuel frequently used several fundamental ethical notions and themes: voluntariness, choice, pleasure, definitions of good and evil, or nature. Thus, arguably, by drawing on several philosophical notions, as a political thinker he also created a synthesis of different political ideas.

⁶ *Dialog on marriage*, 117.

⁷ *Orations*, 388d.

⁸ *Orations*, 388 b. Cf. *Foundations*, 84, on the importance of close friends in the administration: ἤκιστ' ἂν ἀρμόσειεν αὐτοκράτορι ἢ βούλαις ὑποτετάχθαι, ὡς ὑφ' ἀρμοσταῖς ἑαυτὸν ποιοῦντι, ἢ τισιν ἀξιολόγοις ἐπιχειρεῖν, μὴ καλῶς βεβουλευμένῳ, καὶ τὰς γνώμας ἔχοντι τῶν φιλοῦντων...

⁹ *Orations*, 388, οὕτω μὲν οὖν οὗτος ἀνὴρ προὔβη πρὸς ἄκρον σοφίας, τῷ τιμᾶσθαι ταύτην παντὸς χρυσοῦ.

¹⁰ See Unit II.

9.1. Society and social “classes”

Unlike in the texts of the rhetoricians and of the ecclesiastics, the emperor's observations on the divisions in Byzantine society are rather scarce and largely follow the conventions of imperial propaganda.¹¹ When used, such statements portray the ruler as benefactor of all his subjects, regardless of their social class. One would have expected more allusions on the divisions within Byzantine society in Manuel's letter collection and yet, his letters included few concrete pieces of information on social realities. Owing probably to the emperor's careful selection, only rarely the emperor makes mention of the economic hardships of the state. Thus, in a letter from the early 1400s the emperor referred to the lack of private and public funds in both Constantinople and Thessalonike.¹² In another letter addressed to Demetrios Kydones the emperor seems to echo his mentor's deep concerns with the social and economic troubles of the state:

I have the impression that, without your realizing it, the general misfortunes nearly dragged you away from the letter you were beginning to the composition of a tragedy, a reaction which I myself am now on the verge of sharing. Αἱ γάρ τοι κοιναὶ δυσπραγίαι, οἶμαι, σὲ ὀρμώμενον ἐπιστέλλειν ἐπὶ τὸ τραγωδεῖν λεληθότως ὥσπερ ἀνθειλκον, ὃ δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐγὼ μικροῦ δεῖν ἤδη κινδυνεύω παθεῖν.¹³

Thereafter, in a letter addressed to Patriarch Euthymios, which described the situation in the Peloponnese Manuel remarked on the conflicts within the Moreote society, conflicts which originated in the social divisions and affected the political stability of the region:

It seems that of old the land of Pelops was destined to look on its *inhabitants' fightings with one another* as preferable to peace. And nobody is so simple that in the absence of an occasion provided by his neighbor he cannot fabricate or invent one by himself. Everyone wishes to indulge his nature by making use of arms. If only those people had made use of them where they should, things would have been much better for them. And since I have a detailed knowledge of the entire situation, I regard nothing as more important than their being at peace with one another. Ὡς γὰρ ἔοικε, πάλαι ἐπέπρωτο τῆ τοῦ Πέλοπος βέλτιον εἰρήνης ἄγειν τὸ πρὸς ἀλλήλους διαμάχεσθαι. κἂν μὴ δῶ τις λαβὴν ἑτέρῳ, οὐδεὶς οὕτως ἀβέλτερος ὡς μὴ δυναθῆναι πλάσαι καὶ ἐξευρεῖν οἴκοθεν· ἐθέλει γὰρ ἕκαστος χρῆσθαι τῆ φύσει χρώμενος ὄπλοις, καὶ εἶθε ἔνθα ἐχρῆν, ἦν γὰρ ἂν αὐτοῖς τὰ πράγματα βελτίω. καὶ ταῦτ' εἰδὼς ἀκριβῶς οὐδὲν ἕτερον προὔργου τίθημι τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους τούτων εἰρήνης.¹⁴

¹¹ E.g. *Foundations*, 9: Μὴ γοῦν καλλίστου δανείου γένοιο κάκιτος ἐκτιστής, μήτε τὸ ἐνόν, μήτε τὸ ἐνδέον ἀποπληρῶν αὐτῷ τῷ βούλεσθαι μόνον. Ἀπολαμβάνει δὲ ὁ Θεὸς τὸ παρ' ἡμῶν ὀφειλόμενον οὐ ταῖς ἑαυτοῦ χερσίν, ἀλλὰ ταῖς τῶν πενήτων, καὶ τῶν ἄλλως βοηθείας δεομένων. Cf. Agapetos' *Advice to the emperor*.

¹² Manuel, *Letters*, 34 dated between 1403-1408 and addressed to Manuel Chrysoloras.

¹³ Manuel, *Letters*, 21.

¹⁴ Manuel, *Letters*, 51 (1408).

On several other occasions, he seemed to couch the allusions to the economic conditions in rhetorical parallels, as in the epilogue of the *Dialog on marriage* or in the first oration of the *Seven Orations* where he rebukes Croesus for having amassed too much wealth.¹⁵ If on the one hand, overall, it appears that the emperor excluded from his texts the topic of social differentiation as fundamental for understanding the problems of the empire, on the other hand, he addressed much more often the topic of benefits shared by society as a whole. In his texts, society was described in abstract terms as a body of subjects who take the ruler as model:

But all subjects will regulate their own life, not on the basis of what the ruler may say but directly on what he may do; looking at his actions as if upon an exemplar, they will be stimulated to imitate him; and they will indeed follow him in all his pursuits. Ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀρχόμενον ἅπαν ὧ φίλτατε, οὐ πρὸς ἄττα λέξειεν ἄρχων, τὸν σφῶν αὐτῶν εὐθὺς ῥυθμίσουσί γε βίον· ἀλλ' ἄττα πράξειεν οὗτος, ταῦθ' ὡς εἰς πρωτότυπον βλέποντες, προθυμήσονται μιμεῖσθαι.¹⁶

As a result, the notion of common interest, expressed in terms like τὸ κοινόν, τὸ συμφέρον, τὸ συνοῖσον, is encountered much more frequently than in other authors.¹⁷ Albeit to a certain extent a conventional element of Byzantine imperial propaganda, the frequent allusion to the common benefit of the people resembled Plethon's utopian republic where the citizens' responsibility towards the welfare of the community was particularly emphasized.¹⁸ This notion appears especially in the *Foundations* where the emperor reminds his son of the necessity to act in accordance with the common interests of the members of the society.¹⁹ It appears therefore that the social and economic differences were generally masked by an appeal to the common good and the conventional approach of the different social categories as subjects of the emperor.

9.2. The making of enemies and allies

The appropriate identification of enemies and allies in Manuel's texts had a particular significance as the emperor, more than other contemporary authors, connected it to the issue

¹⁵ *Orations* I.

¹⁶ *Dialog on marriage*, 89.

¹⁷ *Foundations*, 314B: συνεγκεῖν δὲ τῷ κοινῷ. Cf. *Foundations* 19: πάντες γὰρ ἀλλήλων δεόμεθα, εἰ μέλλει διαρκέσειν ἡμῖν τὸ ζῆν; *Oration to the subjects*, Τὸ ὑμῖν συνοῖσον εὐχόμενός τε διατελών, PG 156, 561B. *Foundations* 42: καὶ πρὸ τοῦ ἰδίου καλοῦ εἰς τὸ κοινῇ συνοῖσον ὀρών; and *Foundations* 43: καὶ ὁ τὸ ἴδιον θέμενος πρὸ τῶν κοινῇ συμφερόντων πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐφέλκεται ταυτηνὴν τὴν εἰκόνα.

¹⁸ Gemistos Plethon, *On virtues*, a.2.40: πολίτη πρὸς πόλιν.

¹⁹ *Foundations*, 21: ἢ που φίλος σοι σαφής, ὃς κοινωνῶν σοι τῶν ἔργων, κατόπιν τοῦ συνοῖσοντος αἰεὶ τὸ χάριεν τίθησιν. *Ibid.*, 37: ψυχῆς καρπὸς ἀληθῆς ἡγεμονία πρεπούσης ἢ πρὸς τάγαθὸν κίνησις, ἢ πρὸς τὸ κακὸν ἀλλοτρίωσις, ἢ πρὸς τὸ κοινῇ συνοῖσον ἐπιμέλεια.

of political freedom.²⁰ The emperor's presentation of allies and enemies reflected both his political realism and his longstanding views on the non-Christian enemies of the state. In the *Foundations* Manuel indirectly admitted that the Byzantines were surrounded by more powerful peoples.²¹ First, aware of the changes in the regional balance of forces, Manuel seems to have adopted the idea that the Byzantines ceased to represent a regional force and that potential allies were to be treated with more caution. The official letters addressed to various western chancelleries make clear the position of subordination which the emperor adopted with regard to other regional power brokers. It may be for this reason that he avoided the use of the term *barbaros* or other derogatory denominations for the surrounding peoples which could have provided support in the defense against the Ottomans. Instead, the Albanians, or Illyrians, as he describes them, who feature in the *Funeral Oration*, are presented as a virtuous people brave and loyal to the Byzantine Despot of the Peloponnese, Theodore I. Such characterization was radically different from Kydones' negative opinions on other neighboring peoples, Bulgarians or Serbians:

Well then, to have the Illyrians, in addition to the forces of the Peloponnese which in themselves were not small, was of the greatest assistance. He arranged all this according to his own plan and far surpassed the expectation of others. For if a small additional assistance helps to tip the scales, what could not be achieved by a substantial force which was also experienced in warfare? And although they themselves were enthusiastic and good soldiers he continued to improve them. Ἐχων γε τοίνυν αὐτοὺς πρὸς τῇ τῆς Πελοποννήσου δυνάμει, οὐ μικρᾶ καὶ καθ' αὐτήν οὖση, προσθήκη ὅ τι μεγίστην, ῥᾶον ἢ τις ἂν ἐνόμισεν, εὖ τὰ κατὰ νοῦν διέθετο πάντα. Εἰ γὰρ δὴ καὶ μικρὰ τις ἐπιθήκη τὸ πᾶν ἰσχύει πολλακίς, ἢ τοσαύτη μὲν τῷ πλήθει, καλὴ δὲ καὶ τῇ τῶν πολεμικῶν ἐμπειρίᾳ, τί οὐκ ἂν ἔδρα; Οὐ γάρ, καίτοι καθ' αὐτοὺς προθύμους τε καὶ ἀγαθοὺς στρατιώτας ὄντας, οὐ προσέθετο ποιῆσαι τούτους βελτίους ἀλλ' ἐπηύξησεν αὐτοῖς.²²

Second, his view on an alliance with the Latins emerges as more nuanced than in the accounts of the Ottomans, for the emperor's continuous attempts to gain the Latins' military support

²⁰ Among the many examples of discussions of freedom see for instance *Foundations* 29: πολλῶν γε θρήνων ἄξιον, ἐξουσίαν εἰληφότας τέκνα Θεοῦ γενέσθαι, ἔπειτα δουλεύειν ἐθέλειν; *Admonitory Oration*, 299.3: δοκῶ οὖν ἐμοί, ἥπερ ἔφθην εἰπών, τῆς δουλείας ταυτησὶ κρείττω τὸν θάνατον εἶναι. Οἶδα δ' ὡς καὶ ὑμῖν ταυτὶ συνδοκεῖ, ἐπεὶ καὶ πᾶσιν ἀνδράσιν οὕτω τοι δῆπου δέδοκται καὶ δοκεῖ, εἰ μὴ τις ἄρα παιδὸς ἔχων φρόνημα καὶ ψυχὴν γυναικῶδη καὶ ἀνελεύθερον. *Admonitory Oration*, 302.20: δρῶμεν τοίνυν, ὦ ἄνδρες, πάντα, ἀνεχώμεθα πάντων ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐλευθερίας; *Letters*, 4, on freedom in Thessalonike. On the idea of *freedom* in late Byzantium see D. Angelov, "Three kinds of Liberty as Political Ideals in Byzantium, Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries," *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia, 22-27 August 2011*, vol. 1, Sofia 2011, 311-332.

²¹ *Foundations*, 26: νόμιζε μηδένα ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν τῆν μείζω δύναμιν κεκτημένων. Cf. *Admonitory Oration to the Thessalonians*, 300.32: ἀλλὰ πολλῶν προέχει ὁ ἐχθρὸς εἰς τε χρήματα καὶ γῆν καὶ συμμαχοῦντας καὶ στρατιὰν καὶ χρῆ πρεσβείαν πέμπειν ὡς αὐτὸν σπονδὰς αἰτησομένους. Συντίθεμαι, ὦ ἑταῖρε, πολλῶν με εἰς τοῦτο ὠθοῦντων, ἅπερ ἀπώσασθαι μὲν εὐχερές, τὸ δὲ χαλεπὸς τις εἶναι δόξαι δεδιώς, ἐν μέρει διεξερχόμενος ἕκαστα, ὧμην δεῖν ἀνέκφορα κατέχειν.

²² Manuel, *Funeral oration* 120-122. Cf. the remarks on the Bulgars, Serbians, and Hungarians, *ibid.* 191-193.

were reflected at the discursive level as well. Thus, the preface of Manuel's treatise *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit* suggests that the emperor did not wish to attack the Latins' faith but his goal was to expound and defend the Greeks' doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit:

This treatise was written not against the Latins; for it belongs to someone who needs to defend a position rather than to someone who wishes to attack others. Τόδε τὸ σύγγραμμα οὐκ ἄντικρυς κατὰ Λατίνων ὑφάνθη· ἐστὶ γὰρ ἀναγκαζομένου μᾶλλον ἀπολογία δοῦναι, ἢ τουτωνὶ καταφερομένου.²³

This positive attitude towards the Latins' faith also emerges in one of his letters where Manuel praised the Latin liturgy and religious customs.²⁴ The conciliatory attitude towards the Latins in theological matters was paralleled at the political level. In the *Funeral Oration* Manuel presented the Hospitaller Knights in positive terms as Theodore sold them the major Peloponnesian strongholds:

There was a community in Rhodes composed of men who had vowed to the Saviour chastity, obedience and poverty and who had also promised to fight those who strove against the Cross, and they were accustomed to bear the sign of the Cross on their clothes, their arms and banners. Ὑπῆρχον ἢ ἐν Ῥόδῳ κοινότης, ἄνδρες ἄζυγίαν, ὑποταγὴν, ἀκτημοσύνην ὑπισχνούμενοι τῷ Σωτῆρι καὶ πολεμεῖν τοῖς τῷ σταυρῷ πολεμοῦσιν, ὃν οἶδε φέρειν εἰώθεσαν κάπτι τῶν ἐσθήτων, κάπτι τῶν ὄπλων, κάπτι τῆς σημαίας.²⁵

Although in the same *Funeral oration* he also expressed some concerns vis-à-vis other groups of Latins, overall the emperor maintained a positive attitude.²⁶ This position is further testified by the letters he sent from the West to individuals in Constantinople, where he expressed his optimism on the response of the western rulers upon his requests to receive military help.²⁷

The emperor's attitude towards the Ottomans emerges as completely different, despite the fact that, like in the case of the Latins, Manuel had often had negotiations with the Ottomans and enjoyed their benevolence. Around 1391, his long theological apologetic treatise composed of twenty-six dialogical episodes on the differences between Christianity and Islam, showed that the emperor, despite his awareness of a traditional Byzantine view on Islam,²⁸ had made the effort of understanding the basics of the enemy's religion. The dialog featured a

²³ Ch. Dendrinios, *An annotated edition of the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, 1.

²⁴ Manuel, *Letters*, 30 addressed to Constantine Asanes (1396), "But your friend speaks of the great silence, order, and reverence with which they perform their sacred rites, which are not at all inferior to our own hymns and readings and in some points may even be superior. He also exalts that truly wonderful and reversed wise man and teacher as well as his thoughtful and intelligent disciples."

²⁵ Manuel, *Funeral oration*, 166.

²⁶ *Ibid.*: "We are not so wretched, spineless or stupid as to prefer those strangers (i.e. the Latins) to ourselves."

²⁷ Manuel, *Letters*, 39, sent from Paris in 1401.

²⁸ Manuel was probably aware of John of Damascus writings against Islam, Th. Khoury, *Manuel II Paléologue. Entretiens avec un musulman*, Paris: Cerf, 1966, 42.

conversation between the emperor and a *mouterizis* most often on friendly terms. One section however (*Dialog* no. 5) provided historical and political arguments against the military successes of Bayezid and the Ottomans, which, to some extent, resembled Makarios Makres' series of homilies about “those scandalized by the successes of the infidels.”²⁹ The flexible approach to Islam in the *Dialogs* disappeared nevertheless from the emperor's subsequent writings which all included long passages that vilified the Turks as an ethnic group.³⁰ Manuel specifically addressed two short texts against the Ottomans, both written after the end of the siege of Constantinople (1394-1402). The first one entitled *Some remarks the leader of the Persians and the Scythians might have made to the proud tyrant of the Turks (Bayezid) who talked grandly and insolently and who was insufferable in his boasts when he prospered, but who turned quite the opposite after the defeat, was an ethopoia* that ridiculed Bayezid for his defeat. The second was titled *Psalm about the Saracen Thunderbolt, when God looked upon His people and, through his enemies, slew him who was beast in every way*, and praised the Christian God for having defeated the Muslim.³¹

Emphatically negative characterizations of the Ottomans are pervasive in most of his texts that even in the *Foundations*, his most abstract composition, one finds several allusions to them.³² In the *Funeral oration* Manuel overlooks the Turkish help received by his brother Theodore during the conflict with the local *archontes*; moreover, he offers an extremely negative account of the Ottoman invaders who were beginning to show their interest in occupying the Byzantine province of the Peloponnese.³³ Bayezid came again in the emperor's

²⁹ *Dialog no. 5* in E. Trapp, *Manuel II Palaiologos. Dialoge mit einem Perser*, Wien: Böhlau, 1968. After an account (54-59) of ancient Greek and Roman glorious deeds, the *Persian* declares himself convinced that Islam was no better than Christianity: “Ἐστω τοίνυν, ἔφη ὁ Πέρσης, τὰ κατ’ ἀλλήλων ἰσόρροπα καὶ βεβαίως μὴθ’ ὑμῖν εὐημερία μὴθ’ ἡμῖν μεταβολὴ προσδοκάσθω, ἀλλ’ ἐν ὑποψίᾳ καὶ ἀμφοτέρα κείσθω, καὶ ταύτην γε τὴν ἀτραπὸν ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν χωρεῖτω, 63.

³⁰ E.g. Manuel, *Letters*, 31 addressed to Kydones: “You may observe that some of them willingly deny the light and let themselves be nailed down to darkness, and even quite unabashedly, alas, expose our cause to ridicule. For if that self-styled prophet should not be refuted, and God, who keeps the bow that should never let fly the arrow, and he who bears the sword of which Paul speaks should polish it without purpose, and the God-haters should continue to run their present victorious course until the time comes when, according to the same apostle, their worth will be made known by fire, then they might be able to present some sort of defense at the judgment by alleging that they did not regard their teacher as a liar, but thought that he was helping them. If this is the sort of thing they believe, they would not have come close to the truth in any way, but since these people, being uneducated barbarians, follow falsehood wearing the mask of truth [...] For a long time these people have been acting wantonly, blaspheming and mocking what is holy in an unbearable manner and feasting on blood and massacres, and for this they had hardly received any punishment, let alone an appropriate one” Cf. also the *Kanon paraklētikos* referring to the Turks as barbarian enemies.

³¹ See Unit II, Introduction.

³² *Foundations*, 71: Μὴδ’ εἶ τις ἱεροσουλῶν, ἀρπάζων, λωποδυτῶν, καὶ πρὸς μὲν τὸ θεῖον ὀλιγωρῶν, εἰς δὲ τοὺς νόμους ὑβρίζων, ἄρξει Σκυθῶν περάτων πάσης οἰκουμένης, πάσης ἀοικίτου, θαυμαστός σοι φαινέσθω τῷ τῆς ἀρχῆς ὄγκῳ.

³³ See the inscription of Parori, R.-J. Loenertz, “Res Gestae Theodori Ioanni F. Palaeologi. Titulus metricus A.D. 1389,” *EEBS*, 25 (1955): 206-210. For the inscription of the translation, see Appendix 1.

focus and was addressed in a virulent *psogos*.³⁴ Then, a less obvious criticism against the Ottoman enemy is also present in the *Seven ethico-political orations* where Manuel relates the story of the defeat of the huge Persian armies by the much fewer but better organized Athenians³⁵

Equally hostile, in the emperor's view, were the Byzantine archontes who opposed the emperor's authority. First, in the *Dialog on marriage*, Manuel included another *psogos* against his nephew John VII, condemned for his claims to legitimacy and for his alliance with the Ottomans that led him to attack the emperor.³⁶ Then, in the *Funeral oration* he blames the Byzantines who sided with the Ottomans in the attempt to oust Theodore:

What can one say about those who had deserted to the enemy, joining the wolves, as one might say, with a strong desire to devour their kinsmen's flesh, though in fact they were only devouring their own? It would take too long to detail their actions and it is better to omit what would only plunge into gloom those who are already suffering. Περὶ δὲ τῶν αὐτομολησάντων εἰς τοὺς ἐχθροὺς καὶ μετὰ τῶν λύκων, ὡς εἰπεῖν, γενομένων καὶ ἐπιθυμούντων μὲν ἐσθίειν τὰς τῶν ὁμοφύλων σάρκας, ἐσθιόντων δὲ τὰς ἰδίας, τί ἄν τις λέγοι; Μακρὸν τὰ κείνων διεξελεῖν καὶ βέλτιον ταῦτα παραδραμεῖν ἢ περ ἐπιτίθεσθαι μελαγχολίαν νοσήσασιν ἀνθρώποις.³⁷

Certainly, the attacks against the regional land-owners had to do with the emperor's efforts to project the image of his imperial authority in control of the elites active in remote provinces. Yet, in contrast to this attitude towards the rebellious *archontes* who ultimately in 1416 sabotaged the emperor's plan to rebuild the Hexamilion wall, Manuel cultivated the idea of a group of close allies active at the court in Constantinople. This group of court allies, within which can be included his “literary court” represented in the letters,³⁸ was well reflected in his political texts. The early *Dialog on marriage* presented Helena Kantakouzene, his mother, as a close collaborator in matters of governance. The later texts, the *Foundations* and the *Orations*, drew heavily on the significance of the ruler's court counselors. If in the *Foundations* the advice addressed to John VIII is more straightforward,³⁹ in the *Orations* it is couched in the account of the Athenian legislator and ruler, Solon. Thus, in the first of the seven *Orations* the author stresses that the legendary statesman of the seventh century BC was only a *primus inter pares*, the appointed leader of a group of equally powerful individuals.⁴⁰

³⁴ *Funeral oration*, 186 and 206.

³⁵ *Orations* I.

³⁶ *Dialog on marriage*, 129.

³⁷ *Funeral oration*, 127.

³⁸ Unit I.2.

³⁹ *Foundations*, 55.

⁴⁰ *Orations*, 388.

