Mihail Mitrea

A LATE BYZANTINE SWAN SONG:

MAXIMOS NEAMONITES AND HIS LETTERS

MA Thesis in Comparative History

with the specialization in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies

Central European University

Budapest

May 2011

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(Romania)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,
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Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU

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Chair, Examination Committee

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Thesis Supervisor

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Examiner

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I, the undersigned, **Mihail Mitrea**, candidate for the MA degree in Comparative History, with the specialization in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on the copyright of any person or institution. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

Budapest, 23 May 2011

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Signature

To Cristina,

φιλίας ἕνεκεν

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Letter from Within

Addressees: Magistros, Symeon, Cassiodorus, Kalliopē, Polyhymnia, Eutherpē, Kleiō, Terpsichorē, Ourania, Thalia, Eratō, Sapphō, Melpomenē, Lucian, Ambrose, Peter, Eugenia, Theodore, John, Andrew, Samuel, Pēnelopē, and you all...

The Agora is barren. The massive colonnades are leaning on their shadows. Echoes of many words are rummaging the silence that slowly brings down the night. The darkness is eerie and awaits its light. It seems like forever until the white fingers of a new day would tear the canvass of the night.

A song, like a passing thought, enlivens the night. A shadow passes along fluttering its wavy Byzantine cloak. It is Thomas Magistros ... to whom Niels Gaul gave soul and body from his own. With the chisel of patience and passion, Niels has carved him, setting him free from the granite of so many ages. Who is giving birth to whom? Niels, or maybe Magistros, secretly carrying the sweet burden of some manuscripts, is placing them in my fearful arms. His words make me believe that I am ready for my own odyssey.

Agonizing weaknesses do not hesitate to twitch my soul ... Suddenly, Symeon, borrowing the voice of István Perczel, starts chanting his divine hymns: "You are no longer alone; you have hoards of saints to teach you how to win!" Hurriedly, Cassiodorus (Timothy Janz) arrives as well, with his arms full of books carrying treasures and, spreading them before me, utters: "Dare! This is the nourishment of the gods! Taste the ambrosia and the nectar of wisdom!"

Muses are joining me ... Kalliopē (Cristina Neagu) unseals her soul for me, Polyhymnia (Lucia Stănică) offers me the key that unlocks everyone's heart, Eutherpē (Alida Beldean) calls me her son, Kleiō (Ioan Ică Jr.) endows me the treasures of history, Terpsichorē (Tatiana) speaks of my inner gift, Ourania (Bogdan Neagota) whispers the silence and the joyfulness of the coming times, and Thalia (Vasilica Cristea) gathers clouds of light above the desert of the blessed. Eratō (Vasile Rus) and Sapphō (Angela Rîșteiu) are singing from the charmed lyre of Greek language. And so, the rhythm lures me in its euphoria and I join hands with meticulous and kindhearted Melpomenē (Mădălina), good–humoured Lucian of Samosata (Daniel), prudent and wise Proclus (Branislav), and always-provident Ambrose (László).

Three choirs of angels, Peter and Eugenia, Theodore and John, Andrew and Samuel, are silently watching from above.

And the darkness is breaking down ... The swan song gains new tunes and the light is spreading everywhere. My beautiful Pēnelopē (Cristina) is arduously weaving the shroud of patience, gathering my tears in the palm of her hands. Victoriously, I hold Mnēmosynē's hand, asking her to keep me from ever forgetting my way towards light, and those who have kindled me with their own burning. The Agora is no longer barren, but shines in its glory. I am walking with Neamonites and Magistros to be reborn together.

M. Maximos Neamonites

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AN	*Anecdota Nova*. Ed. Jean François Boissonade. Paris: Apud Dumont, 1844. Reprinted Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1962.
B	*Byzantion*
BMGS	*Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*
ByzF	*Byzantinische Forschungen*
BZ	*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
CFHB	*Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*
ClMed	*Classica et mediaevalia*
CPG	*Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*. 2 vols. Eds. E. Leutsch & F. G. Schneidewin. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck et Ruprecht, 1839-51.
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
EEBS	*Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν*
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
JÖB	*Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* [before 1969, *JÖBG*]
L	*A Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Ed. G. W. H. Lampe. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961.
LBG	*Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität: besonders des 9.-12. Jahrhunderts*. Ed. Erich Trapp. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996–.
LSJ	*A Greek–English Lexicon*. Eds. Henry G. Liddell, Robert Scott, and Henry S. Jones. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
M.T.	Vladimir A. Mošin, Seid M. Traljić, eds. *Filigranes des XIIIe et XIVe siècles*. Zabgreb, Académie yougoslave des sciences et des beaux-arts, Institut d' histoire, 1957.

ODB	*The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. 3 vols. Eds. Alexander Kazhdan et al. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
PLP	*Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*. Eds. Erich Trapp, Rainer Walther, Hans-Veit Beyer et al. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1976-2001.
RG	*Rhetores Graeci*. 9 vols. Ed. Christian Walz. Leipzig, 1832–6.
TLG	*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*

LIST OF PLATES

INTRODUCTION*

1. Prolegomena

In the last period of its existence, i.e., the Palaiologan period (*c.*1261-1453),[1] the Byzantine empire staged an impressive cultural revival. In spite of struggling with political fragility, a shrunken territorial map, and emergent impoverishment, Palaiologan Byzantium nurtured a significant blossoming of learning,[2] which, seen from the perspective of the previous Byzantine cultural revivals, i.e. the Macedonian[3] and Komnenian,[4] has its own uniqueness revealed by a number of noteworthy features.[5] The promoters of this intellectual revival were the members of an educated class comprising court and ecclesiastical officials,

* Thanks are due to Judith Rasson for correcting my English and making suggestions on style, and to Kelly Hydrick, Courtney Krolikoski, and Laura-Ann Gousha for proofreading and useful comments on various parts of my thesis.

[1] Among the most seminal books and essays on this period, see Nevra Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Angeliki E. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins: The Foreign Policy of Andronicus II (1282-1328)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972); Eadem, "The Palaiologoi and the World around Them (1261-1400)," in Jonathan Shepard, ed., *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500-1492*, 803-833 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Donald M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium (1261-1453)*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Idem, *Church and Society in the Last Centuries of Byzantium* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Idem, *Studies in Late Byzantine History and Prosopography* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1986); Ihor Ševčenko, *Society and Intellectual Life in Late Byzantium* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1981).

[2] Angeliki E. Laiou underlines that the "modern scholars have routinely contrasted these achievements to the weakness of the state" and considers that this assumption should be reassessed especially when it comes to the first half of the fourteenth century; cf. Eadem, "The Palaiologoi and the World around Them...," 824; cf. also Ihor Ševčenko, "The Palaeologan Renaissance," in Warren Treadgold, ed., *Renaissances before the Renaissance: Cultural Revivals of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, 144-171 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984).

[3] Cf. Warren Treadgold, "The Macedonian Renaissance," in Idem, ed., *Renaissances before the Renaissance...*, 75-98.

[4] Stephen C. Ferruolo, "The Twelfth-Century Renaissance," in Warren Treadgold, ed., *Renaissances before the Renaissance...*, 114-143.

[5] See, for instance, Ihor Ševčenko, "Palaiologan Learning," in Cyril Mango, ed., *The Oxford History of Byzantium*, 284-318 (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); cf. Idem, "Theodore Metochites, the Chora, and the Intellectual Trends of His Times," in Paul A. Underwood, ed., *The Kariye Djami*, vol. 4, 19-84, Studies in the Art of the Kariye Djami and its Intellectual Background (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975). [translated and reprinted in French as "Théodore Métochites, Chora at les courants intellectuels de l'époque," In Idem, *Ideology, Letters and Culture in the Byzantine World* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1982), VIII; cf. also Steven Runciman, *The last Byzantine Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

"gentlemen scholars,"[6] schoolmasters, and basically everyone who entered the dynamic and competitive "market" (*marché*) of *paideia*.[7]

Figures like Maximos Planoudes (*c.*1250/5–c.1305),[8] Manuel Moschopoulos (*fl.*1306/7),[9] Demetrios Triklinios (*fl.*1308–*c.*1325/1330),[10] Thomas Magistros (*c.*1280-*c.*1347/8),[11] Theodore Metochites (1270–1332),[12] Theodore Hyrtakenos (*fl.*1315/6–1327),[13] George Karbones (*fl.*1325–1337),[14] Nikephoros Gregoras (*c.*1292/5–*c.*1358/61)[15] are but a few of the Byzantine *pepaideumenoi*[16] active in Palaiologan Byzantium.[17] Testimony to the vibrant atmosphere of these (late) Byzantine learned circles is the voluminous corpus of letters that has come down to us.[18] Mostly active in Constantinople, but also in

[6] This term has been used for the first time by Robert Browning in his article on "Teachers," in Guglielmo Cavallo, ed., *The Byzantines*, 95-116, especially 105 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); cf. also Niels Gaul, "The Twitching Shroud: Collective Construction of *Paideia* in the Circle of Thomas Magistros," *Segno e Testo* 5 (2007): 263–340; Idem, "Moschopulos, Lopadiotes, Phrankopulos (?), Magistros, Staphidakes: Prosopographisches und Methodologisches zur Lexikographie des frühen 14. Jahrhunderts," in Erich Trapp, Sonja Schönauer, eds., *Lexicologica Byzantina*, 163-196, Beiträge zum Kolloquium zur byzantinischen Lexikographie (Bonn, 13-15 Juli 2007) (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2008).

[7] Cf. Niels Gaul, "The Twitching Shroud...," 264; for the Bourdieuan concept of *marché*, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Langage et pouvoir symbolique* (Paris: Éditions Fayard, Édition du Seuil, 2001).

[8] Cf. *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* (hereafter: *PLP*), eds., Erich Trapp, Rainer Walther, Hans-Veit Beyer et al. (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1976-2001), 23308.

[9] *PLP* 19373.

[10] *PLP* 29317.

[11] *PLP* 16045.

[12] *PLP* 17982.

[13] *PLP* 29507.

[14] *PLP* 11167 and 11171.

[15] *PLP* 4443.

[16] Πεπαιδευμένοι or λόγιοι are corresponding Greek terms for "learned men." However, one has to take into account the fact that Byzantine intellectual standards do not easily compare with the modern ones.

[17] Ihor Ševčenko speaks of about 150 *literati* between 1261 and 1453; cf. his article on "Palaiologan Learning," 285; Idem, "Society and Intellectual Life in the Fourteenth Century," In Idem, *Society and Intellectual Life*..., I. However, the statistics brought forward by Ševčenko should not be taken as an ultimate truth. For instance, Apostolos Karpozilos challenges Ševčenko's statement and assumes, based on epistolographic evidence showing the wide circulation of books in late Byzantium, that the Byzantine intellectuals were more numerous that it has been suggested; cf. Apostolos Karpozilos, "Books and Bookmen in the 14th Century," JÖB 41 (1991): 255-276; cf. also Robert Browning, "Literacy in the Byzantine World," *BMGS* 4 (1978): 39-54. For concise portrays of the most important scholars of Palaiologan revival – though Nikephoros Gregoras is omitted – see Nigel G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, revised edition (London: Duckworth; Cambridge, Mass.: Medieval Academy of America, 1996), 229-264; for succinct summaries of their lives, see also the respective entries by Niels Gaul in Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, Salvatore Settis, eds., *The Classical Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010). The seminal role played by the Byzantine *literati* in the cultural life and educational system of Late Byzantium is masterly analyzed by Sophia Mergiali in *L'enseignement et les lettrés pendant l'époque des Paléologues (1261–1453)* (Athens: Kentron Ereunes Byzantiou, 1996).

[18] Letters and correspondence occupy a central place among the genres constituting the rhetoric and classical legacy of Byzantium. See, for instance, the article of Margaret Mullet, "The classical tradition in the Byzantine

Thessalonike,[19] Cyprus, etc., and coming from different social *strata*, late Byzantine *literati* maintained an incessant correspondence with each other.[20] Among the Palaiologan *pepaideumenoi* whose correspondence has been preserved one can also place the figure of Maximos Neamonites.

2. Previous scholarship

This Maximos Neamonites has received little scholarly attention. Not only that the scholarship dedicated to him is scarce, but he has never come into the main focus and interest of any Byzantinist. References to Neamonites and the presumably fourteen letters (hereafter *ep.* or *epp.*) stemming from his quill and surviving in codex *Vaticanus Chisianus* R. IV. 12 (*gr.* 12) are limited to an edition of his *ep.* 1, a short dictionary entry, a few but significant notes in a monograph, and a footnote in a second scholarly book. Unfortunately, the bibliographical list on Maximos ends here.

Neamonites' *ep.* 1 was edited by Stavros Kourouses in his article on the letters of Gregory, archbishop of Bulgaria.[21] Kourouses argued, mostly hypothetically, for the fact that the addressee of Neamonites' *ep.* 1 may have been Gregory, archbishop of Ochrid.[22] Furthermore, he assumes that the fourteen letters are arranged chronologically in the manuscript, and based on this assumption, dates the epistolographic collection of

letter," in Eadem, *Letters, Literacy and Literature in Byzantium*, 75-93. Variorum collected studies series, 889 (Aldershot, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007).

[19] Cf. Franz Tinnefeld, "Intellectuals in Late Byzantine Thessalonike," *DOP* 57 (2004): 153-172; cf. also Daniele Bianconi, *Tessalonica nell'età dei Paleologi. Le pratiche intellettuali nel riflesso della cultura scritta* (Paris: EHESS, Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, 2005).

[20] Ihor Ševčenko speaks of the "close-knit" group of late Byzantine scholars whose correspondence shows that "everybody was in touch with everybody else at some point;" cf. Idem, "Society and Intellectual Life...," 70.

[21] Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας (ιγ΄/ιδ΄ αἰ.) ἐπιστολαὶ μετά τινων βιογραφικών εξακριβώσεως," (The Letters of Gregory, archbishop of Bulgaria (13th-14th centuries), with some biographical identifications) *EEBS* 45 (1981-1982): 516-558, at 531; on 29th of April 2005, the Greek text of the letter has also been uploaded to the online version of *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (*TLG*).

[22] Cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 532-4; for a critical assessment of Kourouses' assumptions and arguments regarding the identity of the addressee of Neamonites' *ep.* 1 with Gregory of Ochrid, see Part I. 3 of the present thesis; on Gregory, see *PLP* 4482 and 91716.

Neamonites to the period *c.*1314 to *c.*1323.[23] Among the addressees, Kourouses suggests – based on internal evidence – the *pansebastos* Michael Atzymes (*fl.*1311–1315/19)[24] (*epp.* 2, 10, and 14), and the patriarch of Constantinople, John XIII Glykys (1315–1319)[25] (*ep.* 4). However, there is no clear evidence that *ep.* 1 was addressed to Gregory of Ochrid and that the recipient of *ep.* 4 was indeed John XIII Glykys. Moreover, *ep.* 14 was clearly not addressed to Michael Atzymes, but surely made mention of him.

Maximos Neamonites received an entry in the *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*,[26] which briefly mentions his activity as a letter writer, two of his addressees (Theodore Metochites and Gregory Kleidas), an epigram, supposedly composed for a codex of Libanius,[27] and the manuscript *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12 as the main source for all the above mentioned information.

An extended and informative discussion of Maximos and his letters is provided by Inmaculada Pérez Martín in her seminal contribution on Gregory of Cyprus (*c.*1240–1290) and the transmission of classical texts in late Byzantium.[28] Even if one cannot gather too much information about the author's biography, basically reduced to a concise footnote sending the reader back to the *PLP* entry,[29] Pérez Martín does provide a thorough palaeographical and codicological analysis of *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, the *codex unicus* transmitting Neamonites' *epistulae*.[30] Moreover, she briefly points out the identified addressees of the letters (Gregory of Bulgaria, Theodore Metochites, Gregory Kleidas, and John Kalabakis (*sic*), Neamonites' son).[31] Pérez Martín does not refer to Kourouses'

[23] Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 536.
[24] *PLP* 1633.
[25] *PLP* 4271.
[26] *PLP* 16788.
[27] Cf. Part II. 1 of the present thesis where I discuss Neamonites' intellectual pursuits as a bookman.
[28] Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio de Chipre (ca. 1240–1290) y la transmisión de los textos clásicos en Bizancio* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1996).
[29] Eadem, 332, n. 45.
[30] Eadem, 332–352; cf. also Pius Franchi de' Cavallieri, *Codices graeci Chisiani et Borgiani* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1927), 15–21.
[31] Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio de Chipre...*, 333.

assumptions regarding the dating of the letters and their recipients.[32] Finally, she offers the transcription of Neamonites' epigram transmitted on folio 173^{v} of the same codex.[33]

In her book on *L'enseignement et les lettrés pendant l'époque des Paléologues (1261–1453)*, Sophia Mergiali gives a reference to Maximos Neamonites in a footnote.[34] In the subsection dedicated to elementary education in Palaiologan Byzantium, she lists the nomenclature of the technical terms used to designate the teachers of primary education: *paideutēs*, *didaskalos*, *grammatistēs*, *chamaididaskalos*, and *mystagōgos*. The term *mystagōgos*, she points out, is also to be found in Maximos Neamonites' *ep*. 1. In addition to mentioning Kourouses' edition of this letter, Mergiali informs the reader that Maximos was a private schoolmaster, active in Constantinople in the early fourteenth century.

Michael Grünbart has recently published an impressive collection of *Epitularum Byzantinarum Initia* (henceforth *EBI*), comprising some 15,480 *initia* drawn from approximately 280 Byzantine letter writers, dating from the fourth to the fifteenth century.[35] One of the many virtues of this project is the fact that the author has included and pointed towards hitherto unpublished corpora of Byzantine letters, such as the fourteenth–century "Florentine corpus,"[36] consisting of 179 letters extant in *codex unicus* Laurentianus S. Marco 356, whose author has been identified by Kourouses as George Oinaiotes (*fl.*1315–1327).[37] The small, unpublished letter collection of Maximos Neamonites was initially not included in the *EBI*,[38] but will feature in the forthcoming amended edition.

[32] Pérez Martín does refer only to Kourouses' edition of *ep*. 1 to be found in his article at pages 530–1; cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio de Chipre*..., 332, n. 46.
[33] Eadem, 334.
[34] Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés*..., 28, n. 70.
[35] Michael Grünbart, *Epistularum Byzantinarum Initia* (Hildesheim; New York: Olms-Weidmann, 2001); cf. Idem, *Formen der Anrde im byzantinischen Brief vom 6. bis zum 12. Jahrhundert*, Wiener byzantinische Studien 25, (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2005).
[36] Cf. Johan E. Rein, *Die Florentiner Briefsammlung: Codex Laurentianus S. Marco 356* (Helsinki: Suomalaisen Tiedeakatemian Kustantama, 1915).
[37] *PLP* 21026; *ODB* 1519.
[38] Cf. the review of Grünbart's *Epistularum Byzantinarum Initia* by Niels Gaul in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (2002.12.17).

The scarcity of scholarship on Maximos Neamonites may best be explained by the mere fact that the only bits and pieces of information about his life and activity are scattered throughout hitherto unpublished letters extant in manuscript form. Apart from the internal evidence deriving from his own small letter collection, there is another source testifying to his life and activity. Thus, glimpses at Neamonites may be gathered from the unpublished *epistolarion* of George Oinaiotes who, allegedly having been his student, addressed a letter (*ep.* 13) to him, and other four (*epp.* 36, 37, 46, and 54) to Neamonites' son.[39]

In *ep.* 13 Oinaiotes sent Neamonites an oration, which the latter prompted the former to write, and asked for his judgment. Oinaiotes underlines that if Neamonites praises a piece of writing this is such significance that nobody will dare to criticize it. The letters sent to "the son of Neamonites," to whom Oinaiotes refers as his best friend, contain also two orations and a request (*ep.* 54) for a letter of Simokattes, perhaps the late antique historiographer, Theophylaktos Simokattes. If he cannot send the original, Neamonites'son is asked to provide a copy.[40] However, Oinaiotes' equally unpublished letters are not in the main focus of the present project, but rather constitute source material for further investigations.

3. Research questions and methodology

Given the scarceness of information currently available on Maximos Neamonites, it seems a worthwhile enterprise to carry out a more detailed investigation and analysis of his hitherto unedited correspondence.

[39] Cf. Johan E. Rein, *Die Florentiner Briefsammlung...*, 71-2; cf. also Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 530, n. 3.
[40] Cf. Johan E. Rein, *Die Florentiner Briefsammlung...*, 71-2.

Thus, the present research endeavours – within the constraints of an MA thesis – to shed more light on the life and activity of this hitherto little–known Byzantine *pepaideumenos* and to offer a possible biographical sketch as much as one can grasp from the *epistulae*, with particular emphasis on his activity as a man of letters and schoolmaster in the early decades of fourteenth–century (Palaiologan) Constantinople.

The thesis is particularly propelled by two overarching questions: first, to what extent do the letters offer insights into the social background of Maximos Neamonites?, or, in other words, to what extent do the letters speak about the one who wrote them?, to be addressed toward the end of the first part of the thesis, and second, what was Neamonites' status as a schoolmaster within the educational system of (late) Byzantium?, to be discussed and analysed in the second part.

The methodology employed for conducting the present project is multi–faceted, including codicological and palaeographical analyses of the material (i.e., *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12)[41] and philological and editing techniques in transcribing its content on foll. 166–172. The perusal reading of Neamonites' letters will be further corroborated and substantiated by a thorough assessment of secondary literature in order to historicize and contextualize them. Moreover, the online digital corpus of Greek literary texts, *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (*TLG*), will be of paramount support for tracing down possible quotations and references.

4. Structure of the thesis

The thesis has a twofold structure. The first part, "Approaching the Letters of Maximos Neamonites," starts with some general considerations on letter writing and letter

[41] In order to see through this important project successfully, it was of vital importance for me to be given the chance to consult this manuscript in the original. Thus, extensive research has been conducted in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. Once *in situ* I subjected the codex *Vaticanus Chisianus* R. IV. 12 (*gr.* 12) to a detailed codicological and palaeographical scrutiny (especially ff. 166–172). Thanks are due to Dr Timothy Janz, curator of Greek manuscripts in the Vatican Library, who kindly guided and supervised me while there.

collections in Byzantium, and a palaeographical and codicological description of the Greek manuscript *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, with particular emphasis on the folios transmitting Neamonites' letters. Subsequently, the *epp.* will be introduced and summarized in the order as they appear in the manuscript, offering some considerations with respect to their style. Moreover, this section aims at gathering and analysing the (auto)–biographical data embedded in the letters (especially *epp.* 1, 3, 5, 7–9, 12–14), and also looking at the social and cultural status of Neamonites' addressees.

The second part, "Maximos Neamonites as a Schoolmaster," has two aims. First, it attempts to portray Maximos as a schoolmaster striving to secure a living though his teaching activities (particularly *epp.* 1, 2, 6, 10, and 14), and constantly in a hunt for books (*ep.* 11); second, it undertakes to contextualize, interpret, and analyse rhetorically Neamonites' fourth letter as a possible "ethopoietical" literary composition.

The thesis will end with an extensive contextualizing and concluding section, which endeavours to draw the distinction, still not sufficiently underlined in present scholarship, between the two interconnected groups of (late) Byzantine "gentlemen scholars" and "schoolmasters," and Maximos Neamonites as a representative figure of the latter group.

A largely diplomatic transcription of Neamonites' hitherto unpublished *epp.* 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 14 will be provided in the appendix. The thesis is also equipped with plates which reproduce the folios transmitting Neamonites' letters.

FIRST PART: APPROACHING THE LETTERS OF MAXIMOS NEAMONITES

Körper und Stimme leiht die Schrift dem stummen Gedanken,
Durch der Jahrhunderte Strom trägt ihn das redende Blatt.

Our handwriting gives body and voice to mute thoughts,
Carried by the speaking paper, they flow with the current of the centuries.
Friedrich von Schiller (1759 – 1805)

1. Letter writing in Byzantium

> There's a female creature who keeps her babies tucked safely in her arms, and even though they have no voice, they send out a loud cry over the sea waves and across the whole continent, reaching whomever they wish, and even those who aren't present can hear. But the babies themselves are mute.

These are the words of the comic character Sapphō as conveyed through the homonymous play by the fourth–century BCE comic writer, Antiphanes. In this variation on the preliminary rhetorical school exercise of *ēthopoïïa*, i.e., a character sketch, Sapphō presents a riddle to her male respondents who suggest that the female creature is the city and the babies are its orators. However, their answer is erroneous and incongruous, leading to a *contradictio in terminis*, since orators cannot be voiceless. Finally, Sapphō reveals the appropriate solution:

> The female creature is a letter, and the babies she carries around inside are the letters of the alphabet. Even though they have no voice, they chat with people far away, whomever they wish. But if someone else happens to stand near the person reading the letter, he won't hear a thing.[42]

[42] *Poetae Comici Graeci*, eds. R. Kassel and C. Austin, vol. 2 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1983), fr. 194, cf. also Patricia A. Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Greek Literary Letters* (London, New York: Routledge: 2006), 8 and 26.

The epistolary format is omnipresent in Byzantine discourse[43] and the carrier of an impressive array of messages, information, and ideas. What exactly the essence of a "letter" might have been difficult to say.[44] For instance, Michael Trapp, in his translated collection of Greek and Latin letters, puts forward a useful definition which encompasses the main points emphasized by ancient epistolography:

> A letter is a written message from one person (or set of people) to another, requiring to be set down in a tangible medium, which itself is to be physically conveyed from sender(s) to recipient(s). Formally, it is a piece of writing that is overtly addressed from sender(s) to recipient(s), by the use at the beginning and end of one of a limited set of conventional *formulae* of salutation (or some allusive variation on them) which specify both parties to the transaction. One might also add, by way of further explanation, that the need for a letter as a medium of communication normally arises because the two parties are physically distant (separated) from each other, and so unable to communicate by unmediated voice or gesture; and that a letter is normally expected to be of relatively limited length.[45]

Thus, letter writing comes about within a particular framework[46] and has its own peculiarities: it embeds the need for the writer/sender to communicate with the reader/addressee(s), who is physically absent, and presents the "I you" coordinates of address, that is, the first–person narrator constantly addressing a "you." Apart from these, the epistolary genre demands, according to Gregory of Nazianzus' much received guidelines,[47] conciseness (*syntomia*), clarity *(saphēneia),* and elegance (*charis*).

[43] Letter writing was considered to be one of the most prominent type of writing in Byzantium. For instance, we know of approximately 280 letter-writers and around 15,480 letters that have survived from the fourth to the fifteenth century. However, this statistics do only partly justice to the amount of letters produced in Greek during the Byzantine millennium; cf. Michael Grünbart, *Epistularum byzantinarum initia...*; cf. Margaret Mullett, "Epistolography," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, eds. Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon, and Robin Cormack, 882-93 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[44] Peter Hattlie pointed out that "discussions about the 'essence,' 'nature,' and 'function,' of the letter have often been difficult to reconcile with the task of garnering historical information from it. The coordinated process of 'thinking' about letters and at the same time 'doing' them historically, in short, has proved stunningly difficult." Cf. Peter Hatlie, "Redeeming Byzantine Epistolography," *BMGS* 20 (1996): 213-248, at 222.

[45] Michael Trapp, *Greek and Latin Letters: an Anthology with Translation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1.

[46] Cf. Stratis Papaioannou, "Letter-Writing," in Paul Stephenson, ed., *The Byzantine World*, 188-99 (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).

[47] Gregory of Nazianzus (*c.*329–*c.*390) was the first to prepare a "set of rules" for good letter writing. Gregory's theoretical framework became a guideline for many Byzantine letter–writers; cf. *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze Lettres*, ed. and trans., Paul Gallay, 2 vols. (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1964-1967); see also George T. Dennis,

The letter is and must be an image or *eikōn* of the soul,[48] which expresses and displays the inner self, soul or character (*psyche*, *ēthos*, *charaktēr*, *typos*, *gnōmē*) of its writer.[49] In other words, the letter offers glimpses into the author's rhetorically conceived character, heart and mind.[50] This echoes the association theorists of epistolary form made between letter writing and the rhetorical mode of *ēthopoïïa* (i.e., character–making). Thus, self–representation, i.e., self–fashioning, was of paramount interest to letter–writers, since they "wrote letters, regardless of their place in the social hierarchy, to advertise themselves, constantly present, or, in effect, make a name for themselves."[51]

Letters and more generally any Byzantine literary writing intended to be entered into public, especially elite discourses, were composed in Atticizing Greek, a language divorced from the "lackluster speech of everyday life."[52] As a result of this, Byzantine letter writing and literature (in general) have often been regarded as being pedantic, escapist, boring, artificial, removed from reality, and a "distorting mirror."[53] Although ocassionally there is a high tendency of appraising Byzantine creations through modern grids, a more

"Gregory of Nazianzus and Byzantine Letter Writing," in Thomas Halton and Joseph P. Williman, eds., *Diakonia: Studies in Honor of Robert Meyer*, vol. 1, 3–13 (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1986).

[48] Anthony R. Littlewood, "An 'Ikon of the Soul': the Byzantine Letter," *Visible Language* 10 (1976): 197–226.

[49] Cf. Stratis Papaioannou, "Letter–Writing," 192.

[50] Patricia A. Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Greek Literary Letters*, 5.

[51] Stratis Papaioannou, "Letter–Writing," 192.

[52] Emmanuel C. Bourbouhakis, "Rhetoric and Performance," in Paul Stephenson, ed., *The Byzantine World*, 176; cf. Simon Swain, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World, AD 50–250* (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 1996), 17-64; Lawrence Kim, "The Literary Heritage as Language: Atticism and the Second Sophistic," in *A Companion to the Ancient Greek*, ed. Egbert J. Bakker (Malden, MA: Wiley–Blackwell, 2010), 468-482; Anthony R. Littlewood, "An 'Ikon of the Soul': the Byzantine Letter."; cf. also Geoffrey Horrocks, *Greek. A History of the Language and Its Speakers*, 2nd edition (Malden, Mass.: Wiley–Blackwell, 2010), 207-370.

[53] Among the scholars who have shared such views are Romilly Jenkins, "The Hellenistic Origins of Byzantine Literature," *DOP* 17 (1963): 39–52; Cyril Mango, *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror*. An Inaugural lecture delivered before the University of Oxford on 21 May 1974 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), and George T. Dennis, *The Letters of Manuel II Palaeologus*, CFHB 8 (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1977). For instance, the latter wrote that "the Byzantine would delve into his handbook of classical allusions and ornate metaphors to embellish an otherwise stereotyped text ... Byzantine letters tend to be conventional and impersonal and, one might add, terribly boring."[53] However, a decade later Dennis took a different stance; cf. Idem, "The Byzantines as Revealed in Their Letters," in *Gonimos. Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies Presented to Leendert G. Westerink at 75*, eds., John Duffy and John Peradotto, 155–65 (Buffalo, N.Y.: Arethusa, 1988); for positive views on the subject, see also Anthony Littlewood, "An Ikon of the Soul: The Byzantine Letter."

authentic valuation should pay closer attention to the horizon of expectation of their original audience, as far as it can be reconstructed.[54]

The written text of a letter was just a minor part of an intricate ritual of communication which often included an element of orality; this can also be observed in Neamonites' letters. As with most rhetorical Byzantine texts, letters were frequently meant to be read aloud to the recipient, often in public gatherings, the so–called *theatra*.[55] The rhythm of reading and presenting the texts in the *theatra* is likely to be indicated by the signs and punctuation marks recurrent in the extant Byzantine manuscripts. Recently, Reinsch has argued that the punctuation served as a notational system for oral performance. A possible sample of such notational system may be offered by the punctuation marks found in the folios transmitting Neamonites' letters.[56]

As common a practice as letter writing was in Byzantium, it nonetheless did poorly in surviving the test of time. There are relatively few Byzantine letters that have reached us, and, for instance, there is no fully preserved correspondence of any of the 280 letter–writers included in Grünbart's *EBI*. A look into the reasons for the scantiness of surviving Byzantine letters reveals the numerous difficulties they had to face. First of all, most of

[54] Cf. Panagiotis Roilos, "Amphoteroglossia: The Role of Rhetoric in the Medieval Greek Learned Novel," in Gregory Nagy, ed., *Greek Literature in the Byzantine Period*, Greek Literature 9, 439 (New York: Routledge, 2001).
[55] For the Palaiologan period, cf. Niels Gaul, *Thomas Magistros und die spätbyzantinische Sophistik. Studien zum Humanismus urbaner Eliten in der frühen Palaiologenzeit*, Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 10 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), 17-53; Przemysław Marciniak, "Byzantine Theatron – A Place of Performance?," in Michael Grünbart, ed., *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter = Rhetorical Culture in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, 277-85, Millennium-Studien zu Kultur und Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausends n. Chr. / Millennium Studies in the Culture and History of the First Millennium C.E., vol. 13 (Berlin, New York: Walter De Gruyter, 2007); Ida Toth, "Rhetorical Theatron in Late Byzantium: The Example of Palaiologan Imperial Orations," in Michael Grünbart, ed., *Theatron...*, 429-448; On performative aspects of Byzantine rhetoric, see Guglielmo Cavallo, *Lire à Byzance*, translated from Italian by P. Odorico and A. Segonds (Paris: Belles Lettres, 2006); Emmanuel C. Bourbouhakis, "Rhetoric and Performance," 175-187; Igor P. Medvedev, "The So-Called *ΘΕΑΤΡΑ* As a Form of Communication of the Byzantine Intellectuals in the 14th and 15th Centuries," in N. G. Moshonas, ed., Η ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ ΣΤΟ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΟ. ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΑ ΤΟΥ Β΄ ΔΙΕΘΝΟΥΣ ΣΥΜΠΟΣΙΟΥ (*Communication in Byzantium*. Minutes of the Second International Symposium), 267-235 (Athens: Center of Byzantine Research, 1993); cf. also Elizabeth Jeffreys, "*Rhetoric in Byzantium*," in Eadem, ed., *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, 173, Papers from the Thirty–Fifth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Exeter College, University of Oxford, March 2001 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).
[56] Cf. Diether R. Reinsch, "The History of Editing Byzantine Historiographical Texts," in Paul Stephenson, ed., *The Byzantine World*, 435-444; See the Appendix where I have indicated them in red.

them were written on perishable materials, a fact which shortened their lifespan. Second, it was a difficult test to make it into the folios of the manuscripts, the main gateways to posterity, since they were not intended for the next generations, but for the benefit of the contemporary readers. In other words, they were deeply embedded in the socio–political *hic et nunc* of their creation.[57] Therefore, the extant Byzantine letters are only those that for different reasons entered letter collections, which were subsequently copied into manuscripts.

