Reinventing the ancient Greeks : the self-representation of Byzantine scholars in Renaissance Italy

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Chapter 2

The Imposition of Greekness in Italy

The previous chapter showed how in the final decades of Byzantium Gemistos Plethon and Laonikos Chalkokondyles began to review their connection with the ancient Hellenes. They not only recast this relation in terms of descent – transforming traditional forms of Byzantine Hellenism –, but also undermined the central position of the Romans in their self-image. The late- or post-Byzantine diaspora in Italy continued to represent themselves as Hellenes, but they did so in a very different context. We must take this into account in order to understand the precise import of their Hellenism. In addition to the differences mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, it is equally important to stress that unlike Plethon the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy did not need to justify their claims to Greekness. Westerners had looked upon the Byzantines as Greeks from at least the ninth century. As we shall see in this chapter, this imposition of Greekness had advantages that the post-Byzantines manipulated as well as disadvantages that they tried to avoid. This chapter offers an overview of the ways in which Byzantines in Italy gave substance to their relation with the ancient Hellenes against the background of how the Italians perceived of them, namely as Greeks and *not* as Romans. The final section zooms in on the ambivalent evaluations attached to the Greek rubric in Italy and on the stereotypes Italian humanists employed to characterise the Byzantines in different settings.

The imposition of Greekness

Western scholarship has always represented the Byzantines as Greeks. This bias has a long history that ultimately goes back to the ninth century. In 800, pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne emperor of the Romans. The western claim to imperial Rome eventually undercut the 'Roman' authority of the Byzantine empire. While the Byzantines themselves never really stopped to call themselves Romans, western sources from the ninth century onwards reflect an anti-Byzantine bias that denied the Roman legacy to Byzantium. The underlying idea was that the coronation of Charlemagne entailed not just a division of the Roman empire (the *divisio*) nor a renovation of the occidental

empire (the *renovatio imperii*), but the veritable transferral of the *imperium romanum* from the Greeks to the West (the *translatio imperii*).[194]

Italian historians of the fifteenth century present no exception to this general trend in western historiography. From their medieval sources they adopted the practice of calling the Byzantines Greeks instead of Romans. They thus perpetuated a western tradition that predated the Byzantines' self-declared Greekness with approximately four centuries. However, their denial of the Roman legacy to the Byzantines was a cultural rather than a political matter. While Italian chronicles of the period maintained the older idea of *translatio imperii* from the Greeks to Charlemagne, many humanist historiographers seem to accept the status of the eastern empire.[195] Even so, this did not make the Byzantines Romans. Italian humanists associated the Roman rubric with Latin rather than Greek and often also with the Roman Church. In their view, veritable Romans ('Romani') lived in Rome and wrote Latin. Italian humanists moreover imagined themselves to be the descendants of the ancient Romans, who had colonised Italy before subjecting the world to their *imperium*. In the founding myths they created for their cities and city-states they often traced origins or foundational events back to Roman times,[196] and they created fantastic Roman genealogies for ruling families. Although their recuperation of Latin preserved a common European culture, Italian humanists saw it as principally 'theirs'.[197] The classic expression of such Roman pride is perhaps Valla's preface to the *Elegantiae linguae latinae*. In his introduction to this work, the humanist claimed that the Italians had maintained at least their more lasting cultural *imperium* since the French, Spanish, Germans and many other nations of the world had accepted Latin's sway.[198] During the fifteenth century, the idea of Italian heirship to the Roman legacy was cited and adopted with different emphases by such important humanists as Salutati, Brunus, and Sabellicus.[199]

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[194] Arbagi (1969) 1-26. Note that the details about the coronation of Charlemagne (such as the exact date of the event and the pope responsible for it) differed. See on this for the medieval period in particular Goez (1958) 62-236.

[195] See on this in more detail Goez (1958) 237-257 who discusses the views of, among others, Leonardus Brunus, Flavius Blondus, Platina, Sigonius and Sabellicus. But see also Pertusi (2004) 19-20 who contrarily emphasises the persistence of the idea of *translatio imperii*.

[196] This is not exclusively characteristic of the humanists. Beneš (2011) has shown that also in the period between 1250 and 1350 intellectuals in northern Italy created Roman pasts for their cities.

[197] Pade (2012) 5-6.

[198] Valla, ed. Garin (1952) 596.

[199] For an overview of the role of humanist Latin in the formation of Italian identities see now Pade (2012).