9.3. The formulation of Byzantine specificity

Turning to Manuel's understanding of Byzantine identity, it is noticeable that the emperor's references to Hellenism were rather rare, despite the trend of self-identifying Hellenism known to have existed in the Palaiologan period. Only in the early *Dialogs with a Muslim* the heritage of ancient Greece appears more prominent, while in other instances it was reduced to quotations of ancient authors like Pythagoras or Isocrates.⁴¹ Instead, like the previous Byzantine rulers, the emperor continued to emphasize the Byzantines' *Romanness*.⁴² At the same time, unlike in the ecclesiastics' case, the references to the Byzantines' Hellenic origins were less present in discussions of political contexts, although Manuel did refer to the ancient Greek cultural background.⁴³ Only in the *First oration* the emperor suggested a parallel between the Byzantines and the ancient Greeks who also fought against the peoples of the East. Nonetheless, ever since his earliest text, the *Panegyric addressed to his father* and the *Admonitory oration to the Thessalonians* he placed the Roman foundation of the state at the core of Byzantine specificity:

You have to keep in mind that you are Romans, and your fatherland is that of Philip and Alexander and that you are the successors of these two nations. Μνημονευτέον ὑμῖν ἐστὶν ὅτι Ῥωμαῖοι ἐσμέν, ὅτι ἡ Φιλίππου καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου ὑμῖν ὑπάρχει πατρὶς καὶ ὡς τούτοις τοῖν γενοῖν τοῖς διαδόχοις.⁴⁴

To a large extent, his understanding implied a strong political aspect. The emperor identified the Byzantines with the Romans as he repeated several tenets of official propaganda that also emphasized the glorious Roman past. From this point of view his writings resembled the court rhetoricians' panegyrics. It is therefore not far fetched to say that this political aspect was emphasized ever more strongly in direct proportion to the decline of the state, as if he intended to reassert what no longer seemed so obvious about the empire of the Romans.

Yet, Manuel's identification of the Byzantines did not entirely function according to propagandistic needs but it also owed much to his political realism. No longer the emperor describes his people as *the chosen people* but rather as a sort of *Christian* people equal with others. One is tempted to explain this attitude on the basis of the Treaty of Gallipoli (1403) which had stipulated the formation of a Christian League including the Byzantines, the

⁴¹ *Dialogs with a Muslim*, no. 5 and *Foundations*.

⁴² See also the analysis of G. Page, *Being Byzantine. Greek Identity before the Ottomans*, 249-270. Page argues that, despite the fact that Manuel uses the term *Rhomaïos* less than other earlier authors like John Kantakouzenos, his terminology of *Roman-ness* confirms the primarily political content observed in earlier writers.

⁴³ E.g. Isocrates, Pythagoras, Homer in the *Foundations*.

⁴⁴ *Admonitory Oration*, 297, 21. Cf. *Panegyric*, 228: ὦ ἄνδρες Ῥωμαῖοι.

Genoese, and the Serbs.⁴⁵ In the *Funeral oration*, although he criticized some of the Latin mercenaries siding with the local archontes, Manuel also praised the Hospitallers as valiant and loyal. The major shift in the attitude towards ethnicity came from the comments the emperor made on the population of Albanians/Illyrians which settled in the Peloponnese in the beginning of Theodore's rule. Unlike Kydones who regarded the neighboring Christian peoples, the Bulgarians and the Serbs, as barbarian, Manuel praised them for their austere lifestyle as well as for their loyalty.⁴⁶

On the other hand, if the comparisons with other neighboring peoples did not underline the Byzantine uniqueness, Manuel promoted the idea of fatherland, πατρίς, as a distinctive political entity, limited geographically to Constantinople, and, to some extent, echoing the western processes of formation of city-based polities.⁴⁷ Some scholars have rightly argued that this notion reflected a process of *territorialisation* of the πατρίς, that is authors, including Manuel, began to operate with an idea of state defined within strict territorial boundaries.⁴⁸ This emphasis on national and ethnic connotations embedded in Manuel's idea of πατρίς, differentiated it from the notion of fatherland (πατρίς) cultivated by ecclesiastics like Bryennios and Symeon of Thessalonike who were more concerned with eschatological and universalist meanings.⁴⁹

9.4. The renewal of imperial ideology in Manuel's texts

Having discussed the major topics of Manuel's political discourse, I will now turn to the final part of this chapter, the analysis of the emperor's conception of imperial authority, seen as both self-representation and as evidence for his response to the social and political challenges effected by contemporary power brokers. As noticed in a previous chapter,⁵⁰ the construction of imperial authority represented the backbone of the political texts studied so far. Viewed

⁴⁵ See ch. 1.

⁴⁶ See above.

⁴⁷ Manuel, *Funeral oration*, 111: ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος τε καὶ τοῦ γένους καὶ τῶν φυσάντων, 161: οὐς οὐκ οἶδα ὅ, τι καλέσετε, Ῥωμαίους καὶ Χριστιανούς διὰ τὸ γένος καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ἢ τάναντία διὰ τὴν προαίρεσιν καὶ τὰς πράξεις, ἐχθροὺς διὰ τὸ πρὸς τὴν πατρίδα διεστραμμένον. Earlier, in a letter addressed to Kydones while he resided in Venice, he appeals to his teacher to come back to Byzantium, his fatherland: you should cling to the fatherland no less firmly than the octopuses to the rocks (τῆς τε πατρίδος ἔχεσθαι οὐχ ἦττον ἢ τῶν πετρῶν οἱ πολύποδες. Letter 12.18-19). On the comparison between Manuel's ideas and the contemporary processes in the Italian cities see A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ἢ οἰκονόμος*, 235-244.

⁴⁸ A. Kioussopoulou, "Les hommes d'affaires byzantins et leur rôle politique à la fin du Moyen Âge," *Historical Review* 7 (2010): 15-21.

⁴⁹ A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ἢ οἰκονόμος*, 204-230.

⁵⁰ See Unit II.

against the backdrop provided by other similar contemporary writings, Manuel's politically charged texts written during his reign seem to provide an answer to two questions about the political history of late Byzantium: what the emperor stood for in those late years of Byzantium and how his style of government can be defined.

The construction of a distinctive imperial representation with Manuel at its center can be understood from two different viewpoints: within the framework of official manifestations of power and as a result of the emperor's attempts to adjust the major features of imperial propaganda and to introduce new features. According to this double layered model of analysis, firstly, it is noticeable that the late Byzantine representation of imperial power remained to a certain extent unaltered. Manuel's coronation ceremonial, performed at the same time with his marriage on February 12 1392 was not much different from other previous similar ceremonies, as described in the account preserved by an anonymous Greek short chronicle and by the Russian pilgrim, Ignatios.⁵¹ Likewise, the official documents issued by Manuel's chancery reflect his adherence to timeless imperial models.⁵² Here, the emperor used the same formulas as in other more fortunate periods of Byzantine history when they better reflected the emperor's extent of authority. In addition to external markers like the ceremonial and the formulaic language of official papers, the emperor's rhetorical texts included several of the standard principles of Byzantine imperial ideology. Many chapters of the *Foundations* and especially the epistolary epilogue of the *Seven ethico-political orations* draw on old values and assumptions. There, the emperor described himself as supreme ruler,⁵³ God's vicar on Earth,⁵⁴

⁵¹ It is a short chronicle of the monastery τοῦ Λειμῶνος on the island of Lesbos published by P. Schreiner, *Die Byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1975, vol I, 104, Chronik 10. Yet this has to be used with caution since it seems that it was based partially on Pseudo-Kodinos and John Kantakouzenos and on an *Euchologion* containing the rubrics and texts of prayers for the ceremonies in Hagia Sophia during which the emperor took part. See P. Schreiner, "Hochzeit und Krönung," 76, and R.-J. Loenertz, "Le chancelier imperial a Byzance, XI^e et XV^e siecles." G. P Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, Dumbarton Oaks studies 19, Washington, D.C: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1984, 198.

⁵² Notions like justice, usefulness, and philanthropy present in Manuel's texts can all be found in the *prooimia* of imperial documents throughout the Byzantine period. Ever since Eusebios they are in fact elements of the Byzantine imperial idea, that is of the concept of the emperor as God's representative on earth. It is characteristic of the continuity and consistency of Byzantine imperial ideology that several parallels can be drawn between Manuel and imperial speeches of the sixth century. Like Manuel, his predecessors insisted on the idea of his responsibilities towards his subjects, the divine appointment of the emperor, and his accountability to God for his policies. On the continuity of imperial virtues in Byzantium see H. Hunger, *Prooimion*, ch. II, 114, 123, 143. and "Philanthropia. Eine griechische Wortprägung auf ihrem Wege von Aischylos bis Theodoros Metochites," *Anzeiger phil.-hist. Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 100 (1963): 1-20, 11.

⁵³ In *Foundations* 72 he operated a distinction between those who just rule, have ἀρχή even over large territories and populations (like the Scythinas) and those who are εὐδαίμονες and βασιλεῖς.

⁵⁴ *Orations, Epistolary epilogue*, 560c: Τί οὖν δὴ τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ πρὸς ἡμᾶς; οὐ δημιουργός; οὐ πατήρ; οὐ βασιλεύς; οὐ προνοητής; οὐ διδάσκαλος; Ταυτὶ δὲ πάντα κάμοι πρόσσεστιν, ὅσα τὰ πρὸς σε. Ὡστ' ἐγὼ μὲν, ὅπερ εἶπον, ἐπὶ τοῦ

or legislator.⁵⁵ Likewise, the passages on imperial authority drawn from Byzantine law codes and written on the last folio of the manuscript Vindob. phil. gr. 42 which included Manuel's political texts, are indicative of the role of the old assumptions of political ideology in the emperor's political theorization.⁵⁶ Significant in terms of the continuity of Byzantine political thought are also the distinctions between legitimate ruler (βασιλεύς) and tyrant (τύραννος)⁵⁷ and the fact that in the *Dialog on marriage* and the *Foundations* Manuel also reasserted the image of the state as body where the emperor is the head, and other social and political groups are represented as the body's limbs.⁵⁸

Particular attention was paid to the relationship between imperial and ecclesiastical authorities where the emperor favored the previously dominant view of the ruler's preeminence.⁵⁹ In the *Foundations* the author plainly advised his son to regard the Church as mother, guide and collaborator:

Above everything you must honor the Church. This is your mother, your nurse, your teacher, creator, anointer, road, and guide, and collaborator and calling towards what is best and most stable. σὲ πρὸ πάντων ἄγειν δεῖ τὴν ἄγουσαν Ἐκκλησίαν. αὕτη σοὶ μήτηρ, τίτθη, διδάσκαλος, πλάστης, ἀλείπτῃς, ὁδός, καὶ ὁδηγός, καὶ συνεργός, καὶ παράκλησις πρὸς ὃ τι κάλλιστόν τε καὶ μονιμώτατον.⁶⁰

If this piece of advice concerned more the spiritual aspects of his son's rule (τὰ πάντα πνευματικά), in the epistolary epilogue of the *Orations*, Manuel openly proclaimed the preeminence of the imperial rule over the priestly authority. The distinction between the two is indicated terminologically: the first one is βασιλεία conceived as full power coming directly from God and the second is mere ἡγεμονία which the priests have received from Moses and the

θρόνου κάθημαι, τοῦ τὸν Θεὸν εἰκονίζοντος.

⁵⁵ *Foundations*, 51: νομοθέτης μὲν ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ κριτὴς τῶν ὑπ'αὐτὸν ἀναδέδεικται, ἀνθρώπων ἄνθρωπος ὢν, θνητὸς θνητῶν, μηδὲν πλέον ἔχων ἢ σχῆμα. Further on principles of imperial propaganda see K. Paidas, *Τα βυζαντινά κάτοπτρα ηγεμῶνος της ὑστερης περιόδου 1254-1403*, 1-20 and I. Leontiades, *Untersuchungen*, 92-134.

⁵⁶ See Appendix 5.

⁵⁷ *Foundations*, 85: ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐννόμως ζῶν, καὶ νόμοις ἄγων τοὺς ὑπ'αὐτόν, καθάπαξ ἐναντίος ἐστὶ τοῖς τυραννεῖν ἐθέλουσιν, οἱ νόμον ἀπαράβατον ἔχουσι τὰς ἑαυτῶν ἡδονάς. εἰκέναι γὰρ δοκεῖ τὸ βασιλεύειν τῷ τυραννεῖν [...]. Τῷ μὲν γὰρ τυράννω τὸ δύνασθαι τὸ τοὺς ὑπέκεινῳ χαυνοῦν ἐστὶ κἂν ἰσχὺν προσλάβῃ τὸ κοινόν, ὄνειροπολεῖ τὴν αὐτοῦ καθαίρειν. ὁ δ' ἀληθῶς βασιλεὺς τοὺς ὑποτεταμένους οἱ πλήθει, πατρός, ποιμένος, ἱατροῦ, διδασκάλου, καὶ εἴ τι σχῆμα δύναται σώζειν, τόπον σώζων τυγχάνει.

⁵⁸ *Foundations*, 43: Δεῖ γὰρ δὴ τὴν κεφαλὴν τῶν μελῶν φροντίζειν καὶ κήδεσθαι, καὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἐπιμελεῖσθαι τὰ μέλη, εἰ δεῖ τὸ ζῶον συνίστασθαι, καὶ τὴν ὀλοκληρίαν ἑαυτῷ περισώζειν. Τὸ γὰρ τμηθὲν τῶν μελῶν, τῆς κοινότητος ἐκστάν, καὶ καθ'αὐτὸ γεγονός, αὐτῷ γε τούτῳ νενέκρωται. Καὶ κεφαλὴ τῶν μελῶν χωρισθεῖσα τοῦτ' ἂν εὐθὺς πάθοι. Ζωὴ γὰρ οὔτε κεφαλῆ, οὔτε μέλεσι, χωρὶς. Cf. also *Funeral oration*, 206-208, "For this champion, your Despot, with whom you fought, he as head, you as limbs, succeeded in two things, though he would have been content had either one or the other had been successful, for both were excellent." See also K. Paidas, *Τα βυζαντινά κάτοπτρα ηγεμῶνος της ὑστερης περιόδου 1254-1403*, Athens: Gregores, 150-156.

⁵⁹ Especially in authors of the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries Theodore Balsamon and Demetrios Chomatenos.

⁶⁰ *Foundations*, 11. Cf. *Foundations*, 12.

prophets:

Thus, I sit on a throne which imitates God's throne, while the priests, and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat. This <latter one> is less important than ours. And let no one accuse me of boldness or stubbornness. For I do not compare myself to Moses who had the power to see God (how could I?), I only compare the positions. Let us look more closely. For both me and Moses derive our authority from God (for that one too is sovereign and teacher. These are from God, since any kind of authority is divine, according to the Apostle); but the imperial authority (*basileia*) is bigger than the simple rule (*hegemonia*), as the newer teachings are more authoritative than the older ones, just as they depend on the New Testament. Thus, my stance towards you far exceeds not only the stance of the priests and Pharisees towards the Jewish people, but also Moses' preeminence over all those. Ὡστ' ἐγὼ μὲν ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου κάθημαι, τοῦ τὸν Θεὸν εἰκονίζοντος, οἱ δὲ ἱερεῖς τε καὶ Φαρισαῖοι ἐπὶ τῆς Μωσέως καθέδρας. Αὐτὴ δὲ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἐλάττων. Καί μου μηδεὶς καταγνώτω τόλμης, μηδ' αὐθαδείας. Οὐ γὰρ ἑμαυτὸν πρὸς τὸν θεόπτην συγκρίνω (πόθεν; ἄπαγε), τὰς δὲ καθέδρας ἀπλῶς. Καὶ σκοπῶμεν ἀκριβέστερον, εἰ δοκεῖ. Εἰ γὰρ καὶ θεόθεν ἀμφοτέροις τὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς, ἐμοί τε λέγω καὶ τῷ Μωσῇ (καὶ γὰρ κάκεινος ἡγεμὼν καὶ διδάσκαλος. Ταυτὶ δὲ πάντως ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐπεὶ καὶ πᾶσα ἐξουσία, κατὰ τὸν Ἀπόστολον)· ἀλλ' ἡ βασιλεία ἀμείνων ἡγεμονίας, αἱ τε νυνὶ διδασκαλαὶ τῶν παλαιτέρων πολλῶν τελεώτεροι, ἅτε δὴ τῆς νέας Διαθήκης ἐξηρητημένα. Ὡστε τὸ πρὸς σέ μου σχῆμα πολλῶν προέχει οὐ μόνον τοῦ τῶν ἱερέων καὶ Φαρισαίων, πρὸς τὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων λαόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς τοῦ Μωσέως ὑπεροχῆς τῆς πρὸς ἐκείνους ἅπαντας.⁶¹

These statements in the *epistolary epilogue* resemble other references like the one in the *Dialog on marriage* to the emperor's role in deciding on matters of faith.⁶² Certainly, in stating the emperor's preeminence over the church and the clerics described here as *Pharisees* in the conclusion of a text which dealt with anything but the ecclesiastical authority, Manuel wished to express his opposition to the ecclesiastics' claims of authority in earthly matters. His assertion of the secular ruler's higher status clearly contrasted with Symeon of Thessalonike's opinions expressed in his liturgical texts on the patriarch's omnipotence.

Yet, secondly, the construction of a distinctive representation of imperial power during Manuel's reign can be regarded from a different point of view as well, for, even if Manuel relied to a great extent on the formulaic language of imperial propaganda expressing longstanding ideological principles, the question remains whether such statements of imperial ideology can always be taken at face value. The answer depends on the analysis of the emperor's treatment of several important aspects common to imperial ideology. In the second unit of this dissertation I have already argued that Manuel operated a number of modifications within the

⁶¹ *Orations. Epistolary epilogue*, 560bc. On the connections between the emperor and God see also *Foundations*, 9: ἀποδίδου γοῦν αὐτῷ τῷ Θεῷ τὸ χρέος ἅπαν εἰς δύναμιν.

⁶² *Dialog on marriage*, 695-698: ἄρχοντος δὲ καὶ βασιλέως [...] καὶ τὰ τῆς πίστεως.

genres of the texts he composed during his reign: he used dialogic orality and irony in order to counteract the imperial claims of his nephew John VII; he used the forms of *kephalaia* and diatribe to create a multilayered didactic- moralizing text; and he included a fully fledged brief history of Morea in a funeral oration for his brother Theodore. In the following, based on this previous analysis as well, I will argue that these modifications must be understood in the context of his efforts to redesign the idea of imperial office so as to respond to the political challenges as described in the first chapter of this dissertation. These efforts converging in a process of renewal of imperial representation become apparent at three interconnected levels: his deliberative stance; the treatment of virtues; and the representation of the emperor as rhetorician and teacher-didaskalos. In addition, in the same framework of the attempts of renewal of imperial authority there should also be included his efforts to assert his influence within the Church, as reflected by his liturgical and homiletic texts.

The first aspect of understanding Manuel's efforts to redesign the imperial representation concerns his general approach to oratorical genres, an issue which has already been partially discussed in the first two units of this dissertation. A look at the list of Manuel's *œuvre* indicates that many of his texts include exhortations as to how to deal with specific occasions or about a ruler's moral and political stance.⁶³ The early *Admonitory oration to the Thessalonians* was an attempt to persuade the reluctant local *archontes* to reject the Ottomans' terms of surrender, which eventually nevertheless took place in 1387. Here Manuel drew on a series of deliberative topics that brought into the foreground the notion of one's liberty as a reflection of the ancient Greek and Roman glory.⁶⁴ The *Foundations* and the *Orations* were conceived as exhortations for the moral betterment of his son, John VIII. As mentioned above, the exhortations included in both texts were often underlined by the idea of effectively acting according to a goal that would bring benefits to the community. Thus, in both texts Manuel frequently uses terms like benefit (συμφέρον), or damage (τὸ βλαβερὸν), profit (τὸ λυσιτελές), all markers of deliberative rhetoric.⁶⁵ Based on such remarks as well as on *exempla* or gnomic

⁶³ E.g. in *Foundations* 72 he distinguishes between those who just rule, have ἀρχή even over large territories and populations (like the “Scythians”) and those who are εὐδαίμονες and βασιλεῖς.

⁶⁴ *Admonitory Oration*, 298-299.

⁶⁵ On these terms as markers of deliberative rhetoric see W. Olmsted, “Topics (and Deliberation): Exemplifying Deliberation: Cicero's *De officiis* and Macchiavelli's *Prince*,” in W. Jost, ed. *A Companion to Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism*, Blackwell, 2004, 173-189. See *Foundations*, 26: νόμιζε μηδένα ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν τὴν μείζω δύναμιν κεκτημένων, δύνασθαι βλάψαι καὶ τὸν φαυλότατον, μὴ συγχωροῦντος τοῦ κρείττονος, ἢ δι' ὀργὴν, ἢ πρὸς τὸ ἡμέτερον ἀφορῶντος συμφέρον. *Foundations*, 35: ἰέραξ, ἵππος, ἰχθὺς κατὰ λόγον, οὐ σὺν λόγῳ τὰ συμφέροντα πράττειν πεφύκασιν· ὥστε δεῖ πολλῶ γε μᾶλλον ἡμᾶς σὺν λόγῳ πράττειν τὰ κατὰ λόγον, ἀπαιτουμένους παρὰ τῆς φύσεως ἀρχῆς βλαπτούσης ἀποπηδᾶν. *Foundations* 41: οὕτω τοι καὶ ἔμπορος, καὶ πᾶς πρὸς κέρδος

sayings, the author then puts forward recommendations or admonitions (προτροπή and ἀποτροπή). In another much shorter text, *The oration addressed to his subjects*, the emperor urges the addressees to follow his moral commandments of an ascetic life and to show courage in defending the state and its ruler.⁶⁶ In the *Funeral oration* the exhortation is also transparent: the praise addressed to Despot Theodore as representative of the ruling family stands also as an invitation addressed to the local *archontes* to continue to acknowledge the central authority in Constantinople.⁶⁷ The emperor's reliance on topics of admonitory rhetoric seems to owe much to a trend in the Palaiologan oratory preoccupied with identifying solutions for the problems faced by the empire. Arguably, Manuel tried to place his texts within this trend, thus echoing the contemporary rhetoricians' s deliberative productions.⁶⁸

One notch down, there can be identified the emperor's peculiar treatment of a common topic in admonitory literature: the system of princely virtues. This is a topic which, as it has been previously demonstrated,⁶⁹ reveals a great deal of information about the priorities of the different interest groups active at the Byzantine court. We have already seen that, in general, when praising the emperor, the panegyrists used a series of virtues commonly in use in imperial rhetoric. The four cardinal imperial virtues prudence (φρόνησις), courage (ἀνδρία), justice (δικαιοσύνη), and wisdom (σωφροσύνη) occupied a central place in their texts. Manuel makes no exception to this rule,⁷⁰ and yet, his system of virtues, although following in the steps of previous systems, underwent significant additions and changes. First, in the *kephalaia* of the *Foundations*, there is a constant attempt to introduce a systematic arrangement of virtues. As I pointed out,⁷¹ the emperor used a moral-philosophical outlook which determined the value of all virtues, be they physical-military, intellectual, spiritual, or political. Inspired by Aristotle's *Ethics*, Manuel distinguished between voluntary and involuntary actions to which he added a further personal category, the mixed voluntary actions (μιξοεκούσια).⁷² Within this philosophical outlook which prized the right measure,⁷³ while underlining the central role of the four imperial virtues, Manuel added several others: moderation (μετριότης), love (ἀγάπη),

ἀγωνιζόμενος. Λογίζου δὲ καθημερὰν ζημίαν τε καὶ τὰ κέρδη.