The role of letter–exchanges in the Palaiologan period has not yet been investigated sufficiently as to permit formulating and assembling a comprehensive picture. There are still a number of "silent" manuscripts preserving letters of the Palaiologan period which wait for scholars to bring them to light by editing, translating, interpreting, and contextualizing them. However, in recent years a growing interest in Byzantine epistolography has brought to the fore letters or letter collections of Palaiologan period that used to remain unexplored.[58] This tendency is welcomed not only because the extant epistolographic corpus sheds valuable light on late Byzantine cultural, social, and economic life, but also because Palaiologan epistolography is a fascinating subject in its own right.[59]

[57] Cf. the forthcoming piece by Stratis Papaioannou on "Fragile Literature: Byzantine Letter–Collections and the Case of Michael Psellos," in P. Odorico, ed., *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine. Le texte en tant que message immédiate*, Actes du colloque international, Paris 6-7-8 Juin 2008 (Paris: École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, forthcoming).

[58] Cf. Peter Hatlie, "Redeeming Byzantine Epistolography."; cf. Angela Constantinides Hero, ed., *The Life and Letters of Theoleptos of Philadelphia* (Brookline, Mass.: Hellenic College Press, 1994); Eadem, *A Woman's Quest for Spiritual Guidance: The Correspondence of Princess Irene Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina* (Brookline, Mass.: Hellenic College Press, 1986); cf. also Margaret Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid: Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop*, Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs 2 (Aldershot: Variorum, 1997); cf. also Stratis Papaioannou's forthcoming critical edition of Psellos' 500 letters for the Teubner Series.

[59] Letters and correspondence occupy a central place among the genres constituting the rhetoric and classical legacy of Byzantium. When it comes to Palaiologan letters, Margaret Mullett points towards their distinctness from the middle Byzantine epistolography. Even if they preserve the timeless themes of death, separation, sickness, friendship, exile, etc, they become more open and descriptive, and often embedding the effects of politics (the civil wars, hesychasm, the *halōsis,* etc); in Mullett's words "Palaiologan letter–writers were bigger fish in a smaller pool and this is reflected in their letters;" cf. Margaret Mullet, "The Classical Tradition in the Byzantine Letter," In Eadem, *Letters, Literacy and Literature in Byzantium*, 75-93, at 89; A different point of view is expressed by Karpozilos, who finds a little and insignificant contrast between late Byzantine letter-collections and the earlier ones, and if any, traceable only in the "informality" and "audacity" towards formulating "pedestrian" requests such as a hat, leather purse, wine, etc. This informality indicates, in

2. The manuscript *Vaticanus Chisianus* R. IV. 12 (*gr.* 12)

The understanding of the past, incomplete or fragmentary as it may be, is mediated to a great degree by the written sources that have survived. A manuscript is a material document/artifact that gives an insight into the social and cultural context in which it was produced.[60] Thus, glimpses at the early Palaiologan period are also provided by the fourteenth–century Greek manuscript, *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12 (*gr.* 12).[61]

Vat. Chis. R. IV. 12 (*gr.* 12) is a Greek miscellaneous manuscript nowadays preserved in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. In 1927, Pius Franchi de' Cavallieri included a brief description of this codex in his catalogue on *Codices graeci Chisiani et Borgiani.*[62] Seven decades later, the manuscript came into the focus of Pérez Martín's research on the transmission of the classical texts in early Palaiologan Byzantium and received a comprehensive codicological and palaeographical analysis.[63]

The manuscript is of typical *quarto* size (205/10 x 145 mm) and contains seven guard leaves and 176 folios (ff. VII + 176).[64] Paper both of (Near) eastern manufacture (*bombykinon*) and of western provenance constitute the materials on which the codex was written.[65]

Karpozilos' words, "the changes that certain codes of ethics have undergone at a time when the aristocracy and the imperial dignity have to accommodate themselves in a world of rapid socio-economic and political changes within their decline realm;" cf. Apostolos Karpozilos, "Realia in Byzantine Epistolography XIII-XVc.," *BZ* 88 (1995): 64-84, at 68-9; cf. also Idem, "Realia in Byzantine Epistolography X-XIIc.," *BZ* 77 (1984): 20-37.

[60] Cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio...*, Introduction.

[61] For instance, on the guard leaf VI^{r} there is a short note which dates the conquest of Constantinople by the Italians, and its reconquest from their "tyranny" (albeit wrongly dated to 6768 = 1260). The Greek text reads: ἐάλω ἡ Κωνσταντινούπολις παρ' Ἰταλῶν ἔτει ϛψιβ΄ μηνὶ ἀπριλλίῳ ιβ΄ ἡμέρᾳ <...> ἠλευθερώθη δὲ τῆς τούτων τυραννίδος ἔτει ϛψξη΄ ἰουλ(ίῳ) κέ ἡμέρᾳ β΄ ἰνδ. δ΄; cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio...*, 333.

[62] Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1927, 15-21.

[63] Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio...*, 332–8.

[64] The manuscript was organized as follows: 4 ff. + 2 ff. (VI-VII) + II + 4 IV + V + III + 8 IV + 2 ff. + III + 1 f. + 6 IV + 1 f. + II. Pérez Martín offers a slightly different distribution of the volume: 2 ff. (VI-VI) + 4 ff + 4 IV + 2 ff. + IV + 2 ff. + III + 8 IV + 2 ff. + 7 ff. + 6 IV + 3 ff; cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio...*, 332, n. 42.

[65] Jean Irigoin, "Les premiers manuscrits grecs écrits sur papier et le problème du bombycin," *Scriptorium* 4 (1950): 194-204 ; In his article, Irigoin draws clearly the distinction between the two types of paper that the Byzantine scribes were make use of, namely, the so-called bombycine paper of Arab origin, or "oriental" paper, and the Occidental paper imported from Italy. The former – characterized by a light brownish colour, shiny surface, no watermarks – was highly used from the mid-eleven century to the end of the fourteenth, whereas the latter entered the Byzantine usage only in the middle of the thirteenth century; cf. Idem, "Les débuts de l'emploi du papier a Byzance," *BZ* 46 (1953): 314-19; Idem, "Papiers orientaux et papiers occidentaux," *Bollettino dell'Instituto Centrale per la Patologia del Libro* 42 (1988): 57-80. The folios 5–36, 37/46,

Moreover, the manuscript has two parchment folios (the guard leaves VI and VII), which, at a closer look, prove to be a palimpsest[66] hiding fragments of Greek text written in majuscule script.[67] The first guard folios (ff. I-V) have added later to the manuscript, and on the f. IV^{r} a *bifolium* of western paper, bearing a watermark type "anchor in a double outline, within a circle surrounded by a star,"[68] was subsequently glued. It contains a Latin synopsis of the whole codex, according to which, f. 167 contains *Maximi monachi Neamonita epistola*, and the following folios *Incertorum epistolae*.

The manuscript also bears testimony to those in whose possession it was. Thus, f. VI^{r} contains a monogram and a *monokondylion*[69] reading Ἰωάννου τοῦ Κριτοπούλου (John Kritopoulos) (*c.*1320–1330),[70] a name which appears again on f. 171^{r} as an addressee of one of Maximos Neamonites' letters. On the upper margin of f. 1^{r}, there is a Latin note indicating that the manuscript belonged at some time to the monastery of St. Mary of the Angels in

38/45, 53–100, 119–165 do not bear watermarks, whereas the following ones do: ff. 39–44 – "fer à cheval" (not catalogued); ff. 47–52, 101–116 – "casque (simple)," M.T. 1745 (a.1321); ff. 174–176 – "huchet," M.T. 4824 (a. 1328–1330); cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio...*, 332. The folios 166–173, transmitting Neamonites' letters, have a watermark composed of the three letters "GVP," allegedly the initials of the paper manufacturer. This filigree has not been yet catalogued; cf. Jean Irigoin, "Les filigranes de Fabriano (noms de papetiers) dans les manuscrits grecs du début du XIVe siècle," *Scriptorium* 12 (1958): 44-50, and Idem, "Les filigranes de Fabriano (noms de papetiers) dans les manuscrits grecs du début du XIVe siècle. Note complémentaire," *Scriptorium* 12 (1958): 281-282.

[66] Cf. *ODB* 1565.

[67] For the employment of ancient parchment in Palaiologan codices, see Brigitte Mondrain, "La réutilisation de parchemin ancien dans les livres à Constantinople au XIVe et au XVe siècle: quelques exemples, de la 'collection philosophique' aux folios palimpsestes du Parisinus gr. 1220," In Santo Lucà, ed., *Libri Palinsesti Greci: Conservazione, Restauro Digitale, Studio. Atti del Convegno Internazionale*, 111-130 (Rome: Comitato Nazionale per la celebrazione del Millenario della Fondazione dell' Abbazia di S. Nilo a Grottaferata, 2008).

[68] Cf. Vladimir A. Mošin, ed., *Anchor Watermarks*, Monumenta chartæ papyraceæ historiam illustrantia 13 (Amsterdam: Paper Publications Society (Labarre Foundation), 1973), 24-39.

[69] Gr. μονοκόνδυλος – "with but with one joint;" the term indicates a word or a set of words written in a single and continuous line drawn without lifting the pen/quill from the writing material, i.e., parchment, or paper; cf. *ODB* 1396.

[70] *PLP* 13815; Vitalien Laurent, *Les bulles métriques dans la sigillographie byzantine*, Archives de l'Orient chrétien 2 (Athens: Estia, 1932), no 178: Ἰω(άννην) Κριτόπωλον μάρτυς σκέπου[ς]; cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio...*, 332, n. 44; Among the codices owned by Kritopoulos there was also the Greek composite manuscript the Laur. *57. 45* – mostly containing epistolographic texts – nowadays preserved Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana; cf. also Sofia Kotzabassi, "Kopieren und Exzerpieren in der Palaiologenzeit," in Antonio Bravo García, Inmaculada Pérez Martín, eds., *The Legacy of Bernard de Montfaucon: Three Hundred Years of Studies on Greek Handwriting*, 473-482, Proceedings of the Seventh International Colloquium of Greek Palaeography (Madrid – Salamanca, 15-20 September 2008), Bibliologia 31 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010).

Florence.[71] This possession note was subsequently crossed out by another owner, most likely Jerome of Modecia.[72] The Italian humanist and antiquarian, Ciriaco de' Pizzicolli or Cyriacus of Ancona (*c.*1391-1453), also seems to have been among the possessors of *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12. His name is readable, albeit heavily crossed out, on the very last folio of the manuscript (f. 176^{v}).[73]

Vat. Chis. R. IV. 12 (*gr.* 12) is a miscellaneous codex containing a non–thematic collection of Greek[74] texts and excerpts stemming from different authors and periods of time. The anthology served for personal usage ("Hausbuch"), as opposed to "public" purposes (such as liturgical manuscripts), and reflects the literary interests of its compilers and owners.[75] Among the authors included in the codex there are Basil of Caesarea (330-379),[76] Basil of Ancyra (*d.* 362),[77] Gregory of Nazianzus (*c.*329–*c.*390),[78] Isidore of Pelusium (*fl.* fifth century),[79] Theophylact of Ohrid (1055–1107),[80] Gregory of Cyprus (*c.*1240–1290),[81] etc.[82]

Maximos Neamonites' fourteen letters and an epigram[83] are transmitted on the last quaternio[84] (ff. 166-173) of *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12.[85] The folios have in average 27 to 32 lines of

[71] The text might read: *Iste liber est monasterii sancta Marie de Angelis de florentia.*
[72] Cf. the upper part of the f. 1^{r} where another Latin note reads *Iste liber est mei Ieronimi de Modoecia.*
[73] His name is written twice *Kuriacus Anconitan(us)* | *Kuriacus Anconitan(us)*; cf. Pius Franchi de' Cavallieri *Codices graeci Chisiani...*, 21.
[74] There are also few short Latin and Italian texts present in the manuscript on ff. VI^{v}, 173^{r} (Latin), 173^{v} and 174^{r} (Italian).
[75] For the collections of excerpts during the Palaiologan period, see Sofia Kotzabassi, "Kopieren und Exzerpieren in der Palaiologenzeit," 473-482.
[76] Letters to Libanius the Sophist (f. 25); *On the Holy Spirit* (excerpts) (ff. 26–27).
[77] *On Virginity* (ff. 118–157)
[78] *Letters* (ff. 47–115).
[79] *Letters* (ff. 46, 158–165).
[80] *Verses* (f. 38).
[81] *Laudatio Sancti Georgii* (ff. 5–25), *Expositio fidei contra Beccum* (ff. 29–38).
[82] According to Pérez Martín, *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12 is a copy of the eleventh–century manuscript *Par. Suppl. gr.* 763, the latter transmitting the letters of Basil of Caesarea (ff. 1–165) and Gregory of Nazianzus (ff. 165–210); cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio...*, 335, n. 55; see also the online meta–catalogue of cursory catalogues of Greek manuscripts, http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/ (last accessed, April 11, 2011);
[83] On the upper half of the f. 173^{v} an epigram is transmitted under the name of Maximos Neamonites: Οὔκουν γε ληπτὴν οὔτ' ἄληπτον ὡς θέμις,/ εἴποιμι ταύτην τῷ φιλοῦντι τοὺς πόνους./ Τὸ μὲν γὰρ ποιεῖ χεῦμα τῶν πλείστων πόνων/ τόδ' αὖ παριστᾷ τὴν σοφιστοῦ πλήμμυραν; cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio...*, 334.
[84] Gr. τετράδιον – "quire;" the term denotes the basic unit of a codex; it consists of one or more folded sheets; cf. *ODB* 1767–8.

text written in one column, with the exception of f. 167^{v} (22 lines of text) and f. 168^{v} (completely blank). There are different features and idiosyncrasies of particular specimens of handwritings throughout the folios containing the letters. Thus, the process of copying the *epp.* in the manuscript seems to be the work of three different scribes: scribe A (ff. 166–168^{r}), scribe B (f. 169^{rv}), and scribe C (ff. 170–172).[86] Pérez Martín has argued in favour of five distinct scribes: the so–called "anon(ymus) Chis(iani)" copying ff. 166–167,[87] "scribe 7" (f. 168^{r}), "scribe 8" (f. 169^{rv}), "scribe 9" (ff. 170–171^{v} l. 5), and "scribe 10" (ff. 171^{v} l. 5–172-173).[88]

In six of the cases, the addressees are mentioned in the heading of the letters, written in red ink. Thus, *ep.* 7 (ff. 169^{v}–170^{r}) is addressed to the *megas logothetēs* Theodore Metochites (1270–1332),[89] *ep.* 8 (ff. 170^{rv})[90] and *ep.* 9 (f. 170^{v})[91] have the judge Gregory Kleidas (*c.*1329–1337)[92] as their recipient, and *ep.* 11 (f. 171^{r}) is sent to John Kritopoulos.[93] The last addressee mentioned in the manuscript is John Kalampakes (*c.*1320–1330),[94] Neamonites' son, to whom the latter sent *epp.* 12 (ff. 171^{rv}) and 13 (ff. 171^{v}–172^{v}).[95]

[85] The name of Maximos Neamonites is written in rubber on the upper left corner of the first folio of the quire (f. 166^{r}); the text reads: μαξίμ(ου) (μον)αχ(οῦ) τ(οῦ) νεαμονίτ<ου>. The word (μον)αχ(οῦ) is crossed out in the same red ink. Neamonites' name is written once again by the same scribe in the same red ink on f. 173^{v}: <ἐ>πίγραμμ<α> εἰς τ(ὴν) βίβλ<ον> τῶν λ<όγων> τ(οῦ) Λιβανί<ου>: τ(οῦ) νεαμονί<του>; cf. Pius Franchi de' Cavalieri' catalogue, 18-9.
[86] Cf. the plates at the end of the thesis.
[87] Pérez Martín presumes that this scribe might have been a disciple of the patriarch Gregory of Cyprus; cf. Eadem, *El patriarca Gregorio*..., 336, 351.
[88] Cf. Eadem, 337, n. 65; cf. Daniele Bianconi, "Libri e mani. Sulla formazione di alcune miscellanee dell'età dei Paleologi," *Segno e Testo* 2 (2004): 311–63; Idem, "Eracle e Iolao. Aspetti della collaborazione tra copisti nell'età dei Paleologi," *BZ* 96 (2003): 521–58.
[89] τῷ μεγ(ά)λ(ῳ) λογοθέτ(ῃ) τῷ Μετοχ(ί)τ(ῃ) MS; cf. *PLP* 17982.
[90] Γρηγ(ο)ρ(ίῳ) τῷ Κλειδ(ᾷ) (καὶ) κριτῇ MS.
[91] τῷ αὐτῷ MS.
[92] *PLP* 11781.
[93] Ἰω(άννῃ) τῷ Κριτοπ(ού)λ(ῳ) MS; cf. n. 70.
[94] *PLP* 10252.
[95] τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ Ἰω(άννῃ) τῷ Καλαμπ(ά)κ(ῃ) and τῷ αὐτῷ MS.

3. Introducing Maximos Neamonites through his letters

The following section will be discussing the dating of Neamonites' letters, introducing the *epistulae* in the order as they appear in the manuscript, highlight some biographical facts to be gained from them, and finally offer some considerations regarding their style.

Neamonites' letter collection depicts him as a *mystagōgos* (*ep.* 1)[96] and *grammatistēs* (*ep.* 2),[97] both technical terms used to designate the teachers or the schoolmasters of primary education in Byzantium (*grammata*, *hiera/peza grammata*).[98] Neamonites' city of residence and the place where he acted as a schoolmaster seems to have been Constantinople. This fact is revealed by *ep.* 1 (f. 166^{r}–f. 166^{v} l. 11) where Neamonites, addressing his correspondent (i.e., an archbishop) living in the west (ἑσπέρᾳ), speaks from the standpoint of one residing in the capital: the addressee's allotted city (λαχοῦσα), he writes, "was built so far away from our frontiers (πόρρω τῶν ἡμετέρων ὁρίων), in such a savage land (ἐν οὕτω μὲν ἀπηγριωμένῳ χωρίῳ) when it comes to the Hellenic tongue and custom, and such a place so far removed from all the useful things (ἀπῳκισμένην τῶν χρηστῶν) which – to say it with Homer – the rose–fingered Morning (ἡ ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἠώς) [i.e., the east = Constantinople] offers."

Ep. 1 consists of two parts. The first depicts Maximos Neamonites as a schoolmaster (*mystagōgos*) complaining about a reneging student, most probably a relative of the archbishop, and then report his joyfulness triggered by the news that his beloved archbishop (i.e., his addressee), residing in a remote western see, has arrived in Constantinople. The second part constitutes a *psogos* (i.e., vituperation) against the city

[96] f. 166^{r} l. 1: καθεκάστην ἐς τὴν ἡμετέραν φοιτῶντα μυσταγωγῷ δῆθεν χρώμενον νεανίαν τουτονὶ...
[97] If in *ep.* 1 Neamonites speaks about himself as a *mystagōgos*, in *ep.* 2 he uses the word *grammatistēs*; cf. the Appendix.
[98] Cf. Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés...*, 28; cf. also the list of technical words which she provides in the first appendix, 243–5.

accommodating his addressee. As it is underlined in the last lines, the letter embodies an interim solution before the long-desired personal encounter between the two.

Neamonites and his addressee seem to have been in very close relations, judging by the affectionate tone of the *ep.* and the way in which Neamonites addresses his correspondent, as "your holiness, my honourable and most-beloved head" (πρὸς ἡμᾶς τῆς τιμίας καὶ φιλτάτης μοι κεφαλῆς, τῆς σῆς ἁγιότητος[99]) and "wonderful soul" (τὴν ἱεράν σου ψυχήν). Kourouses advanced the hypothesis that Neamonites' addressee may have been Gregory, archbishop of Ochrid (1312–1313/1314).[100] He based his assumptions on internal evidence: first, the recipient of *ep.* 1 seems learned since Neamonites refers to Homer (*Odyssey* II. 1) and Euripides (*Hecuba* 229), and having acquired virtue he fulfilled a difficult spiritual and administrative office: "so that it [i.e., providence] might tame the wildness of the west through your virtue and might subject to the yoke of the law what previously was insubordinate and disorderly."[101]

Second, the archbishop's departure from Constantinople may have been recent since he has not yet grown accustomed to his absence (ἀποδημῶν ἐπισκόπων ὁ πάντ' ἄριστος ἠνία);[102] third, after having established a lawful order in the western see, the archbishop returns to the capital and Neamonites does not raise the eventuality of a new departure.[103] Kourouses concluded that the addressee of *ep.* 1 has many features in common with Gregory, as also seen from the evidence by Gabras and Metochites[104] and dated *ep.* 1 to

[99] Compare, from an earlier period, Michael Grünbart, *Formen der Anrede im byzantinischen Brief vom 6. bis zum 12. Jahrhundert*, Wiener byzantinistische Studien 25 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2005), 210 (ἁγιότης), 285 (κεφαλή), 360 (ψυχή), an address typical for metropolitans and archbishops.
[100] Cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 532-4.
[101] ἵν' ἐξημερώσῃ τῆς ἑσπέρ(ας) τὸ ἄγριον τῇ σῇ ἀρετῇ καὶ ζυγῷ τοῦ νόμου καθυποτάξῃ τὸ πρώ(ην) ἀφηνιάζον (καὶ) ἀτακτοῦν.
[102] Cf. Joseph N. Hajjar, *Le synode permanent* (Synodos endēmousa) *dans l'Église byzantine des origines au XIe siècle*, Orientalia Christiana analecta 164 (Rome: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1962).
[103] Cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 532-4.
[104] Cf. Ibid., 533.

the period 1314–1315. However, one must not forget that all these assumptions are based on hypotheses and there is no proof that *ep.* 1 was indeed addressed to Gregory of Ochrid.

Fully embellished with intertextual references, *ep.* 2 (f. 166^{v} l. 12–f. 167^{r} l. 3, appendix) is an exhortation to a court official (σεβαστῶν ἄριστε),[105] whose identity Maximos does not disclose beyond making mention of his title, to reconsider his mind-set and be steadfast when it comes to the education of his son (τὴν τοῦ παιδὸς μάθησιν).[106] The concluding part is straightforward and proffers a *pro domo sua* plea: even if the addressee does not consent to leave anymore his child under Neamonites' supervision, the fees which have been already paid will not be refunded, due to the poverty characterizing the schoolmasters.

Kourouses identified the addressee of *ep.* 2 with the *sebastos* Atzymes, whose name is mentioned in *ep.* 14 (f. 172^{r} l. 7, appendix *ep.* 14. 5), and whom Kourouses equates with Michael Atzymes,[107] the *domestikos tōn anatolikōn thematōn* (1311–1315/19). Moreover, he assumed that *ep.* 10 was probably sent to the same *sebastos*,[108] which seems doubtful to me.[109] However, the assumption that the *sebastos* in *epp.* 2 and 14 may be one and the same sounds reasonable, though again it may be difficult to push it beyond a hypothesis.

Ep. 3 (f. 167^{r} l. 4 – l. 23), the recipient of which is unknown, contains a criticism directed against the addressee who seemingly does not make the decisions over certain issues (unspecified, but presumably pertaining to Neamonites) fittingly (<π>άνυ μοι δοκεῖς τὰς τῶν πραγμάτ(ων) κρίσεις ἐκφέρειν οὐχ ὑγι(ῶς)),[110] but acts in a sycophantic manner

[105] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep.* 2. 1.
[106] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep.* 2. 8.
[107] *PLP* 1633.
[108] Cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 535.
[109] See below and Part. II. 1.
[110] Cf. *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f. 167^{r} l. 4; cf. Plate 2.

(μετέχειν δόξεις τρόπου τοῦ κόλακος).[111] Either he changes his attitude, says Maximos, or he should not be angry at those calling him a flatterer.

Ep. 4 (f. 167^{r} l. 24 – f. 167^{v}, appendix) is addressed to an archbishop (δέσποτά μου θειότ(α)τε)[112] from the perspective, '*ek prosōpou*,' as it were, of an impoverished widow who, after having assumed the monastic habit together with one of her daughters, asks for financial support for the marriage of her other daughter. It seems that the letter was composed by Maximos on behalf of the widow, and may be read as a variation of the rhetorical exercise of *ēthopoïia*, to be analyzed in the second part of the thesis. Moreover, *ep.* 4 provides valuable insights into some aspect of the social realia of fourteenth–century (Palaiologan) Byzantium, touching upon aspects such as poverty, marriage, and dowry, also to be addressed in the second chapter of the second part of the present study.

As already mentioned, Kourouses suggested that the addressee of *ep.* 4 may have been the patriarch of Constantinople, John Glykys (1315–1319), and dated *ep.* 4 to the period 1315–1316.[113] However, Kourouses' assumption that τῷ πρώτῳ προσῆλθεν ἀρχιερεῖ τῷ *τὴν προεδρίαν τάυτην δόντι ἆθλον τῆς σῆς ἀρετῆς* [italics mine] (*ep.* 4. 4–5) refers to Glykys' elevation to the patriarchal see remains, once more, just a hypothesis.

Although incomplete, *ep.* 5 (f. 168^{r}) brings forward one of the most recurrent themes of Byzantine epistolography: sickness and death,[114] also present in Neamonites' *epp.* 12 and 13. Thus, by employing elegiac tones, Neamonites depicts himself lamenting the wretchedness of his existence, that, similar to that of a swan, is drawing near its twilight. This image has provided the title for this thesis. A violent climax to Neamonites' suffering comes, as he confesses, from grief concerning his son.

[111] Cf. *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f. 167^{r} l. 16; cf. Plate 2.
[112] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep.* 4. 1.
[113] Cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 535-6.
[114] Cf. Margaret Mullett, "The Classical Tradition in the Byzantine Letter."

Ep. 5 opens with the proverb of the swan, which, towards the very end of her life, sings "gracefully and sweetly" (περὶ τὰ λοίσθιά οἱ τοῦ βίου εὐμουσότ(α)τα ᾇδει (καὶ) λιγυρώτατα)[115] so that the pleasure induced by her song (τῆς αὐτοῦ μνημεῖα μούσης (καὶ) μέλψε(ως))[116] would make her live on in the memories of those hearing her. Neamonites confesses of "running a similar course" with that of the swan and partaking in the same kind of suffering (ἐγὼ δὲ ταὐτὰ τῷ πτηνῷ πάσχων (καὶ) δρόμον τρέχων τὸν ὅμοιον),[117] from which it could be inferred that he is drawing near to old age. Yet, unlike the bird, the man discovers to his utmost sorrow that he has no such mastery that would allow him to leave something of delight behind. Not possessing anything that would "befit the spoken word or the one residing in the mind," there is nothing he could leave to the joy of his friends "in the time to come."[118]

Nemonites places the roots of his ineptitude in his senses, which have been "worn out" (προκατείργαστο γάρ μοι τὰ αἰσθητήρια)[119] by the long suffering of the body through "many and frequent illnesses" (ταῖς πολλαῖς (καὶ) συχναῖς νοσηλίαις τοῦ σώματος).[120] To this suffering has been added a misfortune concerning his son (ὁ δὲ κολοφὼν, ἡ λύπη λέγω, τοῦ φιλτάτ(ου) υἱοῦ).[121] Although it is not explicitly stated what really happened, Neamonites uses a strong emotional language that conveys the deep grief this event has caused him. Thus, he speaks of the "Tantalian suffering" (Ταντάλειον τιμωρί(αν))[122] he is now enduring, envisaging his present state as a punishment for his "wretched life" (δίκας τοῦ ταλαιπώρου βίου).[123] Yet, he was not completely thrown into a state of despondency,

[115] Cf. *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f. 168^{r} l. 2; cf. Plate 3.
[116] f. 168^{r} l. 3.
[117] f. 168^{r} l. 5–6.
[118] οὐδέν τι λογικοῦ χάριεν οὐδ' εὐηχὲς ἔχω οὔτε μὴ τοῦ προφορικοῦ ἢ ἐνδιαθέτου προσῆκον λόγον (καὶ) οἷον εἰς τοεξῆς φίλους εὐφρᾶναι (καὶ) σπέρμα φιλικ(ῆς) διαθέ|σε(ως) ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καρπωθῆναι (f. 168^{r} l. 6–8).
[119] f. 168^{r} l. 9–10.
[120] f. 168^{r} l. 9.
[121] f. 168^{r} l. 10–11.
[122] f. 168^{r} l. 13.
[123] f. 168^{r} l. 17.

"the grief ... has not weakened my will" (ἡ λύπη ... <ἀδύ>νατον τὸ ἐμοὶ καταθύμιον οὐκ ἐπήνεγκεν),[124] even though he goes as far as whishing his life would have been ended, "for this misfortune ... should have brought the end of the life which is in me."[125] But as it was not so (τοῦτο δὲ οὐκ ἐγένετο), he is now left to die the slow and painful death of being "consumed mercilessly by the suffering" (τὸ περιλειπόμενον τῷ πάθει τοῦ σώματος πιμελῆς μέρος ἀφειδῶς διατήκοιτο).[126]

Ep. 6 (f. 169^{r}–f. 169^{v} l. 9, appendix) is addressed to a court official, the father of one of Neamonites' students. Although failing to mention his name, in the first part of the letter Neamonites highly praises the addressee for his education and wisdom (Ἑρμοῦ μαθητὴν ὄντα).[127] It is for this reason that the schoolmaster further stresses that the addressee's son too should acquire an education befitting such a father. This end could be fulfilled by Neamonites, as long as the father would be willing to provide him with a higher tuition fee.

Ep. 7 (f. 169^{v} l. 10 – f. 170^{r} l. 11, appendix) bears yet another of Neamonites' requests: a petition to the *megas logothetēs* Theodore Metochites. However this time, the issue at hand is a more personal one, concerning an exemption from a payment imposed on Neamonites by the *prōtokynēgos*. Addressing his letter to Metochites, the schoolmaster fits his plea into the framework of Metochites' virtues that would not allow him to overlook the affliction of an old man. Such a burden would weigh heavily on a man as "worn out by time and illness" as Neamonites is. Therefore, he asks Metochites, the only man capable of effecting justice, to exonerate him from this payment.