From this vantage point, it is understandable that Italians in particular would not identify Greek-speakers living (roughly speaking) in the territories of the ancient Hellenes with the Romans, even if they could not claim to be the actual political heirs to ancient Rome themselves. In order to understand why Italian humanists could name the Byzantines Greeks at the same time they called their ruler emperor of the Romans, we must realise that for them the *imperium* was (at least in theory) a transferable principle of supreme authority that could move from one people to another. So, within the league of the *imperium romanum* – sometimes identified with the Fourth Monarchy – the imperial ball had moved from the Romans to the Greeks after the final dissolution of the western empire in the fifth century and from there to the Gauls (with the coronation of Charlemagne) and the Germans (with that of Otto the Great almost two centuries later). If a ruler acquired the *imperium romanum*, and thus obtained the title of 'emperor of the Romans', this did not automatically mean that his subjects became identified as 'Romans' in any sense beyond the formally political one. This explains why, for Italian humanists, the Byzantines could be Greeks under a Roman emperor.

So, even if Italian humanists recognised that the Byzantine empire was somehow a remnant of the Roman empire, they did not perceive of the Byzantines as Romans, but as Greeks. In their historical works, for example, they consistently called the eastern Romans 'Greeks' ('Graeci'), although they often did call their emperor 'Roman'. It seems that, for Italian humanists, the Byzantines had always been Greeks from Constantine's *translatio imperii* in the fifth century until their own days. When, for instance, Flavius Blondus discussed the Gothic-Byzantine Wars (535–554) in his famous account of the decline of the Roman empire, he presented it as a war between Goths and Greeks, although he did call Justinian a 'Roman emperor'.[200] Similarly, he saw the war of Pandulf Ironhead against the Byzantines (968) as a war to repel the Greeks 'who had dared to assist the Saracens against the Roman emperor' (then Otto I).[201] In the exceptional case that they did call the Byzantines collectively 'Romani' (as did, for example, Palmerius in his *Liber de temporibus*) they denoted the Byzantines before the Carolingians.[202] The idea behind this apparently was that after the *translatio imperii* the

[200] Blondus (1484) fols. Cv^{v}, Di^{r}, Ev^{r}, Kviii^{v}.

[201] Blondus (1484) fol. Kviii^{v}: 'Maius tunc Othoni et Pandulfo caput ferreo negocium fuit Graecos repellere qui Sarracenis per indicias foederatis adversus imperator Romanum opem ferre conati sunt'.

[202] In his *Liber de temporibus*, Matthaeus Palmerius called the Byzantines 'Romani' in his account of world history until the end of the eighth century (see Palmerius, ed. Scaramella 1906: 61 ll. 12-

Greeks of the Roman East lost the 'Roman' dignity which they had enjoyed as the political successors of the Romans. Yet it seems that Italian humanists generally also called the pre-Carolingian Byzantines Greeks. Franciscus Philelfus, for example, claimed that 'in the person of Charlemagne the *imperium* was transferred from the Greeks to the Romans'.[203] Examples can easily be multiplied, not only from humanist historiography,[204] but also from other types of sources ranging from extravagant humanist poetry to austere diplomatic acts.[205]

Italian humanists were not completely unaware of the Byzantines' own claims to Romanness. Sabellicus, for example, observed that the Greeks called their prince 'emperor of the Romans' in their diplomatic acts and books and that they called the inhabitants of Constantinople 'Romaei'.[206] Moreover, in the exceptional case that they wrote in Greek, they could prove sensitive to the finesse of Byzantine naming. In his Greek letters, for instance, Franciscus Philelfus called the Byzantines Romans

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14, 22-24, 37-39; 62 ll. 9-10, 18-21; 63 ll. 37-39). Thereafter, he called them invariably 'Graeci' (see n. 202).

[203] Philelfus, ed. Gualdo Rosa (1964–1968) 136 l. 10 (ca. 1048); 162 l. 17: 'imperium a Graecis transtulit ad Romanos in persona Caroli Magni'. Philelfus dated the event in ca. 756. His assertion reflects confusion about whom Charlemagne actually represented (Gauls? Germans? Romans?). See for such confusion in the medieval sources esp. Goez (1958) 204-206.