⁶⁶ τούτους δὲ γενναίους ἄνδρας αὐτοὺς δεικνύναι ὑπὲρ γένους, ὑπὲρ πατρίδος, ὑπὲρ τοῦ κρατοῦντος αὐτοῦ, *Oration to the subjects*, in PG 156, 561-562.

⁶⁷ *Funeral oration*, 211-213.

⁶⁸ See Unit II, Introduction.

⁶⁹ D. Angelov, "Byzantine imperial panegyric as advice literature (1204-1350)," in E. Jeffreys ed, *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 55-70.

⁷⁰ *Foundations*, 73.

⁷¹ See chs. 4 and 5.

⁷² *Orations*, 432C.

⁷³ *Foundations*, 20.

and humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη). Certainly, these virtues were not new for the authors of panegyrics. Nonetheless, the emperor, by specifically attaching them to the four Menandrian core virtues, signaled his intentions to renovate the system of imperial virtues so that it would reflect his philosophical-moral outlook as well as his political strategy often seeking reconciliation between opposing views.

The theoretical treatment of virtues did not represent the major concern of the *Foundations*, for it was actually the immediately following and related text, the *Orations*, which further expanded and refined the discussion on this topic. In the *Orations*, the *Foundations*' less elaborated treatment of virtues was replaced with a detailed discussion of the system of virtues now conceived not only as core elements of an ethical-philosophical system but also in a hierarchical order. The view which pervades this extensive composition is that, according to Manuel, in a ruler's life, some imperial virtues have more importance than others. Thus, the last two pieces of the *Orations* were dedicated to two virtues which the emperor specifically designates as the highest among the virtues a ruler should be endowed with: love (ἀγάπη) and humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη).⁷⁴ Furthermore, the first five texts of the *Orations* which draw more on theoretical ethics were envisaged as basis and preparation for acquiring the higher Christian virtues which, according to Manuel's view, coincide with the ruler's highest virtues. The inclusion of these two virtues among a ruler's values constituted a novelty in imperial propaganda. These two virtues are to be found in neither of the rhetoricians' texts or in any other rhetorical text of the Palaiologan period, except for the contemporary Demetrios Chrysoloras' contemporary one hundred letters which imitated Manuel's texts.⁷⁵ As he himself had previously authored a panegyric for his father, Manuel was probably aware of the different virtues commonly used in imperial propaganda and yet, noticeably, he chose to use a different set of values.

The proclaiming of ἀγάπη and ταπεινοφροσύνη as fundamental imperial virtues reflected the emperor's preoccupation with ongoing political processes. On the one hand, by setting these two virtues on top of his hierarchical system, Manuel addressed the political circumstances of the early fifteenth century. The seventh oration plainly states that a more

⁷⁴ *Orations*, VII, 529ab: ὁ δὲ τὰ καλὰ κτησάμενος πάντα οὐδὲν ἑαυτὸν ὤνησεν, εἰ μὴ καὶ τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην προσεκλήσατο, ὡς οὐσαν γε ταύτην μόνην μάλιστα πασῶν ἀρετῶν λαμπτήρᾳ τε καὶ φύλακα τῶν ἀγαθῶν πάντων. ὅτε τοίνυν ταῦθ' οὕτως ἔχει, ἔδει με δήπου περὶ τῶν ἄλλων εἰπόντα οἷς ἂν γένοιτο ἀνὴρ τε καὶ βασιλεὺς ἀγαθός, τελευτῶν καὶ περὶ τῆς καλλίστης τῶν ἀρετῶν ταυτησὶ διελθεῖν. Ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ σαφῶς ἔστι κατὰ πολὺ χαλεπώτερον τό γε φυλάξαι τὰγαθὰ καὶ διασώσασθαι μέχρι τέλους τοῦ τὴν ἀρχὴν ταῦτα κτήσασθαι.

⁷⁵ Demetrios Chrysoloras, *Hundred letters*, 80: ὁρῶν ὡς οὐδὲν ὑψηλότερον ταπεινοφροσύνης ἐν βίῳ, αὐτὴ γὰρ ὑπηκόους οὐ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς αὐτῶν βασιλεύοντας σώζει, ταύτην ὡς ἔδει περιπλακεῖς τὸ σκάφος τῆς ἐξουσίας ἠδέως φέρεις.

humble attitude was commendable in times of great political distress:

Humility conceals the protectors, those who maintain order in times which do not allow us to stand without fear. Ἀπέκρυψε μὲν ὑπασπιστάς ἢ ταπεινοφροσύνη, τοὺς ἀκριβῶς τὴν τάξιν διατηρήσαντας, ἐν καιροῖς οὐ συγχωροῦσιν ἀτρέμας ἴστασθαι.⁷⁶

In terms of political governance, many groups and individuals began to assert influence and hence the emperor's authority in matters of administration experienced a setback. As discussed above, in the first oration Manuel praised Solon's institutional change in the government of Athens, according to which the ruler was to be the leader of a group of *aristoi*, who upheld the right of censoring their leader; I have already suggested that Manuel saw a model in Solon for his own political conduct.⁷⁷ This major change in the system of virtues constituted a means to signal to the other political actors that within the Byzantine political sphere, the emperor understood his new position as having an importance equal to the significance of other individuals.⁷⁸ On the other hand, if we take into consideration that the addressee of the orations, John VIII, was also Manuel's designated successor, it turns out that they were clearly intended to answer the educational needs of the emperor's son and co-emperor. Apparently, in using *ταπεινοφροσύνη* Manuel intended to rebuke his son for recent instances of misbehavior. In the seventh oration, Manuel advises his son to show moderation even when acting for high purposes:

I define modesty as the act of doing grand deeds and yet of thinking very modestly; in addition modesty means not to be carried away by the great deeds. [...] Not because you should not be aware of your good deeds, but because virtues are more important than our deeds. Λέγω δὲ μετριοφροσύνην τὸ ποιεῖν μὲν τὰ ὑψοῦντα, φρονεῖν δὲ πάνυ μέτρια. Καὶ μεγάλα πράττοντα, μηδαμῶς ἐπαίρεσθαι. [...] Οὐ τῷ μηδὲν ἑαυτῷ συνειδέναι καλῶς ποιοῦντι (πῶς γὰρ;), ἀλλὰ τῷ καλῶς εἰδέναι ὑψηλοτέρας οὔσας τὰς ἀρετὰς τῶν ἡμετέρων ἔργων.⁷⁹

In the same text which discusses *humility* as the highest virtue of a ruler, the emperor advises John not to act in ignorance or with the use of force.⁸⁰

The systems of virtues displayed in the two texts, the *Foundations* and the *Oration*s, show if not an evolution in the emperor's system, at least an effort to refine his ideas and present an

⁷⁶ *Oration*s, 537d.

⁷⁷ *Oration*s: οὐκ ἄρα διὰ ταῦτα ἄριστος ἀρίστοις, καὶ μέγιστος μεγίστοις ἀνήρ ἀνδράσι νομίζοιτο, καὶ νῦν γε πᾶσιν ἔτι δοκεῖ. Cf. *Anonymous Oration* (Vat. gr. 632, ed. Ch. Dendrinos, *Porphyrogenita*), 445.1, περαίνειν τὴν Ἀθηναίων πολιτείαν.

⁷⁸ On the new style of authority which entailed stronger collaboration with state officials, see also I. Leontiadis, "Untersuchungen," 184. Furthermore, in *Foundations* 90, equates the ruler's activity to that of ordinary people.

⁷⁹ *Oration*s, 544d.

⁸⁰ *Oration*s, 545a: τὸ γὰρ διὰ μεγάλα φρονεῖν οὕτως ἔχοντα οὐδὲ νοῦ μετέχοντός ἐστιν, οἶμαι. ἀλλ'οὐδὲ ἐκεῖνό γε μέτριον, οὐδὲ ἀγαθόν, τὸ ποιεῖν τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἢ μηδαμῶς ἐπιστάμενον, ἢ μὴ καθαρᾷ προαιρέσει. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ πάντως ἄγνοια, τὸ δὲ τις βία ποιεῖ.

integrated system of moral excellence. The analysis suggests that Manuel may be implicitly making the case for a new kind of kingly conduct, in which the non-material virtues, such as those celebrated in the first and the last speech are cultivated against the physical qualities of the traditional ruler such as strength and military prowess.⁸¹ If so, an openly new political conduct gains a particular function as far as the immediate audience, John and the courtiers, were concerned. According to this system of virtues, the ruler should make use of a peaceful approach even in times of utmost distress⁸² and should adopt an appropriate conduct towards his subjects.⁸³

Noticeably, this new type of political heroism preached in Constantinople was echoed by the outlook that shaped the *Funeral oration* for his brother Theodore. There, although in the rubric of μακαρισμός the author compared his brother to valiant ancient heroes and in the section dedicated to his brother's deeds numerous references to his military deeds are present, Manuel constructed a narrative whose epilogue unveils the peace in Morea. According to his account, the restoration of peace under Byzantine authority was achieved primarily through skillful diplomatic planning that considered the presence of different ethnic groups in the region.⁸⁴

9.4.1. Emperor-rhetorician

The admonitory stance adopted by the emperor as well as the systematization of virtues which occurs in the *Foundations* and, to a larger extent, in the *Orations*, further expands our understanding of the emperor's approach to imperial authority. Based on these two aspects analyzed in detail in a previous unit,⁸⁵ I suggested that the emperor adopted a didactic voice which arguably originated in his attempt to represent himself as an *emperor-rhetorician*. In the following, I will look more closely into how the emperor forged this representation that owed much to his literary preoccupations and to the performative context of the address to his son and co-emperor John VIII Palaiologos.⁸⁶

⁸¹ This kind of heroism is somehow different from what some scholars asserted with regard to the political ideals in the Palaiologan period. D. Angelov stated that the Palaiologan ideal was predominantly militaristic, *Imperial ideology*, 134.

⁸² ἥδιον εἰρήνης οὐδέν, οὐ μόνον λέγω τῆς ἰδιωτικῆς ταυτησὶ τῆς καθ' ἕκαστον, τῆς τῶν ἀρχόντων πρὸς ἄρχοντας. Cf. *Foundations*, 56. Μηδὲ πολέμει πρὸς ἀδελφοῦς τοὺς ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ, μήτε μὴν πρὸς ὄντινον, ἢ βαρβάρων ἕθνος, ἐν σπουδαῖς σοι καταστάν, καὶ τηρεῖν αὐτὰς ἐθέλον; *Orations*, 501b, against civil strife: καὶ κατὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μὴ θρασύνεσθαι, μηδὲ κατεπαίρεσθαι, μηδὲ ἀπογινώσκειν αὐτούς.

⁸³ ἴσθι τὴν ὑπηρετῶν εἰς τὸ κοινὸν βλάβην σοὶ λογιουμένους τοὺς βλαπτομένους, *Foundations*, 74, 77, and 81-82.

⁸⁴ See ch. 6.

⁸⁵ See Unit II.

⁸⁶ Not only that both the *Foundations* and the *Orations* were addressed to John VIII, but Manuel collected most of his texts into four de luxe manuscripts which he offered to his son (Vindob. phil. gr. 98, Vat. gr. 1619, Vat. gr.

Reading through Manuel's letters it often emerges that literary activities accounted for one's pleasurable pastime following periods of intense activity.⁸⁷ In his letters he represented himself as chair of *theatra* and judge in literary matters. Owing to these activities, he cultivated the role of an orator preoccupied by the constant refinement of his performance skills. He often makes reference to moments of acting on stage.⁸⁸ Yet, the emperor claims, such literary preoccupations also had a different function. The chief role of rhetorical skills in a ruler's education is stressed ever since the emperor's earliest letters reflecting on the topic:

Being an accomplished speaker is clearly preferable to being wealthy; it provides something more pleasurable than all pleasure as well as a greater glory. But the opposite might well be true for those attempting to make speeches without having thoroughly practiced the art of rhetoric from childhood. A person who wishes to deliver a faultless speech must also consider what will please the hearers and the topics which will make them feel glorious and enviable. He must have natural ability in addition to practice; his desire must have the assistance of intelligence and, furthermore, of the proper occasion. Τὸ μὲν λέγειν ἰσχύειν κρεῖττον σαφῶς ἢ πλουτεῖν, τῶν τε ἡδέων ἡδίων πάντων καὶ δόξαν γε ἀμείνω φέρει. τούναντίον μέντοι γε ἅπαν συμβαῖνον εὖροι τις ἂν τοῖς λέγειν μὲν πειρωμένοις μὴ πάνυ δ' ἐξησκόσιν ἐκ παίδων τὰ περὶ λόγους. Δεῖ δέ γε καὶ τὸν λέγειν εἰδέναι ἀμέμπτως ἐθέλοντα τοὺς λόγους πρὸ πάντων ἄγειν οἷς τε τρυφᾶν ἔξεστι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ ὅπερ εὐδοκίμους αὐτοὺς καὶ ζηλωτοὺς ἀπεργάζεται, ἔχειν τε τὴν φύσιν ἐπομένην τῇ ἀσκήσει καὶ τῇ ἐφέσει τὸν νοῦν καὶ πρὸς γε ἔτι τὸν καιρὸν συνεργόν.⁸⁹

The above passage can be corroborated with his other rhetorical exercises apparently written for amusement purposes⁹⁰ as well as instances of the emperor's reflections on the strategies used in writing, which reveal his preoccupation with the significance of writing in a ruler's activity. Early on, in the *Panegyric oration for his father*, Manuel outlined the main traits of a rhetorician's craft, by commenting on what should be included or excluded from a public oration and what kind of arguments an orator should use.⁹¹ Such remarks in the *Panegyric*⁹²

632, Crypt. Z.δ.1).

⁸⁷ E.g. Manuel, *Letters*, 9, 11 and 32.

⁸⁸ See Manuel, *Letters*, 30 addressed to Constantine Asanes, and the *Funeral oration*, 188: "Are there any among you who object to the stage and the mask?"

⁸⁹ Manuel, *Letters*, 11.2-9.

⁹⁰ For instance the *Description of Spring on a Dyed Woven Hanging Tapestry*, ed. J. Davis, *Porphyrogenneta*, 411-414.

⁹¹ Manuel II, *Panegyrikos logos*, 228: ὅτι μὲν οἷσιν προέκειται εἰς τὸν τῶν εὐδαιμόνων ἐγγεγράφθαι χορὸν ἀνάγκη μάλα πολλή τό τε τὰ παρόντα συντετηρηῆσθαι ἀγαθὰ, ἢ τε τῶν ἐναντίων ἀπάντων ἀπόθεσις, καὶ τὸ μὴδ' ἐν ὑποψίαις κείσθαι ἄλλα ἅττα ἀπευκταῖα ὀρρωδεῖν, οὐδεὶς ἀντερεῖ [...] Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁμοίως τῷ μαθηματικῷ τὸν ῥητορικὸν βιασόμεθα διαλέγεσθαι. Εἴτε γὰρ τῷ ῥητορεῦν ἐθέλοντι παρασταίη ἐναργεῖς ἀποδείξει καὶ μηδαμῇ τὰμφοβητήσιμον ἐχούσαις εἰς τοὺς ἀγῶνας χωρήσαι, εἴθ' ὁ μαθήμασι σεμνυνόμενος ψιλῆ τῇ πιθανότητι καταχρηστέον εἶναι νομίσειεν, οὐδετέρῳ ἂν κατάλληλον τὸ ἐγχείρημα γένοιτο.

⁹² Further remarks on what his studies and writing meant to him and on the necessity to neglect them due to other activities can be encountered in his letter to Alexios Iagour: J. Barker, *Manuel II*, 410-413, 528-530. Cf. Ch. Dendrinos, "Ἡ ἐπιστολὴ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Μανουὴλ Παλαιολόγου πρὸς τὸν Ἀλέξιο Ἰαγούρ καὶ οἱ ἀντιλήψεις του περὶ τῆς σπουδῆς τῆς θεολογίας καὶ τῶν σχέσεων Ἐκκλησίας καὶ Πολιτείας," *Philosophias Analekta*, 1.1-2 (2001) 58-74.

seem to have presaged the generic changes the emperor operated in the rhetorical texts written during his reign. Previously, I have argued that in the *Funeral oration* Manuel significantly expanded the narrative section of his brother's, Theodore, deeds. With its detailed historical information, this account similar to a history of Morea motivated the emperor's intervention in the province and gave him the opportunity to display his claims to full authority even in the isolated territories of the state. Furthermore, Manuel advertised the oration; the received responses point to his intention to disclose his rhetorical training in a form which would make it clear that writing was a central element of his activity.⁹³ These well documented instances which unveil the emperor's penchant for the use of rhetoric evince his concerns for the role of knowledge and learning in a ruler's life. According to this often reiterated view, an emperor must be in possession of an education based on the knowledge and wisdom of the ancients.⁹⁴

The texts of the *Foundations* and the *Orations* further illustrate the idea that education was one of Manuel's core notions of the ruler's craft. In the first oration for instance he remarks once again that knowledge was a more important aspect than hoarding wealth or resources:

For these individuals, this <i.e. learning> was absolutely better than getting rich and it surpassed by far Croesus' thesaurus on account of safety, and it was more powerful than Xerxes' many resources. Τοῦτο τουτοισὶ τοῖς ἀνδράσι κρεῖττον ἀτεχνῶς ἢ πλουτεῖν, καὶ τοὺς τοῦ Κροίσου θησαυροὺς εἰς ἀσφαλείας λόγον πολὺ νικῶν, ἰσχυρότερον τῆς Ξέρξου πολυχειρίας.⁹⁵

All these concerns were tailored to the emperor's general didactic outlook which privileged the image of mentors concerned with the ethical education, and, ultimately, led him to represent himself as an emperor-teacher. As a consequence, he constantly connects intellectual activities like writing with a ruler's public career:

But if we should thus refrain from literary activities the fruits of our education will disappear to such an extent that we will not even be able to understand clearly the dogmas which enable us to be truly pious. With all this in mind, my good friend, I continue to do some writing, not as much as I ought, but as much as the time permits, in order that I might be an example to my subjects of the love of letters, so that as they mingle so much with barbarians they might not become completely

⁹³ See ch. 2.

⁹⁴ *Foundations*, 39: Χρὴ θεμέλιον ἔχοντας τῶν ἀρχαιότερων τὰς γνώμας τοὺς νεωτέρους, οἰκοδομεῖν εἴ τι δύναιτο. Ἔφη οὖν τις, μάλα ἀνὴρ, Πυθαγόρας τοῦνομα, Δεινὰ μὲν ἐκπρήξας, ἐπιπλήσσειο χρηστὰ δέ, τέρπου.

⁹⁵ *Orations*, 385A. Cf. *Foundations*, 75, learning (μάθησις) should represent one of the core activities of a ruler. The second oration reiterates the idea: Τοῦτο δέ ἐστὶ κυρίως τὸ διενεργούμενον ἀγαθὸν κατὰ γε γνῶσιν, καὶ πρόθεσιν καὶ ἔξιν. On the preeminence of knowledge over experience: *Foundations* ch. 32: Μῦθος δέ τις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς, οὐ τοσοῦτον ἰατρὸν εἶναι τὸν εἰστήμη τοῦτ' ὄντα, ὡς τὸν περιπεπωκότα ποικίλοις πάθεσι.

barbarized. Καὶ οὕτω που τῶν λόγων ἀφεστηκόσι κατὰ τοσοῦτον οἰχήσεται τὰ τῆς παιδείας ἡμῖν, ὡς μηδὲ δύνασθαι καλῶς εἰδέναι τὰ δόγματα δι' ὧν ἔστιν ὡς ἀληθῶς εὐσεβεῖν. Καὶ ταῦτ' εἰδῶς, ὧ' γαθέ, ἔχομαι τοῦ λέγειν, οὐχ ὅσον δεῖ ἀλλ' ὅσον ὁ καιρὸς ἐπιτρέπει, ἵν' ὧ' τοῖς ὑπὸ χεῖρα παράδειγμα εἰς τὸν τῶν λόγων ἔρωτα, ὡς ἂν μὴ πάντη βαρβαρωθεῖεν βαρβάρους οὕτω μιγνύμενοι.⁹⁶

According to this outlook, what made knowledge an effective tool in a ruler's hands was the ability to speak well (καλῶς λέγειν), as seemingly Manuel prized highly the effective communication of political messages. It is for this reason that in the very first lines of the *Oration*s he entreats his son to acquire the rhetorical skills which would allow him to become a good ruler:

For the rulers who want to become good and for those who have a powerful reasoning and who take into consideration the common benefit, there is nothing more profitable than to know how to speak well. Τοῦ καλῶς ἐπίστασθαι λέγειν οὐδὲν ἂν γένοιτο λυσιτελέστερον ἄρχουσιν ἐθέλουσιν ἀγαθοῖς εἶναι, νοῦ τε βάρους ἔχουσι, καὶ πρὸς τὸ κοινῇ συνοῖσον ὀρώσι.⁹⁷

The emperor's firm stand concerning the process of acquiring knowledge and rhetorical skills for a politically efficient language was coterminous with the central idea promoted by the emperor in the *Foundations* and the *Oration*s: that is the process of becoming an ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ.⁹⁸ This process, Manuel claims, needed a strict guidance and direction and Manuel appears ready to strengthen his parental role⁹⁹ with the role of a *didaskalos*. The embedded didactic function was plainly assumed in the preface of the *Foundations*, and in the *Oration*s, where education was introduced as an element in the construction of the imperial *ēthos*:

For to speak with authority, which is very effective for instructors, teachers, and anyone who strives to restore or to forge the nature of the youths, is entirely possible for me. But for those (i.e. the ancient writers) it is entirely impossible, even though all the wisdom is gathered into one. For how can they provide exhortations causing no fear, or in a trustful manner, or in a confident way according to the stance of an emperor, a father, or a friend, given that they lack the position which inspires the lack of fear, and the imperial majesty, and the friendship which grows with the intimacy between teachers and students. Τὸ γὰρ δὴ μετ' ἐξουσίας εἰπεῖν, ὃ πολλὴν τὴν δύναμιν ἔχει καὶ παιδοτρίβη, καὶ διδασκάλω, καὶ παντὶ διορθουμένω φύσεις νέων, ἢ πλάττοντι, ἐμοὶ μὲν ἔξεστι παντελῶς, ἐκείνοις δὲ οὐδαμῶς, οὐδ' ἂν ἡ πάντων σοφία εἰς ἓν γε τούτοις συνέλθῃ. Πῶς μὲν γὰρ ἂν προστάξαιεν ἀδεῶς, πῶς δὲ πιστῶς, πῶς δὲ θαρρούντως, κατὰ βασιλέα, καὶ

⁹⁶ Manuel, *Letters*, 52. 29-35.