The beginning of *ep*. 7 touches upon a widely encountered theme in Byzantine epistolography, that of illness. Thus, one can gather that Neamonites had just recovered

[124] f. 168^{r} l. 11–13.
[125] χρῆν γὰρ σφοδροτάτην ταύτην ἁπασῶν γενομέν(ην) μοι συμφορῶν (καὶ) ζωῆς παῦλαν τέως τῆς ἐν ἐμοὶ ποιῆσαι τέως (f. 168^{r} l. 13–15).
[126] f. 168^{r} l. 18–19.
[127] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep*. 6. 14.

from a "long-lasting" and most probably serious affliction that kept him from performing his usual activities (ἡ πολυχρόνιος νόσος ἀργὸν παντάπασιν πεποίηκέ με).[128]

Putting forth the real subject of the letter is an opportunity for Neamonites to exhibit once again his rhetorical skilfulness: "yet a good necessity set me in motion, but not because of this [need] [I am set in motion], but in order that your natural virtues [advantages] would not bypass me" (κἀμὲ μὴ φύγῃ τὰ σὰ φυσικὰ προτερήματα).[129] Neamonites praises Metochites for "your good character firmly disposed towards good [things]" (τὸ σ(ὸν) εὐσταθὲς πρὸς τὰ καλὰ καὶ χρηστὸν ἦθος)[130] and employs a carefully chosen *simile* that may have had a special significance for Metochites, due to the latter's intellectual pursuits in astronomy.[131] Thus, his "natural virtues" are praised for standing out among those of others of his kind in such a way as "the moon [is lighter] than the other stars" (ὧν διαφέρῃ τοῖς νῦν δυναμ(ένοις) καὶ γνώμῃ καὶ τρόπῳ καὶ ὅσα σελήνη τῶν ἄλλων ἀστέρων).[132]

The roots of Neamonites' issue of concern go back to his "very youth" (ἐμοὶ νέᾳ πάνυ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ),[133] when "a place not unsuitable for my habit (τόπος οὐκ ἀσύμφωνός μου τῷ τρόπῳ)[134] was found for me, who was longing for an idle [apolitical/scholarly] life (τὸν ἀπράγμονα βίον ποθήσαντι).[135] It was the court of the present-day *prōtokynēgos*" [136] (τοῦ νῦν

[128] *Ep*. 7. 1.
[129] *Ep*. 7. 8–9.
[130] *Ep*. 7. 4–5.
[131] Cf. Ihor Ševčenko, *Études sur la polémique entre Théodore Métochite et Nicéphore Choumnos* (Brussels: Byzanthion, 1962), 68-117; cf. also Börje Bydén, Theodore Metochites' *Stoicheiosis Astronomike* and The Study of Natural Philosophy and Mathematics in Early Palaiologan Byzantium, Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia 66 (Göteborg : Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 2003).
[132] *Ep*. 7. 9–10.
[133] *Ep*. 7. 14.
[134] *Ep*. 7. 15.
[135] *Ep*. 7. 14; cf. CPG II, 301: Apostoles III. 60 h: Ἀπραγμόνως ζῆν ἡδύ· μακάριος βίος.
[136] For this term, see *ODB* 1745–6; *PLP* gives seven entries: *prōtokynēgos* Alyates (*c.*1348), *PLP* 709; *prōtokynēgos* John Batatzes (1333–1343) *PLP* 2518; *prōtokynēgos* Buzenos (13th c.) *PLP* 3016; *prōtokynēgos* Kontophre (*c.*1329) *PLP* 13130; *prōtokynēgos* Raul (*c.*14th c.) *PLP* 24107; *prōtokynēgos* Rizas (1361) *PLP* 24265; and *prōtokynēgos* Sarantenos Indanes (*c.* 1300) *PLP* 24908.

πρωτοκυνηγοῦ ἦν ἡ αὐλή).[137] It seems that the parents of the *prōtokynēgos* had honoured Neamonites' parents with a gift, which the latter [i.e., Neamonites' parents] received because of their "exceeding virtue." It appears that this gift was a place for which no recompensation was demanded from them (ἐκεῖνοι δι' ὑπερβάλλουσαν ἀρετὴν εἶχον τὸ αἰδέσιμον).[138] As Neamonites was heir to his parents, the *prōtokynēgos* "rendered me honour as those ones [i.e., his parents] to mine [i.e., Neamonites' parents]" and so the gift was extended to the heir as well.

However, this situation seems to have been changed by the time Neamonites writes this *ep*. Even though he takes great care of the manner in which he couches his problem, we can infer that the *prōtokynēgos* is now asking for some sort of financial recompensation for that place. To advocate for his right and against payment, Neamonites makes reference to the initial conditions under which the place was given to his family, "for how would have been a gift if a certain recompensation [had been claimed]?" (πῶς γὰρ ἦν χάρις εἰ λῆμμά τι προσλαμβάνον).[139] In the face of such a shift in his condition, Neamonites, "encouraged by the greatness of your virtue" (θαρρήσας τῷ μεγέθει τῆς σὴς ἀρετῆς),[140] turns to Metochites' judgement,

> for whoever has a sound mind through God's grace and whoever does not want to be disturbed by external influences, and is not removing his soul from what is just – as the smoke [chases away] the bees (ὡς καπνὸ(ς) τὰς μελίττας) –, and because of this keeping a spotless see of judgement, will also cast the correct judgement regarding this – and by this I mean my own dwelling (τοῦ ἐμοῦ λέγω οἰκήμ(α)τος). And that one will not refuse to preserve by a single order an old gift [and not to prescribe any rent], and thus without a gift (προῖκα) to become beneficent and generous (εὐεργετικὸ(ς) (καὶ) φιλότιμος).[141]

[137] *Ep*. 7. 14.
[138] *Ep*. 7. 17.
[139] *Ep*. 7. 18–19.
[140] *Ep*. 7. 32.
[141] *Ep*. 7. 24–29.

Furthermore, toward the purpose of adding leverage to his request, Neamonites belittles himself, and depicts himself as "having not possessed either the virtue which praises into the light those successful, or the advantages of the nature by which some [people] have the freedom of speech [i.e., *parrēsia*]" (μήτ' ἀρετὴν κεκτῆσθαι ἥτις ἐπαίνειν εἰς φῶς τοὺς κατορθοῦντ(ας), μήτε προτέρημα φύσεως δι' οὗ τινες παρρησιάζοντ(αι)).[142]

Finally, in the very end of *ep.* 7, Neamonites refers to himself as being "worn out by time and illness" (ἡμᾶς τετρυχωμένους ὄντ(ας) χρόνῳ (καὶ) ἀσθενείᾳ).[143] Therefore, the option he puts forth to Metochites is that the latter can either deem to help (σὸν οὖν ἐστί ... ἐντάξαι τοῖς εὐεργέτηθεῖσι παρὰ τῆς εὐγενεί(ας) σου) so afflicted a person or "to turn a blind eye to the fact that we run [i.e., live] in addition to these other afflictions also with this unaccustomed burden" (ἢ καὶ παραβλέψαι πρὸ(ς) τοῖς ἄλλοις δεινοῖς (καὶ) τῇ ἀσυνήθει ταύτῃ φορολογίᾳ τρέχεσθαι).[144]

Kourouses further advanced the hypothesis that *ep.* 7 is to be dated after March 1321 – the end of the first phase of the civil war. In support of this assumption, he points to Neamonites' words: "but now the time has brought its proper revolving and unsteadiness, and moves the unmovable, rather to say, the fickle [things]" (ἐπεὶ δ' ὁ χρόνο(ς) καὶ νῦν τὴν οἰκεί(αν) τροπὴν καὶ ἀστάτωσιν συνέφερε καὶ κινεῖ τὰ ἀκίνητα, μᾶλλον δ' εἰπεῖν τὰ εὐρίπιστα).[145] According to Kourouses, *anastatōsis* may allude to the turbulent political scene characterizing the third decade of fourteenth–century Constantinople.[146] However, this is not clear since the political scene of Palaiologan Byzantium, especially of the first three decades of the fourteenth century, was usually characterized by instability.

[142] *Ep.* 7. 30–33.
[143] *Ep.* 7. 33.
[144] *Ep.* 7. 34–35.
[145] *Ep.* 7. 20–21.
[146] Cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 535 and n. 1.

Moreover, one has to take into consideration that the title of *ep.* 5 (i.e., τῷ μεγ(ά)λ(ῳ) λογοθέτ(ῃ) τῷ Μετοχ(ί)τ(ῃ))[147] may have been added in the superscription at a date later, *ex post*, as it were, than the actual composition of the letter. For instance, it may have been the case that Neamonites sent *ep.* 7 to Metochites when the latter was only *logothetēs tou genikou* (1305–1321). Subsequently, at the time when Neamonites' *epp.* were copied in *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, Metochites may have been widely known as *megas logothetēs* and therefore the scribe may have changed the title of his office.

Ep. 8 (f. 170^{r} l. 12–f. 170^{v} l. 13) and *ep.* 9 (f. 170^{v} l. 14–24) constitute appeals for justice addressed to Gregory Kleidas. *Ep.* 8 is a *pro domo* plea, whereas *ep.* 9, by far the shortest among Neamonites' *epp.*, amounts to Neamonites' intercession for a case of marriage. Both letters abound in intertextual references, testifying to Kleidas' *paideia*, and *ep.* 9 is introduced by a short poem consisting of six dodecasyllable verses.

In *ep.* 9 Neamonites plays the role of a mediator between the parents of a girl and his addressee [i.e., Gregory Kleidas], voicing their request to be heard in a matter concerning their son-in-law (ὁ κηδεστὴς αὐτῶν):

> you, most divine Lord (θειότατε δέσποτα), receive these people [i.e., the parents of the girl] (δέξαι τουτουσὶ τ(οὺς) ἀν(θρώπ)ους) and deem them trustworthy when they are relating the misfortunes concerning the little girl (διηγουμ(έν)(ους) συμφορὰς τὰς περὶ τὸ θυγάτριον ἀληθεῖς νόμισον), for more have befallen them than they have narrated (πλείω γ(ὰρ) πεπόνθασιν ὧν διηγήσαντο).[148]

The son-in-law is spoken of in harsh terms, being deemed "heavier than the burdens in Homer" (βαρύτερος πέφυκε τοῦ παρ' Ὁμήρου ἄχθους)[149] and one can infer, the cause of "the misfortunes concerning the little girl." Moreover, Neamonites stresses the "disorder and deviation of his mind" (γνώμης ἀνάχυσιν (καὶ) παρατροπὴν).[150]

[147] Cf. n. 89.
[148] *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f. 170^{r} l. 17–18; cf. Plate 4.
[149] f. 170^{r} l. 19.
[150] f. 170^{r} l. 19–20.

When it comes to *epp.* 8 and 9, both addressed to Gregory Kleidas, Kourouses assumed that they are to be dated later than *ep.* 7. Once again, he relied on the title of the letter: Γρηγορίῳ τῷ Κλειδᾷ καὶ κριτῇ (to Gregory Kleidas, the judge) and τῷ αὐτῷ (to the same),[151] and took as a *terminus ante quem* 1329, the date when Gregory Kleidas received the title of *katholikos kritēs tōn Rhōmaiōn.*[152]

Ep. 10 (f. 170v l. 25–f. 171r l. 4, appendix), according to Kourouses sent to the same court official who received *ep.* 2, which seems doubtful on internal evidence,[153] reveals a father who, having changed the mind regarding the education of his son, has cancelled a previous contract with Neamonites. Therefore, the latter is seen endeavouring to persuade the father that his son will not benefit from staying at home, but should rather continue his studies.

Ep. 11 (f. 171^{r} l. 5–l. 30, appendix) testifies to the circulation of books in the Palaiologan period. Addressing John Kritopoulos, the one-time owner of *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12,[154] Maximos Neamonites speaks of a "desired book" (ἡ πεποθημ(έν)η βίβλο(ς)) which he did not have time to read or copy because he had to return it to the owner after an allegedly very short time. Therefore, he solicits the addressee to lend his own copy so that the benefit deriving from the book would spread to many.

Ep. 12 (f. 171^{r} l. 31–f. 171^{v} l. 31) and *ep.* 13 (f. 171^{v} l. 32–f. 172^{v} l. 3) are both addressed to Neamonites' son, John Kalampakes, who supposedly was far away from home. In the first part of *ep.* 12, Neamonites reproaches his recipient for the fact that he did not send any news about him, which made everybody believe him dead (οὐδὲ τῶν ἀν(θρώπ)ων οὐδεὶς ἐν

[151] Cf. *PLP* 11781.
[152] Cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 535.
[153] See Part II. 2.
[154] Cf. n. 70.

ζῶσιν εἶναί σε δεδήλωκε).[155] The end of the letter constitutes an exhortation to Kalampakes to return home.[156]

Ep. 13 goes along the same lines as *ep.* 12, yet employs more sorrowful tones. The themes of death and sickness, which already appeared in *ep.* 5, are given here a much stronger voice. Having his son away in a foreign land (τοῦ σοῦ χωρισμοῦ (καὶ) ποθοῦμεν),[157] Neamonites is painfully missing his presence, as well as being tormented by the idea that he might be dead. However, at some point, a man delivers the news that Kalampakes is alive (πρὸς ἡμ(ᾶς) οὗτος ὁ ἄν(θρωπ)ος μεθ' ὅρκων φρικτῶν ὡς κ(α)τὰ τ(ὸν) μάρτιον μῆνα ζῶντα ἐθεάσατό σε).[158] As evidence for this (σημεῖα παρ' ἡμ(ῶν) ἀπαιτούμ(εν)ος εἰς πίστωσ(ιν) τοῦ λόγου αὐτ(ῶν)), the man speaks about his [Neamonites'son] bruise between the eyes (μεταξὺ τῶν ὀφρύων ἔλεγε μώλωπα φέρει), beautiful hair (κόμην πάνυ ὡραί(αν)) and speaking abilities (ὁμιλ(εῖν) ἐπιτήδειος), highest humility (ταπείνωσ(ιν) ἄκραν), plus the fact that he bears the name of Kalampakes (τοὔνομα Καλαμπάκης).[159] Upon hearing this, Maximos writes a letter urging his son to come home and thus, put an end to the bitter grief and daily tears of an old man.[160] Throughout *ep.* 13, Neamonites makes use of the powerful and imminent motif of death,[161] as a means of persuading Kalampakes to end his wandering and return to his home.

[155] Cf. *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f. 171^{v} l. 1; cf. Plate 6.
[156] σύ δ' ἐπείγου μοι φίλτατε μήτ' Ἄβαρ(ις) γενέσθαι νυνὶ μήτ' ὀϊστῷ πρὸς δήλωσιν τῶν σῶν ἐκείνου χρῆσθαι ἀμήχαν(ον), γὰρ ὅτι (καὶ) μῦθος ἦν ἀλλὰ χαίρ(ειν) ἀφεὶς τἀκείνου Λυγκεὺς ἕτερος γενοῦ (καί) σε λάθῃ μὴ δεὶς πορεί(αν) ἐνταυθὶ ποιούμ(εν)ος ἵν' ἡμ(ᾶς) ἡμιθνῆτ(ας) ὄντ(ας) πόθῳ τῷ σῷ ἀναρρώσῃς τῇ σῇ γραφῇ πάντες οἱ ἡμέτ(ε)ρ(οι) ὑγιαίνουσι (καὶ) προσαγορεύουσί σε (f. 171^{v} l. 27–31).
[157] Cf. *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f. 172^{r} l. 10–11; cf. Plate 6.
[158] f. 172^{r} l. 17–18.
[159] f. 172^{r} l. 19–21.
[160] εἰ μὲν οὕτ(ως) ἔχει (καὶ) αὐτὸς εἶ καθὼς φάσκει (καὶ) τὰ παρ' ἡμῖν σὰ γνωρίσματα κάμφθητι, υἱέ μου, Καλαμπάκη μου, γλυκύτ(α)τ(ον) ὄνομα ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ πρὸς ἡμ(ᾶς) ἐπαναλύσης (καὶ) τῆς μακρ(ὰς) ἄλλης παύσης σαυτ(ὸν) (καὶ) ἡμ(ᾶς) λύπης πικρ(ᾶς) (καὶ) καθ' ἡμερινῶν δακρύ(ων) (καὶ) ἀναζωώσῃς ψυχὰς πνεούσ(ας) τὰ λοίσθια μή τις γοῦν ἔξοδος (f. 172^{r} l. 21–25).
[161] ὅτι (καὶ) τὰ σὰ (καὶ) ἐμὰ χάριν σοῦ ταμιεύετ(αι) σῶα σπεῦσον οὖν ταχέ(ως) ἐλθ(εῖν) προτοῦ καταλάβοι ἡμ(ᾶς) ὁ θάνατος ἤδη γ(ὰρ) ὠθεῖ βαλ(εῖν) ἡμ(ᾶς) πρὸς τὸ Ταίναρ(ον) (καὶ) διὰ τοῦ Ἀχέροντος παραπέμψαι τῷ Πλούτωνι (f. 172^{r} l. 29–31).

Epp. 12 and 13, both addressed to John Kalampakes,[162] are to be dated, according to Kourouses, to the period 1321–1322. This is indicated, in his view, by νῦν ἀνεριπίσθη τὰ δεινὰ καὶ πάντ᾽ ἀνατέτραπται (f. 171^{v} l. 11–12). Again, this is a hypothesis at best.

In *ep*. 14 (f. 172^{v} l. 4 – 30, appendix), the last in the letter collection as it survives, Neamonites writes to an unknown intermediary, asking him to endorse his request for becoming a teacher to the sons of the *sebastos* Atzymes. The addressee seems to be a friend of the *sebastos*, and presumably has his own sons under Neamonites' guidance. Moreover, the recipient appears to know one of Atzymes' servants who previously studied under Neamonites. The latter alludes to the level of education of his former student, called "the son of Bolas," as a testimony to his own teaching skills, which would recommend him [i.e., Neamonites] as a teacher to the sons of the *sebastos* too. Towards the end of *ep*. 14 Neamonites complains about his kidney disease (τὸ γ(ὰρ) ἐν νεφροῖς πάθος), using it as an excuse to send a letter rather than to go in person to his addressee.

Kourouses further suggested that the *sebastos* Atzymes may have been the addressee of *epp*. 2 and 14.[163] However, when it comes to *ep*. 14 it is quite clearly that Atzymes is not the real addressee, even though the letter surely makes mention of him. Moreover, the mere sequence of *ep*. 2 and *ep*. 14 makes Kourouses' chronological order[164] very unlikely.

As it became by now quite clear, there is not a single letter within Neamonites' letter collection which can be dated with absolute certainty. Even though some of the letters (*epp.* 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13) bear titles indicating the office of their addressees, however, one has to take into consideration that these titles may have been added by scribes at a later date. Unfortunately, in none of Neamonites' letters the office of the

[162] Kourouses seems to contradict himself when saying that the only source testifying to John Kalampakes are Neamonites' *epp*. 12 and 13. Thus, in the introductory part of his edition of Neamonites' *ep*. 1, Kourouses pointed in a footnote (n. 3) that Oinaiotes sent three letters to Neamonites' son (*epp*. 36, 45, and 54); cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 530 and 535.
[163] Ibid., 535.
[164] See the section where I discuss the previous scholarship on Maximos Neamonites.

addressee occurs in the text, adding even further to this uncertainty. This offers a useful *caveat* against any univocal dating, and therefore, the possibility to provide a clear chronological framework for Neamonites' letter collection seems impossible. However, having said this, the second and the third decades of the fourteenth century still seem to be the most likely period for Neamonites' correspondence. This proposal may be confirmed by Oinaiotes (*fl.*1315-1327), who having been allegedly Neamonites' student or even his colleague, sent him at least one letter (*ep.* 13).[165]

Neamonites' letters entail a special preoccupation with themes such as sickness and death (*epp.* 5, 12-14),[166] impoverishment (*epp.* 2, 4, 7), and friendship (*ep.* 1). In addition, the letters present Neamonites' pleas as a schoolmaster always striving to secure a salary from the parents of his students (*epp.* 2, 6, 10), but also in his intellectual pursuits as a bookman (*ep.* 11). In what follows, we will offer some considerations on the style of Neamonites' *epp.*

Neamonites' letters might be characterized by what Dennis called a "Byzantine clarity."[167] *Prima facie*, they leave the impression that their Atticizing Greek is straightforward and easy to unravel. However, Neamonites' employment of numerous participial constructions, not all of which seem to obey ancient standard grammar (in spite of his indubitable learning), and the intricacies of the syntax do pose serious challenges for everyone reading them.

First, Neamonites makes use of a couple of apparent *hapax legomena*/rare words throughout his letter collection. For instance, in *ep.* 5 (f. 168^{r} l. 2 – 3), when introducing the proverb of the swan song, Neamonites writes ὅπως, οἶμαι, τῆς αὐτοῦ μνημεῖα μούσης καὶ μέλψε(ως) περιείη τοῖς ἔτι ζῶσι... ("so that, I think, the remembrances of her [i.e., the swan] music and singing would remain for those still living ..."). Here he uses two feminine nouns,

[165] Cf. n. 39.
[166] See below pp. 21-3, 29-30 for some examples.
[167] George T. Dennis, "The Byzantines as Revealed in Their Letters," in *Gonimos. Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies...*, 157.

ἡ μοῦσα, ης and ἡ μέλψις, εως in genitive singular, the second of which, constructed on the root of the verbal form μέλπειν – "to celebrate with dance and song" – is not to be found either in *LSJ*, *LBG*, or *L*. The online version of *TLG* offers a single occurrence of this noun used in genitive plural (μέλψεων) in a fourteenth–century scholium to Euripides' *Hecuba*.[168]

The second word unique in Neamonites occurs in *ep.* 6 (f. 169^{v} l. 3) where Neamonites alludes to the fact that he receives too little money for teaching the *sebastos*' son. For this he employs the feminine dative singular of the noun ἡ ὀλιγομισθία, ας, "little recompensation," as it were, a form that he supposedly derives from the adjective ὀλιγόμισθος, ον ("receiving small wages").

Second, Neamonites' *epp*. constitute a rewarding place for analyzing intertextuality and literary *mimēsis* in fourteenth–century Palaiologan epistolography.[169] They seem to comply with the guidelines adopted by Joseph Rhakendythes (*c.*1280–*c.*1330)[170] from the twelfth-century manual – presumably wrongly – ascribed to Gregory Pardos, metropolitan of Corinth:

> In the letters the most useful are the maxims of the wise [men], and the so-called *apophthegmata* (i.e., aphorisms) and proverbial sayings, frequently the more mythic, more pleasant, and simpler ones. Sometimes the combination of a verse quotation with prose are useful, as for instance one would take a Homeric verse or you would attach a bit of a verse.[171]

Throughout his letters, Neamonites employed a plethora of quotations and references to classical authors, especially Homer[172] and Euripides.[173] Thus, he alluded to "the rose–

[168] Cf. *Scholia in Hecuba* 916. 4; cf. Wilhelm Dindorf, *Scholia Graeca in Euripides Tragoedias*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1863), 446.
[169] Cf. Herbert Hunger, "On the Imitation (Μίμησις) of Antiquity in Byzantine Literature," *DOP* 23-4 (1969-70): 15-38, reprinted in Gregory Nagy, ed., *Greek Literature in the Byzantine Period*, 80-101, Greek Literature 8 (New York: Routledge, 2001).
[170] Cf. *PLP* 9078.
[171] Joseph Rhakendytes, *On Letters* (Περὶ ἐπιστολῶν): ἐν ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς χρησιμώτατα τὰ γνωματεύματα τῶν σοφῶν, καὶ τὰ οὕτω καλούμενα ἀποφθέγματα καὶ τὰ παροιμιώδη, πολλάκις καὶ τὰ μυθικώτερα καὶ γλυκύτερα καὶ τὰ ἀφελέστερα· χρήσιμοί ποτε καὶ αἱ κολλήσεις, οἷον ἐὰν ἔπος Ὁμηρικὸν ἀπολαβὼν ἢ ἔπους τεμάχιον προσάψῃς; cf. *RG* III, 558-9.
[172] For the usage of Homer by Byzantine writers, see Robert Browning, "Homer in Byzantium," *Viator* 6 (1975): 15-33.

fingered Morning" (ἡ ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἠώς) (*ep.* 1),[174] to "the burdens" (ἄχθη) in Homer (*ep.* 9),[175] to the "angry one" from Euripides (*ep.* 1),[176] and to the supplication brought by Hecuba to Agamemnon "in arms, hands, and hair" (ἔν τε βραχίοσι χερσί τε καὶ κόμαισιν) (*ep.* 14).[177]

Moreover, *epp.* bring to the fore mythological and classical figures such as "men-destroying Ares" (Ἄρης βροτολοιγός) (*ep.* 2),[178] Zeus (*ep.* 6), Hermes (*ep.* 6), Pluto (*ep.* 13) Tantalus (*ep.* 5), Radamanthys (*ep.* 6),[179] Proteus and Empusa (*ep.* 9).[180] One can also meet in Neamonites' letters Abaris the Hyperborean (*ep.* 12),[181] Lynkeus, one of the Argonauts (*ep.* 12), the trainers or the anointers (ἀλεῖπται) at the Olympic games (*ep.* 2) – a *simile* employed

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[173] Cf. Anthony R. Littlewood, "A Statistical Survey of the Incidence of Repeated Quotations in Selected Byzantine Letter-Writers," in *Gonimos. Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies*..., 137-54.

[174] Cf. Homer, *Odyssey* II. 1.

[175] Cf. Homer, *Iliad* XII. 452, XVIII. 104, XX. 247; *Odyssey* I. 379.

[176] Cf. Euripides, *Hecuba* 229.

[177] Euripides, *Hecuba* 836-40:

> εἴ μοι γένοιτο φθόγγος ἐν βραχίοσιν
> καὶ χερσὶ καὶ κόμαισι καὶ ποδῶν βάσει
> ἢ Δαιδάλου τέχναισιν ἢ θεῶν τινος,
> ὡς πάνθ' ἁμαρτῆι σῶν ἔχοιτο γουνάτων
> κλαίοντ', ἐπισκήπτοντα παντοίους λόγους.

The English translation, by E. P. Coleridge, goes: "Oh! would I had a voice in arms, in hands, in hair and feet, placed there by the arts of Daedalus or some god, that all together they might with tears embrace your knees, bringing a thousand pleas to bear on you!"

[178] Cf. Homer, *Odyssey* VIII. 115; *Iliad* V. 31; Aeschylus, *Suppliant Women* 665.

[179] Cf. CPG I, 372: Gregory of Cyprus III. 59: Ῥαδαμάνθυος κρίσις: ἡ δικαιοτάτη; CGP II, Gregory of Cyprus III. 5; CPG 1, 304: Diogenianus VII. 98; CPG II, 206: Macarius VII. 49-50; CPG II, 632: Apostoles XV. 17: Ῥαδαμάνθυος ὅρκον: ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπὶ δικαιοσύνῃ, μαρτυρουμένων. ὁ δὲ ὅρκος ἦν κατὰ χηνὸς ἢ πλατάνου ἢ κριοῦ ἤ τινος ἄλλου τοιούτου· οἷς ἦν μέγιστος ὅρκος ἅπαντι λόγῳ κύων, ἔπειτα χήν. τοιοῦτοι δὲ καὶ οἱ Σωκράτους ὅρκοι.

[180] Neamonites may have been acquainted with Lucian of Samossata, who in his encomiastic treatise, *On Dance* (Περὶ Ὀρχήσεως), brings forward both Proteus and Empusa as *simile* for versatility and unpredictability: δοκεῖ γάρ μοι ὁ παλαιὸς μῦθος καὶ Πρωτέα τὸν Αἰγύπτιον οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ ὀρχηστήν τινα γενέσθαι λέγειν, μιμητικὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ πρὸς πάντα σχηματίζεσθαι καὶ μεταβάλλεσθαι δυνάμενον, ὡς καὶ ὕδατος ὑγρότητα μιμεῖσθαι καὶ πυρὸς ὀξύτητα ἐν τῇ τῆς κινήσεως σφοδρότητι καὶ λέοντος ἀγριότητα καὶ παρδάλεως θυμὸν καὶ δένδρου δόνημα, καὶ ὅλως ὅ τι καὶ θελήσειεν. ὁ δὲ μῦθος παραλαβὼν πρὸς τὸ παραδοξότερον τὴν φύσιν αὐτοῦ διηγήσατο, ὡς γιγνομένου ταῦτα ἅπερ ἐμιμεῖτο. ὅπερ δὴ καὶ τοῖς νῦν ὀρχουμένοις πρόσεστιν, ἴδοις τ' ἂν οὖν αὐτοὺς πρὸς τὸν καιρὸν ὠκέως διαλλαττομένους καὶ αὐτὸν μιμουμένους τὸν Πρωτέα. εἰκάζειν δὲ χρὴ καὶ τὴν Ἔμπουσαν τὴν ἐς μυρίασμορφὰς μεταβαλλομένην τοιαύτην τινὰ ἄνθρωπον ὑπὸ τοῦ μύθου παραδεδόσθαι. In A. M. Harmon's English translation: "For it seems to me that the ancient myth about Proteus the Egyptian means nothing else than that he was a dancer, an imitative fellow, able to shape himself and change himself into anything, so that he could imitate even the liquidity of water and the sharpness of fire in the liveliness of his movement; yes, the fierceness of a lion, the rage of a leopard, the quivering of a tree, and in a word whatever he wished. Mythology, however, on taking it over, described his nature in terms more paradoxical, as if he became what he imitated. Now just that thing is characteristic of the dancers today, who certainly may be seen changing swiftly at the cue and imitating Proteus himself. And we must suppose that in Empusa, who changes into countless forms, some such person has been handed down by mythology." For Greek text and English translation, see A.M. Harmon, *Lucian*, vol. 5 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962): 230-3.

[181] In the end of *ep.* 12, addressed to his son, supposedly far away from home, Neamonites likened his addressee to Abaris, alleged the Hyperborean, who, according to Herodotus, traveled around the world carring an arrow; cf. Herodotus, *Histories* IV. 36.

by Neamonites for representing himself as a schoolmaster –[182] and the Hellanodikai, the chief judges at the games held in honor of Zeus at Olympia (*ep.* 8).[183] These references usually were, as I suggested, adjusted to the recipient's level of *paideia*/learning.

Finally, Neamonites epistolographic style creates suggestive images by employing well–known toponyms. For instance, the addressee of *ep.* 2 is given the advice not to be "inconsistent and to be hurled back and forth with the changes of Euripos (μεταβολαῖς ταῖς Εὐρίπου)."[184] The *simile* of Euripos' tide was widely used by Byzantine authors, among whom I just mention Nikephoros Basilakes (12thc.),[185] Theodore Metochites,[186] and Nikephoros Gregoras.[187] Another powerful image is created by Neamonites in *ep.* 13 where, trying to convince his son to return home, he describes his imminent death as a *descensus ad inferos*: the death will lead him (i.e., Neamonites) towards Tainaron (Ταίναρον)[188] and across Acheron will escort him to Pluto: ὁ θάνατος ἤδη γ(ὰρ) ὠθεῖ βαλ(εῖν) ἡμ(ᾶς) πρὸς τὸ Ταίναρ(ον) (καὶ) διὰ τοῦ Ἀχέροντος παραπέμψαι τῷ Πλούτωνι.[189]

If the "Secular Bible" (i.e., Homer) is quite often referred to, the references to the Gospels are very scarce. For example, in the end of *ep.* 13 Neamonites alluded to the biblical episode of the resurrection of Lazarus,[190] and *ep.* 4 is almost entirely built around the

[182] Cf. CPG II, 554: Apostoles XII, 53: Οἱ πεπαιδευμένοι, καθάπερ οἱ ἐκ τῆς παλαίστρας, κἂν...
[183] Cf. Pindar, *Olympian* III. 12; Pausanias, *Description of Greece* V. 9.5.
[184] Cf. also CPG II, 291: Apostoles III, 18: Ἄνθρωπος εὔριπος: τύχη εὔριπος: διάνοια εὔριπος: ταῦτα ἐπὶ παλιμβόλων.
[185] Nikephoros Basilakes, *Against Bagoas* 16: ἄνθρωπος κύβου πολυπτωτότερος τοῦ Εὐρίπου παλιντροπώτερος; cf. Antonio Garzya, ed., *Nicephori Basilacae Orationes et Epistolae* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1984), 102. 11; The employment of the Euripos tide as a *simile* goes back to Plato who used it to describe the thinking of those who deem to hold that nothing is sound and stable; see for instance *Phaedo* 90c.
[186] Cf. for instance his *Poem* 20. 111; for a critical edition of Metochites' *Poems*, see Jeffrey Michael Featherstone, ed. and trans., *Theodore Metochites's poems "to himself,"* Byzantina Vondobonensia 23 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000).
[187] Cf. his letters to Theolept, the metropolitan of Philadelphia (*ep.* 61), and to a certain Basil (*ep.* 107); for critical edition of Gregoras' *Epistulae*, see P. L. M. Leone, *Nicephori Gregorae Epistolae* (Matino: Tipografia di Matino, 1982–3).
[188] Cf. CPG I, 329: Plutarch I. 54: Ταινάριον κακόν τὸ μέγα καὶ παρανομούμενον εἰς ἱκέτας. οἱ γὰρ Λακεδαιμόνιοι τοὺς καταφυγόντας εἰς Ταίναρον τῶν Εἱλώτων ἀπαγαγόντες ἀπέκτειναν; CPG II, 214: Macarius VII. 99: Ταινάριον κακόν: ἐπὶ τῶν σφόδρα δεινῶν καὶ χαλεπῶν; cf. CPG II, 653: Apostoles XV. 94.
[189] Cf. *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f. 172^{r} l. 30–31.
[190] ὁ Θ(εὸ)ς ἀξιώσειεν ἀλλήλ(ους) ἡμ(ᾶς) ἰδ(εῖν) (καὶ) δόξαν αὐτ(ὴν) ἀπονέμοιμεν ἣν (καὶ) αἱ σύγγονοι τοῦ Λαζάρου ἀπένειμαν (*ep.*13, f.172^{r} l. 32–f.172^{v} l. 1) for the biblical passage, see John 11.

scriptural passage of the miracle of healing the haemophilic woman (ἡ αἱμορροοῦσα),[191] Again a connection to the addressee's or *'ek prōsopou'* narrator can be shown.

The letters are considerably enriched by the multitude of the proverbs (παροιμίαι) that Neamonites has sown almost on the body of each *ep*. For instance, *ep.* 5, albeit fragmentary, begins and then is entirely clad in the garments of the swan song adage (κύκνειον ᾆσμα/μέλος), that is "the swan, close to the last moments of her life, sings the most gracefully and sweetly."[192] In the same *ep*., Neamonites informs his addressee about his Tantalian suffering (Ταντάλειον τιμωρίαν),[193] triggered by a grief regarding his son.