[204] Similar usages are found throughout humanist historiography. See, for example, Accoltius (1544) fols. $A4^{v}$-$A5^{r}$, $B6^{r}$, $C3^{v}$, $D3^{v}$, $E1^{r}$-$E5^{r}$, $F7^{r}$, $F8^{r}$, $K6^{v}$, $M5^{v}$ (First Crusade, 1096-1099); Brunus, ed. Santini (1914) 64 ll. 25-26 (1274) and Brunus, ed. Di Pierro (1914) 455-456 ll. 3-4 ('imperatorem Graecorum') and *passim* in his account of the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–1439); Philelfus, ed. Gualdo Rosa (1964–1968) 136 l. 10 (ca. 1048); 162 l. 17 (ca. 756); Forestus (1485) fols. 228^{r} (752), 237^{r} (886), 237^{v} (ca. 892), 242^{v} (971), 243^{v} (977), 249^{r} (1006), 261^{v} (1126), 262^{r} (1130), 263^{r} (1139–1140), 372^{r} (1202), 374^{r} (1215), 377^{r} (1260), 379^{r} (1260); Palmerius, ed. Scaramella (1906) 74 ll. 5-7 (790), 86 ll. 10-12 (983), 89 l. 43-90 l. 3 (1053–1056), 100 ll. 24-25 (1204), 106 ll. 35-37 (1274), 113 ll. 15-16, 37-39 (1330), 144 ll. 39-45 (1438), 145 ll. 31-40 and 169 ll. 32-33 (1453); Platina, ed. Gaido (1913) 179 l. 14 (1042); 179 ll. 29-30 (1076); 179 l. 36 (1014); 181 ll. 3-4 (1038); 185 ll. 23-25 (1056); 216 ll. 33-35 (1158); Sabellicus (1535) 322b (9th cent.), 326a (9th cent.), 335a (ca. 963), 312a (ca. 800). Note that in Bembus' Venetian history (ed. Ulery: 2007–2009), the 'Graeci' (or 'equites Graeci') specifically refer to stradiots fighting in the service of Italian lords.

[205] In poetry, the alternative 'Graii' was preferred over 'Graeci'. See, e.g., Molza, ed. Scrosone & Sodano (1999) 35.1; Piccolomineus, ed. Van Heck (1984) 450 l. 22, 474 l. 31; *idem*, ed. Van Heck (1994) 2.92 (but cf. 2.49); Pusculus, ed. Elissen (1857) 35 (2.421); Zovenzonius, ed. Ziliotto (1950) 2.11.37. See also the diplomatic documents concerning the Peloponnesus in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries brought together by Chrysostomides (1995) 1 l. 4, 58 l. 45, 326 l. 79, 366 l. 74, 463 l. 126, 479 l. 8, 482 l. 6, 545 l. 5.

[206] Sabellicus (1535) 275b: '[Graeci] suum principem Romanorum imperatorem suis diplomatibus et libellis inscriberent ipsique Constantinopolitani Romaei graeca voce decerentur'.

(“Ρωμαῖοι’), even if he called their country ‘Hellas’.[207] He used the Roman label not only in the stock formula ‘*autokrator* of the Romans’,[208] but also to refer to the Byzantines either collectively or individually. For example, when he wrote to Sultan Mehmet II in 1454 to ransom his mother-in-law, he admitted that ‘the sin of the Romans handed out Constantinople to your goodness so that the wrongdoers will learn their lesson’.[209] In another letter he introduced one John Gavras as ‘a young man who [was] by birth a Roman, according to New Rome that is’.[210] We must not forget, however, that Philelfus presents something of an exception among the Italian humanists; he probably could make such fine distinctions because he was aware of the subtleties involved in naming the Byzantines in the Greek language due to his close contacts with the late-Byzantine upper class (he travelled to Constantinople and married a Greek noblewoman from the Chrysoloras family). At least one contemporary feared that due to his admiration for the

[207] I examined Philelfus’ 110 Greek letters together with the Greek poems in the edition of Émile Legrand (1892). ‘Romans’ is used by Philelfus with reference to the Byzantines (see Philelfus, ed. Legrand (1892) nr. 17, p. 41; nr. 32, p. 63; nr. 37, p. 73; nr. 41, p. 63), but also to the ancient Romans (see nr. 89, p. 158; nr. 100, p. 176), while ‘Λατῖνος’ is used to refer to contemporaneous users of the Latin language (see nr. 19, p. 43; nr. 100, p. 189). ‘Hellas’ is used by Philelfus to denote Byzantium in a flattering letter to Johannes Argyropulus (Milan, April 13, 1441); he says that the Byzantine scholar plainly takes the first place among the wise men in Greece (see Philelfus, ed. Legrand 1892: nr. 24). See also Philelfus’ usage of ‘Hellas’ in the letter to Demetrios Sgouropoulos and his poem to Isidore of Kiev (Philelfus, ed. Legrand 1892: 169 ll. 4-5, 209 ll. 13-28). Jeroen De Keyser is currently preparing a complete edition of Philelfus’ Latin letters which will also entail his Greek letters according to the unpublished edition of Alessandro Leccese.

[208] See Philelfus, ed. Legrand (1892) nr. 17, pp. 41 (Milan, October 19, 1440): ‘τὰ περὶ τοῦ ἀρίστου ἡμῶν βασιλέως καὶ μεγίστου Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτορος’ (to Johannes Palaeologus).