⁹⁷ *Oration*s, 385a: εἰ γὰρ τῷ ῥήτορι δοκεῖ εἶναι τῶν φύσεων αἴτιον τὸν παρασχόντα τὸ σπέρμα.

⁹⁸ *Prefatory letter* of the *Foundations*, 316.C: εἰ μέλλεις καλὸς ἀγαθὸς ἔσεσθαι.

⁹⁹ E.g. *Oration*s, 557a: αὐτὸς σου τὴν φίλην κεφαλὴν, ὧ' συμβασιλεῦ τε καὶ παῖ, οὐ μόνον ἐνταυθοῖ στεφανώσαι, ἀλλὰ κάκεῖ, τῷ καλῷ στεφάνω τῶν μακαρίων.

πατέρα,καὶ φίλον, οἵτινες ἐστέρηνται καὶ σχήματος ἀφοβίαν διδόντος, καὶ σχέσεως πασῶν κρατούσης τῷ τῆς φύσεως φίλτρῳ, καὶ φιλίας συνηθείᾳ θαρρυνούσης,¹⁰⁰

I am convinced that in so far as there is some benefit here, if you want to gain something by acting diligently, it would be easy to make plain that you are the best of men and of emperors. If, as the author of this text, I am inferior to these texts, nevertheless this should not be an impediment for you to acquire virtue; but if I find something better (since nobody was excepted from the following goods), you will consider that it is fitting for you to inherit this for you and you will strive eagerly to advance and improve your father's wealth and even the empire itself. As you notice my shortcomings (for they are many and great) be willing to earn something from these, setting them as a teacher for a better life and for a more secure empire. It is good that you imitate those who saved themselves from the others' shipwrecks and learned their lessons from the mistakes and misfortunes of those. Πείθομαι γὰρ εἶναι τοσοῦτον ἐνταυθοῖ τὸ συνοῖσον, ὅσον γε, εἰ φιλοπόνως αὐτὸ δρέψαιο ῥαδίως ἀποφῆναι σε ἄριστον ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ βασιλέων. Εἰ δ'ὁ ταῦτα γράφων ἐγὼ πολλῶ χειρὸν ἔχω τῶν γεγραμμένων, ἀλλὰ σοι μὴ τοῦτο ἔστω πρὸς τὸ καλὸν κώλυμα, ἢ εἰργόν τι τοπαράπαν. Ἄλλ' εἴ ποῦ τι καὶ βέλτιον εὔρηται παρ' ἐμοί, ἐπεὶ μηδεὶς ἐστέρηται πάντων ἐξῆς τῶν καλῶν, ἡγοῦ σοι πρέπειν τοῦτο κληρονομῆσαι, καὶ πρὸς ἐπίδοσιν ἀγαγεῖν πολλῶ γε κρείσσω φιλοτιμησεσθαι ἢ τὴν οὐσίαν τὴν πατρικὴν καὶ βασιλείαν αὐτήν. Τὰμὰ δὲ ἐλαττώματα διορῶν (πολλὰ δ'έστι καὶ μεγάλα) θέλε τι καὶ παρὰ τούτων κερδᾶναι, διδάσκαλον αὐτὰ προσησάμενος βίου τε ἀμείνονος, καὶ πολιτείας ἀσφαλέστερας. Καλὸν σοι γὰρ ἐκείνους μιμῆσασθαι, οἳ τοῖς ἐτέρων ναυαγίοις διασώζονται, ἀπὸ τῶν ἐκείνων ἀμαρτημάτων τε καὶ ἀτυχημάτων τὸ δέον καταμαθόντες.¹⁰¹

Within this didactic framework which the emperor set up, Manuel then proceeded to offering hints as to the behavior an ideal emperor and ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ should adopt:

You should recognize the good individual not by his fate but by his attitude and behavior. The good individual is not one who exerts his power but one who uses the power which he has at his disposal. Not one who possesses much gold buried in the ground, but one who prides himself with his friends. Ἀγαθὸς οὐκ ἐκ τῆς τύχης, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῶν τρόπων κρινέσθω σοι. Οὐχ ὁ μεγάλην δύναμιν ἔχων, ἀλλ' ὁ τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν βελτίω ποιῶν. Οὐχ ὧ πολὺς ἐστι χρυσὸς κατωρυγμένος, ἀλλ' ὅς γε φίλοις λαμπρύνοιτο.¹⁰²

Interestingly, with the exception of Solon, among the paradigms of behavior proposed in both the *Foundations* and *Orations*, one does not find any of the legendary mythological figures of

¹⁰⁰ *Prefatory letter*, 317a.

¹⁰¹ *Prefatory letter*, 317c. Cf. also *Orations*, 560b, *Epistolary epilogue*: καὶ γὰρ χωρὶς τινος ἄλλου σχήματος ὑπεροχὴν ἔχοντος ἄρχων ὁ πατήρ ἐστὶ τῷ παιδί, καὶ δεσπότης, ἐξ αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως. Ταῦτα δὲ ἡμῖν ὁ Θεὸς. Εἰρήσθω δέ πως καὶ φανερώτερον. Τί οὖν δὴ τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ πρὸς ἡμᾶς; οὐ δημιουργός; οὐ πατήρ; οὐ προνοητής; οὐ διδάσκαλος; Ταῦτι δὲ πάντα καμοὶ πρόσεστιν, ὅσα τὰ πρὸς σε. On the emperor's knowledge of different strategies of education see the citation from Gregory of Nazianz in *Foundations*, 32. Τοὺς μὲν ἄγει λόγος, οἳ δὲ ῥυθμίζονται παραδείγματι. Οἳ μὲν δέονται κέντρον, οἳ δὲ χαλινοῦ.

¹⁰² *Foundations* ch.70: the ideal ruler is to be praised not for his wealth but for the friends; ch. 71 insists on the fact that wealthy rulers must not be necessarily admired.

rulers common in imperial orations.¹⁰³ As a matter of fact, ideal representations of imperial rule are almost entirely absent. From this point of view, it is telling that the classical comparison with heroic models identifiable in other imperial orations is somehow subverted. Instead, in the *Foundations* the author mentions exclusively the model provided by the exemplary yet hapless life of Job.¹⁰⁴

Aside from such models, the emperor's didacticism is made clear in the systematic way in which he presents ethical notions. The strategy adopted was to proceed from basic philosophical questions or illustrations to more complex problems and principles.¹⁰⁵ At other times he urges his son, not only to indulge in military and physical activities but, as a ruler, to combine them with intellectual pursuits.¹⁰⁶ Even more so, pointing to his predominant intellectual preoccupations, Manuel exhorted his son to seek for relaxation in delightful gardens after moments of intense activity.¹⁰⁷ In addition, he repeatedly offered specific advice for how to deal on specific situations and for a proper behavior expected in relation with his subjects.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, frequently Manuel refers to the importance of one's nature and character. The most conspicuous evidence for such advice is placed in the last two orations which, as mentioned above, tried to regulate John's behavior by means of direct address. Thus, in the conclusion of the last oration of the *Orations* after Manuel expressed a lengthy criticism against his son's acts as co-emperor, he exhorted him not to pass radical judgments on other individuals, since the position of judge (κριτής) was reserved to God:

Thus it is good and safe to give only to our Savior the power to judge everyone and not to compare us with each other. Since this is my opinion, it has been shown in every way that nobody must be high-minded towards others. Even if some people have high reputation, they should not mock other people, nor should they think highly about themselves: for, as it is said, *the one who judges me is God*. He is the one who may crown your head, oh co-emperor and son, not only here but there where he crowns the blessed ones. Ὡστε καλὸν καὶ ἀσφαλὲς μόνῳ τῷ Σωτῆρι διδόναι τὸ πάντας κρίνειν καὶ μὴ ἀλλήλοις ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς παρεξετάζειν. Ἐπεὶ δ' ὡς ἔγωγ' ἂν φαίην, διὰ πάντων ἀποδέδεικται, μηδένα δεῖ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν [...] Κἂν ὧσι λίαν σπουδαῖοί τινες ἄνθρωποι, μήτε τῶν ἄλλων καταγελάτωσαν, μήθ' ἑαυτοὺς

¹⁰³ This is not the case with the *Funeral oration* where the final *synkrisis* of the deceased with the ancient heroes brings into foreground a whole series of legendary heroes, *Funeral oration*, 215.

¹⁰⁴ *Foundations*, 69.

¹⁰⁵ E.g. *Foundations*, 1-4 on different ways of life and *Orations* 2 and 3 on notions like *good* and *voluntariness*. In both cases these initial presentations serve as basis for further teaching.

¹⁰⁶ ῥώμη σώματος συγκεκριμένη συνέσει πεπλεγμένος ἄριστα τοῖς τυραννεύουσι στέφανος. *Foundations*, 53. *Foundations*, 45: ἦν ἐπιθυμῆς τελειότητος, καὶ μεγίστων ἐν μεθέξει καλῶν γενέσθαι, παρακελεύου τῇ ψυχῇ, μὴ τοὺς μικρὰ συνοίσοντας ὑπερορᾶν λογισμοῦς· ἀλλ' ἀσπασίως δέχεσθαι πᾶν, ᾧ βελτίους γιγνόμεθα.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. *Foundations*, 80: οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεὶς ἐν ἀνθρώποις, ὃς ἂν σπουδῇ διηνεκῶς χρήσαιο· ἀλλ' ἡ φύσις ἐκάστῳ σπουδάζοντι καὶ παραμυθίας τινός ἐφίεται. Cf. also Manuel's *Depiction of Spring on a Tapestry*.

¹⁰⁸ As in *Foundations*, 84 on οἰκεία διόρθωσις.

νομιζέτωσαν ἀγαθοὺς εἶναι· ὁ γὰρ ἀνακρίνων με, φησὶν, ὁ Θεὸς ἐστίν [...] Αὐτός σου τὴν φίλην κεφαλὴν, ὧ συμβασιλεῦ τε καὶ παῖ, οὐ μόνον ἔνταυθοῖ στεφανώσαι, ἀλλὰ κάκει, τῷ καλῷ στεφάνῳ τῶν μακαρίων.¹⁰⁹

Similar instances of didactic advice can be encountered not only in the *Foundations* or the *Oration*s but also in other shorter texts of his written during his reign and dealing with counseling on specific issues of behavior: *The admonitions leading to conciseness in expression and tranquility in one's thought* (1406),¹¹⁰ *The anacreontic verses addressed to a completely ignorant and most garrulous person* (1392-1396),¹¹¹ or the *Oration as from a benevolent ruler to his well disposed citizens*.¹¹² These last examples testify to the widespread tendency of providing political advice via didacticism.

This didactic framework in which moral advice is developed and which is revealed by the multiple references to the emperor's teaching role suggests that, contrary the assesment of previous scholarship,¹¹³ the emperor consciously constructed the image of an *emperor-rhetorician*, an image which retained a strong political dimension. This message involved on the one hand differentiation from previous Byzantine rulers who, like Manuel's father, had neglected the intellectual aspect of ruling. As for other Palaiologan rulers, such as John VI Kantakouzenos, it is noticeable he had mostly theological preoccupations which he utilized on specific occasions, without that amounting to a fully-fledged program of imperial renovation. On the other hand, by composing a series of political texts Manuel tried to legitimize his dynastic line and his immediate successor John VIII, against the challenges of John VII's line. Furthermore, the message embedded in Manuel's texts also involved another distinction from the Church, itself teacher-*didaskalos* but in spiritual issues, as stated in the *epistolary epilogue*:

For if you must not disobey the priests of old and the Pharisees, because they are

¹⁰⁹ *Oration*s 7, 556d. Cf. 505a: ὁρᾶς, ὅποσον ἀγαθόν ἐστιν ἢ αὐτομεμψία.

¹¹⁰ For a transcription of this short text, see ch. 4.

¹¹¹ PG 156, 575d-576d: “Τοῦ βασιλέως κυροῦ Μανουήλ τοῦ Παλαιολόγου στίχοι Ἀνακρεόντειοι πρὸς τινὰ ἀμαθῆ καὶ πλεῖστα φληναροῦντα:” Ἀκριτόμυθε Θεοσίτα, / Ὅς βοᾶς μὲν μάλιστα γε, / Σιωπᾶς δὲ ἥκιστα γε, / Πῶς σέ τις παύση ληροῦντα, / Φλυαροῦντα, φληναφοῦντα, / Καὶ μὴ ῥάβδῳ σου συνθλάσῃ / Τὸ κρανίον εὖ ποιήσας; Cf. Manuel's *Oration against a drunk person*.

¹¹² *Oration addressed to his subjects* (Ὁς ἐξ εὐμενοῦς ἄρχοντος πρὸς εὐνοὺς ὑπηκόους τοὺς ἐν ἀκμῇ, PG 156, 561): Τὸ ὑμῖν συνοῖσον εὐχόμενός τε διατελῶν, καὶ ζητῶν ἅπασι τρόποις, δεῖν ῥήθην διὰ βραχέων ὥσπερ τι δῶρον ταυτασί τὰς παραινέσεις εἶπεῖν. Ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν ὥσπερ ἐμπέφυκε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὸ καὶ τοῖς θύραθεν ἐπιδιδόναι ζητεῖν [...] Εἰ γοῦν ἀγαθός τις εἶ, καὶ παρελθεῖν ἐθέλεις τοῖς ἡλικίας ἐν τε δημοσίαις τιμαῖς, ἔν τε πᾶσιν, οἷς ζηλωτὸς ἂν γένοιο· θήρευε ταῦτα σπουδαίους ἔργοις, ἐν ἅπασι παρέχων σαυτὸν οὐχ ἦττον πρόθυμον ἢ πιστόν. Φεῦγε μὲν νωθεῖαν, καὶ ῥᾶθυμίαν, καὶ τὸ καθεύδειν ὑπτίος ἐπὶ μαλακῶν στρωμάτων, θέλων εὐδαιμονεῖν.

¹¹³ S. Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés pendant les Paléologues*, 165: “Devant le spectacle d'un état affaibli, menacé et réduit à jamais au rang de puissance secondaire, les preoccupations intellectuelles deviennent plutôt une diversion qu'un souci réel d'une élite, abritée dans l'intimité de la cour de Manuel II Paléologue. Empereur philosophe dans le sens platonicien, Manuel II anime cette élite et exerce sur elle une grande influence par sa propre production littéraire.”

sitting on Moses' seat, although they transmit nothing from what I taught, it is much more appropriate that you listen to me who am teaching you what is useful, even if I might not be doing this well. Εἰ γὰρ τοῖς πάλαι ἱερεῦσι καὶ Φαρισαίοις οὐκ ἀπειθεῖν ἔδει, ὡς καθεσθεῖσιν ἐπὶ τῆς Μωσέως καθέδρας, καίτοι μηδὲν ἐργαζομένοις ὧνπερ ἐδίδασκον, πολλῶ γε μᾶλλον πρέπον ἐστὶν ἐμοί, σοι τὸ συνοῖσον λέγοντι, πείθεσθαι, εἰ δὴ καὶ μὴ τοῦτο καλῶς πράττοιμι.¹¹⁴

This representation was distinct from the conventional representation of the ruler as *philosopher-king*, in that it valued highly the process of acquiring and using rhetorical skills in political transactions. Unlike the notion of *philosopher-king* which was used mostly to describe the passive usage of knowledge, Manuel's conception of *logos* involved an active civic role of rhetoric in the state's life to convey his political messages. It is therefore, I believe, appropriate to say that this emperor-writer reworked the old version of a philosopher-king into a new mold tailored to his own preoccupations and to the concrete political challenges of his day.

These observations allow us to draw several conclusions. First, the projection of the imperial image as a *teacher-rhetorician* has to be understood in the light of the emperor's efforts to convey political messages by means of his rhetorical compositions. If in his letters it is noticeable that he envisaged composing rhetorical texts as a pleasurable activity, in his political texts he adopted a different approach. Thus, the *Dialog on marriage* supported the emperor's claims to dynastic supremacy and, likewise, the *Funeral oration* projected the image of an emperor capable of exerting authority over the distant and vulnerable Byzantine territories. Using an extended and detailed narrative, Manuel forged a different facet of Byzantine rulership as concerned with military and diplomatic activities. Just like in the case of the *Foundations* and the *Orations*, here as well the medium of conveying the message of political authority was a rhetorical text with educational undertones.

Second, these observations can also lead us to a better understanding of the emperor's conception of rhetoric as a political instrument different from other contemporary conceptions such as the one of the court rhetoricians. Both the emperor and the authors of panegyrics embraced a wide range of meanings which boil down to two major perspectives: first, rhetoric itself is a powerful medium and second, those who know how to handle it can effectively become themselves powerful in their society. This understanding of rhetoric was grounded in the ancient assumption that knowledge and education empowers individuals. According to many theorists of rhetoric, by learning the practical skills of literacy the educated individual also acquired the appropriate ethics and thus became capable to rule the

¹¹⁴ *Epistolary epilogue*, 560a.

community.¹¹⁵ Yet, whereas the imperial rhetoricians dwell on the psychological impact of rhetoric on individuals, in his texts Manuel underscored its civilizing influence on individuals and on society at large. As used by panegyrists, rhetoric highlights the power of language to distort reality by exaggerating the effects of the ruler's actions. On the contrary, for his part, Manuel used *logos* to underline the capacity to lead and to shape world views. For him, like for other ancient rhetoricians, the perfect orator should have been not only a virtuous man but also the ruler of the state.

By this account and as a prominent member of the Constantinopolitan scholarly circle, the emperor emerges as one of the individuals responsible for challenging the cultural domination of panegyric. He was more interested in rhetoric's potential for beneficial results and less in its power to convey personal interests. Accordingly, his political writings seem to have been designed to end political turmoils and to harmonize individual and collective interests. By contrast to the court orators' project, often driven and designed by personal ambition, I would suggest that Manuel's project sought to compensate for the lack of previous enlightened statesmanship and participatory citizenship in the aftermath of the conflicts with the Ottomans. Departing from the scholars' program, Manuel linked rhetoric to the articulation of wise governance and civic conscience. Clearly each program sought to fulfill a special need: whereas the orators' program conceived rhetoric as key to social survival and political prominence, Manuel's turned it into an expression of and a guide to salvation of the Byzantine state. This logocentric assumption aimed at spelling out what one should do once in power. Thus, it can be concluded that, if for the late Byzantine court rhetoricians rhetoric represented a question of formal address, for Manuel, who included rhetorical training in his moral system, it represented rather an instrument of coercing mores. In his texts, rhetoric moved further from issues of praise and closer to the political present since, for him, rhetoric's mission was to specify common goals and to articulate visions widely acceptable.¹¹⁶

9.4.2. Emperor-preacher

The attempts to convey political messages of ideological renewal by means of public oratory were not confined to texts specifically designed for this purpose. Manuel's liturgical and

¹¹⁵ The correlation between power, ethics, and the rhetorical education in the Hellenistic and the Roman world has been convincingly investigated by T. Morgan on the basis of Egyptian papyri and the theoretical texts of authors like Cicero, Quintilian, or Plutarch, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and the Roman Worlds*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 146-150, 228, and 267.

¹¹⁶ Such a process was certainly not unique for the Palaiologan period as it is observable in the texts of other early Palaiologan authors like Thomas Magistros or Maximos Planoudes.

homiletic writings also had political connotations and were intended to advertise his authority. This little known and hitherto unexplored aspect of his literary activity mirrors his concern for the growing influence of ecclesiastics and for their attacks against imperial authority. The prayers and the four homilies often reveal Manuel's political attitudes and, at the same time, allude to historical events. The so-called *Prayer for the Holy Mother of God for help in the present circumstances* (Κάνων παρακλητικός εἰς τὴν ὑπεραγίαν ἡμῶν Δέσποιναν Θεοτόκον ὑπὲρ τῶν νῦν περιστάσεων) specifically addressed an event in the history of early-fifteenth century Constantinople, namely the siege of the City in 1411 by the Ottomans. Here, the author prays for the Theotokos to bring help in defending the City against the Turkish invaders:

We, the entire gathering of the faithful,/ Call on our Mother/ Of the supreme ruler, God./ Deliver your people from misfortunes/ And give to your city the victory against the enemies./ You can see, Virgin, there is another enemy,/ Who is attacking forcefully/ This possession of yours./ As you have previously destroyed the father of this one <i.e. Bayezid, 1402>,/ Make this one here and his army disappear. Ἄπασα τάξις καὶ ἡλικία πιστῶν/ τῇ μητρὶ βοήσωμεν/ τοῦ παντάνακτος θεοῦ./ τὸν λαόν σου ῥύου συμφορῶν/ καὶ τὴν νίκην κατ' ἐχθρῶν δίδου τῇ πόλει σου./ Ὁρᾶς, παρθένε, Χαγάνον ἄλλον ἐχθρὸν/ δεινῶς ἐπικείμενον/ τῷ κλήρῳ τῷδε τῷ σῶ./ ὡς προτοῦ τὸν φύσαντα αὐτόν,/ τοῦτόν τε καὶ τοὺς αὐτοῦ ἄρδην ἀφάνισον.¹¹⁷

Apart from the liturgical prayers,¹¹⁸ Manuel's four preserved homilies¹¹⁹ place the emperor among other authors of sermons like Demetrios Chrysoloras or ecclesiastics like Gabriel of Thessalonike and Makarios Makres. Although several cases of Byzantine emperors-homilists (Leo VI, Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos, Manuel I Komnenos) can be identified, Manuel's case remains singular for the Palaiologan period. In these homiletic texts written in a high style for an educated audience, he explicitly made use of his religious education for the purpose of developing his notion of the imperial idea. His homilies call for God's protection of the chosen emperor and his people.¹²⁰ At the same time, Manuel appears to have consciously conceived for himself the role of a responsible guide for the people's spiritual life.¹²¹ In doing so, on the one hand he appears to have followed Theodore Balsamon's twelfth century formulation of imperial ideology which prescribed the emperor's right to enter the sanctuary of the church whenever he wished to deliver sermons, to bless and cense with a candelabrum

¹¹⁷ *Kanon paraklētikos*, 1-10.

¹¹⁸ Including here the *Eύχη ἑωθινή* (*Morning Prayer*), in PG 156, 564-576.

¹¹⁹ *On the Dormition of the Theotokos* (ed. M. Jugie), *On the Nativity of Christ* (Vat. gr. 1619), *On Saint John the Baptist* (Vat. gr. 1619), and *On Saint Mary of Egypt*. See Unit II.

¹²⁰ M. Jugie, *Manuel Palaeologus. Ad Deiparam*, *Patrologia Orientalis*, 16, 586-587.

¹²¹ Cf. *Foundations*, 31- τὸ μὲν αἰεὶ τὰ βελτίω τῶν χειρόνων ἐκλέγεσθαι Θεοῦ.