A court official receives a letter from Neamonites in which the latter speaks of "the next best way" (δεύτερος πλοῦς)[194] and of "the rivers [which] are flowing upstream" (ἄνω χωροῦσι ποταμῶν αἱ πηγαὶ)[195] (*ep*. 6). Theodore Metochites is told by Neamonites in *ep*. 7

[191] Cf. Luke 8: 42-8.

[192] Cf. *Vat*. *Chis*. R. IV. 12, f. 168^{r} l. 1–2. The first to use this *simile* was Aeschylus in *Agamemnon* 1444-1447:

> ὁ μὲν γὰρ οὕτως, ἡ δέ τοι κύκνου δίκην
> τὸν ὕστατον μέλψασα θανάσιμον γόον
> κεῖται φιλήτωρ τοῦδ'· ἐμοὶ δ' ἐπήγαγεν
> εὐνῆς παροψώνημα τῆς ἐμῆς χλιδῆι.

"For he lies thus; while she, who, like a swan,/ has sung her last lament in death,/ lies here, his beloved; but to me she has brought / for my bed an added relish of delight;" English translation by Herbert W. Smyth, *Aeschylus*, vol. 2, The Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926), 129; for the swan song see also Plato, *Phaedo* 84e-85b; By the third century BCE the expression "to sing one's swan song" becomes a proverb; cf. for instance CPG II, 490: Apostoles X. 18: κύκνειον ᾆσμα: ἐπὶ τῶν ἐγγὺς θανάτου ὄντων. οἱ γὰρ κύκνοι θνήσκοντες ᾄδουσι. καὶ ἴσασιν ὁπότε τοῦ βίου τὸ τέρμα ἀφικνεῖται αὐτοῖς, καὶ μέντοι καὶ εὐθύμως φέρουσιν αὐτὸ προσιόν. ἄνθρωποι δὲ ὑπὲρ οὗ οὐκ ἴσασι δεδοίκασι καὶ ἡγοῦνται μέγιστον εἶναι κακὸν αὐτό. ἀναγηρύονται δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ τελευτῇ οἷον ἐπικήδειόν τι μέλος. ὁ δὲ ἀετὸς ἀδίκων ἄρχων πρὸς αὐτὸν οὐδέποτε ἐκράτησεν, ἡττήθη δὲ ἀεί; cf. also CPG II, 182: Macarius V. 40; CPG I, 258: Diogenianus V. 37; CPG I, 365: Gregory of Cyprus II. 78: κύκνειον ᾆσμα: ἐπὶ τῶν ἐγγὺς θανάτῳ ὄντων· οἱ γὰρ κύκνοι θνήσκοντες ᾄδουσιν; cf. also W. Geoffrey Arnott, "Swan Song," *Greece & Rome* 24 (1977): 149-153.

[193] For this proverb, see CPG II, 657: Apostoles XVI. 9: Ταντάλειοι τιμωρίαι: ἐπὶ τῶν ἀγαθὰ μὲν ἐπιτυχόντων, μὴ συγχωρουμένων δὲ ἀπολαύειν αὐτῶν. φασὶ γὰρ τοῦ Ταντάλου ἔμπροσθεν εἶναι παντοδαπὰ δένδρα· καὶ ἡνίκα ἂν τὴν χεῖρα ἐκτείνῃ λαβεῖν τι τῶν δένδρων, ἐκκλίνουσιν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ· ἢ ὅτι πηγὴ πλήρης ὕδατός ἐστι καὶ ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς λίθος μέγαλη κρέμαται· καὶ ἡνίκα ἂν κύψῃ τοῦ πιεῖν, πίπτει ἡ πέτρα καὶ οὐκ ἐᾷ αὐτὸν πιεῖν. καὶ τοῦτο ἀϊδίως; CPG I, 373: Gregory of Cyprus III, 73: Ταντάλου τάλαντα: ἐπὶ τῶν σφόδρα πλουσίων; cf. also CPG I, 309: Diogenianus VIII. 23; CPG I, 161-2: Zenobius VI. 4; CPG II, 772-3: Mantissae Proverbiorum II, 94.

[194] Cf. CPG II, 24: Diogenianus II, 45: Δεύτερος πλοῦς: ταύτην τὴν παροιμίαν σαφῆ ποιεῖ Φιλήμων· πλοῦς † δεύτερός ἐστι δήπου λεγόμενος, Ἂν ἀποτύχῃ ** τοῦ οὐρίου καὶ κώπαις πλεῖ· οἷον δευτέρα γνώμη καὶ πρᾶξις. Ἡ μεταφορὰ ἀπὸ τῶν ναυτιλλομένων; CPG II, 155: Macarius III. 20: Δεύτερος πλοῦς: ἐπὶ τῶν ἀσφαλῶς τι πραττόντων· παρόσον οἱ διαμαρτόντες κατὰ τὸν πρότερον πλοῦν ἀσφαλίζονται περὶ τὸν δεύτερον.

[195] Cf. CPG I, 47: Zenobius, II. 56: Ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι πηγαί: παροιμία ἐπὶ τῶν ὑπεναντίως λεγομένων ἢ γινομένων· οἷον εἰ ὁ πόρνος τὸν σώφρονα ἔλεγε πόρνον. Ἐπειδὴ οἱ ποταμοὶ ἄνωθεν κάτω ῥέουσιν, οὐ κάτωθεν ἄνω; CPG I, 185: Diogenianus I. 27; CPG II, 286: Apostoles II. 92.

that time "has moved the unmovable" (κινεῖ τὰ ἀκίνητα),[196] and the addressee of *ep.* 4 read almost the same, that it is time's habit "to turn things upside down" (τὰ ἀνωκάτω ποιεῖν).[197]

In *ep.* 8 Neamonites flattered his addressee, the judge Gregory Kleidas, by calling him *tritagōnistēs*[198] who "[similar to the wise] holds the eyes on the head" (τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς φέρων ἐπὶ κεφαλῆς). [199] In the same letter, he speaks of "the ox [standing] on the tongue," i.e., incapable of speaking (ὁ ἐπὶ γλώσσης βοῦς).[200] Furthermore, *ep.* 12, sent to John Kalampakes, begins with the saying "you shall say the thing seen in sleep" (εἰπὲ σὺ τὸ ἐνύπνιον).[201]

Neamonites attaches to *ep.* 9 "a bit of a verse,"[202] which he composed for his addressee, the judge Gregory Kleidas. The six verses of the poem written in dodecasyllable[203] and employing a "crisscross pattern" (*chiasmus*) merit quotation in full:

> The audacity deriving from your pure friendship, which puts forward the streams of justice, entirely silvery and without any filth that would make turbid the rays of truth, has convinced my vague motion towards words to tell such things in a free speech.[204]

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[196] Cf. CPG I, 197: Diogenianus II. 6: Ἀκίνητα κινεῖς: ὅτι οὐ δεῖ κινεῖν, οὐ Βωμοὺς, οὐ τάφους; CPG I, 22: Zenobius I. 55; CPG II, 265: Apostoles II. 3; cf. also CPG II, 5: Diogenianus I. 25; CPG II, 189: Macarius V. 98; cf. the Appendix.

[197] Cf. CPG II, 61: Gregory of Cyprus I. 61: Ἄνω κάτω πάντα: ἐπὶ τῶν τὴν τάξιν μεταστρεφόντων. Μένανδρος Ἐγχειριδίῳ· καὶ ἐν Χήρᾳ· Τὸ λεγόμενον τοῦτ᾽ ἐστὶ νῦν. Τἄνω κάτω, φασί, τὰ κάτω δὲ ἄνω.

[198] "one who takes the third part" – term applied by Demosthenes to Aeschines in *On the Crown* 18. 129.

[199] Cf. Ecclesiast 2: 14: τοῦ σοφοῦ οἱ οφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐν κεφαλῇ αὐτοῦ; cf. also Basil of Caesarea, *Commentary on the Prophet Isaiah* 10. 239; Procopius of Gaza, *Commentary on Isaiah*, PG 87. 2, 2028: ὡς σοφοῦ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ.

[200] Cf. Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 36; cf. also CPG I, 51: Zenobius II. 70: Βοῦς ἐπὶ γλώττης: παροιμία ἐπὶ τῶν μὴ δυναμένων παρρησιάζεσθαι, ἤτοι διὰ τὸ ἄφωνον τοῦ ζώου, ἢ διὰ τὸ τῶν Ἀθηναίων τὸ νόμισμα ἔχειν βοῦν ἐγκεχαραγμένον· ὅπερ ἐκτίνειν ἔδει τοὺς πέρα τοῦ δέοντος παῤῥησιαζομένους; CPG I, 358: Gregory of Cyprus I. 95; cf. also CPG I, 223: Diogenianus III. 48; CPG II, 332: Apostoles V. 7: Βοῦν ἐπὶ γλώττης: ὅ ἐστί νόμισμα. ἁρμόζει δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ῥητόρων τῶν λαμβανόντων νομίσματα ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ κατηγορῆσαι τινά, ἀλλὰ σιωπῆσαι; cf. also CPG II, 18: Diogenianus II. 2.

[201] Cf. CPG II, 563: Apostoles XII. 78b: Ὀνείρατά μοι λέγεις: ἐπὶ ψῶν ἄπιστα καὶ ἀδύνατα διηγουμένων· ὅθεν καὶ ἡ κοινὴ καὶ δημώδης παροιμία· τοῦτο κατ᾽ ὄναρ εἶδες.

[202] Cf. n. 97.

[203] Cf. Marc D. Lauxtermann, *The Spring of Rhythm: an Essay on the Political Verse and Other Byzantine Metres* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999).

[204] Cf. *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f.170^{v} l. 14-16:

> τοιαῦτα θάρρος σῆς καθαρ(ᾶς) φιλί(ας)
> ἐμ(ὴν) ἀμυδρὰν κίνησ(ιν) ἐς τοὺς λόγους
> ἔπεισ(εν) εἰπεῖν ἐς λαμυρὰν λαλίδα,
> ἥτις προΐσχει ῥεύματα τῆς δίκης
> ἀργυροειδῆ πάνυ (καὶ) δίχα ῥύπου
> τοῦ συνθολοῦντος ἀκτῖνας ἀληθί(ας).

Neamonites' affinity for composing dedicatory verses seems to be further underlined by the fact that the same folios containing his *epistulae* also transmit an epigram composed by Neamonites, presumably a colophon for a codex of Libanius which he had in his possession.[205]

[205] Cf. Niels Gaul, *Thomas Magistros und die spätbyzantinische Sophistik*..., 169–181; for the text of the epigram see n. 83.

SECOND PART: MAXIMOS NEAMONITES AS A SCHOOLMASTER

> *Do not even conceive of the idea that I would return any money to your reverence, for not either Hades or the fire ever return what has been seized before and has been appropriated like a lot. Much more so with regard to the schoolmasters, who in great abundance surpass many in poverty.*
>
> Maximos Neamonites[206]

1. Maximos Neamonites as a schoolmaster

Maximos Neamonites' *epistulae* depict their author as a schoolmaster (*mystagōgos*/ *grammatistēs*)[207] active in fourteenth–century Constantinople, true to generic conventions (and the realities of life), in a continuous quest for securing an income in exchange for his teaching services.

The first glance at Neamonites' activity as a schoolmaster is offered by the beginning and the end of *ep.* 1. The first lines of the letter speak about a young man, who presumably was Neamonites' student and the addressee's acquaintance or relative: "This young man, who is every day attending our [school], having me as his teacher, when I am giving him a share of the voice (utterance of words) and of the spoken word, and if you like, also the didactical one" (καθεκάστην ἐς τὴν ἡμετέραν φοιτῶντα μυσταγωγῷ[208] δῆθεν

[206] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep.* 2. 14–17. For the Greek text, see the Appendix.
[207] Cf. Part I. 3.
[208] Φοιτῶ εἰς γραμματιστοῦ is an expression denoting one's regular frequentation of the school of the elementary schoolmaster. Supposedly, Neamonites, as a *mystagōgos*, speaks of his private school (ἡμετέραν) of primary education (ἱερὰ/πεζὰ γράμματα). Sophia Mergiali gives a list of technical terms, albeit without indicating her source, referring to the primary education in Palaiologan Byzantium. Thus, the schoolmasters of *hiera grammata* were called γραμματιστής, παιδευτής, μυσταγωγός, and χαμαιδιδάσκαλος, and the correspondent schools φροντιστήριον, παιδευτήριον, σχολὴ γραμματικευομένων; cf. Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés...*, appendix 1, 243-5; For private and public education in late Byzantium, see C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries (1204-ca. 1310)* (Nicosia: Cyprus Research Centre, 1982), 90-110.

χρώμενον νεανίαν τουτονί, καὶ φωνῆς αὐτῷ καὶ λόγου τοῦ γε προφορικοῦ, εἰ βούλει δὲ καὶ διδασκαλικοῦ, μεταδιδόντος μου).[209]

It might even be that the archbishop [i.e., the recipient] was paying for his tuition fee. As it becomes clear, the student was in the wrong in front of his master (ταῦτα δίκας οὐ μικρὰς ὀφλισκάνοντα ὑπερημερίας εἵνεκα),[210] which caused a great upset (ὄκνον δ' ἐμοὶ καὶ λύπην προὐξένησε)[211] to Neamonites, "habitually very severe if ever such a thing happens" (πάνυ χαλεπ(ῶς) ἐξ ἔθους διακειμένῳ, εἴποτέ γε τοιοῦτο συμβαίη),[212] and was of such importance that it required a punishment (τὸ δίκας μ(ὲν) ἀφεῖναί οἱ οὔσας ἀπαραιτήτους);[213] indeed he feared it might give an advantage to his rivals on the "market" of *paideia* (ὃ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἕρμαιόν τι φαίνεται τῶν μυσταγωγῶν, ἤν τινα λάβοιεν ἐγκοπήν).[214]

However, by delivering to his master [i.e., Neamonites] the very pleasant news of the archbishop's arrival, "he related to me the only true pleasure of pleasures of the day, that is, the arrival of your holiness, the honourable and most–beloved head for me" (αὐτὸν δ' ἐμὲ πασῶν ἡδονῶν ταυτησὶ τῆς ἡμέρ(ας) ἡδον(ὴν) καὶ μόνην ἡγήσασθαι ἡ πρὸ(ς) ἡμᾶς τῆς τιμί(ας) (καὶ) φιλτάτης μοι κεφαλῆς, τῆς σῆς ἁγιότητος, ἄφιξις παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀγγελθεῖσα),[215] the student is exempted from having to bear any consequences of his action.

As we gather, the archbishop was residing in a remote city the name of which is not mentioned, outside of the Byzantine frontiers and the Byzantine cultural milieu. Neamonites' tone of compassion when describing his friend's condition, bereft of the benefits of living in Constantinople, betrays the insider perspective of a resident of this city. Thus, his words are bitter when referring to the city of residence of the archbishop

[209] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep*. 1. 1–3; cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 531.
[210] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep*. 1. 4.
[211] *Ep*. 1. 5–6.
[212] *Ep*. 1. 6–7.
[213] *Ep*. 1. 8–9.
[214] *Ep*. 1. 7–8.
[215] *Ep*. 1. 9–11.

that cannot offer the same benefits as "the rose-fingered Morning," a Homeric metaphor denoting Constantinople:[216]

> Oh, how many times have I cursed [the city], if I may say this, the lot that has fallen on you, because it [the city] was built so far away from our frontiers, in such a savage land when it comes to the Hellenic tongue and custom, and such a place so far removed from all the useful things which – to say it with Homer – the rose-fingered Morning [i.e., the east = Constantinople] offers.
>
> ὦ πόσα τῆς λαχούσης σε, εἰ θέμις εἰπεῖν, κατευξάμην, ὅτι δὴ κατῴκισται πόρρω τῶν ἡμετέρων ὁρίων, ἐν οὕτω μ(ὲν) ἀπηγριωμένῳ χωρίῳ ὅσα γε τῆς Ἑλληνίδος γλώττης (καὶ) ἔθους, οὕτω δ' ἀπῳκισμένην[217] τῶν ὅσα γε καθ' Ὅμηρον φάναι ἀνίσχει, χρηστῶν ἡ ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἠώς.[218]

But even though rejoicing at the news of his "beloved" friend's arrival from his western see, the very end of the letter is somehow unexpected. Neamonites writes that for the time being he cannot do more than send him an embrace in the form of the present letter. The reason which keeps Neamonites from meeting the archbishop is bitterly revealed as his demanding "duty:" "therefore we embrace you, wonderful soul, with this letter, because for the time being my service [duty], which should perish, does not permit me to enjoy a face-to-face conversation straightaway" (δι' ἅ τοι καὶ περιπτυσσόμεθά σε, τὴν θαυμασίαν ψυχήν, ταυτῃὶ τῇ γραφῇ, ἐπειδή γ' ἐκ τοῦ παραυτίκα τῆς κατ' ὄψιν ὁμιλίας ἀπολαῦσαι ἡ κάκιστ' ἀπολλυομένη λειτουργία μοι οὐκ ἀνῆκεν).[219] Thus, the very last lines of *ep.* 1 speak of Maximos Neamonites as a schoolmaster being in a condition in which he could not arbitrarily leave his present obligation (λειτουργία).[220]

[216] Cf. Homer, *Iliad* XII. 452.
[217] Kourouses' edition of *ep.* 1 has ἀπῳκισμένῳ. However, the manuscript reads ἀπῳκισμένην; cf. *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f. 166[r] l. 20–21; cf. also Plate I from the end of the present thesis.
[218] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep.* 1. 13–16.
[219] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep.* 1. 26–28.
[220] In *ep.* 64, addressed to Andronikos II (*r.* 1283-1328), the schoolmaster Theodore Hyrtakenos tells the emperor that he is either given the *siteresion*[220] (i.e., a salary from imperial treasury) or is relieved of his teaching duty, which may be what Neamonites denotes as λειτουργία: δέομαί σου τοῦ κράτους δυοῖν θάτερον, ἢ τῆς λειτουργίας ἀπαλλαγὴν ἢ τῶν βασιλικῶν πρυτανείων σιτηρεσίαν, ὡς ἂν, πενομένων διδασκομένων, ἐς τὴν σὴν τοῦ βασιλέως ψυχὴν διαβαίνῃ τό κέρδος· εἰ δ'οὖν, ἐρρέτω τὸ διδάσκειν; cf. Apostolos Karpozilos, "The Correspondance of Theodoros Hyrtakenos," *JÖB* 40 (1990): 275–94, at 289; cf. also Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés...*, 91, 235.

Whereas Neamonites' *ep.* 1 laid only a very general foundation for our knowledge of this figure, helping us gather the information that he was a schoolmaster practicing his teaching activities in Constantinople, more details of his profession and socio–economic standing come to light by reading some *epistulae* placed later in the collection, as it survives. Thus, he seems to have been in a modest financial situation, judging by his constant strife for retaining students and securing an income by means of fees. Evidence of this can be found in three of his letters that contain pleas addressed to parents, or rather fathers, to continue the financial support of their sons' education (*epp.* 2, 6, and 10).

In *ep.* 2, Neamonites is seen writing to a *sebastos*, presumably the very Atzymes mentioned in *ep.* 14,[221] to urge him not to change his mind and to withdraw his son from Neamonites' supervision. A similar request can be found in *ep.* 10 as well. Thus, after having conceded to the father's desire to have his son sent home, Neamonites tries to persuade the former to send the child back soon, so that he will not waste the knowledge already gained. Lastly, in *ep.* 6, after suggesting the father's moral obligation to do his best for his son's *paideia*, Neamonites brings into question the financial rewards he would expect for providing such a service for the son of a person of high social standing.

Thus, more precisely, *ep.* 2 shows Neamonites' attempts to convince Atzymes of the need to continue supporting the education of his son. In fact, the letter takes the shape of a plea for the father to remain true to his decision of giving his son an education and to keep Neamonites in the position of his son's teacher. However, behind the schoolmaster's "interest" to retain and educate the child, the letter embeds his endeavour to secure a living for himself by retaining a source of income. The very end of the *ep.* will shed more light on this aspect.

[221] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep.* 14. 5: Ἀτζύμῃ τῷ σεβαστῷ; cf. the Appendix.

Neamonites addresses the father using words of praise and urges him to remain constant to his prior decision of providing *paideia* to his child. Moreover, he employs his rhetorical skills by making references to classical figures ("the men-destroying Ares") and to the tide of Euripos, a *simile* much utilized by Palaiologan writers.[222] Thus, in his own words: "you should not be uncertain, oh, the best among *sebastoi*, or inconsistent and to be hurled back and forth with the changes of Euripos" (<ο>ὐδήπου σε χρὴ παλίμβολον εἶναι σεβαστῶν ἄριστε ἢ ἀστατεῖν (καὶ) μεταβολαῖς ταῖς Εὐρίπου συμμεταρριπίζεσθαι),[223] but on the contrary, "as if you have acquired your habit through close combat with men–destroying Ares, in the same manner [you should not] change [your] mind regarding the education of [your] son" (ὡσπερεὶ τὴν ἕξιν ταῖς τοῦ Ἄρεος διαμάχαις κτησάμενο(ς) τοῦ βροτολοιγοῦ, οὕτω δὴ (καὶ) [<ο>ὐδήπου σε χρὴ] τὰ πρὸς τὸν παῖδα μεταπηδᾶν).[224]

Neamonites tries to persuade the *sebastos* of the fact that a change of mind from his part would be unbefitting for the education of his offspring, for "this is of such fathers who are not longing to see their beloved sons to come into the possession of something good than of those who are jealous" (τοῦτο γὰρ π(ατέ)ρων οὐκ ἐφιεμένων μᾶλλον φίλους παῖδ(ας) ἰδεῖν καλοῦ τινος ἐν κατασχέσει γενέσθαι ἢ φθονούντων).[225] "On the contrary," stresses Neamonites, "you should be unmoved (ἐχρῆν ἀκίνητον εἶναι),[226] and almost like a statue (καὶ μονονοὺ ἀνδριάντα),[227] regarding what you decided concerning the education of your child" (οἷς συνέθου πρὸ(ς) τὴν τοῦ παιδὸς μάθησιν).[228]

Furthermore, Neamonites reminds the *sebastos* of the inherent natural capacity of his son (δεξιότητα φύσε(ως) ἐνοῦσαν αὐτῷ)[229] and subsequently expresses his readiness to

[222] Cf. Part I. 3 of the thesis.
[223] Cf. Maximos Neamonites, *Ep*. 2. 1–2.
[224] *Ep*. 2. 2–4.
[225] *Ep*. 2. 6–7.
[226] *Ep*. 2. 7–8.
[227] *Ep*. 2. 8.
[228] Ibid.
[229] *Ep*. 2. 10–11.

become the trainer (ἀλείπτης) of the child: "if you are to remain constant in the best of advices, then it will be all right, and you will have us as the trainer for your son" (ἡμᾶς ἀλείπτας ἕξεις ἐς παῖδα τὸν σὸν),[230] a trainer not inferior to those at the Olympic games (οὐκ ἐλάττους, οἶμαι, τῶν ἐν Ὀλυμπίοις πάλαί ποτ' εὐδοκιμησάντων).[231]

Neamonites ends *ep.* 2 with quite a blunt assertion from his part that might have even been intended as a coercive strategy. Thus, he straightforwardly makes known the fact that, in case the father changes his mind, he will not reimburse the money charged for his son's education: "do not even conceive of the idea that I would return any money" (ἄλλως δέ τ' ἀργύριον παλιννοστήσειν πρὸ(ς) τὴν σὴν σεβαστότητα μήδ' εἰς νοῦν βάλε).[232] Neamonites' impecunious economic condition can be gathered from the ensuing *simile* employed, emphasizing that schoolmasters do not return what has been taken, just as Hades or the fire do not restitute what they have seized: "not either Hades or the fire ever return what has been seized before and has been appropriated like a lot (οὔτε γὰρ Ἅδης οὔτε πῦρ ἀνεμοῦσί ποτε τὰ προκατειλημμ(έν)α καὶ ὡς κλῆρος οἰκειωθέντα). Much more so with regard to the schoolmasters, who in great abundance surpass many in poverty (πολλῷ γε δήπου γραμματιστὰς οἳ πολλῷ τῷ περιόντι τῇ ἐνδείᾳ τ(οὺς) πολλ(οὺς) ὑπερβάλλουσιν)."[233]

Ep. 6 is yet another sample of Neamonites' persuasive skills, employed to the end of ensuring financial resources from the father of one of his students. The two seem to have been close acquaintances, since Neamonites addresses his correspondent as "my friend" (φίλον ἐμόν)[234] and makes reference further on in the letter to their "friendship" (μυσταγωγόν μ' ἐποιήσω τοῦ σοῦ παιδὸ(ς) τῇ φιλίᾳ οὐχ ἧττον ἢ τῇ τύχῃ θαρρήσ(ας)).[235]

[230] *Ep.* 2. 11
[231] *Ep.* 2. 12–13.
[232] *Ep.* 2. 14–15.
[233] *Ep.* 2. 15–17.
[234] *Ep.* 6. 15.
[235] *Ep.* 6. 16.

Neamonites' intention of writing such a letter becomes obvious from the second and third paragraph, where he expresses his wish to have been transformed by the gods into a statue with only but the faculty of speech remaining, so that he could continue practicing the art of rhetoric, with no other (material) worries to impinge on his being:

> If verily the divine purpose had shown itself – as it is impossible [to describe] the things around you [*sg*.] differently; you [*pl*.] have ordered me to be a teacher (προσεκελεύετε εἶναί με διδάσκαλον) – at second thought I would have additionally demanded to be changed into a statue (in order not to be alive) (κατὰ δεύτερον πλοῦν εἰς ἀνδριάντα μὴ μεταποιηθῆναι ἔσεσθαι) except for [my] soul and its [the soul's] vocal organs (τ(ῶν) φωνητικῶν αὐτῆς ὀργάν(ων)), through which the means of the art [of rhetoric] (καλῶς τὰ τῆς τέχν(ης)) would be well accomplished by me; being somehow beyond incurring expenses and other necessities (δαπάν(ης) δὲ καὶ ἄλλης χρείας ἔξω που τυγχάν(ων)), I would not give myself to grief and offer no difficulties whatsoever to the fathers of my students [literally, 'of the sons'] (οὔτ' ἐμαυτὸν ἀνίᾳ ἐδίδουν καὶ π(ατ)ρᾶσι παίδων παρεῖ|χον οὐδαμῶς πράγματα).[236]

However, as "nature cannot be changed from its original configuration" (ἡ φύσις δ' ἡμῶν ἀμετάπτωτος ἧς ἀρχῆθ(εν) ἔτυχε διαπλάσεως),[237] and as he is not in such a state "beyond incurring expenses and other necessities," Neamonites turns to the real motive of the letter for, "having acquired a mindset which might benefit such old age, I should tell the truth to you especially."[238] It goes almost without saying that Neamonites does not continue by addressing his request in a straightforward manner.

The letter leaves little doubt about the high social status of Neamonites' addressee. Equally, judging by the good style in which it is written and the multitude of classical references and especially similes employed – in a manner resembling the one employed in *epp*. 1 and 2 –, one can easily gather that the current addressee was a well-educated person. This also confirms the fact that whenever a Byzantine letter writer decided to make use of

[236] *Ep*. 6. 6–11.
[237] *Ep*. 6. 12–13.
[238] *Ep*. 6. 13–14.

references to classical authors or figures, he did so carefully, so that his selections would fit the addressee's background.[239]

By the end of *ep.* 6, Neamonites makes a reference to "the [dignity] of your office" (τὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἔχει τῆς σῆς), if the term ἀρχή is to be understood in this way. Therefore, this is a card that Neamonites tries to play to his own interest by employing different ways of flattering his addressee. Thus he calls him a "disciple of Hermes" (Ἑρμοῦ μαθητὴν ὄντα)[240] (i.e., a student of rhetoric), and considers him "no small piece of luck, through which I continuously receive students" (οὐ μικρὸν ἔρμαιόν σε τῶν ἄλλων ἡγησάμ(ην) ᾧ τ(οὺς) παῖδ(ας) ἔχων διατελῶ),[241] equally praising as well his „capacity to make judgment from your [own] experience and conduct" (δύναμίν τε κριτικὴν ἔχοντα ἔκ τε πείρ(ας) καὶ ἀγωγῆς).[242] Actually, this echoes a similar case referred to later, in *ep.* 14. There, Neamonites asked the alleged father of one of his students to intercede for him so that he could become the teacher of the *sebastos* Atzymes' sons.[243] In both cases one can observe how Neamonites made use of his acquaintances and recipients as intermediaries for gaining more students. Moreover, judging by their content and language, one can even raise the hypothesis that these two *epistulae* (*ep.* 6 and *ep.* 14) may have had the same addressee.

Finally, in the same paragraph, Neamonites once more reveals the way in which he makes his living by underlying the fact that "I employ the art [of rhetoric] toward a living" (τῇ τέχνῃ χρῶμαι πρὸς πορισμ(ὸν)).[244]

After having acknowledged the education of the father, Neamonites turns to discussing that of the son. Thus, he suggests that it is necessary for the son too to receive a

[239] Cf. Part I. 3.
[240] *Ep.* 6. 14.
[241] *Ep.* 6. 18.
[242] *Ep.* 6. 19.
[243] *Ep.* 14. 9–17.
[244] *Ep.* 6. 17–18.

good education, as this would in turn reflect the positive influence of the father and be a mirror for the qualities of the latter. To produce a higher effect, Neamonites asks in a rhetorical manner whether the father is really doing all he could for the education and welfare of his son, using the latter's unaccomplished state as an excuse (οἱ δ' εἰδότ(ες), ἀλλ' οὐ χρὴ τοῦτ' εἰπεῖν, πρός γε εἰδότα τὸν λόγον ποιούμενο(ν) πλὴν ἐρήσομαί σε εἴ γε διατείνῃ τὸ ἀτελὲς τοῦ παιδό(ς) προβαλλόμενο(ς)).[245] What he seems to imply is that a son lacking in education would send a negative message about the father as well, about his concern and care for the child, and even about the latter's own state of education.

In the remainder of the letter, Neamonites employs a *simile* to describe his work of educating the child, with the aim of putting forward his pecuniary interests. Thus, a son's education is likened to a piece of land full of stones and thorns that is in need of much cleaning to be turned into arable land: (π(ὡς) ἂν οἴῃ γήδιον ἔχων πλῆρ(ες) πετρῶν τε καὶ ἀκανθῶν ᾖρημ(έν)ος ποιῆσαι εὔγειον).[246] If a man possessing such a land does not spend a large sum of money on a person willing to clean it, then he will have his plot unclean. Likewise, a father is left with an uneducated offspring, if not willing to pay the required fee, in this case to a teacher.

This last part of the letter abounds in references to payment, such as: "a very little recompensation" (ὀλιγομισθίᾳ μάλα μόνῃ),[247] "a lavish allowance" (τῇ χορηγίᾳ),[248] "bestowing many gifts on the one who can do the cleaning" (νύττων συχναῖς τῶν δωρεῶν τὸν δυνάμενον ἐκκαθᾶραι),[249] or "more investment" [literally, 'expenditure'] (πλείονο(ς) δὲ δαπάνης),[250] as well as allusions to the "heavy work" of providing an education (τὸ βαρὺ τοῦ

[245] *Ep.* 6. 27–29.
[246] *Ep.* 6. 30–31.
[247] *Ep.* 6. 32.
[248] *Ep.* 6. 34.
[249] *Ep.* 6. 35.
[250] *Ep.* 6. 37.

πόνου διαφέρων).[251] Therefore, the letter could be read as a plea for a raise in the allowance Neamonites gathers from the father in exchange for educating his son (τοῦτο ἦν καὶ περὶ τοῦ σοῦ παιδὸ(ς) οἵου φίλων ἄριστε, ἐπεὶ πολλῆς μ(ὲν) δεῖται ... εἴ γε χρεὼν γενέσθαι τοιοῦτον ὁποῖον καὶ τὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἔχει τῆς σῆς).[252]

Ep. 10 depicts Neamonites sending another *pro domo* request in order to secure his income. Similar to *ep.* 2, *ep.* 10 makes reference to a father who changed his mind regarding the education of his son, and carries Neamonites' pleas for the continuation of the child's studies. Moreover, he mainly uses the same arguments, by appealing to the paternal authority and responsibility. Thus, he holds the view that it is the duty of the father to choose the best path for his son and provide him with a befitting education. Apart from that, it would be unbecoming to change a previously agreed-upon decision: "Look, I have sent you your son (ἰδού σοι πέπομφα τ(ὸν) υἱόν); for it would have been not befitting to contradict your order, and yet, it would be necessary to give heed rather to the previous orders than to change the mind."[253]

Interestingly, although *ep.* 2 and *ep.* 10 share the same theme, significant differences become visible at a closer examination of the vocabulary and the images employed. Thus, unlike *ep.* 2 which contains classical references and *similes*, *ep.* 10 is more concise in style, not having too much ornament. This could be an indication of the fact that Neamonites' addressee was a less-educated person. So far, we have seen that Neamonites quoted Euripides, Homer (*ep.* 1), employed the *similes* of the tide of Euripos, the trainers (ἀλεῖπται) at the Olympic games, Hades (*ep.* 2), etc. Therefore, the mere fact that such references are lacking from *ep.* 10, may imply that its addressee was of a lower intellectual background.