(τρικήριον) which bishops used during church services.¹²² On the other hand, the homilies echoed the ancient representations of emperors as priests. Previously, Theodore Balsamon quoted a passage from Flavius Josephus in which the Roman emperor Tiberius styled himself “most exalted bishop” (ἀρχιερεὺς μέγιστος), a Greek rendition of the pagan title *pontifex maximus*. Similarly, Manuel echoed Eusebios' notion of Christian emperor-teacher (*didaskalos*) acquainted with the divine mysteries by virtue of being God's 'image' on earth.¹²³ Thus, by composing and delivering homilies, Manuel appears to have imitated Constantine the Great, the first emperor to have done so. Moreover, like in the homilies of another emperor, Leo VI (866-912),¹²⁴ the sacerdotal character of the Byzantine imperial office inspired by the royal models of the Old Testament, David and Solomon, is present.¹²⁵

The four homilies drew on specific religious subjects and, according to some of their preambles, were performed on particular occasions such as religious feasts of different saints or, as in the case of the *Homily on the Dormition of the Theotokos*, upon the occasion of the recovery from an illness.¹²⁶ Although very little information regarding their contexts of production survives, it is possible that they may have been performed in the imperial palace, as for instance, Joseph Bryennios' sermons. They display not only the emperor's knowledge of the intricate doctrinal issues as the *Oration on the Theotokos*¹²⁷ but also his vision of a life of ascetic practice as the *Oration on Saint John the Baptist*.¹²⁸ Thus, to some extent, the imperial homilies shared several of the concerns present in the ecclesiastics' writings. And yet, the

¹²² Canon 69 of the Quinisext Ecumenical Council in Rhalles-Potles eds., *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων*, Athens, 1852-1859. vol.2 commentary on canon 69 of the Quinisext Council permitting the emperor's entry into the sanctuary of the church. A century later, the argument is repeated verbatim by Demetrios Chomatenos. On Balsamon's understanding of customary law, see D. Simon “Balsamon zum Gewohnheitsrecht” in W. Aerts ed, *SCHOLIA. Studia ad criticam interpretationemque textuum Graecorum et ad historiam Iuris Graeco-Romani pertinentia viro doctissimo D. Holwerda oblata*, Groningen, 1985, 119-33.

¹²³ Eusebios, *Life of Constantine*, I, 5: “he cleansed humanity of the godless multitude, and set him up as a teacher of true devotion to himself for all nations, testifying with a loud voice for all to hear, that they should know the God who is, and turn from the error of those who do not exist at all,” A. Cameron and S. G. Hall, *Eusebios. Life of Constantine*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999, 69. See also H.-G. Beck, *Das byzantinische Jahrtausend*, München: Beck, 1978, 130 with reference to the passages of Eusebios in J.M. Sansterre, “Eusèbe de Césarée et la naissance de la théorie 'cesaropapiste',” *B 42* (1972): 131-195, 532-593.

¹²⁴ T. Antonopoulou, *Leonis VI Sapientis Imperatoris Byzantini Homiliae*, Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca; 63, Turnhout: Brepols, 2008. On the links to Constantine I consciously drawn by Basil I and his grandson, Constantine VII, see Dagron, *Emperor and priest*, 206-208. Cf. T. Antonopoulou, *The Homilies of Leo VI*, Leiden: Brill, 72-79.

¹²⁵ Cf. *Homily on St. John the Baptist*, Vat.gr. 1619 fol. 47r: καὶ ὅτε ταῦθ' οὕτως ἔχει, ὑπόχρεω πάντες ἐσμέν, τῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπόμενοι νόμῳ, καὶ ἡγεμόνι χρώμενοι τῷ θειοτάτῳ Δαυίδ, ᾧ λίαν ἐτιμήθησαν οἱ φίλοι τοῦ Θεοῦ,

¹²⁶ For instance, the *Homily on the Theotokos* was occasioned by the emperor's recovery from an illness. See Manuel, *Homily on the Theotokos*, 543.

¹²⁷ Manuel, *Homily on the Theotokos*, VII.

¹²⁸ φεύγων μὲν τὰς πόλεις καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς ἡδέα ὡσπερ ἄλλός τις τὴν ἐρμημίαν καὶ τὰ ἐν ταύτῃ λυποῦντα, ἔχων τὴν ἔρημον πόλιν καὶ ἀντὶ πατρίδος αὐτὴν ἀσπαζόμενος, *On St. John the Baptist*, Vat. gr. 1619, f. 51, 21-27.

emperor also took the opportunity to integrate elements of his own imperial idea into these publicly delivered sermons. In the introductory part of the *Homily on St. John the Baptist* the emperor depicted himself as the *bridegroom* (νύμφιος) of the Church and also, mentioned that his son and co-emperor was present at the public deliverance of the sermon:

Vat. gr. 1619, fol. 47r: and now in the presence of the beloved emperor, the bridegroom of the church, and of this co-emperor. καὶ νῦν παρισταμένω τῷ φίλῳ καὶ βασιλεῖ, τῷ τῆς ἐκκλησίας νυμφίῳ, [...] καὶ συμβασιλεύοντι τούτῳ.

This connection between Manuel's homiletics and his son the co-emperor is further underlined by the fact that the sixth of the seven *Orations* was actually reproduced verbatim with few differences from the *Homily on Saint Mary of Egypt*.¹²⁹

If occasionally he shows the humility required for the speaker in such circumstances,¹³⁰ most often he states that his power derives ultimately from God, who allowed him to govern his people. This notion, central to imperial propaganda, surfaces especially in the unedited *Homily on the Nativity of Christ* in Vat. gr. 1619.¹³¹

Thus, despite being circumscribed to limited topics and occasions of performance, the homilies appear to have played a role in shaping his imperial image. Certainly, as his ability in dealing with theological matters has been demonstrated in other texts (*The Dialogs with a Muslim* and *The Treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*), through his *Homilies* he could reach out to a wider public and gain acknowledgment of his authority in matters of faith. At the same time, contrary to the ideology promoted by contemporary ecclesiastics, which emphasized the distinction between the patriarch's spiritual power and the dispensable state of the emperor, Manuel's homilies and liturgical texts favored the opposite idea. Thus, it can be contended that the homiletic and liturgical writings served political purposes because they conveyed a certain ideological message, namely that obedience to religion is inseparably connected with subjection to the emperor.

Eventually, it can be said that Manuel used homiletics for his political goals at least on a secondary level. By writing the homilies Manuel considered that it was appropriate to illustrate his belief in the sanctified imperial power. The edifying accents of a homily together with its delivery in church by the emperor in person would have persuaded the people about

¹²⁹ On the differences between the two texts see E. Kaltsogianni, "Zur Entstehung der Rede des Manuel II. Palaiologos auf die Heilige Maria von Ägypten [BHG 1044c]," *Parekbolai. An Electronic Journal for Byzantine Literature*, vol. 1, 2011, 37-59.

¹³⁰ M. Cunningham ed., *Preacher and Audience. Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics*, Leiden: Brill, 1998, 7-19.

¹³¹ Vat. gr. 1619 fol 30r-v: πάντα γὰρ θεόθεν ἡμῖν.

the prevalence of such a concept.

Conclusions: imperial ideology and style of government

All these facets of the imperial representation which can be ascribed to different periods of the emperor's reign have in common Manuel's literary preoccupations. In the previous unit of my dissertation, from the *Dialog on marriage* to the *Funeral oration for Theodore*, I have tried to record shifting authorial voices which the emperor used in addressing political issues specific to late Byzantium: deliberative, didactic, and narrative. They supplement each other rather than exclude one another. From a view of polemical political discourse in the *Dialog on marriage*, I moved to a model of education and the emperor's relation with other factors of political decision making. From questioning the dynastic order (in the *Dialog*), I moved to attempts to reinforce political order through a different kind of political discourse (*Funeral oration*). They reveal not only the emperor's standpoints in his attempts to answer publicly political challenges but also the existence of an imperial long-term project establishing a system of effective political communication. This project involved subsequent stages with changing approaches determined by the confrontation between his outlook and the ideas of other groups of individuals. In the first stage, the emperor appeared to have strengthened his connections with the *literati* and frequently chaired *theatra*. The letters and the dialogic mode of his text on marriage point to the fact that during the last decade of the fourteenth century the emperor did not have at his disposal too many possibilities of circulating his political messages except for the rather informal meetings in the framework of *theatra*. In this particular period (1391-1399) the *theatra* seem to have resembled literary salons where debates took place and Manuel could concomitantly assume the role of a court leader and of a μαῖστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων.¹³² In a second stage, which chronologically coincides with the years following the emperor's return from the West, rhetorical productions became much more numerous. Following a post-1402 trend, like other court rhetoricians, Manuel celebrated the defeat of the Ottomans as a divine omen. But, if the Ottoman threat was temporarily deflected, Byzantium still had to live through a period of dual rule with John VII in Thessalonike holding the titles of *basileus* and *autokrator*. Both Manuel and John VII had sons who had the right to inherit their fathers' rule. At this moment, Manuel was quick to act: not only appointed he his son as co-emperor, but he also made known his chosen successor by specifically addressing two texts to

¹³² See ch. 2.

his son, the *Foundations* and the *Orations*. There, using a didactic stance, he presented himself as his son's teacher in matters of ethics and political action, offering also a systematic introduction into major philosophical themes. In parallel to these texts, he used the opportunity of his brother's commemoration in Mistra to operate a sharp modification within the genre of his *epitaphios* and make sure that by using a fully-fledged narrative voice in describing Theodore's achievements, he presented himself as defender of Morea. The generic transformations in the *Funeral oration*, reflected in the large-scale use of narrative point to his utmost intention to employ his rhetorical skills for political purposes.

The emperor's efforts to adapt his own imperial representation to the realities and react in texts publicly performed continued through his reign. After 1411, he constantly delivered prayers and sermons which alongside his previous theological and liturgical writings suggest that he intended to assume a more influential position within the Church. This move can be interpreted as an act whereby the emperor sought to appease if not to counteract the anti-imperial position adopted by the ecclesiastics in their discourse. Thus, although at times, his politico-didactic texts concerned with issues of authority seem to acknowledge the limits of his political authority, the emphasis on rhetorical training legitimized and authorized a different type of ruler, yet still a ruler.

When describing Manuel's style of government, scholars have often quoted Sphrantzes' statement attributed to Manuel, according to which in times of crisis, an emperor was supposed to act rather as a manager (*oikonomos*) of political and economic affairs:¹³³

My son, the Emperor, seems to himself to be a suitable emperor-but not for the present day. For he <John VIII> has large views and ideas and such as the times demanded in the heyday of the prosperity of his ancestors. But nowadays, as things are going with us, our empire needs not an emperor, but an administrator. I am afraid that the decline of this house may come from his poems and arguments, for I have noted his propensities and what he thought to achieve with Mustafa, and I have seen also the result of his danger in what danger they have brought us.¹³⁴

Certainly, as J. Barker argued more than forty years ago in his extensive monograph, the emperor's vast political experience cannot be overlooked when judging his ideological outlook. Manuel was a *basileus-oikonomos* inasmuch as he was an *empereur-hagiographe* who collected and used relics for diplomatic purposes,¹³⁵ or an *empereur et prêtre* as his homiletic and liturgical

¹³³ Sphrantzes' words were echoed by Manuel himself in the *Foundations*, 59: Χρή γὰρ πάντας ἄρχοντας γαλήνην ταῖς αὐτῶν ψυχαῖς καὶ προνοεῖν καὶ οἰκονομεῖν. Χειμῶνα μὲν γὰρ νέφος ἐπάγει, γαλήνην δὲ αἰθρία ποιεῖ.

¹³⁴ Sphrantzes, *Memoirs*, 58-60.

¹³⁵ On the emperor's involvement in economic activities such as trade or tax collection, pursuits which sometimes overlapped with the aristocracy's interests, see K.-P. Matschke, "Kaiser oder Verwalter? Die Wirtschaftspolitik Manuela zwischen 1403 und 1422 und ihre Effekte," in *Die Schlacht bei Ankara und das*

texts indicate. Yet, the above analysis showed that, when considering his style of government, the role of rhetoric in his rule cannot be overlooked.¹³⁶ His prolific literary activity indicates that he also wished to add a further dimension to his rulership and to reinvent himself as a rhetorician, both similar to other active fellow authors and to a teacher-instructor of his son and of his subjects. On the one hand, these texts served purposes of self-promotion through self presentation since, with very few instances of public display remaining, literary culture became an instrument of self-fashioning and one of the very few means of political propaganda. In the absence of a more substantial body of court rhetoricians the emperor undertook the role of a social-political commentator on the state situation and accordingly put forward a personal discourse on imperial authority. His interest and skill in staging and publicizing himself and his policies are well documented and I have provided examples to suggest how deep his involvement with this practice went. The *Foundations* and the *Orations* were not only tools of social control through direct advice but they also advertised Manuel's dominant position in relation with the other acknowledged *basileus* and *autokrator* John VII, while the *Funeral oration* made clear that the emperor still had authority in the Peloponnese.

On the other hand, overall, the use of different authorial voices reflecting different rhetorical approaches - deliberative, narrative, didactic - combined with his priestly stance suggests that the emperor sought to attain a kind of social harmony. In his highly elaborated rhetorical texts Manuel appears to promote the idea of a *seductive authority* which would preserve most imperial prerogatives while admitting the growing influence of other groups. This aestheticized version of empire helped him identify a middle path between political groups in conflict and dissipate the tensions among different interest groups such as the hardcore Orthodox and the Latinophiles. In writing these texts Manuel seems to have sought to exercise a form of non-coercive social control achieved through agreement rather than

Schicksal von Byzanz, Weimar: Böhlau, 1981, 220-235. In 1407 (23 October) Manuel sent several pieces of relics to king Martin V of Aragon (1395-1410), after consultations with the patriarch and other Constantinopolitan nobles: *...de columna in qua ligatus fuit Salvator Noster; de lapide super quem Petrus incumbens, post ternam Christi negacionem, amarissime flevit; de lapide in quo, post deposicionem a cruce ut ungerent, positus fuerat humani generis Liberator, ac eciam de craticula super quam Sanctus Laurentius fuit assatu*. C. Marinesco, "Manuel II Paleologue et les rois d'Aragon. Commentaire sur quatre lettres inedites en latin, expediees par la chancellerie byzantin," *Bulletin de la section historique de l'Academie Roumaine* 9 (1924): 199. On his so-called *relic diplomacy* see Barker, *Manuel II*. Relics remained an important diplomatic tool even later on and it was used by Theodore II Palaiologos and John VIII Palaiologos, Th. Ganchou, "Géorgios Scholarios, 'secretaire' du patriarche unioniste Gregorios III Mammas? Le mystère résolu," in *Le patriarcat oecuménique de Constantinople aux XIVe-XVIe siècles: Rupture et continuité*, Paris: Centre d'études byzantines, neo-helleniques et sud-est européennes, 2007, 117-194.

¹³⁶ Already J. Chrysostomides pointed to the significance of Manuel's *reflective nature* combined with his *pragmatic and empirical knowledge* when developing his political conception. J. Chrysostomides, "Introduction," in *Funeral oration*, 12.

through direct and material coercion.

Furthermore, to a large extent Manuel's texts analyzed in this dissertation revert the representation of an emperor preoccupied exclusively by the political aspects of his position, a kind of representation cultivated especially during his father's reign. He also subverted the image of the *philosopher-king* by substituting the philosophical preparation to rhetorical education focusing on providing a pleasurable experience to the readers/listeners. In the *Foundations* and the *Orations* the image of the philosopher created by constant reference to concepts and themes drawn especially from Aristotle's writings was reinforced by that of a Christian preacher and of a didaskalos, teaching his son the right behavior.

Conclusions of the unit

Let us now summarize and conclude this last section of the present dissertation. My aims here have been to provide a mapping of certain political discourses current during Manuel II's reign and to identify the different approaches to the emperor's authority in the texts of the ecclesiastics, the imperial rhetoricians, and the emperor himself. The comparison between the statements inserted into the discourse used by each group and by Manuel himself points to numerous similarities as well as differences. Regarding the growing concerns with the economic and social situation, it is noticeable that the ecclesiastics and the court rhetoricians shared largely similar opinions. They identified the members of the higher echelons of the social elites, businessmen and aristocrats, as responsible for the endemic poverty in Constantinople or in Thessalonike. As for the emperor's texts, however, they do not display a similar interest in social and economic issues. The attitude to the enemies and the potential allies of Byzantium differed from a group to another: while the ecclesiastics claimed that the Byzantines should defend themselves alone, the emperor and the rhetoricians favored the idea of an alliance with the Latins. In addition, Manuel suggested that other neighboring peoples, like the *Illyrians*, the *Mysoi*, and the *Triballoi*, could provide help. For these peoples, he did not use the term *barbaroi*, thus echoing the provisions of the Treaty of Gallipoli in 1403 which assigned to the Byzantines a place in an alliance with other regional Christian peoples. Therefore he downplayed the Byzantine uniqueness, occasionally pointing only to their *Romanness*, a notion also used largely by court rhetoricians. Moreover, in both Manuel's and the rhetoricians' texts the tendency was to use a territorially delimited and national *πατρίς*. On the contrary, the ecclesiastics tended to use the notion of *πατρίς* with the universalist connotations of a *community of the Orthodox* (γένος τῶν ὀρθοδόξων).¹ Finally, the attitude to imperial authority was particularly radical in the texts of most of the ecclesiastics who denied the emperor the claims to universal and absolute power. The stricter Orthodox clergymen envisaged a political entity where the emperor's authority was limited and could be censured by the Church. On the other hand, the rhetoricians cultivated a representation of imperial authority which relied on the tenets current in the Byzantine courtly propaganda. In particular, they equally praised the military successes of the emperor as well as his literary

¹ See also the analysis of A. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ή οικονομός*, 204-206.

preoccupations. Often they described the emperor as *teacher-didaskalos*. In fact, this feature was one of the core elements of Manuel's construction of imperial authority since he assiduously cultivated his rhetorical skills. In his texts he assumed a didactic stance in order to assert that his first-born son, John VIII, was to be his successor. In other texts like the *Dialog on marriage* or the *Funeral oration* he reacted to political challenges of the day, and in his homiletic and liturgical texts he envisioned the role of a priest thus signaling his opposition to the ecclesiastics' claims of Church preeminence.

Viewed from a historical perspective, these broad discursive themes indicate a conflict ongoing in the last decades of the Byzantine Empire, between the Church, on the one hand, and the emperor, on the other hand, who relied on the support of aristocracy whose interests were reflected by the rhetoricians' texts. Yet, even if the emperor's political discourse had more affinities with the rhetoricians' discourse, Manuel's texts put forward a clearly distinct alternative. He realized that he needed bureaucrats and the propaganda of the court rhetoricians for strengthening the authority of the imperial administration particularly against the ecclesiastics' claims. Nevertheless, the analysis of his texts indicated that he certainly also wished to avoid becoming too circumscribed by the practices and precedents that accompanied government. It is probably for this reason that one should understand why he sometimes rebuked his friend, Demetrios Chryoloras, for having praised him excessively.

Manuel thus appears as a political thinker preoccupied by the interstices of the imperial office. His main concern was the promotion of a new imperial ethos and at the same time adaptation to the new social realities in which the Byzantine emperor represented little more than a group leader. Often his voice engaged with the collective imagination of his audience: while being connected to a timeless history and experience, it echoed the emperor's personal experiences.

Conclusions

The aim of this dissertation was to examine the political messages conveyed in several rhetorical texts by Emperor Manuel II and determine the strategies whereby the emperor as author outlined a specific political discourse. This discourse was meant to offer a renewed version of late Byzantine imperial ideology. Until now, students of Manuel II's writings investigated his texts for evidence regarding the political and institutional history of the last decades of Byzantine history. This kind of information surfaces especially in his letters and in the *Funeral oration on his Brother Theodore*. Yet, other rhetorical texts of his, which were written in a highly elaborate language and lacked concrete data concerning events, situations, or individuals, have previously been largely overlooked if not dismissed as obscure and useless for historical research. Nevertheless, at a closer scrutiny, they present a different set of data which pertain to the discursive construction of imperial representations at a time of significant economic, social, and political transformations. These hitherto unstudied pieces of evidence allow us to get a better sense of the emperor's style of government and of the ideological assumptions underlying his actions.

The point of departure for my investigation was the observation that these imperial writings, despite occasionally being couched in fairly conventional terms, reflect the relations which the emperor sought to negotiate and establish with other contemporary power brokers. Viewed against the backdrop of other similar contemporary writings, Manuel's political texts can answer a number of questions with regard to the history of late Byzantium: what did the emperor stand for in those years? What was his style of government? What were the means envisaged for saving the state from impending destruction? They reflected the emperor's concerns vis-à-vis ongoing issues and conflicts with effects on the institutional framework, or issues such as imperial succession, the exertion of central authority in provinces isolated from Constantinople, or the necessity to establish a balanced system of alliances with other regional influential actors. Owing to the significance of such events occurring during the final decades of Byzantine history, in the first chapter of my dissertation, I considered necessary to offer a survey of the major social and political shifts in Byzantium. There I documented the emergence of a new class of entrepreneurial aristocracy with tight connections in both the old landowning Byzantine families as well as in the commercial groups of Italian merchants. In

doing so, I relied on the recent studies of the Byzantine social groups by scholars like K.-P. Matschke, Th. Ganchou, or A. Kioussopoulou who investigated the activities, the origins, and the connections of various individuals. Based on this preliminary discussion, the picture of late fourteenth and early fifteenth century Byzantine political history is further outlined by a presentation of four different instances of challenge to imperial authority: the ecclesiastics' claims to preeminence in both spiritual and worldly matters, which triggered the emperor's more energetic involvement in Church affairs; the attempts to overthrow Manuel II made by John VII, the inheritor of Andronikos IV, the first-born son of Emperor John V, attempts which were ultimately thwarted by the implementation of a regime of dual rule, with John VII receiving the titles of *basileus* and *autokrator* in Thessalonike (1403-1408); the demands for autonomy and independent external policies exerted by the archontes from the Peloponnese that in the end called for Manuel's direct involvement in the affairs of the peninsula; and finally, the threats with extinction of the Byzantines coming from the Ottomans.

In the second chapter of the first unit of my dissertation I dealt with the profile of the group of *literati* the emperor gathered at his court. I noticed that the emperor maintained a strong relationship with them as attested by the intense exchange of letters taking place between him and them. After a presentation of the performances of literary writings taking place in the framework of the so-called *theatra* I focused on the major groups of the *literati* active in Constantinople: on the one hand, there were those oriented towards closer connections with the Latin West like Demetrios Kydones, Manuel Kalekas, Manuel Chrysoloras, Demetrios Skaranos, or Maximos Chrysoberges. They partook in common intellectual projects such as the translation into Greek of the Dominican liturgy as well as in coordinated diplomatic pursuits like the attempt to regain from Venice the properties and assets of John Laskaris Kalopheros. On the other hand, the written sources present us the image of another group of individuals who upheld strict Orthodox views, a group which includes Patriarch Euthymios II, Joseph Bryennios, Theodore Potamios, or Makarios Makres. As indicated by their correspondence and manuscript evidence, they were connected by numerous intense intellectual exchanges. Apart from these two groups we find other individuals who were associated with the emperor on account of their common literary preoccupations: Demetrios Chrysoloras, John Chortasmenos, or Isidore the future Cardinal of Kiev.