[251] *Ep.* 6. 33.
[252] *Ep.* 6. 35–38.
[253] Cf. *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12, f. 170^{v} l. 25–26.

In fact, Neamonites did employ a *simile* in *ep.* 10: "because sometimes the same issues also happen in notaries' offices about last wills (τοῖς τῶν διαθηκ(ῶν) γραμματείοις),[254] that is, the later orders become stronger than the previous ones (τῶν πρώτων ἐπικρατέστερα τὰ ὕστερα γίνεσθαι),[255] we deemed it necessary to assent to your second orders." The same image is reinforced toward the end of the letter, where Neamonites underlines that if the father does not forget what is important for his son and keeps the promise he already made, then Neamonites will keep his as well. Thus, he will educate the child since he already took the commitment to do this. Moreover, the young man (τὸν νέον) will be the one benefiting the most from this agreement, since the current state of staying at home is endangering the knowledge he accumulated so far: "it would not befit that the young [man] to stay at home (τὴν ἐν οἴκοι ποιεῖσθαι διατριβὴν οὐ προσήκει).[256] Rather [he should] promptly undertake [his studies] again (ἀλλὰ τῆς πάλιν ἅπτεσθαι τάχιον),[257] so that he will not become forgetful (ἐπιλήσμω<ν>) of the beginnings which I sowed with a great effort" (τῶν ἀρχῶν ἃς πολλῷ τῷ πόνῳ κατεβαλλόμ(ε)θα).[258]

Ep. 10 also echoes gender issues, rendering a glimpse of how a woman may have been perceived in (late) Byzantium, through the lens of men. Thus, it is implied that the mother of the student would take great joy in having him by her side so that he "might become a pleasant sight" for her (δέχου τοίνυν αὐτ(ὸν) φίλην ὄψιν τῇ μ(ητ)ρὶ γενησόμ(εν)ον).[259] However, what is acceptable in the case of a woman is not in that of a man, and Neamonites stresses that a father's primary concern should be a child's best

[254] *Ep.* 10. 3.
[255] *Ep.* 10. 4.
[256] *Ep.* 10. 12–13.
[257] *Ep.* 10. 13.
[258] *Ep.* 10. 14.
[259] *Ep.* 10. 6.

interest in the long term, "for you are a father and to long for this [thing] does not befit you" (π(ατ)ὴρ γ(ὰρ) εἶ (καὶ) ζητεῖν οὐ τοῦτο προσήκει).[260]

Moreover, Neamonites reminds his addressee of the fact that he should not consent to his son's lacking *paideia*, as this is not becoming of the role of a father: "you would be incapable of preferring the view of the child to the pure fortune [i.e. education] (χρήμ(α)τος ἀκηράτου)[261] and to seeing [your child] empty of *paideia*" (κεν(ὸν) ὄψεσθαι τῆς παιδεί(ας)).[262] To further accentuate his duty as the male parent, capable of taking rational decisions, Neamonites urges his recipient to resist his wife's will. The latter is referred to as caring "little, if anything" of her son's education (οὖ δὴ μικρὰ ἢ οὐδ(ὲν) φροντίζουσα μ(ήτ)ηρ),[263] being more inclined, because of "the law of nature" (φύσεως πολιορκουμένη νόμῳ)[264] to give heed to her maternal feelings and keep the child at home, regardless of the consequences this action will have on his further development: "But I think that the mother who cares little, if anything of this [education], and who is besieged by the law of nature, has convinced you to change your mind."[265] But these gender issues will be further discussed in the second part of the present section where we will dwell on Neamonites' fourth letter, seemingly written on behalf of a woman.

Ep. 14, the last in Neamonites' letter collection as it survives, depicts him writing to a third party, allegedly the father of one of his students, so that the recipient would promote Neamonites' interest in educating the sons of the *sebastos* Atzymes. Apparently, Neamonites' addressee is a friend of the court official and commands some influence over him. Moreover, he already knows one of Neamonites' former students, who afterwards became an eager servant of the *sebastos*. Therefore, Neamonites points to the high level of

[260] *Ep.* 10. 7.
[261] *Ep.* 10. 8.
[262] *Ep.* 10. 8–9.
[263] *Ep.* 10. 9.
[264] *Ep.* 10. 10.
[265] *Ep.* 10. 9–10.

education of his former student as a credential for his skills in providing an education for the sons of the *sebastos*.

Although the name of the addressee remains unknown, those of the other two characters of the letter are mentioned. Thus, the name of the *sebastos* is Atzymes, whom Kourouses equates with Michael Atzymes,[266] the addressee of Michael Gabras' letters and Manuel Philes' poems, and Neamonites' former student is the son of a certain Bolas.[267] This makes *ep.* 14 stand apart from the bulk of the other *epp.*, which do not mention, with the exception of *ep.* 13, any name.

Even though Neamonites seems to have desired employment from the part of the *sebastos*, yet he did not directly address Atzymes. Rather he wrote to one of Atzymes' acquaintances, most probably one of his friends. Thus, he entreats his addressee to take his bidding and lay it open in front of the *sebastos* – "do become my patron by speaking to the *sebastos*" (γενοῦ μοι λέγων ..., πρόξενος, πρὸς τὸν ... σεβαστόν) – as the latter,

> [who is] good and full of graces (χρηστὸν μὲν (καὶ) [(καὶ)] πασ(ῶν) γέμοντα χαρίτων),[268] no less however bent down by the supplications of his friends (οὐχ ἧττον δ' ἐπικαμπτόμ(εν)ον ἱκετείαις τῶν φίλων);[269] for he would grant this favour to you rather than to any of those who is related [to him] by *genos* [i.e., a family relation] (σοὶ γ(ὰρ) μᾶλλον ταυτηνὶ τ(ὴν) χάριν δοίη ἂν ἥ γε τῷ τῶν γένει προσηκόντ(ων)),[270] even if it should happen that all relatives come together for mediation at the same time.

Neamonites may have been a teacher to his addressee's sons. This card is played by the schoolmaster to his interest by urging the later to listen and "appreciate" his request, as any father that cares for his son would do:

> as fathers who care for their sons appreciate the request of teachers the most (ἐπειδὴ π(ατέ)ρες διδασκάλ(ων) αἴτησ(ιν) τῶν παίδ(ων) κηδόμ(εν)οι),[271] if it should befittingly have come to his mind to care for the

[266] *PLP* 1633.
[267] *PLP* 3283.
[268] *Ep.* 14. 9–10.
[269] *Ep.* 14. 10.
[270] *Ep.* 14. 11–12.
[271] *Ep.* 14. 13–14.

> one who will be in the present need (τ(ὸν) ἐς τ(ὴν) παροῦσαν χρεί(αν) ἐσόμ(εν)ον)[272] [i.e., Neamonites], you might also display, marvellous one, – to say the same thing – the veneration with which you cherish the teachers of [your] sons" (δείξειας ἂν θαυμάσιε ταὐτὸν εἰπ(εῖν) (καὶ) ὁποῖ(ον) σέβας τρέφεις τ(οῖς) τῶν υἱέων μύσταις).[273]

Another trump used by the schoolmaster for promoting his qualities as a schooolmaster is a reference to one of his disciples. Thus, we are told in the beginning of *ep.* 14, of a certain "son of Bolas" who, having studied grammar under Neamonites, is now an eager servant of the *sebastos*. Neamonites' addressee seems to have known this son of Bolas:

> for you know – I know it well – that the son of Bolas happened to be a former disciple of mine when the things pertaining to grammar were pursued earnestly by him (τὸν Βῶλα ὄντά μοι τῶν πάλαι μὲν ὁμιλητῶν ὅτε (καὶ) τὰ ἐς γραμματ(ικ)(ὴν) αὐτῷ ἐσπουδάζετο);[274] now having changed that pursuit, he was seen quite eagerly as a servant to Atzymes the *sebastos* (νυνὶ δὲ τ(ὴν) σπουδ(ὴν) μεταθεὶς ἐκείνην ὤφθη μάλα σπουδαί(ως) ὑπηρετήσ(ας) Ἀτζύμῃ τῷ σεβαστῷ).[275]

Thus, Neamonites points to the high level of education of his former student, most probably noticed by the *sebastos*, and uses this as a "record" for his high qualification in providing education.

Even though aware that such a request from his part would have yielded a greater success if presented in person, Neamonites reveals towards the end of *ep.* the reason for which he resorted to writing a letter instead. Thus, it appears that he is suffering from his kidneys to such an extent that he is rendered by this sickness "almost incapable of moving" (εἰ δὲ δὴ γραφῇ τὴν ἱκετεί(αν) προβάλλομαι (καὶ) μὴ καταπρόσωπ(ον) (...) τὸ γ(ὰρ) ἐν νεφροῖς πάθος μικροῦ (καὶ) ἀκίνητ(ον) τίθησι).[276]

[272] *Ep.* 14. 15.
[273] *Ep.* 14. 16–17.
[274] *Ep.* 14. 2–3.
[275] *Ep.* 14. 3–5.
[276] *Ep.* 14. 18–21.

References to Neamonites' physical suffering have been frequent in other *epp.* as well (*epp.* 5, 12, 13). Thus, in *ep.* 5 he was writing that "my senses have become worn out by the many and frequent illnesses of the body" (προκατείργαστο γάρ μοι τὰ αἰ|σθητήρια ταῖς πολλαῖς (καὶ) συχναῖς νοσηλίαις τοῦ σώματος).[277] In *ep.* 7 he speaks of a long and serious illness: "the long-lasting illness made me completely idle to such an extent that those who knew my usual dealings do not even believe that I was still alive" (ἡ πολυχρόνιος νόσος ἀργὸν παντάπασιν πεποίηκέ με καὶ τοσοῦτον ὥστε καὶ τοῖς εἰδόσι τἀμὰ μὴ πιστεύεσθαι ζῆν).[278] Moreover, in the same letter he refers to himself as being "worn out by time and illness" (ἡμᾶς τετρυχωμένους ὄντ(ας) χρόνῳ (καὶ) ἀσθενείᾳ),[279] etc. However, in none of these references did he become particular as to the cause of his suffering.

In the very last paragraph of *ep.* 14 Neamonites trusts that his message will come across to his addressee with the same force, even though delivered in written form, by means of a letter, "the inanimate logos, when being uttered, is capable of just the same as an act from [live] voice or by [live] sight" (λόγος ἄψυχος ταὐτ(ὸν) τῷ ἀπὸ γλώττ(ης) (καὶ) κ(α)τ' ὄψιν δύνατ(αι) προϊέμ(εν)ος),[280] since "some voice exists" – (to say it with Euripides)[281] "as art of someone who brings the supplication – in arms, hands, and hair" (γένητ(αι) τίς φθόγγος – τέχνη τινὸς τοῦ τ(ὴν) ἱκεσί(αν) προσάγοντος – ἔν τε βραχίοσι χερσί τε (καὶ) κόμαισιν).[282]

The reading of Neamonites' letters has so far brought us valuable insights into the aspects of his profession and socio-economic standing, revealing his constant strife for retaining students and securing an income. In this he can be compared to Theodore Hyrtakenos, whom I shall discuss in my "Contextualizations and Conclusions." Yet another

[277] Cf. *Chis. Vat.* R. IV. 12, f. 168^{r} l. 9–10; cf. Plate 3.
[278] *Ep.* 7. 1–2.
[279] *Ep.* 7. 33.
[280] *Ep.* 14. 26–27.
[281] *Hecuba* 836-40.
[282] *Ep.* 14. 29–30.

of the schoolmaster's endeavours can be gathered from *ep.* 11, which is telling of his vocation as a bookman. Thus, he is seen in the quest for a book, trying to persuade one of his acquaintances to lend him a copy, so that he could produce one as well for his personal use. Apart from firmly placing Neamonites' name among those borrowing and copying books, this letter also provides a relevant addition to our knowledge of book transmission economy in the Palaiologan era.[283]

The subject of *ep.* 11 revolves around a book which Neamonites has borrowed from his correspondent, John Kritopoulos, who was not the "first owner" of it, but a recipient as Neamonites. This book seems to have been a valuable and "desired book, not only for the owner, but also for the one who will take it in his hands" (ἡ πεποθημ(έν)η βίβλο(ς)... μὴ τῷ κεκτημ(έν)ῳ μόνον, ἀλλὰ (καὶ) τῷ ληψομ(έν)ῳ ταύτην ἐς χεῖρας).[284] Moreover, Neamonites does not refrain from describing the books as:

> being in a good state by means of both the good character of the one who wrote it (εὖ ἔχουσαν τῷ καλῷ χαρακτῆρι τοῦ γράψαντος)[285] and of its first owner, who, due to the ambition to know (τῆς φιλοτιμί(ας) χάριν εἰδέναι),[286] has spent much of his gold in order to become master of such a possession (οὑτωσὶ μάλα συχν(οὺς) τῶν χρυσῶν κ(α)τακενώσαντι τοῦ γενέσθαι τοιούτου κύριον κτήμ(α)τος).[287]

The mention of "ambition" (φιλοτιμία) seems to go with Nikephoros Choumnos' (*c.*1260–1327) assertion that the publication of a literary work was propelled by two main reasons: either, as Choumnos underlined in his letters, it was published "so as to be useful"

[283] On books and higher education, see C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium...*, 133-158; cf. Leighton D. Reynolds, Nigel G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*, 3rd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).
[284] *Ep.* 7. 1–2.
[285] Cf. Basile Atsalos, *La Terminologie du livre-manuscrit à l'époque byzantine: Première partie. Termes désignant le livre-manuscrit et l'écriture* (Thessalonike: University Studio Press, 2001).
[286] *Ep.* 7. 8.
[287] *Ep.* 7. 8–9.

(κατὰ χρείαν), or "for the sake of ambition" (φιλοτιμίας ἕνεκεν).[288] However, Börje Bydén considers this dichotomy as being false and deems that:

> no doubt there were works in the fourteenth century, as today, which did more for the needs of the readers than they did for the reputation of the author – and vice versa. But then as now, authors were fully capable of simultaneously being helpful to others and pursuing their personal interests, without becoming schizophrenic. Metochites knew this, and he congratulated Plutarch on having succeeded in both respects.[289]

When it comes to *ep.* 11, Neamonites confesses that, because of lack of time (τῇ τοῦ χρόνου βραχύτητι),[290] he did not then manage to benefit from it, but only to see it (οὐδ(ὲν) πλέον ἀπ᾽ αὐτὴς ὀνάμενοι ... ἢ τότε θεᾶσθαι βίβλον).[291] Now, upon having to return the book back to the owner, he makes a plea in front of Kritopoulos to lend him his personal copy in order to make one of his own as well. Both the purchase of books and their transcription by professional scribes were an expensive affair. Therefore, numerous men of letters, scholars, schoolmasters, among which also Neamonites, and students resorted instead to the practice of borrowing books from those who possessed them, either for reading or copying them for themselves.[292]

Thus, in order to make his letter more persuasive, Neamonites resorts to rhetorical devices. First, he reassures his correspondent that the book has been sent back in a perfect condition, for lack of time "untouched" (ἀθιγῆ),[293] which fends the latter from any

[288] Cf. Nikephoros Choumnos, *Letter* 72, *AN* 85. 7-11: Οὐ μὴν ἀλλ', ἐπειδὴ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων οὐδενός σοι μέλει πλὴν τοῦ γε τὰς ὀφρῦς ἀνεσπακὼς καθῆσθαι, λόγους δ' οὐκ ἀτιμάζεις καὶ τούτων μᾶλλον ἐν ἐπιστολαῖς χαίρεις, τί καὶ τὴν γλῶτταν πεδήσας ἔχεις, καὶ ταῦτα μὴ κατὰ χρείαν τὰ πλείω, φιλοτιμίας δὲ μόνης ἕνεκεν εἰωθυῖαν κινεῖσθαι; see also Idem, *Letter* 3, *AN* 4. 10, *Letter* 4, *AN* 5. 9-10, *Letter* 35, *AN* 42. 22, and *Letter* 78, *AN* 94. 18 .

[289] Börje Bydén, "The Nature and Purpose of the *Semeioseis gnomikai*: The Antithesis of Philosophy and Rhetoric," In *Theodore Metochites on Ancient Authors and Philosophy. Semeioseis gnomikai 1–26 & 71*, trans. Karin Hult, 245–288, at 262–3, Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia 65 (Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 2002).

[290] *Ep*. 11. 6.

[291] *Ep*. 11. 6–7.

[292] Cf. C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium*..., 144-8.

[293] *Ep*. 11. 3.

"distress" (σὺ δ' ἐμοὶ δίκαιο(ς) μῶμον προστρίψειας),[294] as well as advancing Neamonites' cause in a subtle way by implying his trustworthiness.

After confessing that he did not have the time to benefit from it "any more ... than to see the book at that time," the author begins flattering his addressee for the privilege the latter was given of not only being allowed to transcribe such book but also of "confidently perusing it to the fullness:"

> You, as I believe, more than we, ought to pay a huge gratitude (ὀφείλεις ἀποτίσαι πολλὰς τῶν χαρίτων)[295] both to one who has brought it forth (τῷ προγεγονότι) and to the present owner (τῷ νῦν); to the former because he compiled it in such a way to get praise from everybody (ὡς συντεταχότι τοιαύτην οἵαν παρὰ πάντ(ων) ἴσχειν ἔπαινον),[296] to the latter because he entrusted you to keep [the book] for a long time and (τῷ δ' ὡς ἐμπιστεύσαντί σοι ἐς πολὺ τοῦ χρόνου κ(α)τασχεθῆναι),[297] as it seems, collecting for yourself a befitting profit (ἱκανὴν ὠφέλειαν ἐρανισαμ(έν)ῳ);[298] this [profit] on the one hand from the transcription of what lies in [the book] (i.e., the content) (ἐκ τῆς μεταγραφῆς τῶν ἐγκειμένων),[299] and also not a little [profit] from comfortably reading it in its entirety (ἐκ τοῦ διϊέναι ταύτην ἀδεῶς ἐς κόρον).[300]

For instance, in *ep.* 38 Michael Gabras congratulates the *sebastos* Atzymes, very likely the recipient of Neamonites' *epp.* 2 and the *sebastos* mentioned in *ep.* 14, for having edited posthumously the writings of an anonymous learned man, among which the most important text was an oration on the emperor.[301]

Once the value of the book has been praised, Neamonites gives voice to his request of wishing to partake in the benefits of the book, by asking for Kritopoulos' personal copy. For this, Neamonites employs one rhetorical tool: the pun πῖδαξ ἢ πίναξ [i.e., spring/fountain or list/catalogue]: ἀλλ' εἰ μεταδοίης οὖν μοι ὧν αὐτὸς ἐδρέψω τῆς βίβλου

[294] *Ep.* 11. 3.
[295] *Ep.* 11. 10–11.
[296] *Ep.* 11. 11–12.
[297] *Ep.* 11. 12.
[298] *Ep.* 11. 13.
[299] *Ep.* 11. 13–14.
[300] *Ep.* 11. 14.
[301] Perceivably but purely hypothetically, this might be the same book Neamonites is talking about.

χάριτος καὶ μὴ τὴν ποτιμωτάτην μόνον δείξας ἔχεις πίδακα ἢ (καὶ) πίνακα τῆς δ' ἀπολαύσε(ως) οὐδαμ(ῶς) ἀπείργοις).[302] Moreover, Neamonites writes that he will be very grateful to "the first one (i.e., the author/compiler), to the one after him (i.e., the owner), and if you want, thirdly to you" (i.e., to Kritopoulos) (τάχ' ἂν τῷ γε προτέρῳ τῷ τε μετ' αὐτ(ὸν) εἰ δὲ βούλει (καὶ) σοὶ τρίτῳ χάριν εἴσομ(εν) οὐ μικρ(ὰν)),[303] and will remain truthful to the original in copying the book: "we will not deem it [i.e., Kritopoulos' copy] to be different from the image and sample decided beforehand" (διενηνοχέναι μηδ(ὲν) οἰησόμεθα τῆς προδιειλημμένης εἰκόνος ἢ παραδείγματος).[304]

As a last recourse, he makes reference to the benefits such a thing would yield for others as well:

> Their gratefulness will spread not only hearby, but also to those distant (οὐκ εἰς τὰ σύνεγγυς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τ(οὺς) διϊσταμ(έν)ους μετοχετεύεται);[305] [gratefulness] from the conspicuous and continuous focus of the one eager to imitate (copy) the beauty of the art, on the one hand (σπουδάζοντος ἀπομάξασθαι τὸ καλ(ὸν) τῆς τέχνης),[306] by being offered by those who, encountering it by chance, drink its pleasant and clear drink to fullness on the other (τὸ πότιμον αὐτῆς καὶ διειδὲς εἰς κόρον πιεῖν).[307]

Even thought Neamonites does not explicitly say what the content of the book was, one may infer that the codex may have been transmitting Greek rhetorical texts,[308] so much

[302] *Ep*. 11. 15–17.
[303] *Ep*. 11. 17–18.
[304] *Ep*. 11. 19–20.
[305] *Ep*. 11. 20–21.
[306] *Ep*. 11. 22.
[307] *Ep*. 11. 22–23.
[308] For comprehensive introductions and handbooks on Greek rhetoric, see *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rhetoric*, ed. Erik Gunderson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, ed. Ian Worthington (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007); Thomas Habinek, *Ancient Rhetoric and Oratory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005); Laurent Pernot, *La Rhétorique dans l'Antiquité* (Paris: Librairie générale française, 2000), English translation *Rhetoric in Antiquity* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005); *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period, 330 BC–AD 400*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997); See also George Alexander Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), Idem, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Greek rhetoric is a complex term standing for a wide range of phenomena – performance, persuasion, etc. Poulakos, offering an overview of the different interpretative approaches to Greek rhetoric, and emphasizing the contemporary vogue of the "rhetorical turn," defines "rhetoric" as nominating and designating "many ways of being and performing in the world;" Cf. Takis Poulakos, "Modern Interpretations of Classical Greek Rhetoric," In *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, 20.

"desired" (πεποθημένη) – to say it with Neamonites – circulated, and highly esteemed within the circles of Palaiologan *pepaideumenoi.*

The content of Neamonites' *ep.* 11 finds more corroboration from the letter collections of the time, which testify to the widespread ownership and circulation of books. These collections also shed light on the dissemination mechanisms of books, the size of the intellectual elite, the patterns of interaction and familiarity between the *literati* and their socio–economic background, of which *ep.* 11 provide but one *tessera.*

Among the well–known Palaiologan *philobibloi* one has to mention Gregory of Cyprus,[309] Maximos Planoudes, Constantine Akropolites, Theodora Raoulaina, the niece of Michael VIII,[310] and Nikephoros Choumnos. Yet another collector of books, Nikephoros Moschopoulos, the metropolitan of Crete (*fl.*1285–1311/12)[311] possessed an impressive private library. Indication of its size is to be found in a letter sent to him by Manuel Moschopoulos, his nephew, in which it is reported that four horses were needed to carry the metropolitan's luggage consisting mainly of his books.[312]

Michael Gabras, a correspondent of the *sebastos* Atzymes whom Neamonites' supposedly addressed *ep.* 2, also had a keen interest in books. His considerable letter collection (462 letters) testifies to his intellectual pursuits as a bookman. For example, *epp.* 1-3, 11, 15, 266, 269, 260, 270, 303 depict Gabras asking particular manuscripts on loan (Plato, Aelius Aristides) from his friend Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos.[313]

[309] Cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio de Chipre…*
[310] For instance, the extant manuscript*Vaticanus graecus* 1899 was copied by her; C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium…*, 140; Several *deluxe* biblical and liturgical codices have been attributed to her; cf. Hugo Buchthal and Hans Belting, *Patronage in Thirteenth-Century Constantinople: An Atelier of Late Byzantine Book Illumination and Calligraphy* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1978); however, Alice-Mary Talbot has contested the candidate proposed by Buchthal and Belting and proposed pertinent arguments in favour of another Theodora, not the niece of Michael VIII, but his wife, the empress Theodora Palaiologina; cf. her article, "Empress Theodora Palaiologina, Wife of Michael VIII," *DOP* 46 (1992): 295-303, esp. 301-2.
[311] *PLP* 19376.
[312] Ihor Ševčenko, "The Imprisonment of Manuel Moschopoulos in the Year 1305 or 1306," 134.
[313] Cf. Apostolos Karpozilos, "Books and Bookmen…," 267; *PLP* 20826.

The circulation of books in late Byzantium was widespread and not confined only among the members of a "close–knit" elite group as it has been previously suggested.[314] This fact can be drawn from the extant collections of letters.[315] For instance, Theodore Hyrtakenos' correspondence, amounting to ninety–three letters,[316] records his intellectual interests and pursuits as a bookman, continuously borrowing and lending books from his contemporaries. From the *epi tou kanikleiou* Nikephoros Choumnos he borrowed a set of books among which a philosophical treatise *On the Soul* (Περὶ Ψυχῆς) (for instance, *epp*. 5, 6, 86, 91). The *megas logothetēs* Theodore Metochites and *protobestiarios* Konstantinos Loukites are yet other correspondents from whom Hyrtakenos did not hesitate to demand manuscripts (*epp*. 11, 18, 37).[317]

In the letter addressed to the *prōtobestiaria*[318] Theodora, Nikephoros Choumnos draws a suggestive comparison between scholars and craftsmen. In it, he underlines that the possession of books is as important a condition for scholars in the pursuit of learning as the familiarity with tools is for craftsmen in the exercise of their trade.[319] *Ep*. 11 reveals Neamonites precisely in this hypostasis of a schoolmaster endeavouring to ensure for himself the possession of an important book. The letter is a revelatory testimony of the economy of book lending and borrowing, offering a glimpse at the subtleties of the process. Moreover, it firmly puts Neamonites' name among those Palaiologan philobibloi.

Throughout his letters, Neamonites employs a plethora of quotations and references to classical authors, especially Homer and Euripides (the first author studied in *enkyklios paideia*), who he is very likely to have taught. These facts and also the *progymnasma*

[314] Cf. Ihor Ševčenko, "Society and Intellectual Life in the Fourteenth Century," 70.
[315] Cf. Apostolos Karpozilos, "Books and Bookmen…"; His article investigates three major letter collections - Theodore Hyrtakenos, Nikephoros Choumnos, and Michael Gabras – the evidence for book circulation in the first half of the fourteenth century.
[316] An edition of Hyrtakenos' letter-collection, preserved in a fourteenth-century *codex unicus – Paris gr. 1209*, has been announced for some time by G. Fatouros and A. Karpozilos.
[317] Cf. Apostolos Karpozilos, "Books and Bookmen …," 257–9.
[318] Cf. *ODB* 1749-50.
[319] Nikephoros Choumnos, *Letter* 77, *AN* 93–4.

which he presumably composed (*ep.* 4) – to be analysed in the second part of the present section – are clear indications of Neamonites' level of education and training in rhetoric. Moreover, as a schoolmaster, he may have possessed his own library comprising of handbooks supporting his teaching activities and presumably codices containing rhetorical texts. In fact, it seems that Neamonites did have in possession a manuscript of Libanius (a major rhetorical model of the Palaiologan period),[320] as evidenced by the extant epigram that he composed for this codex. The text of the epigram has been transmitted, as already mentioned,[321] by the same manuscript preserving Neamonites' *epp*., *Vat. Chis*. R. IV. 12, f. 173^{v}.

In Byzantium, like in the Graeco-Roman period, the educational curriculum consisted of three phases: primary education (*hiera grammata*) which offered *propaideia* in reading, writing, and spelling, followed by *enkyklios paideia* (general education) that included mainly the study of grammar based on the analysis of texts. It was at this stage when the students were initiated in the "little–rhetoric"[322] by introducing them to the use of the circle of the composition exercises known as *progymnasmata* (i.e., preliminary exercises to rhetoric). In fact, for many of those who had progressed this far, this stage was the end of their education; from the evidence gathered in this sub–chapter, it seems that it was at these levels that Neamonites would have been active.

By reading Neamonites' *epp*., one gets acquainted with a schoolmaster resident and active in Constantinople in the first decades of the fourteenth-century, eking out a meagre living through his teaching activities. Neamonites' financial shortcomings are revealed by his repeated attempts of sending letters to persons of high social standing, allegedly court

[320] Cf. Niels Gaul, *Thomas Magistros und die spätbyzantinische Sophistik* ..., 169–188.
[321] Cf. Part I. 2 of the present thesis; for the text of Neamonites' epigram, see n. 83.
[322] On his commentary on the *progymnasmata*, John of Sardis (ninth century) defines them as "little rhetoric:" ἰστέον δέ, ὅτι τὰ προγυμνάσματα μικρὰ ῥητορικὴ ἔστιν. Cf. George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric,* Writings from the Greco-Roman World 10 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 176.

officials, in order to obtain the financial means necessary for his survival. We shall return to this in the context of Theodore Hyrtakenos. Moreover, one has borne witness to Neamonites' intellectual pursuits as a bookman. Staying on the level of the rhetorician/progymnasmatist, in the next sub–section we shall see Maximos Neamonites engaged in composing a rather different kind of letter, one written in the voice, '*ek prōsopou*,' as it were, of a woman and which can be thought of as a rhetorical exercise of *ēthopoiïa.*

2. A woman's plea for financial support or an *ēthopoïïa* in Maximos Neamonites' *ep.* 4

As mentioned in the first part of the thesis, *ep.* 4 appears to have been written by Neamonites on behalf, '*ek prosōpou*,' as it were, of a woman, containing the latter's plea addressed to a bishop ("my most divine lord" – δέσποτά μου θειότ(α)τε; "your holiness" – ἡ σὴ ἁγιότης), to the interest of her daughter. The woman is a widow and apparently a nun, having two daughters in her care. One of them took the monastic habit like her mother, whereas the other has not yet found a vocation in life, the lack of material resources keeping her from marrying. It is on behalf of the latter that the woman writes to the bishop in the hope of receiving financial support. Thus, she presents the miserable situation of her daughter, who is in desperate need of assistance. Therefore, their hopes turn to the bishop, whom the woman calls "guardian" (φύλαξ) and "imitator" (μιμητής) of the first high-priest, Christ. Her yearning is that the bishop help her just as Christ helped all those in need in times long passed.

The text of *ep.* 4 merits a full translation:

> Having lived for a short time in a rightful marriage, my most divine lord, and having given birth to two daughters, I had to concede my husband to death. I persuaded with my words one of them [i.e., the daughters] to put on this ragged garment [i.e., the monastic habit] together with me, and to earn her living by working the wool, while the other [daughter] is, on the one hand, to a large extant zealous to imitate the noble and celibate conduct of the first and, on the other hand, does not only not possess what a marriage would require, but even food for a day or a poor garment.
>
> Hence, compelled by her insistence, I am coming forward with the same thought with which the woman with bloodshed approached the first high–priest [i.e., Christ] who gave this episcopacy to you as a prize of your virtue. Just as she was led by the multitude of miracles to approach the God-man Word, the same way I, being encouraged by your zeal, which you nurture for the one whose throne you are occupying, come with the same hope and faith.
>
> Therefore, if the time still permits for our generation to perform anything that would be a trace or imitation of those events transmitted long ago [i.e., the Gospel], than prove [this] on us who are oppressed by a far greater suffering than the disease of bloodshed, and you will be rightfully

> called His imitator and guardian. But if [the time] has not left [this possibility] of reverting things in this manner [i.e., like Christ], yet your holiness, through the abundance of your wisdom, should regain that trait which characterized the true high–priest and which is now endangered. If this [plea] will be rejected like something easily wiped away by the one to whom belong the throne of wisdom and the word, than from who else will there be a word about this beautiful thing? Knowing this, examine our case and let yourself be requested to help, according to what is possible, the endangered young woman.[323]

Ep. 4 may be read also as a Byzantine rhetorical exercise (*progymnasma*) of *ēthopoïïa*, i.e., character–sketch, whose title may be "What words might a mother say to the bishop regarding the marriage of her daughter?" (τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους ἡ μήτηρ τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ εἰς τὸν τοῦ αὐτῆς θυγατρίου γάμον;). In what follows, the analysis of *ep*. 4 will be framed by some general considerations on rhetoric in Byzantium, with particular emphasis on the role of *progymnasmata* within Palaiologan education.

The process of learning needed handbooks of rhetoric.[324] The most frequently used, copied and commented were those of Hermogenes of Tarsus (late second century CE), Menander Rhetor[325] (late third century), and Aphthonius (fourth century).[326] As Kustas stresses, both Hermogenes and Aphthonius constituted "the rhetorical *cursus* and continued to be so recognized throughout the life of Byzantium."[327] For instance, the former not only had a remarkable influence in Byzantium, but has remained popular even in modern Greek education.[328] Hermogenes' work was all–inclusive, dealing with the whole of rhetoric, a fact pointed out later by the eleventh–century polymath and courtier Michael

[323] For the Greek text of the letter, see the Appendix.
[324] On text-books used in higher education and the teaching of rhetoric in Palaiologan Byzantium, see C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium*..., 133-158.
[325] *Menander Rhetor. A Commentary*, ed. and tr. Donald A. Russell and Nigel G. Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); Malcolm Heath, *Menander: a Rhetor in Context* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[326] Cf. Elizabeth Jeffreys, "Introduction," in *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, 2; George L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Thessalonike: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1973), 5-26.
[327] George L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric*, 23.
[328] Ibid., 6.

Psellos. "Certainly beautiful [is] the rhetoric of Hermogenes of Tarsus [...] for it is the most essential among all the divisions of this art."[329]

The Byzantine students who progressed further than the basic instruction of the *grammatikos* were initiated and trained in the usage of *progymnasmata*. As their name suggests, these were preliminary exercises in composition which preluded the study of rhetoric. They formed the basic level of rhetorical training and were a liaison in the educational curriculum between the teaching of grammar and rhetoric. Initial steps towards rhetorical performance, *progymnasmata* not only served as guidelines in written prose composition, but also equipped the prospective performers with a plethora of techniques of presentation and argumentation for rhetorical performances. Moreover, besides equipping the elementary student of rhetoric with a basic repertoire, they endowed him with particular habits of thinking. The *progymnasmata* – gymnastic training for the mind,[330] like the rest of rhetorical training – worked to make the young man "a habitual user of language,"[331] and shaped his "literary consciousness."[332]

The first reference to these preliminary exercises can be found in the twenty–eighth chapter of the rhetorical handbook known as the *Rhetoric for Alexander*. It is embedded in the Aristotelian voluminous corpus and was allegedly written by Anaximenes of Lampsacus in the third quarter of the fourth century BCE. In it he explains:

> We are acquainted with proofs, anticipations, the postulates, which we demand from our hearers, iterations, elegances, the means of regulating the length of our speeches, and all the ways of putting words together for purposes of statement. And so knowing from what has been said the

[329] Ibid., 10, n. 4: καλὴ μὲν οὖν ἡ τοῦ Ταρσέως Ἑρμογένους ῥητορική [...] συνεκτικωτάτη γάρ ἐστι πάντων τῶν τῆς τέχνης μερῶν.
[330] Ruth Webb, "The *Progymnasmata* as Practice," in Y. L. Too, ed., *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 289-316, at 292; cf. also Rafaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).
[331] James J. Murphy, "The Key Role of Habit in Roman Rhetoric and Education as described by Quintilian," in Tomás Albaladejo, Emilio del Río, José Antonio Caballero, eds., *Quintiliano: Historia y actualidad de la retórica.* Actas del Congreso Internacional "Quintiliano: Historia y Actualidad de la Retórica: XIX centenario de la Institutio oratoria," 147 (Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 1998).
[332] Ruth Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Farnham, England; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2009), 41.

> qualities which are common to every kind of oratory and their uses, if we accustom and practise ourselves according to the prescribed preparatory exercises (*progymnasmata*), we shall attain to great facility both in writing and speaking (1436[a] 21-26)[333]

The study of *progymnasmata* reached its peak in the late Roman period when impressive repertoires and manuals described them.[334] In fact, there are four testimonies of theories on preliminary exercises which have come down to us, written or attributed to different authors. The earliest surviving account is by Aelius Theon of Alexandria (first century CE),[335] which is primarily addressed to teachers rather than students.[336] Moreover, a later handbook on *Progymnasmata* survives by (pseudo)–Hermogenes of Tarsus[337] from the second century CE.[338]

Aphthonius, a student of the Antiochean rhetor and sophist, Libanius, also wrote an account of the preliminary exercises.[339] Together with Hermogenes' *On Staseis* or *On Issues*[340] and *On Forms* or *On Ideas*[341] it formed the so-called *Corpus Hermogenianum*, the standard

[333] Cf. Jonathan Barnes, ed., *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, revised edition, vol. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 2296.
[334] Cf. Stanley E. Porter, ed. *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Age, 330 B.C.–A.D. 400* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), George A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric Under Christian Emperors* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Idem, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
[335] Scholars have variously dated Theon, the recent consensus placing him in the first century CE. However, there are voices that state that such an early dating has weak grounds. For instance, Malcolm Heath brings to the fore of the debate arguments for a later date of Theon; cf. his article on "Theon and the History of the Progymnasmata," *GRBS* 43 (2002/3): 129-60; For Theon's *Progymnasmata* see, Leonard Spengel, ed., *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1854-56), 59-130; this edition was replaced by the critical edition of the Greek text, along with a French translation, by Michel Patillon, Giancarlo Bolognesi, eds., *Aelius Théon: Progymnasmata*, Budé Series (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1997); for an English translation see, George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks...*, 1-72.
[336] Cf. George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks...*, 2; Kennedy points out that throughout his text, Aelius prefers the simple terms such as *gymnasma* or *gymnasia* over *progymnasmata*, which occurs only once.
[337] The Hermogenean paternity of these *Progymnasmata* has been questioned. For instance, Hugo Rabe has shown that they differ stylistically from the authentic canonical Hermogennean texts; cf. Hugo Rabe, ed., *Hermogenis Opera* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1913), iv-vi; recent scholars have established that they are the product of rhetoricians belonging to the same tradition as Hermogenes. Among the proposed candidates for their paternity was Libanius the Sophist; cf. *Corpus Rhetoricum*, ed. and tr. Michel Patillon (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2008), 165-177.
[338] Michel Patillon, *Hermogène. L'art rhétorique* (Paris: L'Age d'Homme, 1997); cf. Idem, *La Théorie du discourse chez Hermogène le rhéteur* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1988).
[339] *Aphthonii Progymnasmata*, ed. Hugo Rabe (Leipzig: Teubner, 1926).
[340] Cf. Malcolm Heath, *Hermogenes On Issues: Strategies of Argument in Later Greek Rhetoric* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).
[341] Cf. Cecil Wooten, *Hermogenes' On Types of Style* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987).

rhetorical compendium that was popular in late Antiquity and later on in Byzantium.[342] The most famous commentaries on Aphthonius' preliminary exercises were by John of Sardis[343] in the ninth century, John Doxapatres in the eleventh century, and Maximos Planoudes in the late thirteenth century. The fourth manual on *progymnasmata* was composed in the third quarter of the fifth century by Nikolaos of Myra, a professor of rhetoric in Constantinople.[344]

These extant works display some variations regarding the number, names, and sequence of the preliminary exercises.[345] However, the standard list of *progymnasmata* unfolds from the simple to the relatively complex ones as follows: the first *progymnasma* is the fable (*mythos*) followed by the narrative/narration (*diēgēma/diēgēsis*) and anecdote (*chreia*).[346] The fourth one is the maxim (*gnōmē*), followed by the refutation (*anaskeuē*), the confirmation (*kataskeuē*), and the common-place (*koinos topos*). Next in the manuals stand the exercise of praise (*enkōmion*), invective (*psogos*), and comparison (*synkrisis*). The final part of the list brings to the fore more elaborate exercises like the character–sketch (*ēthopoiïa/prosōpopoiia*), here under discussion, the description (*ekphrasis*),[347] the systematic debate of a general question (*thesis*), and the introduction of a law (*eisphora nomou*).

Theon underlines that "the training in these exercises is absolutely necessary not only for the would–be orators, but also for those who want to practice the art of the poets,

[342] On Aphthonius and his works, see *Corpus Rhetoricum*, 49-52; For a comparison between pseudo-Hermogenes' *exercises* and Aphthonius', see *Corpus Rhetoricum*, 52-103. For an account of the extension *of progymnasmata* in the Byzantine period, see Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, vol. 1 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 92–120.
[343] Hugo Rabe, ed., *Ioannis Sardiani Commentarium in Aphthonii Progymnasmata* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1928).
[344] *Nicolai Progymnasmata*, ed. Joseph Felten (Leipzig: Teubner, 1913).
[345] For the order of treatment of progymnasmata in extant treatises see table 1 in Kennedy's book, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks...*, xiii.
[346] Cf. Ronald F. Hock and Edward N. O'Neil, eds., *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric*, vol. 1: *The Progymnasmata* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986); vol. 2: *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002).
[347] This preliminary exercise of *ekphrasis* was highly utilized by Byzantines. For instance, Paul the Silentiary' s description of Hagia Sophia (sixth century), Nikolaos Mesarites (*c.*1200) on the church of Holy Apostles, Theodore II Laskaris and Theodore Metochites on the city of Nicaea, John Eugenikos on Trebizond, and on Constantinople by Methochites, etc.

historians, and other writers; finally, these are somehow the principles of all forms of discourse."[348] Thus, these useful building blocks or elements of composition were not confined only to school curricula, but they were extensively used, composed, and developed by Byzantine *pepaideumenoi* and more precisely schoolmasters among whom one can arguably include Maximos Neamonites, throughout their literary or teaching career. They also were diffused through various genres of Byzantine literature: histories, letters, textbooks, homilies, etc.

For instance, in the twelfth century Nikephoros Basilakes composed an "inventive series" of *progymnasmata*; Gregory of Cyprus (1241–90) wrote seventeen fables (*mythoi*), three tales, a *chreia*,[349] an *enkōmion*, four declamations, and an *ēthopoïïa*;[350] George Pachymeres (1242–c.1310) composed his own examples for all the *progymnasmata* described by Aphthonius;[351] Maximos Planoudes (*c.*1250–c.1305) wrote a comparison between winter and spring, commented on the *Corpus Hermogenianum*, and assembled a compendium of proverbs;[352] Constantine Akropolites (*d.* 1324)[353] composed *progymnasmata* including fables and *ēthopoïïai*,[354] and Theodore Metochites (1270–1332) left behind comparisons and *enkomia*.[355]

All of these Greek handbooks on *progymnasmata* contain useful guidance and instructions on how to compose *ēthopoïïai* or character–sketches.[356] Aphthonius and Hermogenes define the *ēthopoïïa* as an imitation of the character of a proposed speaker with

[348] Cf. *Corpus Rhetoricum*, 91.
[349] Cf. Ronald F. Hock, Edward N. O'Neil, eds., *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises*, 308-333.
[350] His fables, tales and characterization are edited by Sofia Kotzabassi, "Die Progymnasmata des Gregor von Zypern," *Hellenika* 43 (1993): 45-63 (text, 51-63); cf. C. N. Constantinides, "Teachers and Students of Rhetoric in the Late Byzantine Period," in *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, 48.
[351] On *chreia* composition by Pachymeres, see Ronald F. Hock, Edward N. O'Neil, eds., *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises*, 334-347.
[352] C. N. Constantinides, "Teachers and Students of Rhetoric...," 48.
[353] Cf. *PLP* 520.
[354] Cf. C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium...*, 100–1.
[355] C. N. Constantinides, "Teachers and Students of Rhetoric...," 49.
[356] On *ēthopoïïa*, see *Corpus Rhetoricum*, 88-92. For its literary developments, see Eugenio Amato and Jacques Schamp, eds., *Ethopoiia: la représentation de caractères entre fiction scolaire et réalité vivante à l'époque impériale et tardive* (Salerno: Helios, 2005).

titles such as "What might so–and–so say..."[357] In Theon's words, *ēthopoïïa* [358] is "the introduction of a person to whom words are attributed that are suitable to the speaker and have an indisputable application to the subject discussed."[359]

There are three types of *ēthopoïïa* (*diaforai*): *eidōlopoiia*,[360] *prosōpopoiia*,[361] and *ēthopoïïa*,[362] which have some peculiar features: they have definite and indefinite persons,[363] can be simple (*haplai*) and double (*diplai*), meaning the character is speaking/addressing either (to) himself or (to) a silent audience.[364] Furthermore, characterizations can be ethical (*ēthikai*) – displaying the moral character, pathetical (*pathētikai*)[365] – showing pathos everywhere, or mixed (*miktai*) – using both pathos and character.[366] To these prescriptions, Aphthonius adds that its style should be "clear, concise, fresh, pure, free from any inversion and figure."[367]

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[357] Ἠθοποιΐα ἐστὶν μίμησις ἤθους ὑποκειμένου προσώπου, οἷον τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους Ἀνδρομάχη ἐπὶ Ἕκτορι; Pseudo-Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata* 9, 1; *Corpus Rhetoricum,* 200; Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata* 11, 1; *Corpus Rhetoricum,* 144; cf. *RG* I, 44-47 and 101-103.

[358] In fact, Theon uses *prosōpopoiia* of any speech in character; cf. *RG* I, 235-239.

[359] George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks...*, 47.

[360] Aphthonius calls it an *eidōlopoiia*, because the words are attributed to the dead: Εἰδωλοποιΐα δὲ ἡ πρόσωπον μὲν ἔχουσα γνώριμον, τεθνεὸς δὲ καὶ τοῦ λέγειν παυσάμενον..., Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata* 11, 1; *Corpus Rhetoricum,* 144.

[361] Προσωποποιΐα δέ, ὅταν ἅπαντα πλάττηται, καὶ ἦθος καὶ πρόσωπον...ὁ γὰρ ἔλεγχος πρᾶγμα μέν, οὐ μὴν ἔτι καὶ πρόσωπον. Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata* 11, 1; *Corpus Rhetoricum,* 144.

[362] ὡρισμένων καὶ ἀορίστων προσώπων ; Aphthonius 11,1; *Corpus Rhetoricum,* 145.

[363] Pseudo-Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata* 9, 3.

[364] Ibid., 9, 4.

[365] As a pathetical model, Aphthonius puts forward a speech of Niobe on having lost all her children: τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους Νιόβη κειμένων τῶν παίδων; ("What words Niobe might say when her children lie dead?"); Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata* 11. 4-6. Cf. *Corpus Rhetoricum*, 145-146; for the English translation see, George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks...*, 116-7.

[366] Pseudo-Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata* 9, 6; Aphthonius 11, 2; *Corpus Rhetoricum,* 145.

[367] Aphthonius 11, 3; *Corpus Rhetoricum,* 145; Initially, the characters were either from mythology or from ancient history, as in Aphthonius' example. However, from the tenth century onwards figures from contemporary events or from Biblical narratives came to be of interest for those composing character-sketches. For instance, John Geometres composed a character sketch of the Byzantine emperor Nikephoros Phokas (r. 963–969), and in the eleven-century, the polymath courtier, Psellos, wrote a characterization of Empress Zoe (*c.*978–1050); cf. Elizabeth Jeffreys, "Rhetoric in Byzantium," In *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, 175; In the twelfth century, Nikephoros Basilakes, *maistōr tōn rhētorōn*, and then *didaskalos tou apostolou* in the Patriarchal School at Constantinople, pursued a career of teaching and writing. Among his literary output there are orations, letters, monodies, and a collection of various examples of *progymnasmata*, which make for the most extensive collection since late antiquity. In this collection, he included twenty seven *ēthopoïïai*, out of which thirteen make use of biblical characters and situations (six based on the New Testament) instead of the standard classical figures. He was the first to introduce Christian themes into the *progymnasmata* and it is this break from the classical pattern that makes his *ēthopoïïai* stand out and deserve further attention. By means of exemplification, I just bring up three titles: "What words the Theotokos might say when Christ has

The exercise of *ēthopoïïa* is applicable, as has been hinted above, not only to historiography, but also to all genres which involve speaking characters, that is, oratory, dialogue, epistolography, and poetry. As Theon stresses that it is "most advantageous in everyday life and in our conversations with each other, and (understanding of it) is most useful in study of prose writings."[368] He goes on to state that the letter is one of its three sub-headings: "under this genus of exercise [i.e., character-sketch] fall the species of consolations and exhortation and letter writing."[369] Nikolaos of Myra's description of *ēthopoïïa* [370] echoes the same view:

> This *progymnasma* is useful for the three kinds of rhetoric; for we often need *ēthopoïïa* when speaking an *enkōmion* and in prosecuting and giving counsel. To me, it seems also to exercise us in the style of letter writing, since in that there is need of foreseeing the character of those sending letters and those to whom they are sent.[371]

As discussed above, ancient epistolography established guidelines for composing a letter, which can best communicate and convey the message of its sender; writing in the third century CE about the theories on letter writing and style, Demetrius says that a letter should abound in "glimpses of character. It may be said that everyone reveals his own soul in his letters. In every other form of composition it is possible to discern the writer's character but in none so clearly as in the epistolary."[372]

Every speaker needs to convince the audience that his/her character (*ēthos*) is authentic. The handbooks describe the *modus operandi* by which a speech or letter could construct for clients a plausible personality; an *ēthos*, through their language. In Aristotle's

changed the water into wine at the wedding," "What words Hades might say when Lazarus has been raised up on the fourth day," and "What words the slave of the high priest might say after having his ear cut off by St Peter and healed by Christ." On Basilakes' *progymnasmata*, see Adriana Pignani, ed., *Niceforo Basilace, Progimnasmi e Monodie* (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1983), 67-232.

[368] George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks...*, 4.

[369] ὑπὸ δὲ τοῦτο τὸ γένος τῆς γυμνασίας πίπτει καὶ τὸ τῶν πανηγυρικῶν λόγων εἶδος καὶ τὸ τῶν προτρεπτικῶν καὶ τὸ τῶν ἐπιστολικῶν; cf. George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks...*, 47.

[370] *RG* I, 381-394.

[371] George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks...*, 166.

[372] Cf. George L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric*, 48.

view, the character of the speaker must be credible, inspire confidence, and appropriate to the individual speaker's age, gender, and ethnicity:

> Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character [διὰ μὲν οὖν τοῦ ἤθους] when the speech is spoken as to make us think him credible [ἀξιόπιστον] ... This kind of persuasion, like the others, should be achieved by what the speaker says, not by what people think of his character before he begins to speak. It is not true, as some writers assume in their treatises on rhetoric, that the personal goodness revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, his character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses [κυριωτάτην ἔχει πίστιν τὸ ἦθος] (Aristotle, *Rhetorics* 1356[a] 4-13)[373]

Moreover, in *Poetics*, the Stagirite lays out the essential traits of the character:

> Concerning the characters [περὶ δὲ τὰ ἤθη] there are four points to aim at. First and foremost, that they shall be good [χρηστά]. There will be an element in the play if what a personage says or does reveals a certain choice [...] The second point is to make them appropriate [τὸ ἁρμόττοντα]. The character before us may be, say, manly; but it is not appropriate in a female character to be manly, or clever. The third is to make them like the reality [τὸ ὅμοιον], which is not the same as their being good and appropriate, in our sense of the term. The fourth is to make them consistent and the same throughout [τὸ ὁμαλόν]; even if inconsistency be part of the man before one for imitation as presenting that form of character, he should still be consistently inconsistent (*Poetics* 1454[a] 16-28)[374]

It has been worthwhile exploring the progymnasmatic *ēthopoïïai* at some length, as it is as essential to our studying of the epistolary genre as to the interpretation of Neamonites' *ep.* 4 in particular. Thus, *ep.* 4 may be considered as an example of an *ēthopoïïa* embedded into the epistolographic writings, which Neamonites as a primary teacher (i.e., mostly grammar – Homer, Euripides), yet well versed in rhetoric (i.e., possessor of a codex of Libanius), may have constructed as a model for his own students.

A closer look provides interesting insights into the cultural and social fabric of its setting. What captures the attention is the fact that *ep.* 4 is displaying the character of a

[373] For the English translation, see Jonathan Barnes, ed., *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, 2155.
[374] Ibid., 2327.

woman. It is a female who speaks throughout the whole letter: "Having lived (ὁμιλήσασα) for a short time in a rightful marriage, my most divine lord, and having given birth to two daughters (θυγάτρια τέξασα δύο), I had to concede my husband to death," "compelled (συνωθουμένη) by her insistence," "I, being encouraged (θαρρήσασα) by your zeal." Might it be the case that this letter was written by the hand of a woman?

Usually, communication by letter in Byzantium took place between two male persons, as proved by the surviving corpus of letters, the majority of which stem from the hands of men. In spite of the stereotype of androcentric Byzantine letter production, there may have been letters written by and addressed to women. So far the only example of letters written by a Byzantine female is the twenty–two letters of Eirene Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina (1291–*c.*1355).[375] Moreover, Byzantine letters give insights only into a minor fraction of Byzantine society: the educated members of its upper echelons.[376] Thus, to my mind, the letter presently discussed is unlikely to have been written by the hand of a woman, *a fortiori* it pertains to the small letter collection of Maximos Neamonites.

In Byzantium, the majority of women had little access to education, which, if any, was one of elementary level consisting of reading and writing. However, this was not always the case. Numerous women of the imperial family and in general of aristocratic rank did participate in the cultural life of the empire. Yet, even in their cases, the education was rather limited in scope and depth, and mostly confined to the religious sphere,[377] or to functional and administrative tasks in the household.

[375] Cf. Angela Constantinides Hero, ed., *A Woman's Quest for Spiritual Guidance: the Correspondence of Princess Irene Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina* (Brookline, Mass.: Hellenic College Press, 1986); for a comprehensive bibliographical list on "Women in Byzantine Empire," see the website of Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, http://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/women_in_byzantium.html (last accessed, 23 May 2011).
[376] Cf. Stratis Papaioannou, "Letter-Writing," 190-1.
[377] Cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, "La Formación Intelectual de las Aristócratas Byzantinas (siglos XI-XIV)," in María del Mar Graña Cid, ed., *Las Sabias mujeres: educación, saber y autoría (siglos III-XVII)*, 77-94, at 88 (Madrid: Asociación Cultural Al–Mudayna, 1994).

The extant Byzantine letters are a testimony to their author's desire to make them known. Therefore, by copying them, one gave a sign of taking pride in his writing. This may be in fact one of the reasons why letters written by women are so extremely scarce, although letter writing as a genre was wide-spread at the time among them as well. But unlike men, as Pérez Martín pointed out, women proved to be more modest and did not generally copy their letters or endeavour to organize them in a letter collection.[378] This may have been caused by the commonly held belief that writing was not an appropriate pastime for women.[379]

Assuming therefore that *ep.* 4 was not written and composed by a woman, another set of questions arises. Did Neamonites write this letter on behalf of a woman in need of help? Does it offer insights into fourteenth-century Byzantine social *realia* and unfold the plea of a poor woman for a request for a favour or financial support? Or is it rather a mere rhetorical exercise of *ēthopoïïa* in which the author employs rhetorical techniques and manoeuvres allusions that he may have learnt and exercised at school and in other milieux of rhetorical performance? Is this letter an "imitation of the character of a proposed speaker,"[380] with a possible title such as "What words would a poor woman say to a bishop for the marriage of her daughter...?"

In her book, *Mail and Female. Epistolary Narrative and Desire in Ovid's 'Heroides,'*[381] Sara Lindheim raises a number of pertinent questions relevant for the present analysis:

> Is it possible to uncover traces of an author's gender in an artistic and intellectual product? To what extant can one distinguish between the voice of a man writing like a woman and the words of a woman writing? Why does

[378] Eadem, 83.
[379] Testimonies to such a view are to be found, for instance, in the eleventh–century writings by Kekaumenos, Attaleiates, and Psellos who speak of the so-called "*thalameusis*," the confinement and seclusion of women in the household; cf. Angeliki E. Laiou, "The Role of Women in Byzantine Society," *JÖB* 31 (1981): 249; see also, Alexander P. Kazhdan, "Women at Home," *DOP* 52 (1998): 1-17.
[380] Cf. Pseudo–Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata* 9, 1; *Corpus Rhetoricum*, 200; Aphthonius, *Progymnasmata* 11, 1; *Corpus Rhetoricum*, 144.
[381] Ovid's *Heroides* are exercises in what exactly a certain female protagonist would say in certain situations.

> a male writer choose to employ the technique of "transvestite ventriloquism," or cross-gendered narration?[382]

To my mind, Maximos Neamonites wrote in the voice of an impoverished woman. Writing on the behalf of someone else it was a frequent practice in (late) Byzantine period. For instance, Nikephoros Choumnos (*c.*1260–1327), a Byzantine scholar and state official of the early Palaiologan period,[383] wrote "ethopoietical letters," two of them written on someone's behalf (*epp.* 93 and 95)[384] and one composed as a rhetorical exercise (*ep.* 36).[385] As Alexander Riehle[386] points out, the titles of *epp.* 93 and 95 (ἐποιήθη τινὶ τῶν φίλων/ἑταίρων κατὰ χρείαν πρὸς ἕτερον) suggest that Choumnos composed them on behalf of other people. Thus, he lent emphasis to their requests through his rhetorical abilities and his prestige, and allegedly through his special connection to the addressees.

Choumnos' *ep.* 36 is introduced by the title ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Ξανθοπούλου πρὸς τὸν ὀρφανοτρόφον[387] which is equivalent to τίνας ἂν εἴποι λόγους..., the heading of the rhetorical exercise of *ēthopoïïa*. This indicates that the author of the letter put his words into the mouth of another person, in this case Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos,[388] an intimate correspondent of high rank officials and intellectuals of his days among whom Michael Gabras, Nikephoros Choumnos, Manuel Planoudes and Nikephoros Gregoras. Asking the question of why would Choumnos compose a letter on behalf of Xanthopoulos since the education of the latter would have been enough for writing a letter on his own, Riehle comes to conclude that the whole letter is rather Choumnos' rhetorical attempt to

[382] Sara H. Lindheim, *Mail and Female. Epistolary Narrative and Desire in Ovid's 'Heroides'* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 177.
[383] *PLP* 30961.
[384] *AN* 127-8, 131-4.
[385] *AN* 43-4.
[386] I would like to express my gratitude to Alexander Riehle (Ludwig–Maximilians University of Munich) for sending excerpts of his PhD dissertation on "Funktionen der byzantinischen Epistolographie: Studien zu den Briefen und Briefsammlungen des Nikephoros Chumnos (ca. 1260–1327)."
[387] "As from Xanthopoulos himself towards the *orphanotrophos*."
[388] *PLP* 20816.

write in the manner of his friend; in other words, a variation of the rhetorical exercise of *ēthopoïïa*.

One might also think of a rhetorical exercise in the case of Neamonites' *ep.* 4, in which the schoolmaster tried to make use of the rhetorical trope of *ēthopoïïa*. However, judging by the content of the other *epp.* of Neamonites, *ep.* 4 does not seem to stand apart from one of the recurrent themes of the collection, that is the "rhetoric" of pleas for support and favour from well-to-do people. For instance, as we have seen, in *ep.* 7, Neamonites addressed the *megas logothetēs* Theodore Metochites for securing his inherited property, while in *ep.* 2, he informed the *sebastos* Atzymes that he would not return any money previously paid for the education of his son.[389]

In *ep.* 4, the one who speaks is not who writes.[390] Neamonites fosters a plausible character portrayal of a woman asking for financial support for the marriage of her daughter: "examine our case and let yourself be requested to help, according to what is possible, the endangered young woman." A marriage in Byzantium involved three main actors: the family of the bride, that of the groom and the family (*in potentia*) of the bride and groom. From a merely economic point of view, the first two families played an important and active role for the pecuniary interests and property arrangements for the conjugal estate of the new family. Put differently, the parents of the bride were supposed to bestow the obligatory "gift" of dowry (*proix*), while the family of the groom the *hypobolon* and the *theoretron*.[391]

[389] Maximos Neamonites, *Ep.* 2. 14–17: "Do not even conceive of the idea that I would return any money to your reverence, for not either Hades or the fire ever return what has been seized before and has been appropriated like a lot. Much more so with regard to the schoolmasters, who in great abundance surpass many in poverty." For the Greek text, see the Appendix.

[390] Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text.* Essays selected and translated by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 111-2.

[391] Angeliki E. Laiou, "Marriage Prohibitions, Marriage Strategies and the Dowry in Thirteenth-Century Byzantium," in Joëlle Beaucamp, Gilbert Dagron, eds., *La Transmission du Patrimoine. Byzance et l'aire méditerranéenne*, 135, Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de Recherche d' Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance Collège de France, Monographies 11 (Paris: De Boccard, 1998); cf. also Ruth Macrides, "Dowry and Inheritance in the Late Period: Some Cases from the Patriarchal Register," in D. Simon, ed., *Eherecht und Familiengut in*

In the Byzantine empire, the dowries of the girls were, as Laiou phrased it, "a real outflow of goods for their natal family"[392] and consisted, depending on the family's means, of trousseau, bedding, clothing, household implements, cash, jewelry, and or land.

Neamonites' *ep.* 4 is a case in point for the issue of marriage and dowry in Palaiologan Byzantium.[393] It unveils the efforts of a candidate bride's mother to make a good marriage for her daughter.[394] A possible *scenario* could have been the following: after a quite stable and fruitful marriage, the woman found herself deprived of her husband by death and remained with two daughter to take care of. At some point she assumed the monastic garment together with one of them, which my have cost her some or most of her fortune as a donation to the monastery she joined. Due to poverty reasons and compelled by the insistence of her other daughter that was willing to get married, the widow-mother advocated for the wedding of her offspring and intended to bring the matter (of dowry) to the attention of a bishop or metropolitan in Constantinople, or perhaps the patriarch himself, as Kourouses suggests.[395] Thus, in order to better get her message across, she employed the help of the schoolmaster Neamonites for writing a letter to this purpose. This raises the question of whether she had enough financial means of paying for these services or Neamonites may have done her a favour (for reasons unknown).

Antike und Mittelalter, 89-98 (München : R. Oldenbourg, 1992); Eadem, "Families and Kinship," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, 652-660, esp. 654-6. On legal age for marriage in Byzantium, see Angeliki E. Laiou, "Contribution à l'étude de l'institution familiale en Épire au XIII^{e} siècle," *Fontes Minores* 6 (1984): 275-323, esp. 279 and 283; cf. also Cecily Hennessy, "Young People in Byzantium," In Liz James, ed., *A Companion to Byzantium*, 81-92, esp. 85 (Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

[392] Angeliki E. Laiou, "Marriage Prohibitions, Marriage Strategies and the Dowry...," 125.

[393] On Byzantine marriage and dowry, see Angeliki E. Laiou, *Mariage, amour et parenté à Byzance aux XIe-XIIIe siècles* (Paris: De Boccard, 1992); Eadem, *Consent and coercion to sex and marriage in ancient and medieval societies* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1993); Eadem, "Marriage Prohibitions, Marriage Strategies and the Dowry...," 129-160; cf. also John Meyendorff, "Christian Marriage in Byzantium: The Canonical and Liturgical Tradition," *DOP* 44 (1990): 99-107.

[394] On the role of women within Byzantine family and society, see Angeliki E. Laiou, "The Role of Women in Byzantine Society," *JÖB* 31 (1981): 233-60; Eadem, "Observations on the Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women," *ByzF* 9 (1985): 59-102.

[395] Cf. Stavros Kourouses, "Γρηγορίου αρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας...," 535-6.

Most probably, the woman was lacking this educational training and needed someone to compose a letter for her case. In fact, the letter under scrutiny shows traits that attest the knowledgeable character of its writer. Thus, similar to Choumnos' letters (93 and 95), written on behalf of other people, Neamonites could lend emphasis to the woman's requests through his rhetorical skills, and allegedly through his possible connection to the addressee.

Throughout *ep.* 4, Maximos Neamonites employs biblical allusions, likening the situation of the mother and her daughter to the long–lasting suffering and disease of the haemophilic woman; the New Testament scene of the miraculous healing of the *haimorroousa* serves as a framework for the woman's request.[396] Neamonites adduces these biblical parallels by the means of *simile*,[397] that is the comparison of two different things by employing the terms "like," "(just) as:"

> I am coming forward with the same thought the woman with bloodshed (ἡ αἱμορροοῦσα) approached the first high-priest [i.e., Christ] who gave this episcopacy to you as a prize of your virtue. Just as she was led by the multitude of miracles to approach the God-man Word, the same way I... come with the same hope and faith... us who are oppressed by a far greater suffering than the disease of bloodshed (τῆς αἱμορροίας πάθει).[398]

[396] The biblical text reads as follows: "And it happened as he went that he was thronged by the multitudes. And there was a certain woman having an issue of blood (οὖσα ἐν ῥύσει αἵματος) twelve years, who had bestowed all her substance on physicians and could not be healed by any (ἥτις οὐκ ἴσχυσεν ἀπ' οὐδενὸς θεραπευθῆναι). She came behind him and touched the border of his garment (τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ), and immediately the issue of her blood stopped (καὶ παραχρῆμα ἔστη ἡ ῥύσις τοῦ αἵματος αὐτῆς). And Jesus said: Who is it that touched me? (Τίς ὁ ἁψάμενός μου;)...for I know that virtue (δύναμιν) has gone out from me (ἐξεληλυθυῖαν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ). And the woman seeing that she was not hid, came trembling (τρέμουσα) and fell down before his feet and declared before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was immediately healed. But he said to her: Daughter, your faith (ἡ πίστις σου) has made you whole (σέσωκέν σε). Go your way in peace" (Luke 8: 42-8).

[397] For this figure of speech, see Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 2nd edition (Berkeley, LA; London: University of California Press, 1991), 140.

[398] In late Byzantine texts that have come down to us, the expression τῆς αἱμορροίας πάθει is used a single time by the Constantinopolitan patriarch, Philotheos Kokkinos (*c.*1300–1379), in his work on the *Life of Patriarch Isidore*; for cf. *TLG* (online version).

Finally, the "rhetoric" of the letter does not lack the practice of flattery. The character of the woman flatters the addressee, i.e., the bishop, by comparing and likening him to Christ:

> You will be rightfully called His imitator and guardian. But if [the time] has not left [this possibility], of reverting things in this manner [i.e., like Christ], yet your holiness, through the abundance of your wisdom, should regain that trait which characterized the true high–priest and which is now endangered.