In the second unit of my dissertation I turned to the emperor's political texts composed during his reign: the *Dialog with the empress mother on marriage* (1396), *The Foundations of imperial conduct* (1406), *The seven ethico-political orations* (1408), and the *Funeral oration for his brother*

Theodore, Despot of Morea (1411). After a survey of the late Palaiologan literary landscape and of the emperor's substantial oeuvre comprising theological, liturgical and political writings, I proceeded to a close reading of each of these texts and used notions drawn from both modern literary theory as well as from ancient rhetorical handbooks. This double perspective enabled me to analyze more in depth categories such as genre and authorial voice which in turn support a better understanding of the topics approached in these writings and of their functions in the given contexts. In addition, in this section I tried to place the production of these texts in their historical and literary contexts.

Building on the investigation of the underlying socio-political developments and of the authorial rhetorical strategies, in the third unit, I dealt with the ideological claims that shaped the different approaches to the nature and exercise of political authority in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. I proceeded from the observation that in late Byzantium, as everywhere else, different social groups adhered to aims that suited their interests. As a result, the late Byzantine political sphere presents the picture of an arena where different political discourses sometimes competed and sometimes intersected with each other. In the first two chapters of the unit I focused on the discourses put forward by the two groups of authors with which the emperor interacted most: the ecclesiastics, defined as members of the Church hierarchy, and the court rhetoricians. In the last chapter, I discussed the differences in the emperor's discursive representation of imperial authority. In order to identify the differences but also the common genealogies of these three competing discourses I dealt with four major themes of discourse shared by all authors of the later Byzantine periods: the cleavages between different segments of society and particularly between the emerging entrepreneurs and the impoverished citizens of Constantinople and Thessalonike; the approach to the question of Byzantium's alliances; the formulation of Byzantine individuality either in cultural terms as identification with Hellenism, or in religious terms as Orthodox, or within a political framework as Roman; and the conceptualization of the idea of imperial rule. Eventually, I looked at the major features of Manuel's style of government as reflected in the discourse he put forward in his political texts in addition to other liturgical writings such as prayers and homilies.

The most important findings of my dissertation I consider the following. With regard to the late Byzantine political practices, it is noticeable a process of change within the basis for decision making by the inclusion of individuals with a variety of social backgrounds: aristocrats, businessmen, ecclesiastics, and at times Latins (Marshal Boucicaut, Gattilusio).

Frequently some of these opposed the emperor as it became clear from the support they offered to John VII or to the Ottoman forces. This change occurred both under the influence of the entrepreneurial aristocracy a class which resulted from the alliance between the mesoi and the old aristocracy, as well as of the population which was increasingly referred to as taking part in public gatherings meant to decide on the affairs of the state. In addition to these changes in the social elites and the institutional framework, the challenges to imperial authority coming especially from the ecclesiastics and from the supporters of his brother's, Andronikos IV lineage, forced the emperor to find other supporters at the Constantinopolitan court. As a result, his strategy to reassert control over the centrifugal forces in the empire involved his action at two levels: on the one hand, the emperor seemingly strove to balance the influence of different factions, and, on the other hand, Manuel also proved to be interested in conveying his political messages to as wide an audience as possible. He attempted to create a kind of parallel court, populated not by traditional court-officials, but by *literati*. He thus managed to preside over this court without being contested and, subsequently, he could use this milieu in order to validate and disseminate his own political views.

The examination of the emperor's group of *literati* led me to conclude that the network of the scholars in Manuel's entourage served various purposes. At a basic level, some of these *literati* like John Chortasmenos used this network to obtain material benefits for themselves and for their families. The network was also used for the cooperation amongst scholars as the manuscript evidence indicates. It appears that often authors commented on each other's texts including the emperor himself. Manuel also actively engaged his literary friends in his political activities, as the example of Manuel Chrysoloras, teacher of Greek in Florence and later the emperor's envoy to the West, shows. A significant outcome of the scrutiny of the emperor's literary court pertains to the modality in which the emperor used the scholarly circle as a platform to advertise an image of his authority. In the absence of an officially appointed μαῖστωρ τῶν ῥητόρων the emperor himself acted as such an official court orator. Especially before 1403, *theatra* offered the opportunity for the emperor to broadcast his literary skills. With the temporary normalization of the situation after the Battle of Ankara the emperor could rely on several members of this network, such as Demetrios Chrysoloras, Manuel Chrysoloras, Makarios Makres, and John Chortasmenos, to write panegyrics or pieces of public oratory which extolled his military and political merits in pacifying the state. Furthermore, the importance of the emperor as a major patron of letters and promoter of literary activities in the late fourteenth century appears even more clearly through a comparison with other

contemporary similar sponsors. Owing to the decline in economic resources, the activities of patrons like Cristoforo Garatone, an Italian humanist and student of Guarino of Verona, proved rather limited in scope. On the contrary, it seems that Manuel II not only was active in literary circles but he also sponsored a workshop for copying manuscripts.

The analysis of the emperor's political texts reveals that all four of the emperor's political compositions were conceived and transmitted as different ways of expressing moral and political advice: deliberative (*Dialog on marriage*), “gnomic” (*Foundations*), based on diatribe (*Orations*), and narrative (*Funeral oration*). In the *Dialog on marriage* which draws on both orality and sophisticated rhetorical theories of topics, praise for decisive action or for political design was replaced with a deliberative stance. In the *Foundations*, by combining the categories of father and teacher into one authorial voice, the emperor played with his needs as a father, on the one hand, and the service to the prince elect, on the other hand. This strategy had the advantage of creating a migrating voice between paternal intimacy and court solemnity. Using multiple voices as well as several generic strands (*centuria*, *hypothekai*, gnomic literature, “princely mirrors”) the author operated a multifaceted and stronger self-authorization. Tightly connected by the same intent to provide an educational model for his son, John VIII, are the seven *Orations*, the text that in most manuscripts follows the *Foundations* and was connected to it. Here, the author organized the material of his seven texts with different topics in the manner of a diatribe, a form of speech popular in antiquity and defined as a group of lectures or orations on a moral theme characterized by vividness and immediacy in language. Thus it appears that the seven *Orations* were intended as something different from a series of seven orations unconnected among themselves. Noticeably, the apparent indetermination of this collection of different types of *logoi* allowed for a greater freedom in the use of philosophical or theological themes. As a result of the configuration of the *Orations*, the educational message is constructed through an accumulation of arguments and representations which culminate in the admonition addressed to John to regard humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη) as the highest imperial virtue. In the last text here analyzed, the *Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*, Manuel appears to have emulated both the traditions of panegyric oration and of epic/chronicle. The subject matter, the praise for his brother, is treated in the form of an historical account and the author offers a wealth of details about the events he recounts. With regard to the construction of the authorial voice, I argued that the author weaves into his narrative three different plots: one following Theodore's deeds in the Peloponnese, one about the emperor-author himself who presented his actions as decisive in

the pacification of the region, and one about the history of Morea.

In all these four texts, the elaborate construction of political advice is reflected in their deliberative contents, the ethos which the emperor strove to construct, and, not least, by their inclusion in a single codex, the Vindob. phil. gr. 98, dedicated to John VIII and part of a series of four manuscripts which comprised most of the emperor's literary texts. From this viewpoint, it can be suggested that the texts were conceived as elements in a comprehensive didactic project envisaged by the emperor Manuel II. In addition, the author often subverted the common tenets of the imperial representation and presented himself as a “defeated” interlocutor in the debate of the *Dialog*, as a teacher-rhetorician of his son in the *Foundations* and the *Orations*, or as his brother's helper in the *Funeral oration*. Furthermore, noticeably, the emperor constantly suggested and explicitly stated that rhetoric and the ability to speak in a persuasive manner were correlates of power. In light of these observations, his strategy to configure a strong authorial voice can be interpreted as an attempt to persuade by means of a kind of dual authority: both as political power that strove to accommodate other power brokers and as oratorical virtue.

The analysis of political discourses in late Byzantium reveals several important developments. Concerning the ecclesiastics' discourse it emerges that the members of the high ranking hierarchy like Symeon of Thessalonike or Joseph Bryennios adopted a radical position concerning their wealthy contemporaries, whom they rebuked for the widening gap between the different social classes and for not participating in the defense of the City. Their discourse acquired even more radical hues regarding the authority of the emperor in the question of the patriarch's appointment. If the roots of this radicalization of the ecclesiastics' discourse, most evident in the treatises of Makarios of Ankara, can be traced back to the early Palaiologan period, its echoes are to be found in the texts of later Church officials like Sylvester Syropoulos and Mark Eugenikos as well.

Unlike the ecclesiastics, the imperial rhetoricians continued to support the idea of the omnipotence of imperial power in Byzantium. Even George Gemistos Plethon, who preached extreme political reforms that entailed the return to the values of ancient Sparta, agreed upon the appropriateness of a monarchical rule. In their panegyrics, they praised extensively the emperor's deeds, his dynastic lineage and direct successor, John VIII. Among the usual virtues identifiable in panegyrical texts, they often described the emperor as a skilled rhetorician and teacher not only for his son but also for his people. Furthermore, unlike the ecclesiastics who preached a kind of Orthodox utopia, they emphasized the Byzantines' specificity reflected in

their Romannes.

A slightly different picture with regard to the emperor's political authority emerged from the analysis of the emperor's discursive representation of imperial authority. He reworked the ancient representation of a philosopher-king in the form of a rhetorician-king and put forward a personal version of the hierarchical system of kingly virtues with humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη) on top. He often pictured himself in guise of a *didaskalos* not only of his son to whom he addressed his texts but also of his subjects as he suggested in his very short Oration to the Subjects. Furthermore, his preaching activity probably indicated a tendency to absorb into his office the function specific to the Church's spiritual authority.

The analysis of the three competing political discourses reveals the antagonisms emerging in the last decades of the Byzantine Empire, between on the one hand, the Church, and, on the other hand, the emperor. By contrast to the orators' project, often driven by personal aspirations, Manuel's project seemingly sought to compensate for the lack of previous enlightened statesmanship and participatory citizenship, in the aftermath of the conflicts with the Ottomans. Unlike the court rhetoricians, Manuel's discourse of imperial authority linked rhetoric to the idea of best governance. Clearly each program undertook to fulfill a special need: whereas the orators' program conceived rhetoric as key to social survival, Manuel's transformed it into a guide to salvation of the Byzantine state. Thus, Manuel's rhetoric deliberately omitted praise and engaged more intensely with the political present since, as he often argued in his texts, rhetoric's mission was to articulate visions widely acceptable.

With regard to his style of government, the analysis of the emperor's rhetorical texts allow us to draw further conclusions. Thus, the use of multiple authorial voices reflecting different rhetorical approaches- deliberative, narrative, or didactic- combined with his priestly stance suggests that the emperor sought to appeal to different kinds of audiences. By relying heavily on his own elaborated rhetorical texts, Manuel seems to put forward the idea of a seductive authority which would preserve most imperial prerogatives while admitting the growing influence of other groups. This aestheticized version of empire helped him identify a middle course between political groups in conflicts such as the one between the hardcore Orthodox and the Latinophiles. Furthermore, these texts reflected a tendency to exert a form of social control achieved through agreement rather than through direct and material coercion.

To conclude, my investigation unveils the picture of the emperor Manuel II as a political thinker concerned with the construction of a functional representation of the imperial office.

He assiduously cultivated the alternative image of an emperor-writer very much different from the image of his father, John V, who was more interested in the day-to-day state administration. Yet, unlike other Byzantine philosopher-kings, through his texts he strove to shape a new role for the imperial institution in an environment increasingly controlled by forces like the Ottomans, the Italian merchants, or the Byzantine *nouveaux riches*. This new role entailed the large scale use of rhetoric, one of the very few tools which he could use in order to maintain a certain cohesion in the collapsing Byzantine political sphere. By producing different versions of the authorial voice he engaged with the collective imagination of his audience so that the texts became connected to a recognizable Byzantine history. At the same time his political writings echoed the emperor's personal experiences that underpinned his attempts to advertise a new imperial ethos adapted to the new social realities in which the Byzantine emperor represented little more than a *primus inter pares*.

The present investigation of the emperor's texts in their rhetorical and socio-political contexts stands therefore as a contribution to the conceptualization of imperial authority in Byzantium. It may serve as a starting point for future research as well, particularly with regard to the influence of the emperor's political thinking on other rhetorical compositions be they theological or liturgical. Another possible avenue of investigation that it may open is the study of the connections between rhetorical innovation and political transformation in the Palaiologan era. As such it may provide reference material for historians in search of the discursive continuities and discontinuities with earlier or later Byzantine authors.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

The Inscription of Parori

-translation-¹

Edition: R.-J. Loenertz, "Res Gestae Theodori Ioanni F. Palaeologi. Titulus metricus A.D. 1389," *Ἐπετηρὶς ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν*, 25 (1955): 207-210.

[1]: An ancient word, a gift of God,² a Despot, a scion of emperors, came to rule our country, after he left his native city of Constantinople. The inhabitants were obstinate in their disobedience, hostile, mischievous and deceitful in power, contrivers of evils, and most wicked, filled with envy and falsehood, quarrelsome and cruel, breaking oaths, plundering, and prone to dissensions. [10] They were drowning everything in blood in their attempt to overthrow him from the throne, drive him out of the country, or put him to death so that they would remain unruled. In addition, they obviously defiled our fathers' glory, allying themselves with the Latins, oh Justice; together they crushed all the men, loyal to the emperor.

They did such things, my friends, for five long years, alas, always living in a struggle for power. [20] But he was brave and he surpassed everyone in wisdom, he was simple in character, shining in knowledge, guileless, outspoken, peaceful, as those who know him are aware, peaceful, appearing to all as a lover of good, generous, sympathetic, gentle, just like another "Child loving father," loving the people of this place, a delightful man, protector of foreigners, a harbor like Joseph in Egypt, generous with the strangers, admired by all enemies, striving to increase the Romans' power diminished by the local men who craved to rise in power above the Despot [30], but were biting and consuming each other up. Thus,

1

The inscription has been translated into Serbian, I. Toth and R. Radić, "Res gestae Theodori Ioanni filii Palaeologi en tant que source historique," *ZRVI* 34 (1995): 188-189.

² Λόγος παλαιός, δῶρον Θεοῦ : a word play which alludes to the Despot's dynastic name, Theodore Palaiologos.

there were daily slaughterings and tears and our confusion became the Latins' might. Such was the situation of the locals and I could speak about misfortunes even worse than these. Now, this was what the Despot gave to the Romans for their disobedience: Freed from the clay brickwork under the rule of the Latins, [40], the new Pharaoh, and harsh commanders, they acquired wealth, cities and lands where they were seeking to put the Despot to death, as in the ancient times they did with the vineyard, as Christ said in the parable, oh, wretched people, ignorant of God the creator.

He sent many ambassadors to these men, asking for their friendship and for the union of the country. Yet, oh, greatest of misfortunes, they never listened, and so, unable to bear the folly of these people [50], who, day after day, were weaving plots and were saying unlawful things, <Theodore> equally constrained by fear, sadness and grief, unwillingly put together an army of strong men, savage warriors, sons of Agar, for the war with the Latins. He placed his hopes in Christ, whom he always had in his heart, praying that justice be done faster for those who were guilty of plundering the lands [60] and from whose injustice he suffered very much. Strengthened by divine grace, he thus marched into battle. Who could recount such deeds, gentlemen, even if Christians suffered such misfortunes, alas, because of the unjust ones' plans? Or how, then, do you all judge the defeat of the enemies which happened so quickly? He conquered cities, trampling on enemies and resembling a Sampson in victory. Then, knowing that the Agarenes took the entire country [70] in their hands right away and despite the toil, the trouble and the danger, he rushes to the universal sovereign <of the Agarenes> with a good plan, so that we regain hope for salvation and not live in captivity again. Then, having discussed gracefully with the emir, and having found unusual acceptance and goodwill, he undertook the rule of the Peloponnese. When he arrived there he subdued the Despotate of Argos and the entire territory which the lords previously held, and came to us as a conqueror holding trophies, after the Latins were put to shame, or, to say it better, punished to the extreme. In this way the Lord fights the enemies, and blesses those humble in heart. To Him be the glory and might, now and forever and ever. Amen.

APPENDIX 2

Pyxis with Imperial Families of Manuel II and John VII and Ceremonial Scenes

Late Byzantine

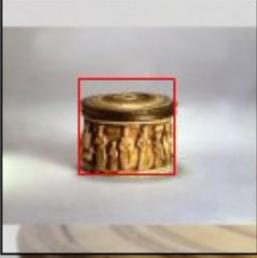
1403-1404

2.95 cm x 4.3 cm (1 3/16 in. x 1 11/16 in.)

ivory

Dumbarton Oaks Museum, BZ.1936.24





APPENDIX 3

Members of Emperor Manuel II's literary circle

| Name | Status | Years of activity | Evidence from letters | Further evidence for connections with Manuel | Relation with other members of the literary circle | Connections to the imperial family or court |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Pro-Latin | | | | | | |
| Demetrios Kydones (PLP: 13876) | Mesazon, ambassador, teacher | 1370-1396 | Addressed to Manuel. Addressed by Manuel. | Manuel's <i>Dialogue on marriage</i> was dedicated to Kydones | M. Chrysoloras, Chrysoberges, Skaranos, Asanes, Euthymios, Bryennios | Theodore I Kantakouzenos, John VI Kantakouzenos, Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina, John V |
| Manuel Kalekas (PLP: 10289) | Teacher, theologian | 1390-1403 | Addressed to Manuel. | Kalekas' <i>Apologia de fide sua</i> addressed to the emperor | Kydones, Chrysoberges, Chrysoloras, Asanes | Theodore I Kantakouzenos, John V Palaiologos, Ioannes Kalopheros |
| Manuel Chrysoloras (PLP: 31165) | Teacher, ambassador | 1390-1415 | Addressed by Manuel. | <i>Synkrisis, Epistolary Oration</i> | Kydones, Chrysoberges, Kalekas, Chortasmenos, John Chrysoloras, Asanes | John VIII, Ioannes Kalopheros |
| Maximos Chrysoberges (PLP: 31123) | Theologian | 1380-1415 | | The letters of D. Kydones | Kydones, Chrysoberges, Chrysoloras, Bryennios | Constantine Asanes |
| Guarino of Verona (PLP: 4324) | Teacher, Humanist | 1400-1420 | Addressed by Manuel | The letters of M. Chrysoloras, Isidore of Kiev, Guarino. | M. Chrysoloras, J. Chrysoloras, Isidore of Kiev | |
| Demetrios Skaranos (PLP: 26035) | Ambassador, | 1390-1430 | | Letters from Kalekas and D. Kydones | D. Kydones, M. Chrysoberges, M. Chrysoloras, C. Asanes | Ioannes Kalopheros, Constantine Asanes |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|-----------|--|--|---|--|
| John Chrysoloras (PLP: 31160) | Teacher, ambassador | 1390-1420 | | <i>Epistolary Discourse</i> to co-emperor John VIII; The letters of Guarino | M. Chrysoloras, Guarino, | Co-Emperor John VIII |
| Constantine Asanes (PLP: 1503) | <i>Theios</i> of John V and Manuel II; rhetorician | 1396 | Addressed by Manuel | <i>Mazaris' Journey to Hades</i> | Kydones, Chrysoberges, Kalekas | John V, Empress Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina |
| Ambroggio Traversari (PLP: 29205) | Humanist teacher | 1417 | | Letters from Guarino | M. Chrysoloras, Guarino, D. Skaranos | |
| Jacopo d'Angeli Scarperia | Humanist | 1390-1415 | | The letters of M. Kalekas | M.Kalekas, M.Chrysoberges | |
| Strict Orthodox | | | | | | |
| Joseph Bryennios (PLP: 3257) | Priest, theologian, court orator | 1390-1430 | Addressed to Manuel | <i>Homilies</i> (in the Palace and in the imperial chamber) | Kydones, Patriarch Euthymios, Manuel Pothos, Manuel Holobolos, | |
| Nikolaos Kabasilas Chamaetos (PLP: 30539) | Theologian | 1370-1396 | Addressed by Manuel | | Kydones | Empress Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina |
| David (PLP: 5008) | Hieromonk, Spiritual father | 1415 | Addressed by Manuel | <i>Manuel: Confession upon the recovery from an illness</i> | Makarios Makres | |
| Gabriel (PLP:3416) | Metropolitan of Thessalonike | | Addressed by Manuel | Collaboration on Manuel's homily <i>On St. Mary of Egypt</i> | Makarios Makres, Joseph Bryennios | Demetrios Leontares |
| Constantine Ivankos (PLP: 7973) | Teacher | 1390-1410 | Addressed by Manuel | Praise for rhetorical skills (Manuel) | Nikolas Kabasilas, Simon | |
| Theodore Potamios (PLP: 23601) | Teacher, theologian | 1400-1418 | Addressed to Manuel Addressed by Manuel | Praise for his rhetorical skills (Manuel) | D. Kydones, Pothos, Chrysoloras, Bryennios, Isidore Glabas | Kantakouzenos, <i>theios</i> of the emperor |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|-----------|---------------------|---|---|--|
| Michael Balsamon (PLP: 2118) | <i>Protekdikos, didaskalos katholikos</i> | 1390-1415 | Addressed by Manuel | Praise for his rhetorical skills (Manuel) | D. Kydones, J. Chortasmenos | |
| Euthymios (PLP: 6268) | Hegoumenos of Stoudios Monastery, Patriarch (1410-1416) | 1390-1416 | Addressed by Manuel | Collaboration on the emperor's <i>Kanon parakletikos</i> ; the controversy over the Metropolitan of Moldavia | Makarios Makres; J. Bryennios | |
| Theodore Kaukadenos (PLP: 11561) | Teacher; tutor of Manuel II's sons | 1380-1390 | Addressed by Manuel | Participation in <i>theatron</i> ; tutor of the emperor's sons | D. Kydones; J. Chortasmenos | John VIII; Theodore II; Geroge Goudeles |
| Manuel Pothos (PLP: 23450) | Judge (<i>krites</i>) | 1380-1400 | Addressed by Manuel | Praise for his rhetorical skills | D. Kydones | John V |
| Simon (PLP: 25382) | <i>Protos</i> of Mt. Athos | 1400-1410 | | | Constantine Ivankos | |
| Makarios Makres (PLP: 16379) | Hegoumenos of the Pantokrator Monastery; monk at the Vatopedi Monastery; theologian; diplomat | 1400-1430 | | Poem addressed to emperor Manuel and Despot Andronikos (1416); Monody on the emperor (1425); copyist of the emperor's texts | Bryennios, Hieromonk David, Gabriel of Thessalonike | Demetrios Leontares, Symeon of Thessalonike |
| Other | | | | | | |
| Frangopoulos (PLP: 30084) | Protostrator, <i>katholikos mesazōn</i> in Morea | 1392-1438 | Addressed by Manuel | Praise for his rhetorical skills | | Theodore I, Theodore II, John VIII, Thomas Palaiologos |
| Isidore of Kiev (PLP: 8300) | Metropolitan of Morea, later cardinal | 1400-1425 | Letters | Panegyric, copyist | Guarino | John VIII, Theodore II Palaiologos |
| Matthew | Logothetes | 1399-1414 | | Preface to the <i>Funeral</i> | | Theodore I Palaiologos |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------|--|---|--|--|
| Chrysokephalos (PLP: 31140) | | | | <i>Oration; Mazaris' Journey</i> | | |
| Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina (PLP: 21365) | Empress (1354-1391) | 1396 | Letter addressed by Manuel | <i>The Dialogue on marriage</i> | Kydones | |
| Joasaph (PLP: 8923) | Monk and scribe | | | Introduction to <i>Funeral Oration</i> | J. Chortasmenos | |
| George Gemistos Plethon (PLP: 3630) | Philosopher | 1390-1452 | | Preface to <i>Funeral Oration on Theodore; Admonitory oration on the situation in the Peloponnese addressed to Manuel II; Memorandum addressed to Theodore II Palaiologos</i> | | Theodore II Palaiologos |
| Demetrios Pepagomenos Sauromates (PLP: 22359) | Copyist, Medicine, imperial secretary | 1415-1452 | | <i>Monody on the death of Cleope Malatesta, wife of Theodore II Palaiologos</i> | J. Chortasmenos, Bessarion | Theodore II Palaiologos |
| Johannes Chortamenos (PLP: 30897) | Teacher, Metropolitan, copyist | 1390-1425 | Addressed to Manuel | <i>Panegyric on the emperor's return from Thessalonike</i> | J. Bryennios, Michael Balsamon, D. Chrysoloras, D. Pepagomenos | Demetrios Aoinares, George Gudeles, M. Tarchaneiotes Boullotes, Theodore Kantakouzenos Palaiologos, Bryennios Leontares, John VIII |
| Demetrios Chrysoloras (PLP: 31156) | <i>Mesazōn</i> , theologian | 1390-1416 | Addressed to Manuel Addressed by Manuel | <i>Synkrisis and One hundred letters, addressed to the emperor</i> | Nicholas Kabasilas, M. Chrysoloras | John VII, Demetrios Leontares, George Goudeles |
| Manuel Raoul (PLP: 24128) | Official at the court of King James Lusignan of | 1382-1400 | Addressed by Manuel | Praise for his rhetorical skills | Manuel Kalekas | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------|---------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| | Cyprus | | | | | |
| Triboles (PLP: 29295) | <i>Oikeios</i> in Thessalonike; secretary of Theodore I Palaiologos | 1382-1387 | Addressed by Manuel | Praise for his rhetorical skills | D. Kydones | John V and Andronikos IV |
| Manuel Holobolos (PLP: 21046) | Secretary of Manuel II (1403-1409), rhetorician. | 1390-1414 | | <i>Mazaris' Journey to Hades</i> | Joseph Bryennios | Theodore II Palaiologos |
| George Baiophoros (PLP: 2043) | Scribe in the Petra Monastery; worked in the monastery's <i>katholikon mouseion</i> | 1400-1430 | | | | Matthew Palaiologos Laskaris |
| Stephanos (PLP: 26779) | Scribe, Metropolitan of Medeia | 1411-1442 | | | John Chrysoloras | Matthew Palaiologos Laskaris |

APPENDIX 5

MS. Vindob. phil.gr. 42, f. 153 v (last folio of the ms.)

-in a different ink and handwriting-

ἀπὸ τοῦ νομίμου βιβλίου Βασιλείου, Κωνσταντίνου, καὶ Λέοντος ἀπὸ τοῦ α' τῷ κεφ. θ'

Βασιλεύς ἐστιν ἔννομος ἐπιστασία, κοινὸν ἀγαθὸν πᾶσι τοῖς ὑπηκόοις, μήτε κατὰ προσπάθειαν ἀγαθοποιῶν μήτε κατὰ ἀντιπάθειαν κακοποιῶν, ἀλλ' ἀνάλογός τις ἀγωνοθέτης τὰ βραβεῖα ἐξ' ἴσου παρεχόμενος.

κεφ. ι'. Σκοπὸς τῷ βασιλεῖ τῶν τε μενόντων καὶ ὑπαρχόντων δυνάμεων δι' ἀγαθότητος ἢ φυλακῆ καὶ ἀσφάλεια, καὶ τῶν ἀπολωλότων δι' ἀγρύπνου ἐπιμελείας ἢ ἀνάληψις, καὶ τῶν ἀπόντων διὰ σοφίας καὶ δικαίων τροπαίων καὶ ἐπιτηδευμάτων ἢ ἐπίκτησις.

κεφ. ια'. Τέλος τῷ βασιλεῖ, τὸ εὐεργετεῖν, διὸ καὶ εὐεργέτης λέγεται, καὶ ἡνίκα τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἐξατονήσῃ, δοκεῖ κιβδηλεύειν τὸν βασιλικὸν χαρακτῆρα.

κεφ. ιβ'. Ὑπόκειται ἐκδικεῖν καὶ διατηρεῖν ὁ βασιλεύς, πρῶτον μὲν πάντα τὰ ἐν τῇ θείᾳ γραφῇ γεγραμμένα. Ἐπειτα δὲ καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῶν ἑπτὰ ἀγίων συνόδων δογματισθέντα, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἐγκεκριμένους ῥωμαϊκοὺς νόμους.

κεφ. ιγ'. Ἐπισημότετος ἐν ὀρθοδοξίᾳ καὶ εὐσεβείᾳ ὀφείλει εἶναι ὁ βασιλεύς, καὶ ἐν ζήλῳ θεῷ διαβόητος, ἐν τε τοῖς ὑπὲρ τῆς τριάδος δογματισθεῖσιν ἐν τε τοῖς ὑπὲρ τῆς οἰκονομίας λαμπρότατα καὶ ἀσφαλέστατα διὰ τὴν κατὰ σάρκα οἰκονομίαν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὀρισθεῖσιν· τουτέστι τὸ ὁμοούσιον τῆς τρισυποστάτου θεότητος ἄτμητον καὶ ἀσυναίρετον διατηρῶν, καὶ τὴν ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ χριστῷ τῶν δύο φύσεων καθ' ὑπόστασιν ἔνωσιν ὡσαύτως ἀσύγχυτον καὶ ἀδιαίρετον τέλειον θεὸν καὶ τέλειον ἄνθρωπον αὐτόν, καὶ τὰ τούτοις ἐπόμενα, οἷον ἀπαθῆ καὶ παθητόν, ἄφθαρτον καὶ φθαρτόν, ἀόρατον καὶ ὄρατόν, ἀναφῆ καὶ ἀπτόν, ἀπερίγραπτον καὶ περιγραπτόν, καὶ τὸ διττὸν τῶν θελήσεων καὶ τῶν ἐνεργειῶν χωρὶς ἐναντιότητος, <καὶ τὸ ἄγραπτον καὶ τὸ γραπτόν>.

απο του νομιμου βιβλια βασιλευ, Μενσανδρου, Μελιουτου
απο τω α τ. κεφ. δ.

βασιλευσιν εν Συριασ επιτασια, κοινον αγαθος παση τωσ επι-
κοσισ, μητε κατα προσαφθην αβαδοποιωσ, μητε κατα αν-
τιπαθην κακοποιωσ. αλλ αναλογωσ τισ ωσ αγανοθε-
τισ, και τα βραβια εξ ισου παρχομενος.

κεφ. ι. κοπος τω βασιλε, των τελευροτων και επαρχοντων βασιλευσιν
δι αγαδοτισσ η φυλακη και αφαλα, και τ απολωλοτισσ
δι αυγυπτιου επιμελιωσ η ανελιφισ, και τωσ ασποντωσ
δι ασφισσ και δικαιοσ τροπαιοσ και επιτηδεμασ
η επικτησιοσ

τροπ

κεφ. ια. Τελοσ τω βασιλε, το ενεργητικ. διο και ενεργητισ λεγετι
και ηηκος τισ ενεργητισσ εξατονηση, δοκει κινδηλιωσ
του βασιλικου χαρακτηρεσ.

κεφ. ιβ. ενπονηται ενδικειν και διαστηρειν ο βασιλευσ, προσοχ
μην παντα τα εν τη θιασ βασιλη χειραμμενασ. εσησ
δε και τα παρα τισν επλα εντων σιωδωσ (δογματιδεν
σημμενασ) ετιδε και τουσ εν κεκρομενουσ ρωμαικουσ νομουσ.

κεφ. ιγ. επισιμοτατοσ εν ορθοδοξια και ευσεβεια αφειλει ειναι

Vindob. phil.gr. 42, f. 153 v

† βιβλίον πρακτικόν τῆς σοφίας σου
καὶ φιλοχείσου μανουῆ τοῦ παλαιολόγου,
πρὸς τὸν βασιλικώτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ
καὶ βασιλέα, Ἰωάννην τὸν παλαιολόγον.
ἐν ᾧ περιέχεται ταῦτα:-

Ἐπιστολή προοιμιακή, ἀναφορῆς κερμαίων, **καὶ**
ὁ ἐν προοιμιακῶν λοιπῶν.

Κερμαία ἑκάστη, Διακρίσις, **καὶ** ποιητικῶν ἀποστροφῶν:

Λόγος πρὸς τὸν βασιλικῶτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα, καὶ ἀγαθὸν ἄνθρωπον,
καὶ ποιητικῶν ἐπιστολῶν λέγειν:

Ἐπίλογος, ὅτι τὸ μέγα ἀγαθόν, πασι φιλοῦμενον ὁμοίως
σημῶς. ὁ δὲ κακός, καὶ βλάπτει μισῶς. φιλοῦμεν δὲ
καὶ τὸ κακὸν ὅτιν ὅτι, ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακὸν νομίζουσι. καὶ
πρὸς τὸν βασιλικῶτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα. **καὶ** ἐπινομήζω, καὶ πᾶσι ὁμοίως

Ἐπίλογος πρὸς τὸν βασιλικῶτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα καὶ ὁμοίως
αὐτοῦ, ὅτι τὸ μέγα ἀγαθόν, πασι φιλοῦμενον ὁμοίως.
σημῶς. ὁ δὲ κακός, καὶ βλάπτει μισῶς. φιλοῦμεν δὲ
καὶ τὸ κακὸν ὅτιν ὅτι, ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακὸν νομίζουσι. καὶ
πρὸς τὸν βασιλικῶτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα. **καὶ** ἐπινομήζω, καὶ πᾶσι ὁμοίως

Ἐπίλογος, πρὸς τὸν βασιλικῶτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα καὶ ὁμοίως
αὐτοῦ, ὅτι τὸ μέγα ἀγαθόν, πασι φιλοῦμενον ὁμοίως.
σημῶς. ὁ δὲ κακός, καὶ βλάπτει μισῶς. φιλοῦμεν δὲ
καὶ τὸ κακὸν ὅτιν ὅτι, ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακὸν νομίζουσι. καὶ
πρὸς τὸν βασιλικῶτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα. **καὶ** ἐπινομήζω, καὶ πᾶσι ὁμοίως

Ἐπίλογος, πρὸς τὸν βασιλικῶτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα καὶ ὁμοίως
αὐτοῦ, ὅτι τὸ μέγα ἀγαθόν, πασι φιλοῦμενον ὁμοίως.
σημῶς. ὁ δὲ κακός, καὶ βλάπτει μισῶς. φιλοῦμεν δὲ
καὶ τὸ κακὸν ὅτιν ὅτι, ἀγαθὸν καὶ κακὸν νομίζουσι. καὶ
πρὸς τὸν βασιλικῶτατον υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλέα. **καὶ** ἐπινομήζω, καὶ πᾶσι ὁμοίως

APPENDIX 7

The contents and structure of the *Foundations of an imperial conduct*

| Chapter | Topic |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| I. Theoretical-philosophical | |
| 1. | On different kinds of life |
| 2. | On the best kind of life |
| 3. | On the common human nature |
| 4. | On the best time to choose a way of life |
| 5. | On the happiness of the subjects which depends on the ruler's action |
| 6. | On opportunities at the right time |
| II. Spiritual: God and Church | |
| 7. | On the service due to God |
| 8. | On the service due to God |
| 9. | On the service due to God |
| 10. | On the love for God |
| 11. | On the submission to the Church |
| 12. | On defending the Church |
| 13. | On the support from God |
| III. Moral advice | |
| 14. | On good versus evil |
| 15. | On the necessity of displaying pleasant behavior towards others |
| III. 1. On individuals | |
| 16. | On friendship |
| 17. | On the good counselors |
| 18. | On the necessity to be surrounded by friends |
| 19. | Individuals depend on communities |
| 20. | Trusting the good ones, distrusting the knavish ones |
| 21. | On real friendship |
| III. 2. On actions | |
| 22. | On truth and honesty |
| 23. | On envy, treachery, and dishonesty |
| 24. | On the right measure and avoiding excess |
| 25. | On voluntariness of good and evil actions |
| 26. | On evil actions |
| 27. | On good actions |

| | |
|---|--|
| 28. | On how to avoid the pervert people |
| 29. | Intermediary conclusion: connection between voluntariness of actions and human nature |
| 30. | On the responsibility of decisions and actions |
| 31. | On choosing the right course of action |
| 32. | On learning the right course of action from other people's experience |
| 33. | On the ἄριστος ἄνθρωπος |
| 34. | On the rational differences between the beneficial and damaging actions |
| 35. | On reason and irrationality |
| 36. | On reason |
| 37. | On the human natural movement towards the good |
| IV. On rulers' appropriate life and behavior | |
| 38. | On how to react to calumnies |
| 39. | On maintaining contact with the appropriate individuals |
| 40. | Once one has knowledge of good and evil, one has to stay with the good |
| 41. | Examination of the daily activities |
| 42. | On the ruler as imitator of God |
| 43. | The body metaphor of the state: the ruler as head of the state |
| 44. | On ἔξις |
| 45. | On ἔξις |
| 46. | On ἔξις |
| 47. | That the ruler is similar to all individuals |
| 48. | On freedom and buying glory |
| 49. | On pleasure |
| 50. | On sins |
| 51. | The emperor-legislator |
| 52. | On the emperor's approach to different kinds of individuals |
| 53. | On temperance in the use of force |
| 54. | On fitting one's desire to realities |
| 55. | On the misfortunes of life |
| 56. | On peace and good relations with other Christian peoples |
| 57. | On cautiousness in a ruler's action |
| 58. | On cautiousness in a ruler's action |
| 59. | Idem |
| 60. | On the ruler's mildness |
| 61. | On the ruler's politeness |
| 62. | On the vanity of life |
| 63. | On changes in life |

| | |
|--|--|
| 64. | On the passing of time |
| 65. | On the passing of time |
| 66. | On Fate (εἰμαρμένη) and Faith (πίστις) |
| 67. | On actions beneficial to others |
| 68. | On the deliberate course of action |
| 69. | On the sufferings of Job |
| 70. | That an individual must be judged according to his character (τρόποι) and not according to his fate (τύχη) |
| 71. | On how to avoid wickedness |
| 72. | That the emperor has to surround himself with good individuals |
| 73. | On the imperial four cardinal virtues |
| 74. | On indifference as cause of evil |
| 75. | On the importance of a ruler's education |
| 76. | On the ruler's care for his subjects |
| 77. | On how to avoid dissimulation (εἰρωνεῖα) and false pretensions (ἀλαζονεῖα) |
| 78. | On the use of rationality in making decisions |
| 79. | On the necessity to keep a mind focused |
| 80. | On relaxation after periods of intense activity |
| 81. | On honesty and hypocrisy |
| 82. | On assuming a pleasant behavior towards the others |
| 83. | On avoiding ἔρις |
| 84. | On listening to the counsels of friends |
| 85. | On the emperor as model for his subjects |
| 86. | On the supreme good (τὸ ἔσχατον καλὸν) and use of knowledge |
| 87. | On the emperor's necessity to fight in battle until the end |
| 88. | On the emperor's military qualities and on his ancestors |
| 89. | On military strategies |
| 90. | On how to deal with enemies |
| 91. | On using experience in order to predict future disasters |
| 92. | On knowing the right moment to speak for a young man and respecting the elders' opinion |
| 93. | On thinking and speaking in an appropriate manner |
| V. Concluding philosophical remarks | |
| 94. | On wisdom |
| 95. | On foreseeing the future based on the present |
| 96. | On the fact that acting appropriately is an act of a wise individual |
| 97. | That the outcome of one's actions depends mostly on one's decisions |
| 98. | On life as a gift from God |
| 99. | That humans are both matter and spirit |

100.

On not doing evil and on relying on spiritual wisdom

APPENDIX 8

MS Barb gr. 219, f. 90 v.
Several words of advice for peace and brevity

+ τ' αὐτοῦ, ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ (αὐτοῦ μὲν ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ εἰρηκλυδὸν τ' κουλὰς :

- III κ' ἀνακόπη μὲν ἀρ' ἄλλοι :
- III κ' μεμψεῖσαι πρὸς λόξιν :
- III κ' λέγειν τὰ πρὸ ἄλλοι μὲν λέγειν τ' ἀλλὰ κ' πρὸς πθεῖναι, κ' ἀφαιρεῖν :
- III κ' λέγειν πρὸς τὸν ἐπομνησθῆναι, πρὸς τοῦ τὴν καθ' ὅλ' ἀξίως αὐτῶν γίνεσθαι :
- III κ' διαφέρεσθαι πρὸς προστάτην, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ ὅσων λέγειν τὰ δοκοῦντα :
- III κ' πολυπρασιάζειν ἢ κυρῶσθαι :
- III κ' λέγειν ἑτοῖα βουλήν, πρὸς τοῦ τὴν λακθῆσαι λαβῆν πέλος :

APPENDIX 9

Vat. gr. 1619, f.15 r-v

Homily on St. Mary of Egypt

Transcription of the *proem* of the homily which is absent from the sixth oration

Title·

τοῦ αὐτοῦ εὐσεβεστάτου καὶ φιλοχρίστου βασιλέως Μανουὴλ τοῦ Παλαιολόγου, λόγος,³ ὅτι ἡ μὲν ἁμαρτία τὸ πάντων χεῖριστον· δεῖ δὲ μηδένα ἀπογινώσκειν· μήτε ἑαυτόν, μήτε ἕτερον· κρίνειν δὲ ἑαυτόν, καὶ οὐχ ἕτερον· καὶ τοὺς ἡμαρτηκότας, οὐ μισεῖν, ἀλλ' ἔλεεῖν· καὶ περὶ μετανοίας, καὶ τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ προνοίας, καὶ ἀγάπης καὶ φιλανθρωπίας Δέσποτα εὐλόγησον (ex Vat.gr. 1619; add. Ἀναγινώσκεται δὲ μετὰ τὸ ἀναγνωθῆναι τὸν βίον, τῆς ὁσίας Μαρίας τῆς Αἰγυπτίας, Vat.gr. 632).

Proem·

1 λόγος οὗτος ὁ τῆς ὁσίας ἡμῖν τὸν βίον ἄριστα διαζωγραφήσας ἀγαθοῦ
2 τινος ἔθους ἐπικράτησαντος κατα ταύτην τὴν ἡμέραν ἐτησίως ἀναγι
3 νώσκεται, ἐν ἐκκλησίαις ἐν οἴκοις ἐν βασιλείοις αὐτοῖς, ὅπου πολλὰ τὰ
4 πράγματα, καὶ ἀσχολίας παντοδαπὰς, πυκνὰ συμβαίνειν οὐκ ἀπεικός.
5 οὕτω γὰρ ὠφέλιμος ἡ διήγησις ὡς μηδενὶ καιρῷ περικόπτεσθαι, ζάλην
6 ἐμποιοῦντι τοῖς πράγμασι. Τὸ δ' ἐπαγωγὸν τοῦ λόγου, ἤδη κάμει παρα
7 κέκληκεν εἰπεῖν τι πρόσφορον τῷ καιρῷ, καὶ τῷ νυνὶ διηγήματι. καὶ
8 τοῦτ' οἶμαι γενήσεσθαι, εἰ τὴν ἀπόγνωσιν ὁ λόγος διαβαλεῖ θαυμάσας
9 τὴν μετάνοιαν, καὶ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ περὶ τὸ γένος ἀγάπην τε καὶ φιλανθρωπίαν.
10 ἐροῦμεν τοίνυν οὕτω χωροῦντες. καὶ τὰ πρὸς ταῦτα φέρον τὰ μὴ παρὰ
11 δράμοντες ὡς οἶόν τε. Οὐ πρὸς ἐπίδειξιν ἡμετέραν ὀρῶντες ἀλλὰ
11 bis πρὸς ὠφέλειαν ὑμετέραν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ὠήθην δεῖν, ἐξ ἀπάντων μὲν τῶν

Vat. gr. 632· λόγος τοῦ κραταιοῦ καὶ ἀγίου ἡμῶν αὐθέντου καὶ βασιλέως κυροῦ Μανουὴλ τοῦ Παλαιολόγου.

12 ἄλλων βοηθεῖν ὅση δύναμις, τὴν δ' ἐκ τῶν λόγων ἐπικουρίαν οὕτω τε-
13 λέως παραδραμεῖν, ὡς μηδὲ γοῦν ἕκ τινος μέρους ἀφοσιώσασθαι τὸ πρὸς
14 ὑμᾶς γιγνόμενον, ἄλλου σιωπῇ περάσαι τὸν πάντα βίον. Μέμψις δὲ οἷ καὶ
15 δικαία οὐκ ἄν ποτέ τισι γένοιτο, εἰ πολλαχοῦ καὶ πολλάκις τοῖς αὐτῶν χρή-
16 σαιντο. Καὶ εἰ πᾶσι τοῦτ' ἐξεστί, πολλῶ γε μᾶλλον ἐμοὶ, ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ σχή-
17 ματος ἀναγκαζομένῳ πολλὰ πράττειν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο μὴ δυναμένῳ πολλὰ
recto

1 λέγειν. ὁ τοίνυν ρηθησόμενος ἤδη λόγος ἔστι μὲν ἐκ τῶν ἡμῖν εἰρη-
2 μένων πρὸς τὸν υἰὸν τε καὶ βασιλέα, διὰ πάντων αὐτὸν ἐνάγουσιν
3 συνοῖσον, καὶ τὸν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργων ἔρωτα. Δόξας δὲ πάνυ συμβαίνειν
4 τῇ παρουσίᾳ ἑορτῇ, ταύτη παρ' ἡμῶν νῦν προσφέρεται. Οὐχ ὡς τὴν ἀρχὴν
5 ἐξεδόθη.