The rhetoric and the style of *ep.* 4 seems to be quite unique within Neamonites' letter collection. Both *ep.* 4 and *ep.* 1 were addressed to high–ranking ecclesiastical dignitaries, allegedly both having a sound educational training, yet the latter does not either quote the Bible, nor make use of any scriptural image. If *epp.* 1, 9 and 14 alludes to Homer and Euripides, *epp.* 2, 6, 12, and 13 to classical figures ("the men–destroying Ares," the trainers at the Olympic games, Radamanthys, Abaris, Pluto, etc), *ep.* 4 bears the imprint of the Gospels; the same author, different styles. Through language, Neamonites constructed a plausible *ēthos* for his "client" which is appropriate to the individual's age, gender, and education. In the case of the impoverished woman, most likely living in a monastery, her education may have been primarily based upon reading/hearing the Bible.[399] Thus, Neamonites employs a biblical framework for presenting the woman's plea.

Neamonites chooses a touching and compelling scriptural passage for embedding his "client's" request, and consequently the rhetoric of *ep.* 4 tries to leave as little room as possible for a negative response from the part of the addressee. Similar to Christ, who was compelled to cure the sanguinolent woman, the recipient of *ep.* 4 is constrained to give heed to the request, for "if this [plea] will be rejected like something easily wiped away by

[399] When it comes to women's attitude towards *paideia*, Neamonites tells to the addressee of *ep.* 10 that "the mother [i.e., the addressee's wife] who cares little, if anything of this [*paideia*], and who is besieged by the law of nature, has convinced you to change your mind." οὗ [i.e., τῆς παιδείας] δὴ μικρὰ ἢ οὐδ(ὲν) φροντίζουσα μ(ήτ)ηρ φύσεως πολιορκουμένη νόμῳ μεταβεβουλεῦσθαί σε, οἶομαι, πέπεικεν. (*Ep.* 10. 9–10); cf. the Appendix.

the one to whom belong the throne of wisdom and the word, than from who else will there be a word about this beautiful thing?"[400]

A visual representation of Neamonites' *ep.* 4 may have been provided for his addressee and contemporaries by the iconographic program of Chora Church. This church was adorned by Theodore Metochites between 1315 and 1321 – presumably the years during which Neamonites composed his letters – with mosaics, whose subjects derive mainly from the New Testament.[401] In the narthex of the church, a mosaic depicts the *haimorroousa* on her knees, surreptitiously touching Christ' feet and getting cured.

Neamonites' *ep.* 4 provides insights into a little corner of the social *realia* of the fourteenth-century Palaiologan Byzantium, touching upon aspects such as poverty, marriage, and dowry. Apart from its message, the form of the letter has required investigation in its own right. The biblical allusions, the vocabulary and the rhetorical devices of conveying a female character, make of this letter a possible "ethopoietical" literary piece, which may have successfully suited the horizons of expectation of those gathering in the fourteenth century Palaiologan *theatra*, in this case the patriarchal court or a prélate's entourage.

Furthermore, the richness of *ep.* 4 lies in the fact that it is a rewarding place for further pathways of inquiry. When a man writes in the voice of a woman, a whole new range of issues springs up: how the Byzantines thought of women; female (self)–expression through the filter of male lenses, etc.

[400] εἰ δ' ὡς περίψημά τι παρ' ᾧ καὶ σοφί(ας) θρόνος (καὶ) λόγος ἐστὶ τοῦτο παραῤῥιφήσετ(αι) πρὸς τίνος ἄλλου λόγος τοῦ καλοῦ τούτου χρήματος ἔσεται;

[401] Cf. Ihor Ševčenko, "Theodore Metochites, the Chora, and the Intellectual Trends of His Times"; Robert Nelson, "The Chora and the Great Church: Intervisuality in Fourteenth-Century Constantinople," *BMGS* 23 (1999): 67–101.

CONCLUSIONS AND CONTEXTUALIZATIONS

In the winter of 1306/7, the known Constantinopolitan "gentleman scholar" Manuel Moschopoulos[402] was charged with treason, and imprisoned.[403] While there, he wrote to Theodore Metochites,[404] the *logothetēs tou genikou*:[405]

> ... a man who has encountered grave adversities and is being mishandled by anyone who chooses, to the point that he almost collapses, would do a very silly and ridiculous thing indeed, if in his plight he permitted the circumstances to treat him as they might please, instead of employing 'learned' discourses, directing his attention towards the most learned and merciful of men, and deploring before him 'his fate'.[406]

In the second decade of the fourteenth century, the schoolmaster Theodore Hyrtakenos[407] sent letters to the powerful men of the day in order to ask for financial support since his teaching activity and intellectual status offered nothing but a life of alleged poverty:

> I myself having been entrusted from childhood to exercise the prosodies of the Muses ... I expected revenues and profit ... But at this moment, having reached this age, and having become a bread-eating old man, on the one hand I forgot the art of composing verses, and on the other I am afflicted by famine.[408]

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[402] Moschopoulos is reckoned among the "philologists" of the Palaiologan period such as Maximos Planoudes, Thomas Magistros, and Demetrios Triklinios; cf. Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés...*, 49-59; Edmund Fryde, *The Early Palaeologan Renaissance (1261-c.1360)* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2000), 295-321; Hereafter I will use "philologist" in quotation marks as a pointer to the fact that Byzantine philology cannot be evaluated by the same *criteria* as the modern philology.

[403] Cf. Ihor Ševčenko, "The Imprisonment of Manuel Moschopoulos in the Year 1305 or 1306," *Speculum* 27 (1952): 133-157; reprinted in Idem, *Society and intellectual Life...*, IX.

[404] *PLP* 17982.

[405] For this Byzantine office, see *ODB* 829.

[406] ... ἄνθρωπος ἀθλίᾳ περιπεσὼν τύχῃ καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ βουλομένου παντὸς ἐκτριβόμενος καὶ ἤδη ἐπιλείπων, εἰ ἐπὶ τῷ πράγματι κείσεται ὅ, τι ἂν αὐτῷ δοκοίη ποιεῖν, ἀλλὰ μὴ λόγους μετιὼν τῷ λογιωτάτῳ καὶ συμπαθεστάτῳ προσέξει τὸν νοῦν καὶ προσανακλαύσεται, ἀνοήτατον ἂν πρᾶγμα ποιοίη καὶ κομιδῇ γελοῖον. For the Greek text of the letter and its English translation, see Ihor Ševčenko, "The Imprisonment of Manuel Moschopoulos...," 140-1.

[407] *PLP* 29507.

[408] Théodore Hyrtakènos, *Letter* I: Ἐγὼ παιδόθεν ἐκδεδομένος μουσείοις ἐγγυμνάζεσθαι προσῳδίαις ... ᾤμην ... προσόδους καὶ κέρδη ... νυνὶ δ'εἰς τοῦθ' ἡλικίας ἐληλακώς, καὶ γέρων γεγονὼς σιτοφάγος, ἐπιλέλησμαι μὲν προσῳδιῶν, συνίσχημαι δὲ σιτοδείᾳ. For the Greek text, see Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés...*, 90, n. 415. Here I offer my own English translation.

These two excerpts give insights into the social and intellectual *realia* of the early fourteenth century Byzantium. The expeditors were both men of letters asking high-ranking officials for their intervention and support: the former to be released from prison as the alleged victim of a plot, the latter to receive pecuniary support for his livelihood.

Prima facie two unfortunate Byzantine intellectuals were striving for their livelihoods. However, a closer look at their *curricula vitae* reveals that they were exponents of different social and intellectual circles. Manuel Moschopoulos embodies the late-Byzantine "gentleman scholar."[409] Nephew of the bibliophile and savant metropolitan Nikephoros Moschopoulos (*fl.*1285-1311/12),[410] Manuel was a member of the urban aristocratic *strata*, closely connected with the court and the ruling class, and highly visible on the political and cultural stage of the period. Theodore Hyrtakenos was an active member of the intellectuals residing in Constantinople, a "shadowy"[411] schoolmaster trying to make a living out of his teaching activities. In conclusion of my thesis it is between these two poles that I shall try to place Maximos Neamonites.

In the rhetoric of *renovatio imperii*, Michael VIII Palaiologos[412] (r. 1259–82), acting as a part of conscious traditionality (i.e., purposely activated tradition),[413] rebuilt and re-created Constantinople in the image of earlier revivals, especially of the Komnenian *renovatio*,[414]

[409] Cf. Niels Gaul, "Moschopulos, Lopadiotes, Phrankopulos...," 166-177; Idem, "The Twitching Shroud...," 265; cf. Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés...*, 49-52; for a sketch portray by Niels Gaul see Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, Salvatore Settis, eds., *The Classical Tradition*, 602-3.
[410] *PLP* 19376.
[411] Term used by Robert Browning in "A Byzantine Scholar of the Early Fourteenth Century: Georgios Karbones," in *Gonimos. Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies...*, 223- 231.
[412] *PLP* 21528.
[413] Cf. Ruth Macrides, "From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi: Imperial Models in Decline and Exile," in Paul Magdalino, ed., *New Constantines. The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th Centuries*, 269-282, at 275, Papers from the Twenty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St Andrews, March 1992 (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994).
[414] Our knowledge and understanding of twelfth-century Byzantium have been tremendously improved since the publication of Magdalino's revolutionary monograph *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). The prevailing idea in modern scholarship anterior to Magdalino's monograph was that the Komnenoi clan, in contrast to their forerunners, i.e., the Macedonian dynasty, undermined and weakened the sound pillars of the empire by yielding to Western influences. One of the most provocative chapters of the monograph is the one on the intellectual life of the empire. Magdalino, breaking with the tendency to depict Byzantine intellectuals as totally submissive to potentates and lacking

"the last time Byzantium had been a power to be reckoned with, to the image created by and for those emperors."[415] One of the most important initiatives of Michael VIII was the re-establishment of the higher education in Constantinople.[416] Having been under the aegis of the patriarch since the twelfth century,[417] higher education returned under the protection and control of the emperor during the Palaiologan epoch. George Akropolites, the emperor's *megas logothetēs* and the most distinguished scholar of his day, played a prominent role in the revival of learning during the early Palaiologan period. His disciple and the future patriarch of Constantinople, Gregory of Cyprus,[418] was also of paramount importance for the economy of this process.[419] By their scholarly activities, they paved the way to the intellectual and cultural blossoming of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth-century Palaiologan Byzantium.

Thus, during the reign of Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282-1328)[420] the intellectual climate reached a climax[421] due to the activities of ardent and intellectually distinguished

creativity, vividly describes Komnenian court culture and the intellectual life of the epoch as a struggle of ideas and ideals. Thus, in the Komnenian period of Byzantium, Byzantine rhetoric was in its heyday, central and fundamental to the political process in Byzantium. Madgalino unravels, in a brilliant manner, the role of the *theatron* in the politics of the time, where speechmakers had the opportunity to promote themselves and their patrons, thus imprinting a degree of autonomy on the system.

[415] Ruth Macrides, "From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi...," 269.

[416] C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium...*; Constantinides, far from building up a fancy and misleading conception about the "university of Constantinople," provides useful background information on late Byzantine education, learning, and culture from the "cataclysm" of the Fourth Crusade (1204) up to c. 1300.

[417] Robert Browning, "The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the Twelfth Century," *B* 32 (1962): 167-202; 33 (1963): 11-40.

[418] *PLP* 4590; On Gregory of Cyprus, see Nigel G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, 223-4 who considers him a mediocre intellectual figure; for a more positive assessment of Gregory, see also C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium...*, 31-49; Angeliki E. Laiou, "The Correspondence of Gregorios Kyprios as a Source for the History of Social and Political Behaviour in Byzantium or on Government by Rhetoric," In Werner Seibt, ed., *Geschichte und Kultur der Palaiologenzeit: Referate des Internationalen Symposions zu Ehren von Herbert Hunger* (Wien, 30. November bis 3. Dezember 1994), 91-108, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik 8 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996); Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio de Chipre (ca. 1240-1290) y la transmisión de los textos clásicos en Bizancio* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1996).

[419] Cf. C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium...*, 31-49; see also Inmaculada Pérez Martín, *El patriarca Gregorio de Chipre...*

[420] *PLP* 21436.

[421] Ihor Ševčenko, "Theodore Metochites, the Chora, and the Intellectual Trends of His Times," 23.

"gentlemen scholars" such as Maximos Planoudes,[422] Manuel Moschopoulos, Theodore Metochites,[423] Thomas Magistros,[424] and Demetrios Triklinios,[425] and others. Due to the expediency of keeping within the given limits of these contextualizations, I will briefly portray only three *prosopa* of this intellectual gallery: Planoudes, Magistros, and Triklinios.[426]

The intellectually rich milieu of the period was dominated by the figure of Maximos Planoudes (*c.*1250-*c.*1305).[427] A Byzantine intellectual and politician, he was one of the most versatile scholars of the Palaiologan period. The significant number of his letters that has come down to us both unravels the personality of their author and gives insights into the world of late Byzantine scholarly activity. A provincial by birth (he was born in Bithynian Nicomedia) he came to Constantinople immediately after 1261 and entered the imperial service with all the prospects for a successful career. His liaisons with the inner circles of power were excellent both under Michael VIII Palaiologos and Andronikos II Palaiologos,[428] facts testified to by his intimate correspondence with high imperial officials. Around 1283 he entered a monastery and dedicated himself entirely to a life of scholarship within the

[422] *PLP* 23308.
[423] The scholarly interest in this extremely prolific Palaiologan author is demonstrated by recent editions and translations of Metochites' works. For instance, J. Featherstone, *Theodore Metochite's Poems 'To Himself'*. Introduction, text and translation, Byzantina Vindobonensia 23 (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2000); Karin Hult, *Theodore Methochites on Ancient Authors and Philosophy. Semeioseis Gnomikai 1-27 & 71*. A Critical Edition with Introduction, Translation, Notes, and Indexes (Gothenburg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 2002).
[424] *PLP* 16045.
[425] *PLP* 29317.
[426] Cf. their short biopics by Niels Gaul in Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, Salvatore Settis, eds., *The Classical Tradition*, 732–3, 934–5, and 953–4 respectively.
[427] For further readings on this outstanding and prolific gentleman scholar of Byzantium, see Marie-Helene Congourdeau, "Planudès Manuel," *Catholicisme* 50 (1986): col. 488-90; Nigel G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, 230-241; C. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium...*, 66-89; Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés...*, 34-42; Angeliki E. Laiou, "Observations on Alexios Strategopoulos and Maximus Planoudes," *BMGS* 4 (1978): 89-99; E. A. Fisher, "Planoudes. Holobolos, and the Motivation for Translation," *GRBS* 43 (2002): 77-104;
[428] However, in his *basilikos logos*, delivered at the coronation of co-emperor Michael IX in May 1294, Planoudes did not hesitate to criticize Andronikos II. Cf. Dimiter Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204–1330* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 78-115.

confines of the Constantinopolitan monastery of Christ Akataleptos, where he seemingly succeeded Gregory of Cyprus as leader of a scholarly circle.[429]

Among his most prominent disciples were Manuel Moschopoulos, Andronikos and John Zarides,[430] George Lekapenos, and Nikephoros Kassianos. Not only did he become the most erudite writer, but he also acted as a pioneer, arousing new inquiries into subjects as geography (Ptolemy, Strabo), astronomy, mathematics (Aratus, Euclid), classical rhetoric, etc. Apart from these interests, Planoudes translated a considerable number of secular and theological texts from Latin (e.g., Augustine's *De trinitate*, Boethius' *De consolatione philosophie*, Ovid's *Heroids*) and compiled and extended the "Palatine Anthology" and the "collected works" of Plutarch.

Another champion of *paideia* in late Byzantium was Thomas Magistros (*c.*1280–*c.*1347/8). Born in Thessalonike into the ranks of the urban élite, Magistros took the monastic habit in 1320s (as Theodoulos) and was probably ordained a priest. Depicting himself as a civic *rhētōr*, Magistros taught grammar and rhetoric in his private lodgings to young men – both aristocrats and those of little means – thus embodying the typical gentleman scholar whose economic status did not depend on collecting fees for his teaching activities. Among his most notable disciples were the future hesychast patriarch of Constantinople, Philotheos Kokkinos,[431] and the major opponent of Palamas,[432] Gregory Akindynos.[433] His prevalent interest in the second sophistic movement[434] and its "uncontaminated" Attic style made him a fervent promoter of the revival of Atticizing

[429] Cf. Inmaculada Pérez Martín, "Planudes y el monasterio de Acatalepto. A propósito del *Monacensis gr.* 430 Tucidides (ff. 4-5 y 83-5)," *Erytheia* 10 (1989): 303-307; Eadem, "La 'escuela de Planudes': Notas paleográficas a una publicación reciente sobre los escolios euripideos," *BZ* 90 (1997): 73-96.
[430] *PLP* 6461 and 6462.
[431] *PLP* 11917.
[432] *PLP* 21546.
[433] *PLP* 495.
[434] Cf. Simon Swain, *Hellenism and Empire*...; Ewen Bowie and Jaś Elsner, ed., *Philostratus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); W.V. Harris and Brooke Holmes, *Aelius Aristides between Greece, Rome, and the Gods* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

Greek rhetoric.[435] Travelling to Constantinople (October, 1312 or spring 1313) and delivering a stirring oration in the presence of Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos, he was offered a career at court which he refused, confirming his "Odyssean" *nostos* and commitment to his native Thessalonike, yet maintaining close links to the imperial court ever after.

Generally believed to have been a disciple of Thomas Magistros, Demetrios Triklinios (*fl.*1308-c.1330)[436] was another significant personality of the late Byzantium intellectual scene. Son of the "wealthy city of Thessalonike," Triklinios, allegedly a disciple of Thomas Magistros or at least a member of his circle, was the Byzantine "philologist" *par excellence.*[437] Mastering an impressive metrical knowledge, Triklinios subjected the corpus of Greek drama to systematic revisions,[438] which he equipped with his metrical scholia. This enterprise is attested by valuable autograph manuscripts,[439] veritable masterpieces of late Byzantine scholarship, which have come down to us. The most notable accomplishment within this project was the edition of the so-called nine "alphabetic plays" of Euripides. Triklinios' reputation went beyond his time and his name is still mentioned frequently in the critical apparatuses of modern editions.

Beside the circles of these well-to-do and illustrious "gentlemen scholars" – and present scholarship is not always sufficiently careful to distinguished between these two, interconnected groups – there were other, little known, early fourteenth-century

[435] For further reading see Niels Gaul, "The Twitching Shroud..."; cf. also his monograph on *Thomas Magistros und die spätbyzantinische Sophistik.*

[436] Cf. Nigel G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium...*, 249-256; Idem, "Planudes and Triclinius," *GRBS* 19 (1978): 389-394; Idem, "Miscellanea Palaeographica, I: Planudes and Triclinius again," *GRBS* 22 (1981): 395-7; M. H. Shotwell, "On the Originality of Demetrius Triclinius in Editing and Commenting on the Byzantine Triad of Aeschylus" (PhD dissertation, Brown University, 1982); Ole Langwitz Smith, "Tricliniana," *ClMed* 33 (1981/2): 239-262; Idem, "Tricliniana II," *ClMed* 43 (1992): 187-229.

[437] Other interests beyond philology are attested by his short essay on lunar theory; cf. A. Wasserstein, "An Unpublished Treatise by Demetrius Triclinius on Lunar Theory," *JÖBG* 16 (1967): 153-74.

[438] Nigel G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium...*, 250; Edmund Fryde, *The Early Palaeologan Renaissance...*, 268-294.

[439] For instance, Oxford, New College, MS 258 (1308); Naples, MS *gr.* II. F. 31 (c.1325/1330); Venice, *Marcianus graecus* 464 (Hesiod) (1316/1330); Rome, Bibliotheca Angelica, MS *gr.* 14 (Euripides) (c.1315-1325); Paris, Supplément grec 463 (Aristophanes) (c.1320/1330).

pepaideumenoi whose livings depended on their teaching activities, where we get closer to the social stratum of Maximos Neamonites. A sliding scale between "gentlemen scholars" and schoolmasters clearly existed, without us being able to draw a clear line. George Karbones[440] and Theodoros Hyrtakenos, introduced above, are good examples of minor participants in the Palaiologan revival of learning.

George Karbones was one of the little known intellectual figures of early fourteenth-century Byzantine society[441] who can only be traced by re-examining scattered *tesserae* spread throughout the works of others.[442] Born in Thyateira (Akhisar) in Lydia, he left his native city in unknown circumstances for Constantinople, where, allegedly with the support of Theoleptos, the metropolitan of Philadelphia, Karbones pursed higher studies and then embraced a career as a teacher and man of *belles lettres.* In the capital he created a nexus of good connections; he became a close friend of Michael Gabras' brother, a confidant of Eirene-Eulogia Palaiologina,[443] and a fairly intimate correspondent of Nikephoros Gregoras. He also ran and presided over an establishment with several assistant teachers (*syllogoi*).[444]

Traces of Karbones' teaching activity can be identified in various surviving texts: his *Encomium of Constantinople*[445] and Byzantine scholia on Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus, presumably commented on in the course of teaching. These philological and classical interests might suggest that Karbones was a member of a distinguished group of

[440] *PLP* 11167 and 11171. For a short but essential introduction to this author, see Robert Browning, "A Byzantine Scholar...," 223-231.
[441] Robert Browning, "A Byzantine Scholar...," 223.
[442] Erwin Fenster offered a sketch portrayal of Karbones in his edition of Karbones' hitherto unpublished encomiun of Constantinople. Cf. Idem, *Laudes Constantinopolitanae* (Munich: Institut für Byzantinistik und Neugriechische Philologie, 1968): 327-365.
[443] The daughter of Nikephoros Choumnos and widow of Andronikos II's son, John the Despot. In 1308 she became the abbess of the Philantropos Soter monastery in Constantinople.
[444] Rodolphe Guilland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras: l'homme et l'oeuvre* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste P. Geuthner, 1926), 262, and Idem, *La correspondace de Nicéphore Grégoras* (Paris: Société d' Édition Les Belles, 1927), 111, 316 cited by Robert Browning, "A Byzantine Scholar...," 225.
[445] This is his only work that has come down to us. The beginning of it is preserved in the *feuilles de garde* of codex *Vaticanus graecus* 444.

schoolmasters transmitting and interpreting the ancient and classical heritage.[446] In short, Karbones, seems an "in-between" intellectual figure who links the two groups (i.e., the "gentlemen scholars" and the schoolmasters): well-linked socially, difficult to grasp in his writings.

A little known writer of the Palaiologan period, Theodore Hyrtakenos has not been systematically studied.[447] However, he provides an illustrative parallel, as I shall argue, to the case of Neamonites. There are only a few grains of information about his life and career to be found in his works. A collection of his correspondence was preserved in a fourteenth-century *codex unicus*: Codex Parisinus *graecus* 1209.[448] The most famous political and religious personalities of the time were among his addressees: Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos, the patriarch John Glykys, the *megas logothetēs* Theodoros Metochites, the *megas domestikos* John Kantakuzenos, the *parakoimōmenos* Alexios Apokaukos, and others.[449]

In most of his letters, Hyrtakenos depicts himself as an impoverished intellectual incessantly preoccupied with his own "gastrointestinal"[450] hardships, always in a quest to fill his stomach. He was not the only one trying to find solutions to his material privations by repeatedly turning to well-to-do people for help; many other aspiring intellectuals both displayed their learning and flattered the rich in order to earn their living.[451] This *status quo* closely resembled the "rhetoric of poverty" developed by twelfth-century Byzantine

[446] Cf. Robert Browning, "A Byzantine Scholar...," 229.
[447] Ihor Ševčenko, "Society and Intellectual Life in the Fourteenth Century," 69-92; Apostolos Karpozilos, "The Correspondance of Theodoros Hyrtakenos," *JÖB* 40 (1990): 275–94; Georgios Fatourios, "Zur Chronologie der Briefe des Theodoros Hyrtakenos," *JÖB* 43 (1993): 221-31; Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés...*, 90-95.
[448] For a brief codicological description of the manuscript consult H. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire des manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1886), 266. This codex has attracted the attention of many scholars. For instance, in 1798 the French scholar La Porte du Theil edited Hyrtakenos' letters extant in the manuscript and three decades later another French scholar, Jo. Fr. Boissonade, published the rhetorical works of the same codex.
[449] For the chronology of Hyrtakenos's correspondence, see Georgios Fatourios, "Zur Chronologie der Briefe...," 221-31.
[450] Cf. Ihor Ševčenko, "Alexios Makrembolites and His 'Dialogue Between the Rich and the Poor,'" *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 6 (1960): 187-228, reprinted in Idem, *Society and intellectual Life...*, VII.
[451] Cf. Ihor Ševčenko, "Society and Intellectual Life...," 69-92.

intellectuals who did not belong to the Komnenian nobility.[452] Karpozilos argues that Hyrtakenos' claims of his life being on the fringes of poverty are "more apparent than real," and that the image of poverty emerging throughout his correspondence was rather exaggerated.[453]

Enjoying the patronage of the high official Theodore Mouzalon, Hyrtakenos received a higher education in Constantinople and subsequently became a teacher sometimes salaried by the court, and operated a private school where his students had to pay fees fixed by a private contract.[454] The most pre-eminent among his students were Nikephoros Metochites, the son of the *megas logothetēs*, and Basileios Glykys,[455] the son of Patriarch John Glykys.[456]

The list of little–known schoolmasters is extended by Hyrtakenos, who mentions in one of his letters the case of two professors, Hyaleas[457] and Chalkomatopoulos, who received a salary (*siteresion*) from the imperial treasury.[458] Ševčenko considers that the members of this intellectual milieu "projected a contradictory self-image: a group exclusive in its possession of esoteric knowledge, and yet submissive and impotent in the face of the mighty; a group hobnobbing with the rich, and yet often plagued by poverty."[459]

Maximos Neamonites seems to belong to the latter group, that is to say, one can arguably place him among the impoverished schoolmasters of the early fourteenth-century Byzantium, who strived to make a living through their teaching activities. Similar to Hyrtakenos, yet in opposition to the "gentlemen scholars" introduced above, Maximos

[452] For instance, the poems of "Ptochodromos" caricature the plight of the hungry intellectual in racy language, and Podromos' plea to Anna Komnena says that is better to be a well fed shopkeeper than a starving grammarian; cf. Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I...*, 341.
[453] Apostolos Karpozilos, "The Correspondance...," 293.
[454] Ibid., 286.
[455] *PLP* 4257.
[456] *PLP* 4271.
[457] *PLP* 29466.
[458] Cf. Sophia Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettrés...*, 92-3.
[459] Ihor Ševčenko, "Society and Intellectual Life...," 71.

Neamonites has received little scholarly attention, and has never come into the main focus and interest of any Byzantinist. The present thesis has endeavoured, by bringing to light Neamonites' hitherto unpublished letter collection, extant in the fourteenth-century *codex unicus*, *Vaticanus Chisianus* R. IV. 12 (*gr.* 12), ff. 166–172, to improve in small steps on this situation.

Thus, the first part of the present study has offered some general considerations on letter writing and letter collections in (late) Byzantium, a field in need of further investigation, as a number of "silent" manuscripts of the period are still waiting for scholars to edit, translate, and contextualize them. Subsequently, a palaeographical and codicological description of *Vat. Chis.* R. IV. 12 (*gr.* 12) was offered. Furthermore, Neamonites' *epp.* have been introduced and summarized in the order as they appear in the manuscript; attention has been equally paid to Neamonites' epistolographic style, which seems to abound in quotations and references to classical authors, especially Homer and Euripides. The first section further highlighted some (auto)–biographical facts embedded in the letters (especially *epp.* 1, 3, 5, 7–9, 12–14).

The second part, "Maximos Neamonites as a Schoolmaster," revealed Maximos as a schoolmaster striving to secure a living through his teaching activities, yet constantly in a quest for books. The second section of the thesis has also contextualized, interpreted, and analysed rhetorically Neamonites' fourth letter as a possible rhetorical exercise (*progymnasma*) of *ēthopoiïa*, i.e., character–sketch, whose title may have been "What words might a mother say to a bishop regarding the marriage of her daughter?"

In conclusion, even though Neamonites' fourteen *epp.* do not permit us to draw a highly extensive knowledge of his life and activity, they do suffice to allow us to pull Neamonites out of his cone of shadow. Thus, the *epistulae* depict their author as a schoolmaster, most probably of primary education, active in Constantinople (*ep.* 1) in the

first decades of the fourteenth century (*fl.*1315–1325), eking out a meager income on the basis of his teaching activities (*epp.* 1, 2, 6, 10, 14). Occasionally, he lifts the pen to interfere on behalf of others (*epp.* 4, 9). Whether for this he received extra salary, it is not certain, but seems likely.

Heavily reliant on this type of income, the letters portray Neamonites in a constant struggle of either retaining his students (*epp.* 2, 6, 10) or gaining more (*ep.* 14). Moreover, Neamonites is seen as pursuing his intellectual interests by taking part in the book transmission economy of the age (*ep.* 11). Apart from all the details concerning his activity as a schoolmaster, the letters also speak of Neamonites' poor health condition (*epp.* 5, 7, 12, 13, 14).

Maximos Neamonites' letters do not take us into the "garden of the Muses,"[460] but they rather give insights into the everyday social, cultural aspects, and especially educational system of the early fourteenth-century Palaiologan Byzantium. Moreover, they are an unique expression, reflection, and an *eikōn* of Neamonites' soul.

The swan, writes Neamonites, "close to the last moments of her life, sings very gracefully and sweetly in such a manner that the remembrances of her music and singing would remain for those still living as an inducement of yearning for it." Maximos' letters might have been enjoyed by those gathering in the fourteenth-century Palaiologan *theatra*, but their song remained hitherto unheard for a long time.

The present thesis represents a first step in giving the swan a voice once again.

[460] Cf. Manuel II Palaiologos (*r.* 1391-1425), *Letter* 14, ed. George T. Dennis, *The Letters of Manuel II Palaeologus*, text, translation and notes, *CFHB* 8 (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1977), 37-9.

APPENDIX

Diplomatic transcription of Maximos Neamonites' letters

I offer below a diplomatic transcription of Neamonites' hitherto unpublished *epp.* 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 14, extant in the fourteenth-century *codex unicus*, *Vaticanus Chisianus* R. IV. 12 (*gr.* 12), ff. 166–172, preserved in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. Their transcription is equipped with footnotes undertaking to present a comprehensive and accurate picture of the original text. Moreover, the punctuation in the manuscript is indicated by the red symbols. Thus, "," stands for commas, "." for points on the line (ὑποστιγμὴ τελεία), and " · " for middle (στιγμὴ μέση τελεία) and upper points (στιγμὴ τελεία).

Both in the transcription of the Greek text and in the footnotes I have employed a set of space-saving conventions and abbreviations as follows:

( ) parentheses (round brackets) expanding the abbreviations extant in the codex

< > brackets circumscribing the text completely missing from the original manuscript and reconstructed by the modern editor

[] square brackets indicate a successive repetition of a word(s)

[ ] superscript square brackets mark either a variant reading of the text indicated in the margins of the folios or a (later) interlinear addition

| indicates a line break within a word

|| indicates the end of a syntactical unit

A the addressee of the letter

CPG *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*[461]

MS manuscript

[461] E. Leutsch and F. G. Schneidewin, eds., 2 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck et Ruprecht, 1839-51).

Letter 2

A: To a *sebastos*[462]

f.166[v] <o>ὐδήπου σε χρὴ παλίμβολον εἶναι σεβαστῶν ἄριστε ἢ ἀστατεῖν. (καὶ) μεταβολαῖς ταῖς Εὐρίπου[463] συμμεταρριπί|ζεσθαι ἄντικρυς, ὡσπερεὶ τὴν ἕξιν ταῖς *τοῦ Ἄρεος* δια|μάχαις κτησάμενο(ς) *τοῦ βροτολοιγοῦ*,[464] οὕτω δὴ (καὶ) τὰ πρὸς τὸν παῖδα μεταπηδᾶν · οὐδὲ τὰς σὰς ἀνεῖναι δίκαιον ἀκοὰς, ταῖς πολλῶν δόξαις (καὶ) παραινέσεσιν, εἰ παραι|νέσεις χρῆ φᾶναι · ἀλλὰ μὴ γνώμας οὐκ ἐλευθέρας · || τοῦτο γὰρ π(ατέ)ρων οὐκ ἐφιεμένων μᾶλλον φίλους παῖδ(ας) ἰδεῖν καλοῦ τινος ἐν κατασχέσει γενέσθαι, ἢ φθονούντων · τοὐναντίον δ' ἐχρῆν ἀκίνητον εἶναι (καὶ) μονονοὺ ἀνδρι|άντα οἷς συνέθου πρὸ(ς) τὴν τοῦ παιδὸς μάθησιν ·||

ἐς τοῦτο γε πλέον τῶν σῶν συνήθων, ἡμῶν ἀναπεισάντων, δεξιό|τητα φύσε(ως) ἐνοῦσαν αὐτῷ φωρασάντων · (καὶ) γοῦν εἰ μ(ὲν) ἐμμένεις τῇ καλλίστῃ τῶν συμβουλιῶν, εὖ ἂν ἔχοι · (καὶ) ἡμᾶς ἀλείπτας ἕξεις ἐς παῖδα τὸν σὸν, εἰ καὶ φορτικ(ὸν) εἰπ(εῖν), οὐκ ἐλάττους οἶμαι τῶν ἐν Ὀλυμπίοις πάλαί ποτ' εὐδοκι|μησάντων, εἴπερ ἀκήκο(ας) · ||

ἄλλως δέ τ' ἀργύριον παλιννο|στήσειν πρὸ(ς) τὴν σὴν σεβαστότητα, μήδ' εἰς νοῦν βάλε · οὔτε γὰρ Ἅδης · οὔτε πῦρ ἀνεμοῦσί ποτε τὰ προκατειλημμ(έν)α · καὶ ὡς κλῆρος οἰκειωθέντα · πολλῷ γε δήπου γραμματιστὰς οἳ πολλῷ τῷ περιόντι, τῇ ἐνδείᾳ τ(οὺς) πολλ(οὺς) ὑπερβάλλουσιν || f.167[r]

[462] Cf. *ODB* 1862-3.
[463] Cf. CPG II, 291: Apostoles III, 18: Ἄνθρωπος εὔριπος: τύχη εὔριπος: διάνοια εὔριπος: ταῦτα ἐπὶ παλιμβόλων.
[464] Homer, *Iliad* V. 31.