APPENDIX 10

Panegyrics and texts addressed to the emperor (numbers correspond to pages of the critical editions)

| Texts | Comparison with heroes/legendary figures | Virtues and ideal representations | Military and diplomatic achievements (campaigns of pacification) | Intellectual and rhetorical skills |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| J. Chortasmenos: <i>Panegyric (prosphonēmatikos) upon the return from Thessalonike</i> | Alexander the Great (44, 230) | ὁ βασιλικὸς ἀνδριάς (132); φρόνησις (134); εὐδαίμων (161); ἐπιστατοῦντος τοῖς πράγμασι (163); νόμον ἔμψυχον (164); φῶς ἐλευθερίας (252) | καθ' ἑπὶ τινα μέγαν λέοντα (69); campaigns in the Peloponnese and Thessaly (115) | Teacher of his son, emperor John VIII (187) |
| D. Chrysoloras: <i>Synkrisis</i> | Alexander the Great (222); Zeno, Bakchiros, Melchisedek (226) | καλὸς κάγαθός (224); πατὴρ ὑπηκόων ὡς παίδων (225); ποιμὴν λαῶν (224); δίκαιος (225, 229, 236); ἰατρὸς ἄριστος (228); ἥπιος δὲ πρᾶος (229); οὐ φόβῳ ἐκκλίνει· οὐ λύπη συστέλλεται (235); φρονήσις, σωφροσύνη, ἀνδρεία (237); γενναῖος, εὐεργέτης (243); σύμβουλος ἢ διδάσκαλος ἀγαθός (243) | Occupation of Thessaly (224); τὰ πεπραγμένα περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν καὶ τὴν Εὐρώπην, Πέλοπος καὶ τὴν Μακεδόνων καὶ οὗς πολέμους κατῶρθωσε (237-); rebuilding of the Hexamilion Wall (243); | φιλόσοφος βασιλεύς (225); μεστὸς φρονήματος καὶ βουλευμάτων γενόμενος ἀγαθῶν (227); Δημόκριτος, Ἀναξαγόρας (229); Κράτης (230); Σόλων, Διογένης θαυμάσιοι, γυμνοσοφισταὶ δὲ Κάλανος καὶ Χαϊρέας (231); οἱ μὲν ἠθικῶν, οἱ δὲ φυσικῶν, οἱ δὲ λόγοις ποιητῶν ἢ λογογράφων (232); ὑπερβαίνειν λόγῳ δὲ καὶ σοφίᾳ πάντας (234); τὴν ἐν τοῖς νοήμασι διηρευνηκῶς καὶ διερμηνεύων ἀκρίβειαν (236). |
| D. Chrysoloras: <i>Hundred letters</i> | Solomon (55); | δίκαιος (7); ἐπιστὰς τοῖς κοινοῖς (15); φιλανθρωπία (17); μιμητὴς Θεοῦ (23, 46); ἥπιος δὲ πρᾶος (26); divine authority (32); ποιμὴν λαῶν (33); ἀγαθός (41); πατὴρ ὑπηκόων ὡς παίδων (41); εὐεργέτης (54, 67); ταπεινοφροσύνη (80); | εἰρηνικὴν τὴν διακονίαν ὄντως καὶ τὴν ἀτάραχον (15); φιλεῖς δὲ τὴν εἰρήνην ζημιούμενος (31) | λόγου καὶ φρονήσεως ἐραστής ἄρχων (28); φιλόσοφος βασιλεύς (29, 34); Πλάτων ὁ σοὸς διδάσκαλος (40); διδακτικὴ ἀρετὴ (63); γνώσει (64); πλῆθος ποτὲ σοφῶν ἐν Ἑλλάδι καὶ γένος ἄλλο Περσίδι καὶ <Ἰνδοῖς> γυμνοσοφιστῶν ἕτερον [...] πάντας ὑπερβαίνει σοφίᾳ (73); τῷ κράτει λόγων ἐστέφου μᾶλλον ἢ ταινίᾳ καὶ διαδήματι (77) |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| M. Chrysoloras: <i>Epistolary Discourse</i> | Constantine the Great (85), Ulysses (74) | εἰς Χριστὸν πίστις (85); εὐσέβεια (85); δικαιοσύνη (86); νόμος ἔμψυχος (92) | Affairs in Peloponnese (62, 65) | Defense of Hellenic παιδεία (117-123) |
| Isidore: <i>Panegyric</i> | Solon (183); Alexander (198) | φρόνησις (161, 177); δικαιοσύνη (145); ἀνδρεία (149) | Campaign in the Peloponnese (162-164); agreement with John VII in Thessalonike (165) | Διδάσκαλος (165, 169, 170, 171, 172); rhetor (165) |
| <i>Anonymous Panegyric Vat. gr. 632</i> (ed. Ch. Dendrinis) | Ulysses (443); Alexander (443); Hercules (444); Pericles, Themistocles (445); Achilles, Hector, Ajax (446) | πάντα ἄριστος βασιλεύς (443); τῆς σωφροσύνης σύμβολον (444); φυλακτήρ καὶ σῶτηρ (448); εὐγένεια, παιδεία, σωφροσύνη, ἀνδρεία, δικαιοσύνη (448) | Ἵπὲρ τῆς τοῦ γένους ἐλευθερίας μάχεται (444) | Philosopher-king, 449; philosopher-rhetor, 449 |
| <i>Anonymous Panegyric Vat. gr. 914</i> (ed. I. Polemes) | | 707.18: the emperor's generosity: ταῦτα δὲ σὺν πολλῶ πόνῳ πανθ' ἡμῖν εὐηργέτηκας. Successful diplomatic missions: 707.18-25. Philosopher-king: 707.13 Didaskalos: 709.81. | | |

APPENDIX 11

The “final edition” of Manuel II Palaiologos' texts for the use of his son John VIII Palaiologos

Texts included in the four manuscripts produced in the imperial milieu and dating from the first decades of the fifteenth century.

Vindobonensis Phil. gr. 98

| | |
|-------------|--|
| DATE | 1417 |
| CONTENTS | ff. 3-30: Foundations of imperial education ff. 31-106: Seven ethico-political orations ff. 106-107: Oration to his subjects ff. 107-111: Morning prayers ff. 112-125: Ethical dialog with his Mother on Marriage ff. 126-127: George Gemistos Plethon, Protheoria of the <i>Funeral oration</i> ff. 127v: Joasaph the Monk, Matthaïos Chrysokephalos, Verses on the <i>Funeral oration</i> ff. 128-175: Funeral oration on his brother Theodore ff. 175: Demetrios Magistros, Epigram on the <i>Funeral oration</i> |
| COPYIST | Isidore of Kiev |
| OWNERSHIP | Cardinal Bessarion |
| DESCRIPTION | H. Hunger: Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Codices historici, codices philosophici et philologici. Vol. 1. Wien: Prachner, 1961, 203-205. O. Mazal, <i>Byzanz und das Abendland</i> , Graz, 1981, 131. A. Angelou, “Introduction,” in <i>Manuel II Palaiologos. The Dialog with the Empress Mother on Marriage</i> , Vienna, 1991, 13-22. |

Cryptensis Z. δ. 001 (gr. 347)

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| DATE | Fifteenth Century |
| CONTENTS (ACCORDING | ff. 01-65: Epistolary confession addressed to the spiritual fathers, Monks David and Damian |

TO BASE
PINAKES)

ff. 65-72: Morning Prayers
ff. 72-75: Kanon Paraklētikos
ff. 82-83: Demetrios Chrysoloras, Against Antonius Ascolanus
ff. 83-85: Antonius Ascolanus, Letter to Demetrios Chrysoloras
ff. 85-88: On the Disputation between Chrysoloras and Ascolanus

COPYIST Isidore of Kiev

OWNERSHIP Cardinal Bessarion (1403-1472)

DESCRIPTION P. Schreiner, "Ein byzantinischer Gelehrter zwischen Ost und West. Zur Biographie des Isidor von Kiew und seinem Besuch in Lviv (1436)," *Bollettino della Badia greca di Grottaferrata*, 3 (2006):215-228
J. Irigoin, "Une reliure de l'Athos au monogramme des Paléologues (Stavronikita 14)," *Palaeoslavica* 10 (2002): 175-179.

Vaticanus Barberinianus gr. 219

DATE Early to mid 15th c.

CONTENTS ff. 1-9: Political verses against an atheist
ff. 9-14: Admonitory oration for the Thessalonians
ff. 14-23: Oration against drunkenness
ff. 24-29: Letter to Nikolaos Cabasilas
ff. 29-36: Panegyric on the emperor John V Palaiologos recovery from an illness
ff. 36-50: Letter to Alexios Iagoup on the procession of the Holy Spirit
ff. 50-53: Letter to Andreas Asanes on dreams
ff. 53-89: Four fictitious letters against Makarios of Ankara
f. 90: On the brevity of expression
f. 91: Oration of Antenor to Ulysses
ff. 91-92: Oration for those who travel by sea
f. 92: Anacreontic verses against an ignorant person
ff. 93-180: Oration on the procession of the Holy Spirit

COPYIST Isidore of Kiev

OWNERSHIP Francesco Barbaro (d. 1453)

DESCRIPTION Ch. Dendrinios, *An Annotated Edition of the Treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, PhD thesis, London University, 1996, lviii-lxxvi
G. Mercati, *Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidone*, 1931, 523.

Vaticanus graecus 1619 (f. 1v-54v and 186-210v)

DATE Early to mid 15th c.

CONTENTS ff. 1-14: Homily on the dormition of the Mother of God
ff. 15-29: Homily on Saint Mary of Egypt
ff. 30-46: Homily on the Nativity of Christ
ff. 47-54: Homily on Saint John the Baptist

COPYIST Isidore of Kiev

OWNERSHIP Francesco Barbaro (d. 1454)

DESCRIPTION Ch. Dendrinios, *An annotated edition of the Treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, PhD thesis, University of London, 1996, lxii
C. Giannelli, *Codices Vaticani Graeci*, Rome, 1923, 286-287.

APPENDIX 12

Translation of George Gemistos Plethon's preface to Manuel II's *Funeral Oration for Brother Theodore*

Preface of the present oration by kyr Georgios Gemistos

The exordium of the oration is deeply passionate and entirely appropriate and it has the features of a funeral piece of writing for the brother who passed away. After Manuel briefly evoked the fatherland and the family, our most divine emperor, who mentions them, does not dwell at length on the section dedicated to these topics. He was eager to deal with the actions of the praised <brother>, which are many and need long descriptions; in order to provide a defense of these actions and since, because of the fact that <these actions> were obvious for everyone and known to everyone, it would not have been necessary to go through each of these aspects, he produced for him <his brother> a solemn text. Consequently, after he began his laudatory speech about him, first, he examined carefully his education from childhood and all aspects of his character, and what kind of man he was for everyone; then he proceeded to his brother's actions and deeds. First, he described his <Theodore's> activities which involved his father, himself <Manuel II>, and other close members of the family at that time and how he dealt with the different challenges of that time. After these, proceeding right away to the account of the situation on the Peloponnese, he mentioned the very first arrival in the province, because only by being expected <Theodore's arrival> it brought profit <to the province>, and how he was welcomed by the happy inhabitants. Then, he undertook the account of their uncle and nephew, taking care of the words in order not to say anything discordant or burdensome inasmuch as possible. Next, <he discussed> the Illyrians' transfer into the same province, because it was a difficult issue to decide whether one should accept them or not in the province, a situation which ultimately has been accepted, despite other people's opposition; yet he <Theodore> took the right decision since he used the Illyrians' settlement for a righteous purpose. And after this, he recalls the defeat of the neighboring enemies and the seizing of the prince <Kantakouzenos>, thereby revealing himself as a stronger ruler. Then, he returned to the deserters who came as barbarians, and first treated them with clemency, without capturing anyone by name; then he also advanced against the barbarian himself, and, thereby, he attacked both, since he was drawn into war by those who came to him as deserters, while others were summoned from home. Then, he described the arrival <in Serres> of Theodore and of himself which took place by necessity and happened contrary to the opinion of the others; he also recounted the danger entailed by that arrival and other difficulties encountered there. Furthermore, <he narrated> that the emperor himself, due to the plans of the barbarian saved himself in addition to rescuing again the great City (Constantinople) contrary to others' opinion, and this one now, even if he was considering that as an unavoidable situation, with great courage and skill fled from there <Serres> to the Peloponnese; and that, by his return, he managed to maintain not only all of his affairs in the Peloponnese, but also the endangered territories of those from beyond the Isthmus; and that, as the barbarian had left Greece and had sent a great and mighty army, he, by making use not of the magnitude of the opposing army but

of a well-planned appropriate strategy, prevented this <Ottoman> army to invade the country; and that because of this military achievement, he recovered and re-asserted his authority over the territories that had once been under the barbarians as well as over the lands which we now possess. [4] Then, after he proceeded to the common war with the barbarian, he also described that, because the Romans' situation was difficult to such an extent that he could not live well due to the misfortunes of many Christians and of many barbarians, he <the emperor> also mentioned his journey back <to Constantinople> and the departure to the West because of this situation. Then, he offers a detailed account of the <Despot's> deeds during those years: and first, he related that <Theodore> having handed over Corinth to the Knights Hospitaller because of the obvious danger, in fact he saved it from the barbarians and that, for this situation, he secured a great support. Then <he recounted> that since it seemed to him that it was better to leave the previous war with the barbarian to these ones <the Hospitallers> who had an entirely different rule, he set the country again in order, after he recovered it, without producing any injustice or causing any damage to the Knights Hospitaller. [...] Then, he proceeds to the comparisons with the ancients, at which point in time as he recalls his brother's illness he uses again emotional terms; at the same time, he makes clear that there was no smaller sign of his courage in his deeds, despite his illness. Now, allowing the citizens present in the ceremony to speak, as it was befitting for them due to the many and great benefits they drew from Theodore, he repeats the *thrēnos*. He does so, and at the same time he asks for a moment of rest holding his voice because of the great suffering, and also because he wished to hear other mourners speak for the love of his brother and because of other reasons, as the emperor himself recounts in detail; for this reason that he began <the funeral oration> directly with an emotional prooimion, in order to avoid being totally drawn into accounts and praises, before the lament. In addition, when he moves to the consolation he stops, combining at every passage the praises which were always beneficial and appropriate, so that he would neither exceed the plausible, nor would he miss anything of what was necessary to be said.

Greek Text

Edition: J. Chrysostomides, *Manuel II Palaeologus: Funeral oration on his brother Theodore*, Thessalonike: Association for Byzantine Research, 1985, 67-69.

Περιπαθὲς μὲν τὸ προοίμιον καὶ οἷον γένοιτ' ἂν ἀδελφῶ μάλιστα πρέπον, ἐπιτάφιον ἐπ' ἀδελφῶ διεξιόντι. Πατρίδος δὲ καὶ γένους βραχὺ τι μνησθεὶς ὁ τάδε λέγων θειότατος βασιλεὺς οὐκ ἐπὶ πλεόν ἐνδιατρίβει τῷ περὶ τούτων χωρίῳ· ἐπειγόμενος μὲν ἐπὶ τὰς τοῦ ἐπαινουμένου πράξεις, οὕσας οὐκ ὀλίγας οὐδὲ βραχέων τῶν λόγων δεομένας, ἀπολογία δὲ πορισάμενος, ὡς διὰ τὸ πᾶσι τούτων περιφανὲς καὶ μηδ' ὑφ' ἑνὸς ἀγνοούμενον οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον εἶη καθ' ἕκαστον διεξιέναι περὶ αὐτῶν, αὐτῷ τούτῳ καὶ μᾶλλον σεμνύνει. Ἐπειθ' οὕτω τῶν κατ' αὐτὸν τὸν ἐπαινούμενον λόγων ἀψάμενος, πρῶτον μὲν περὶ τῆς ἐκ παιδὸς τροφῆς καὶ τοῦ ὄλου ἡθους διέξεισι καὶ οἷος τοῖς ὄλοις ἦν ὁ ἀνὴρ, εἴτ' ἐπὶ τὰς πράξεις τε καὶ τὰ ἔργα χωρεῖ. Καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ἐκείνων μέμνηται, ἃ ποτε περὶ τε τὸν πατέρα καὶ ἑαυτὸν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων οἰκείων τοὺς τότε δεδυστυχηκότας ἐπέπρακτο αὐτῷ, καὶ ὡς προσηνέχθη τοῖς τότε πράγμασι· μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἐπὶ τὰ Πελοποννησιακὰ ἤδη χωρήσας πρώτης μὲν τῆς εἰς τὴν χώραν ἀφίξεως μέμνηται, ὡς καὶ προσδοκηθεῖσα μόνον ὤνησε πρὶν γενέσθαι, καὶ ὡς ἀφῖκτο καὶ ὡς παρὰ τῶν ἐγγχωρίων ἀσμένων ὑπεδέχθη· οὗ δὴ καὶ τῶν περὶ

τοῦ τε σφῶν θείου καὶ ἀνεψιοῦ ἀψάμενος λόγων εὖ μάλα φυλάττεται τὸ μηδὲν ἐς αὐτοὺς ἀπηχῆς καθ' ὅσον οἶόν τε μηδὲ φορτικὸν εἰπεῖν· ἔπειτα τῆς Ἰλλυριῶν αὐτόθι μετοικίσεως, ὡς δύσκριτόν γε ὄν εἶτε παραδεκτέον αὐτοὺς ἐς τὴν χώραν εἶτε μή, ὅδ' ἐδέξατό τε, οὐ δοκοῦν οὕτω τοῖς πολλοῖς, αὐτὸς μάλα εὐστόχως βεβουλευμένος περὶ τοῦ συνοίσοντος, καὶ ἐς δέον τούτοις ἐχρήσατο· καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο τῆς τῶν προσοίκων ἐχθρῶν ἥττης καὶ τῆς πρίγκιπος συλλήψεως, δι' ὧν ἐγκρατεστέραν ἀποφαίνει καταστήσαντα τὴν ἀρχὴν. Εἴτ' ἐπανελθὼν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὡς τοὺς βαρβάρους αὐτομόλους ἤκοντας καὶ πρῶτον κοινῇ περὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἐπεξεληθὼν φειδοῖ τοῦ μηδενὸς ἂν ὀνομαστὶ καθάψασθαι, ἔπειτ' ἐπ' αὐτὸν τὸν βάρβαρον χωρεῖ καὶ οἷς κατ' ἀμφοῖν ἐπεχείρησεν ὑπὸ τῶν ὡς αὐτὸν ἠκόντων αὐτομόλων ἐναγόμενος, ἐνίων δὲ καὶ οἴκοθεν μετακαλουμένων. Ἐπειτα τῆς ὡς αὐτὸν ἀφίξεως μέμνηται, τῆς τε τούτου καὶ ἑαυτοῦ, ἀνάγκη τε γεγεννημένης καὶ παρὰ τὰ δεδογμένα σφίσι οὕτω δὴ συμπεπτωκυίας, τοῦ τε παρὰ ταύτην κινδύνου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἐκεῖσε ἀπηντηκότων δυσχερῶν· καὶ ὡς αὐτὸς μὲν βασιλεὺς γνώμη τοῦ βαρβάρου ἐπὶ τὴν μεγάλην αὐτὸ πόλιν παρὰ δόξαν ἀνασώζεται, ὅδ' ἤδη δοκῶν ἐν ἀφύκτοις ἔχθεσθαι μάλα ἀνδρείως τε καὶ εὐμηχάνως ἐκεῖθεν ἐπὶ Πελοπόννησον ἀποδιδράσκει, καὶ ὡς ἡ ἐπάνοδος τούτου πάντα ἤδη οὐ τὰ ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ὅσα ἐντὸς Πυλῶν τὰ πλεῖστα κινδυνεύοντα διέσωσε, καὶ ὡς τοῦ βαρβάρου ἐκ μὲν τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀνακεχωρηκός, πέμψαντος δὲ ἐπὶ Πελοπόννησον οὐκ ὀλίγην οὐδὲ φαύλην στρατιάν, ὅδ' οὐ πλήθει ἀντιπάλῳ στρατιάς, ἐπινοίᾳ δὲ στρατηγία πρεπούση κεκρημένος κεκωλύκει ταύτην τῆς χώρας ἐπιβῆναι, καὶ ὡς διὰ τοῦτο τοῦργον καὶ τὰ παρακεχωρημένα τῷ βαρβάρῳ καὶ ἤδη ἐχόμενα ἀπειλήφει τε καὶ ἐπανεώσασε τῇ ἀρχῇ. Εἴτ' ἐπὶ τὸν κοινὸν τοῦ βαρβάρου πόλεμον μετεληλυθώς, καὶ ὡς πολλῶν μὲν Χριστιανῶν συμφοραῖς, πολλῶν δ' ἄλλων βαρβάρων ἐνευτυχηκός χαλεπῶς ἐντεῦθεν τὰ Ῥωμαίων πράγματα ἔσχε, μνησθεῖς καὶ προσέτι τοῦ γε ἑαυτοῦ διὰ ταῦτα ἀπόπλου τε καὶ ἀποδημίας τῆς εἰς τὰ Ἑσπέρια, ἔπειτα τὰ τούτῳ ἐν ἐκείνοις τοῖς καιροῖς πεπραγμένα διέξεισι· καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ὡς Κόρινθον ἐν προφανεῖ οὔσαν κινδύνῳ Φρερίοις ἐγχειρίσας αὐτὴν τε ἔσωσε τῆς τῶν βαρβάρων χειρὸς καὶ τοῖς ὅλοις πράγμασιν οὐ μικρὰν ἐντεῦθεν τὴν βοήθειαν ἐμηχανήσατο· ἔπειθ' ὡς χρόνῳ ὕστερον καὶ τῆς ἄλλης ἀπάσης ἀρχῆς τοῖς αὐτοῖς δόξας παραχωρεῖν τὸν πρὸς τὸν βάρβαρον πόλεμον κάλλιον κατέθετο καὶ τὴν χώραν ἀπολαβὼν αὐθις κατέστησεν, οὐδὲ Φρερίους οὔτε ἀδικήσας οὔτε τι βλάβας ὅλως. [...] Εἴτ' ἐπὶ τὰς πρὸς τοὺς παλαιοὺς παραθέσεις χωρεῖ, ἠνίκα καὶ τῆς νόσου μνησθεῖς ἐς τὸ περιπαθέστερον αὐτὸ ἀποκλίνει, ἀποφαίνων ἅμα οὐδὲν ἐλάττω τῆς ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις ἀνδρίας τὴν παρὰ τὴν νόσον ἐπιδεδειγμένον. Κάνταῦθα δούς τι καὶ τοῖς παροῦσι τῶν ὑπηκόων φθέγγασθαι προσῆκον ἐκείνοις αὐτοῖς πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων εὐεργεσιῶν ἕνεκα ὧν εὖ πεπόνθασιν παρ' αὐτοῦ, τὸν αὐτὸν αὐθις ἐπαναλαμβάνει θρήνον. Τοῦτο δὲ ποιεῖ ἅμα μὲν ὡς ἀναπαύλης δεηθεῖς διὰ τὸ τοῦ πάθους μέγεθος ἐπεχόμενος τὴν φωνήν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ ὡς ἐπιθυμήσας καὶ ἐτέρων πολλῶν θρηνοῦντων ἀκοῦσαι διὰ τὸ περὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν μανικὸν φίλτρον πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων αἰτιῶν ἕνεκα, ὡς αὐτὸς διέξεισι βασιλεὺς οὐ χάριν καὶ ἀπὸ περιπαθοῦς εὐθύς ἐνήρξατο προοιμίου, ὡς μὴ τὸ παράπαν δυνηθεῖς τῶν τε διηγῆσεων τῶν τε ἐπαίνων ἄψασθαι πρὸ τῶν θρήνων. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπὶ παραμυθίαν ὁμως μεταβάς ἀποπαύεται, ἐπιπλεκομένων ἐκάστῳ χωρὶ τῶν αἰεὶ προσηκόντων τε καὶ προσαρμοττόντων ἐπαίνων, ὡς μῆτε τῷ πιθανῶ ὑπερβάλλειν μῆτε ἐλλείπειν τι τῶν ἐνότων τε καὶ ἅμα δεόντων ῥηθῆναι.

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