Letter 4

A: To a bishop

f.167^{r} βραχὺν <τῷ>[465] νομίμῳ γάμῳ χρόνον δέσποτά μου θειότ(α)τε ὁμιλήσασα καὶ θυγάτρια τέξασα δύο, ἀπεβαλόμην θανάτῳ τὸν σύ|ζυγον · καὶ θατέραν μὲν λόγοις ἔπεισα, σὺν ἐμοὶ τὸ ῥάκος τοῦτο περιβαλεῖν · καὶ τῇ τῶν ἐρίων ἐργασίᾳ,

f.167^{v} τὴν τροφὴν συμπορίζεσθαι · τὴν δευτέραν δὲ, πολλῷ τῷ μέτρῳ τοῦ σεμνοῦ (καὶ) ἄζυγος βίου τῆς προτέρας,[466] [ἐπέχουσαν (καὶ)] ζηλοῦσαν μὴδ' ὁπωσοῦν, ἀ<παι>τεῖ[467] τὰ γάμου, ἡ μὴ δὲ μιᾶς ἡμέρας τροφ(ὴν) ἢ φαῦλον ἔνδυμα κεκτημ(έν)ην · ||

καὶ δὴ συνωθουμένη τῇ ταύτης βίᾳ, προσέρχομαι μεθ' οὗ λογισμοῦ (καὶ) ἡ αἱμορρο|οῦσα,[468] τῷ πρώτῳ προσῆλθεν ἀρχιερεῖ · τῷ τὴν προεδρίαν τάυτην δόντι, ἆθλον τῆς σῆς ἀρετῆς · || ὡς οὖν ἐκείνην τὸ τῶν θαυμάτ(ων) πλῆθος ἀπῆρε προσιέναι τῷ θεαν(θρώπ)ῳ λόγῳ, οὕτω κἀγὼ ζήλῳ τῷ σῷ, ὃν πρὸς ἐκεῖνον τρέφεις. οὗ (καὶ) τὸν θρόνον ἐπέχεις θαρρήσασα, μετὰ τῆς αὐτῆς ἐλπίδος (καὶ) πίστεως πρόσειμι · || εἰ μὲν οὖν ἴχνός τι (καὶ) μίμημα [καὶ] τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς ὁ χρόνος τῶν πάλαι παραδεδομέν(ων) ἐναφῆκε τελεῖσθαι, δεῖξον ἐφ' ἡμῖν. ταῖς πολλῷ τῆς αἱμορροί(ας) πάθει πλέον πιεζομέναις · καὶ δὴ μιμητὴς ἐκείνου, (καὶ) φύλαξ ἐνδίκως κληθήσῃ · ||

εἰ δ' οὐκ ἀφῆκεν ὥσπερ ἐκείνου τρόπος τὰ ἀνωκάτω ποιεῖν, ἀλλ' ἡ σὴ ἁγιότης, τὸ, παντὸς μάλιστα τὸν ἀληθ(ῶς) ἀρχιερέα χαρακτηρίζον (καὶ) κινδυνεῦον ἤδη, τῷ περιόντι τῆς σαυτοῦ σοφί(ας) · ἀνακτησάσθω · || εἰ δ' ὡς περίψημά τι παρ' ᾧ καὶ σοφί(ας) θρόνος (καὶ) λόγος ἐστὶ τοῦτο

[465] deleted.
[466] ἐπέχουσαν – in the upper left margin.
[467] rubbed away.
[468] Luke 8: 42-8.

παραρριφήσετ(αι), πρὸς τίνος ἄλλου λόγος τοῦ καλοῦ τούτου χρήματος ἔσεται · ταῦτ᾽ εἰδὼς, δοκίμασον τὰ ἡμέτερα · καὶ τὰ δυνατὰ, κινδυνευούσῃ νεάνιδι παρακλήθητι βοηθῆσαι ||

Letter 6

A: τ<ῷ> αὐτ<ῷ>

f.169[r] ὁ δὲ νῦν ὁ παρ᾽ Ἕλλησι μυθευόμενο(ς) Ζεὺς ἦν τε καὶ ἐτιμᾶτο · (καὶ) ἡ τότε πλάνη καὶ λῆρο(ς) καὶ ἐξαπάτη · καὶ τὸ τῶν προσανε|χόμενον αὐτοῖς παρακεκινημέν(ον) φρόνημα · ταὐτὸν δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς εἶχον · καὶ μηδέν τι διαλλάττον ἐκείνοις, προ|σῆλθον ἂν εὖ προσλιπαρῶν, φύσιν ἐμὴν μεταμεῖψαι κ(αὶ) μεταπλᾶσαι · ||

εἰ δὲ δὴ τὸ δῖον ἀπεφήνατο βούλημα, ὡς οὐχ οἷόντε ἄλλ(ως) τὰ περὶ σὲ, προσεκελεύετε εἶναί με διδά|σκαλον · προσῃτησάμην ἂν κατὰ *δεύτερον πλοῦν*[469] εἰς ἀν|δριάντα μὴ μεταποιηθῆναι ἔσεσθαι, πλὴν ψυχῆς καὶ τ(ῶν) φωνητικῶν αὐτῆς ὀργάν(ων). οἷς ἂν ἐτελεῖτο μέν μοι καλῶς τὰ τῆς τέχν(ης) · δαπάν(ης) δὲ καὶ ἄλλης χρείας ἔξω που τυγχάν(ων) · οὔτ᾽ ἐμαυτὸν ἀνίᾳ, ἐδίδουν, καὶ π(ατ)ρᾶσι παίδων παρεῖ|χον οὐδαμῶς πράγματα · ||

ἐπειδὴ δ᾽ ἐκεῖνα λόγος ἦν ἄλλως. καὶ ἡ φύσις δ᾽ ἡμῶν ἀμετάπτωτος ἧς ἀρχῆθ(εν) ἔτυχε διαπλάσεως. φρόνημά τε κεκτημένος ὁποῖον ἂν τοιούτῳ

[469] Cf. CPG II, 24: Diogenianus II, 45: Δεύτερος πλοῦς: ταύτην τὴν παροιμίαν σαφῆ ποιεῖ Φιλήμων· πλοῦς † δεύτερός ἐστι δήπου λεγόμενος, Ἂν ἀποτύχῃ ** τοῦ οὐρίου καὶ κώπαις πλεῖ· οἷον δευτέρα γνώμη καὶ πρᾶξις. Ἡ μεταφορὰ ἀπὸ τῶν ναυτιλλομένων; cf. also CPG II, 155: Macarius III. 20: Δεύτερος πλοῦς: ἐπὶ τῶν ἀσφαλῶς τι πραττόντων· παρόσον οἱ διαμαρτόντες κατὰ τὸν πρότερον πλοῦν ἀσφαλίζονται περὶ τὸν δεύτερον.

προσήκοι γήρᾳ, φαίην ἂν καὶ μάλιστα πρὸς σὲ τἀληθὲς · Ἑρμοῦ μαθητὴν ὄντα
καὶ φίλον ἐμὸν · ||

καὶ δὴ ἄκουε · μυσταγωγόν μ᾽ ἐποι|ήσω τοῦ σοῦ παιδὸ(ς), τῇ φιλίᾳ οὐχ
ἧττον ἢ τῇ τύχῃ θαρρήσ(ας) · οὐδὲ γὰρ λέγω τῷ τρόπῳ · || κἀπειδὴ τῇ τέχνῃ
χρῶμαι πρὸς πορισμ(όν), οὐ μικρὸν ἕρμαιόν σε τῶν ἄλλων · ἡγησάμ(ην) ᾧ τ(οὺς)
παῖδ(ας) ἔχων διατελῶ, δύναμίν τε κριτικὴν ἔχοντα, ἔκ τε πείρ(ας) καὶ ἀγωγῆς,
ἧς πόλλ᾽ εὔχῃ τὸν φίλον υἱὸν γενέσθαι ἐγκα|ταλήψει · τοῦτο στρέφων κατ᾽
ἐμαυτὸν πρὸς ἄνδρα νοῦν ἔ|χοντος ἅμα καὶ τέχνην, ὅτι κερδανοῦμεν δύο τὰ
κάλλιστα · || τό γε διαφυγεῖν ἀκαίρους μέμψεις, αἷς ἔστιν ὅτε πρὸς τῶν ἀμυήτων
τῆς τέχν(ης) πλυνόμεθα · καί γε τὸ πολὺ τοῦ σκόπου, ταῖς συχναῖς φιλοτιμίαις
προσαφαιρούμεθα · ||

νυνί δ᾽ *ἄνω χωροῦσι ποταμῶν αἱ πηγαί*[470] · καὶ οἱ μὴ εἰδότες τῶν
μενυημέν(ων) πλεονεκτοῦσι · καὶ τὰς ψήφους, ἐπακριβοῦνται πλέον τοῦ
Ῥαδαμάνθυο(ς)[471] · || οἱ δ᾽ εἰδότ(ες), ἀλλ᾽ οὐ χρὴ τοῦτ᾽ εἰπεῖν, πρός γε εἰδότα τὸν
λόγον ποιούμενο(ν) · πλὴν ἐρήσομαί σε. εἴ γε διατείνῃ, τὸ ἀτελὲς τοῦ παιδὸ(ς)
προβαλλόμενο(ς), ||

f.169[v] π(ὡς) ἂν οἴῃ γήδιον ἔχων πλῆρ(ες) πετρῶν τε καὶ ἀκανθῶν, ᾗρημ(έν)ος
ποιῆσαι εὔγειον. || ἐγὼ (δὲ) εἰ ἤμην σκαπάνη χαίρ(ων), καὶ ταύτας ἐξελεῖν
ἐπιστήμ(ην) εἶχον · πότ(ε)ρ(ον) τοῦτ᾽ ἐνήργουν ὀλιγομισθίᾳ μάλα μόνῃ καὶ ὕδατι

[470] Cf. CPG I, 47: Zenobius, II. 56: Ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι πηγαί: παροιμία ἐπὶ τῶν ὑπεναντίως λεγομένων ἢ γινομένων· οἷον εἰ ὁ πόρνος τὸν σώφρονα ἔλεγε πόρνον. Ἐπειδὴ οἱ ποταμοὶ ἄνωθεν κάτω ῥέουσιν, οὐ κάτωθεν ἄνω; CPG I, 185: Diogenianus I.27: Ἄνω ποταμῶν χωροῦσι πηγαί: ἐπὶ τῶν ἐναντίως γενομένων ἢ λεγομένων. Οἷον, εἰ ὁ πόρνος τὸν σώφρονα λέγει πόρνον; CPG I, 351: Gregory of Cyprus I, 28: Ἄνω ποταμῶν χωροῦσι πηγαί: ἐπὶ τῶν ἐναντίως λεγομένων; Cf. CPG II, 286: Apostoles II, 92: Ἄνω ποταμῶν: λείπει, χωροῦσι πεγαί: ἐπὶ τῶν ἐναντίως λεγομένων· ὡς ὅταν ὁ πόρνος τὸν σώφρονα λέγῃ πόρνον.

[471] Ῥαδάνθυο(ς) MS; cf. CPG 1, 304: Diogenianus VII. 98: Ῥαδαμάνθυος κρίσις: ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπὶ δικαίοις μαρτυρουμένων; CPG I, 372: Gregory of Cyprus III, 59: Ῥαδαμάνθυος κρίσις: ἡ δικαιοτάτη; CPG II, 206: Macarius VII. 49: Ῥαδαμάνθυος ὅρκος: ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ μικροῦ τινος ὀμνύντων, ἤγουν κριοῦ, κύκνου, λαχάνων καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων; Idem, VII. 50: Ῥαδαμάνθυος κρίσις ἐπὶ τῶν δικαιοτάτων; CPG II, 632: Apostoles XV. 17: Ῥαδαμάνθυος ὅρκον: ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπὶ δικαιοσύνῃ, μαρτυρουμένων. ὁ δὲ ὅρκος ἦν κατὰ χηνὸς ἢ πλατάνου ἢ κριοῦ ἤ τινος ἄλλου τοιούτου· οἷς ἦν μέγιστος ὅρκος ἅπαντι λόγῳ κύων, ἔπειτα χήν. τοιοῦτοι δὲ καὶ οἱ Σωκράτους ὅρκοι.

τὸ βαρὺ τοῦ πόνου διαφέρων, ἢ τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἂν ἐποίουν, || σοί τ᾽ ἀνάγκη τὸν χῶρον ἔχειν ἀκαθαρτόν, μὴ προσδαψιλευόμενο(ς) τῇ χορηγίᾳ · (καὶ) οἱονεὶ νύττων συχναῖς τῶν δωρεῶν, τὸν δυνάμενον ἐκκαθᾶραι. || τοῦτο ἦν καὶ περὶ τοῦ σοῦ παιδὸ(ς) οἵου φίλων ἄριστε · ἐπεὶ πολλῆς μ(ὲν) δεῖται καθάρσεως · πλείονο(ς) δὲ δαπάνης · εἴ γε χρεὼν γενέσθαι τοιοῦτον, ὁποῖον καὶ τὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἔχει τῆς σῆς ||

Letter 7

A: τῷ μεγ(ά)λ(ῳ) λογοθέτ(ῃ) τῷ Μετοχ(ί)τ(ῃ)

f.169^{v} ἡ πολυχρόνιος νόσος, ἀργὸν παντάπασιν πεποίηκέ με · καὶ τοσοῦτον, ὥστε καὶ τοῖς εἰδόσι τἀμὰ, μὴ πιστεύεσθαι ζῆν · καὶ οὔτε φιλί(ας) ἀρχόντων ἐφῷ καὶ τὰς μεγάλα δυναμέν(ων) φιλί(ας) · τὰς μὲν ἐνούσας μοι μετρίας τὸ πάθο(ς) ἠφάνισε · τὰς δὲ μὴ οὔσ(ας) ἀδύνατα κτήσασθαι · || ἦ γὰρ καὶ τὸ σ(ὸν) εὐσταθὲς πρὸς τὰ καλὰ καὶ χρηστὸν ἦθος καὶ τῶν ἀντικειμέν(ων) αὐτοῖς ἀμύητον, καθὰ ταῖς ἁπάντων γλώσσαις κεῖται. ||

οὐκ ἂν ἔως τοῦ νῦν ἐξέφυγέ μοι παντελῶς ἄγνωστον · ἀλλ᾽ ἐπεί τις χρεία καλ(ῶς) ποιοῦσα κεκίνηκ(εν), οὐ διὰ ταύτ(ην) ἀλλ᾽ ἵνα κἀμὲ μὴ φύγῃ τὰ σὰ φυσικὰ προτερήματα, καὶ ὧν διαφέρῃ τοῖς νῦν δυναμ(ένοις), καὶ γνώμῃ καὶ τρόπῳ, καὶ ὅσα σελήνη τῶν ἄλλων ἀστέρων, || νῦν αὐτὴ θαρρῆσαι πεποίηκέ με. καὶ προσελθεῖν τῷ μεγαλείῳ τῷ σῷ καὶ τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐξειπεῖν σοι, οὐκ ἀποκρύψομαι, ἑτοίμως · ἄλλως τε μὴ δὲ πρὸς τὸ ψεύδεσθαι ἑτοίμως ἔχω · μήτοιγε πρὸς τὸ σὸν ἀξίωμα · ||

ἐμοὶ γοῦν νέᾳ πάνυ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ · τὸν ἀπράγμονα βίον ποθήσαντι · εὑρέθη τίς
καὶ τόπος οὐκ ἀσύμφωνός μου τῷ τρόπῳ · τοῦ νῦν πρωτο|κυνηγοῦ ἦν ἡ αὐλή · ||
ὃς τοῖς γονεῦσιν αὐτοῦ κατ᾽ ἴχνος βαίνων · ἀπένειμέ μοι τιμὴν, ὡς κἀκεῖνοι τοῖς
ἐμοῖς · κἀν ἐκεῖνοι δι᾽ ὑπερβάλ|λουσαν ἀρετὴν εἶχον τὸ αἰδέσιμον, (καὶ) ἐμοὶ δὲ
δι᾽ ἐκείν(ους) ὡς κλῆρος τίς κατήχθη · καὶ οὔτε παρ᾽ ἐκεῖνοις, ἀπητήθη τί, πῶς
γὰρ ἦν χάρις εἰ λῆμμά τι προσλαμβάνον, κἀγὼ δὴ πολλοῦ δέω τῷ πρωτοκυνηγῷ
δοῦναί τι τούτου ἕνεκεν · || ἐπεὶ δ᾽ ὁ χρόνο(ς) καὶ νῦν τὴν οἰκεί(αν) τροπὴν, καὶ
ἀστάτω[σιν] συνέφερε καὶ κινεῖ τὰ ἀκίνητα,[472] μᾶλλον δ᾽ εἰπεῖν τὰ εὐρίπιστα, οὐκ
ἔχων ἄλλ(ως) αὐτὸν ἐπαινεῖν, τέως δ᾽ ὅ τι σὺ φέρων τὸν δῖν(ον) αὐτοῦ · καὶ τῇ
σῇ ἐξουσίᾳ παρέρριψε, χάριν ἔχειν ὁμολογῶ · ||

f.170[r] νοῦν γὰρ ἔχων τῇ χάριτι τοῦ θ(εο)ῦ ὑγιᾶ · (καὶ) θολοῦσθαι μὴ θέλων τοῖς
ἔξωθ(εν) παραρ<ρ>έουσι · μὴ δὲ τοῦ δικαίου ποτὲ διιστῶν τὴν ψυχήν, ὡς
καπνὸ(ς) τὰς μελίττας · (καὶ) διατοῦτο τὸ κριτήρι(ον) ἄχρα<ν>τον διατηρῶν, ἔχει
(καὶ) περὶ τούτου, τοῦ ἐμοῦ λέγω οἰκήμ(α)τος ὀρθὴν τὴν ψῆφον, διοίσειν · (καὶ)
οὐ φθονήσει ἑνὶ κελεύσμ(α)τι μὴ χάριν παλαιὰν διασώσασθ(αι) (καὶ) προῖκα
γενέσθαι εὐεργετικὸ(ς) (καὶ) φιλότιμος · ||

ταῦτ᾽ ἐγὼ τοῖς πολλοῖς ὢν ἀγν(ὼς) ἐφῷ μήτ᾽ ἀρετὴν κεκτῆσθαι ἥτις
ἐπαίνειν εἰς φῶς τοὺς κατορθοῦντ(ας), μήτε προτέρημα φύσεως δι᾽ οὗ τινες
παρρησιάζοντ(αι), θαρρήσας τῷ μεγέθει τῆς σὴς ἀρετῆς, ὑπέμνησα · ||

σὸν οὖν ἐστὶ (καὶ) ἡμᾶς τετρυχωμένους ὄντ(ας), χρόνῳ (καὶ) ἀσθενείᾳ
ἐντάξαι τοῖς εὐεργέτηθεῖσι, παρὰ τῆς εὐγενεί(ας) σου, ἢ καὶ παραβλέψαι πρὸ(ς)
τοῖς ἄλλοις δεινοῖς · (καὶ) τῇ ἀσυνήθει ταύτῃ φορολογίᾳ · τρέχεσθαι ||

[472] Cf. CPG I, 197: Diogenianus II. 6: Ἀκίνητα κινεῖς: ὅτι οὐ δεῖ κινεῖν, οὐ Βωμοὺς, οὐ τάφους; CPG I, 22: Zenobius I. 55: Ἀκίνητα κινεῖν: καθ᾽ ὑπερβολὴν, ὅτι μὴ δεῖ κινεῖν μήτε βωμοὺς, μήτε τάφους ἢ ἡρῷα; CPG II, 265: Apostoles II. 3: Ἀκίνητα κινεῖς: ἐπὶ τῶν λίαν παράνομα πραττόντων. ὅτι οὐ δεῖ κινεῖν τύμβους, μὴ τάφους, μὴ ὀροφήν; cf. also CPG II, 5: Diogenianus I. 25; CPG II, 189: Macarius V. 98.

Letter 10

A: Unknown

f.170[v] ἰδού σοι πέπομφα τ(ὸν) υἱὸν · οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦν ἀντειπεῖν κελεύοντ(ος) · καίτοιγ᾽ ἐχρῆν τοῖς πρώην, μᾶλλον ἐπεσταλμ(έν)οις, ἢ προσέχειν τ(ὸν) νοῦν · ἐπεί δ᾽ ἐστὶν ὅτε ὁποῖα καὶ τοῖς τῶν διαθηκ(ῶν) γραμματείοις συμβαίνει, τῶν πρώτων ἐπικρατέστερα τὰ ὕστερα γίνεσθαι, δεῖν ἔγνωμ(εν) τοῖς δευτέροις συνθέσθαι · ||

δέχου τοίνυν αὐτ(ὸν) · φίλην ὄψιν τῇ μ(ητ)ρὶ γενησόμ(εν)ον · εἰ δὲ (καί) σοι, οὐκ οἶδα · π(ατ)ὴρ γ(ὰρ) εἶ, (καὶ) ζητεῖν οὐ τοῦτο προσήκει · ἀλλ᾽ ὅτι προτιμᾶν οὐκ οἶδας θέαν οὕτω παιδὸ(ς), χρήμ(α)τος ἀκηράτου κεν(ὸν) ὄψεσθαι, τῆς παιδεί(ας) · οὗ δὴ μικρὰ ἢ οὐδ(ὲν) φροντίζουσα μ(ήτ)ηρ, φύσεως πολιορκουμένη νόμῳ, μεταβεβουλεῦσθαί σε, οἴομαι πέπεικεν · ||

f.171[r] εἰ δέ γε χρὴ μήτε τοῦ περὶ παιδὸ(ς) σκοποῦ διαπεσεῖν, ἡμ(ᾶς) τε[473] πληρωτ(ὰς) φανῆναι τ(ῶν) ὑπεσχημένων, ἐπὶ πολὺ τὸν νέον · τὴν ἐν οἴκοι ποιεῖσθαι διατριβὴν, οὐ προσήκει · ἀλλὰ τῆς πάλιν ἅπτεσθαι τάχιον · ἵνα τῶν ἀρχῶν ἃς πολλῷ τῷ πόνῳ κατεβαλλόμ(ε)θα, ἐπιλήσμω<ν> μὴ γένηται ||

[473] τὲ MS.

Letter 11

A: Ἰω(άννῃ) τῷ Κριτοπ(ού)λ(ῳ)

f.171[r] ἵνα μή τι τῶν ἀπειρημ(έν)ων ἡ πεποθημ(έν)η βίβλο(ς) ἀνίῃ πάθοι, μὴ τῷ κεκτημ(έν)ῳ μόνον, ἀλλὰ (καὶ) τῷ ληψομ(έν)ῳ ταύτην ἐς χεῖρας, κἀντεῦθεν μ(ὲν) ἐκεῖνος σοὶ, σὺ δ' ἐμοὶ δίκαιο(ς) μῶμον προστρίψειας, ἀθιγῆ σοι ταύτην πεπόμφαμ(εν) · || (καὶ) ὡς ἂν αὐτός μοι συνείποις, (καὶ) οὐκ ἄλλ(ως),[474] ἢ (ὡς) ἐγὼ διατείνομαι · ἢ μᾶλλον εἰπεῖν ὡς αὐτὴ καθορᾶται · ||

οὐδ(ὲν) πλέον ἀπ' αὐτὴς ὀνάμενοι τῇ τοῦ χρόνου βραχύτητι, ἢ τότε θεᾶσθαι βίβλον, εὖ ἔχουσαν τῷ καλῷ χαρακτῆρι τοῦ γράψαντος · καὶ τῷ πρῶτον κτησαμ(έν)ῳ, τῆς φιλοτιμί(ας) χάριν εἰδέναι, οὑτωσὶ μάλα συχν(οὺς) τῶν χρυσῶν κ(α)τακενώσαντι, τοῦ γενέσθαι τοιούτου κύριον κτήμ(α)τος · σύ δ' ὡς οἶμαι, πλέον ἡμῶν, τῷ τε προγεγονότι, καὶ τῷ νῦν, ὀφείλεις ἀποτίσαι πολλὰς τῶν χαρίτων · τῷ μ(ὲν), ὡς συντεταχότι τοιαύτην, οἵαν παρὰ πάντ(ων) ἴσχειν ἔπαινον · τῷ δ' ὡς ἐμπιστεύσαντί σοι, ἐς πολὺ τοῦ χρόνου κ(α)τασχεθῆναι, (καὶ) ὡς εἰκὸ(ς), ἱκανὴν ὠφέλειαν ἐρανισαμ(έν)ῳ · τοῦτο μ(ὲν), ἐκ τῆς μεταγραφῆς τῶν ἐγκειμένων, οὐκ ὀλίγην δὲ, (καὶ) ἐκ τοῦ διϊέναι ταύτην ἀδεῶς ἐς κόρον · ||

ἀλλ' εἰ μεταδοίης οὖν μοι, ὧν αὐτὸς ἐδρέψω τῆς βίβλου χάριτος, καὶ μὴ τὴν ποτιμωτάτην μόνον δείξας ἔχεις πίδακα · ἢ (καὶ) πίνακα, τῆς δ' ἀπολαύσε(ως) οὐδαμ(ῶς) ἀπείργοις,[475] τάχ' ἂν, τῷ γε προτέρῳ, τῷ τε μετ' αὐτ(ὸν), εἰ δὲ βούλει (καὶ) σοὶ τρίτῳ, χάριν εἴσομ(εν) οὐ μικρ(ὰν) (καὶ) διενηνοχέναι μηδ(ὲν) οἰησόμεθα, τῆς προδιειλημμένης εἰκόνος ἢ παραδείγματος · ὧν ἡ χάρις, οὐκ εἰς τὰ σύνεγγυς μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τ(οὺς)

[474] After ἄλλ(ως), two words consciously rubbed away.
[475] Subsequently corrected to ἀπείρξοις.

διϊσταμ(έν)ους μετοχετεύεται · ἡ μ(ὲν), ἐκ τῆς προφανοῦς καὶ συνεχοῦς ἀτενίσε(ως) σπουδάζοντος ἀπομάξασθαι τὸ καλ(ὸν) τῆς τέχνης, ἥ δ' ἀφ' ὧν τὸ πότιμον αὐτῆς καὶ διειδὲς εἰς κόρον πιεῖν, παρεχομ(έν)η τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσιν · ||

εἰ δ' οὐ, κέρδος ἐν ἀμφοτέροις ἔσεται · ἡμῖν μ(ὲν), (ὡς) εἰδόσι μηδ(ὲν), ὧν ἐκεῖνοι πεπονήκασιν · αὐτοῖς δὲ, τ(οὺς) ἐκ συγγραμμάτων ἐπαίνους, κακῶς ζημιώσασιν · ὧν γε μὴ ὄντων, ἀφιλότιμος πάντως πᾶς, ὁ μὴ πεπονηκὼς ἐπὶ τοῦτο · ἔρρωσο ||

Letter 14

A: Unknown

f.172^{v} ὑπὲρ οὗ τ(ὴν) αἴτησιν ταύτην τίθεμαι · οὐκ ἔτι διαφεύγει τ(ὴν) σ(ὴν) ἀγχίνοιαν τυγχάνειν γ(ὰρ) εἰδ(ὼς) εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι, τὸν[476] Βῶλα ὄντά μοι τῶν πάλαι μὲν ὁμιλητῶν ὅτε (καὶ) τὰ ἐς γραμματ(ικ)(ὴν) αὐτῷ ἐσπουδάζετο · || νυνὶ δὲ τ(ὴν) σπουδ(ὴν) μεταθεὶς ἐκείνην, ὤφθη μάλα σπουδαί(ως) ὑπηρετήσ(ας) Ἀτζύμῃ τῷ σεβαστῷ · (καὶ) μεθ' οἵ(ας) οὐκ ἂν αὐτῷ τὶς μέμψαιτο[477] τῆς σπουδ(ῆς) τῶν τοιαῦτ' ἐνεργεῖν σπουδαζόντων · || οὗτος δύνασθαί με πρὸς σὲ οἰηθεὶς (καὶ) τ(ὴν) τῶν υἱέων πρὸ(ς) λόγ(ους) παιδαγωγίαν · ἐναργῆ τιθέμενος πρόφασιν · βαρὺς ἐπίκειτ(αί) μοι μάλα ἀνύσαί οἱ τὰ τοῦ σκοποῦ ||

γενοῦ μοι λέγων πρὸς τὸν χρηστὸν μὲν (καὶ) [(καὶ)] πασ(ῶν) γέμοντα χαρίτων · οὐχ ἧττον δ' ἐπικαμπτόμ(εν)ον · ἱκετείαις τῶν φίλων, πρόξενος, σεβαστὸν · || σοὶ γ(ὰρ) μᾶλλον ταυτηνὶ τ(ὴν) χάριν, δοίη ἄν, ἥ γε τῷ τῶν γένει προσηκόντ(ων), κἂν προβαλλομ(έν)ῳ ἐξείη πάντ(ας) ἅμα συν|δραμ(εῖν) ἐς μεσιτεί(αν) προσήκοντ(ας) · || ἐπειδὴ π(ατέ)ρες διδασκάλ(ων) αἴτησ(ιν) τῶν παίδ(ων) κηδόμ(εν)οι, περιπλείστου τίθεντ(αι) εἰ μὲν οὖν προσηκόντ(ως) ἐπῄει τούτῳ ἐντεθυ|μῆσθαι · τ(ὸν) ἐς τ(ὴν) παροῦσαν χρεί(αν) ἐσόμ(εν)ον · || δείξειας ἂν θαυμάσιε · ταὐτὸν εἰπ(εῖν) (καὶ) ὁποῖ(ον) σέβας τρέφεις τ(οῖς) τῶν υἱέων μύσταις · ||

εἰ δὲ δὴ γραφῇ τὴν ἱκετεί(αν) προβάλλομαι (καὶ) μὴ καταπρόσωπ(ον) ὃ μᾶλλον ἐχρῆν (καὶ) κατὰ τ(ὸν) σὸν ποιητ(ὴν) γουνάσασθαι · ἐκμειλίξασθαί τε πρὸς τούτ(οις) εἴ που τέ τι (καὶ) ἀντιβαίνει, θαυμάσεις μηδὲν · || τὸ γ(ὰρ) ἐν

[476] Corrected from τῶν.
[477] or μέμψοιτο as indicated above it.

νεφροῖς πάθος μικροῦ (καὶ) ἀκίνητ(ον) τίθησι · κἀντεῦθεν συγγνωστέος ἢ μεμπτέος μᾶλλον τυγχάνων εἰμὶ · τὸ δὲ (καὶ) οἰήσει τοῦτ᾽ οἴεσθαί με ποι(εῖν) ὡς χῶρ(αν) οὐχ ἕξ(ον) ἐν ἐμοὶ, μὴ ταὐτὸς ἐν νῷ βάλοις, κἀγὼ πολλοῦ · δέω, μᾶλλ(ον) δ᾽ ἐν εὐχῆς τίθημι μοίρᾳ ἐαλωκέναι τῷ πάθει τούτῳ μὴ δὲ πώποτε · ||

ἄλλ(ως) τε τ(οῖς) αὐθορμήτως κινουμ(έν)οις ὥς γε σὺ πρὸ(ς) τὰ καλὰ λόγος ἄψυχος ταὐτ(ὸν) τῷ ἀπὸ γλώττ(ης) (καὶ) κ(α)τ᾽ ὄψιν δύνατ(αι) προϊέμ(εν)ος · || ὡσπερεὶ κινδυνεύει μήτε λόγῳ μήτ᾽ ἀν(θρώπ)ῳ μηδόλω(ς) ὑπείκειν τ(οῖς) διακειμ(έν)οις μὴ οὑτωσὶ · κἂν ἄδητ(αι) τὰ τοῦ λόγου σειρήνεια[478] ἢ κ(α)τ᾽ Εὐριπίδ(ην) εἰπ(εῖν), γένητ(αί) τις φθόγγος – τέχνη τινὸς · τοῦ τ(ὴν) ἱκεσί(αν) προσάγοντος – ἔν τε βραχίοσι χερσί τε (καὶ) κόμαισιν ||

[478] σειρήνια MS.

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