[209] See Philelfus, ed. Legrand (1892) nr. 41, pp. 63-64 (Milan, March 11, 1454): ‘ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία Ῥωμαίων παρέδωκε τῇ σῇ καλοκαγαθίᾳ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν εἰς παίδευσιν, οἶμαι, τῶν ἀδικούντων’.

[210] See Philelfus, ed. Legrand (1892) nr. 37, p. 73 (Milan, October 23, 1454): ‘νεανίσκος, τὸ μὲν γένος Ῥωμαῖος ἐστὶ (κατὰ τὴν νέαν δηλονότι Ῥώμην)’. The phrase ‘κατὰ τὴν νέαν δηλονότι Ῥώμην’ is equivocal. ‘δηλονότι’ obviously signals epexegesis, while ‘κατὰ’ with an accusative has multiple meanings. Here, an interpretation like ‘according to (the standards of) New Rome’ seems the most appropriate, but an alternative interpretation (less likely because it makes the sentence elliptic) is that Gavras was a Roman by birth as he was born ‘in the region of New Rome’. Note also that Philelfus’ addressee was Thomas Coronaeus (Tommaso Franco), a Greek medic from Coron. This makes the addition curious. It may indicate that Philelfus felt that for Greeks born outside New Rome like Franco the Roman identification of Gavras was in need of clarification as it was for a western audience. On Coronaeus see Foffano (2000).

Greeks Philelfus had become a Greek, yet Philelfus emphatically replied that he had always been a Latin and would always be so.[211]

Even though at least some humanists were aware that the Byzantines called themselves Romans of a sort, they did not invent a name for them that reflected this in Latin. In his Latin correspondence, even Philelfus did not hesitate to refer to the 'Graeci' when he meant the Romans of the East, without exception and without further qualification.[212] At first glance, the formula 'Imperator Romeorum' used by the Italians might imply that contemporary Byzantines were 'Romei', yet it was a fossilised Latin loan translation of the official Greek title of the Byzantine emperor. How fossilised the expression had become by the first half of the fifteenth century appears best from the Latin proceedings of the Council of Ferrara-Florence, where the Grecism 'Romei' is not used at all beyond the formula 'Imperator Romeorum'. In all other instances where the Byzantines are meant, reference is to 'Graeci', not 'Romei'.[213]

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[211] See Philelfus, ed. De Keyser (forthcoming) 1.4 (a letter to Marcus Lippomanus, 1427). Note that Bisaha (2004) 129 on the contrary took the line as an indication for 'a sense of cultural absorption on Philelfus' part'. The contrary is true. Philelfus wrote: 'Accepi litteras tuas, quibus non dubio declarasti tibi meum reditum in Italiam voluptatis plurimum attulisse, quippe qui dubitasses me non litteraturam solum, sed naturam etiam Graecorum adamavisse, ob idque factum omnino Graecum, praesertim cum Graecam uxorem quam Latinam ducere maluerim, petisque quantum librorum mecum advexerim' *[I received your letter, in which you plainly state how much joy my return in Italy caused you for you suspected that I not only admired the literature, but also the nature of the Greeks and that I had therefore become entirely Greek, especially so because I preferred to marry a Greek rather than a Latin wife, and you ask how many books I took with me]*. Bisaha wrongly took 'quippe qui dubitasses' as the introduction of a rhetorical question in the third person singular, while 'quippe qui' in fact introduces an explanatory relative clause referring back to the implied subject of 'declarasti' (hence also the generic subjunctive in the second person singular, 'dubitasses'). This interpretation is confirmed by Philelfus own assertion in the same letter: 'Et sum Latinus et fui semper. Nec aliud quicquam ex Graecia reportavi quam litteraturam atque disciplinam…' *[I am and I have always been a Latin. And from Greece I brought back nothing else than literature and knowledge…]*. Cf. Resta (1986) 9-10 from which Bisaha misquoted the line.

[212] See the forthcoming edition of Philelfus' correspondence by Jeroen De Keyser.

[213] *Conciliorum*, ed. Alberigo & Dossetti (1973) 521, 523, 531, 561 (but we also find 'imperator Graecorum' on 517). The evidence can easily be multiplied from other sources. In Italian discourse, this is also reflected in, for example, the Italian *Vite* of Vespasiano da Bisticci, where the Council is discussed at some length. Throughout his biographies, the word 'Romani' always refers to either the inhabitants of contemporaneous Rome, or the ancient Romans, but never to the Byzantines (whom Bisticci like the authors of the *Acta* calls 'greci'). See, e.g., Bisticci, ed. Greco (1970–1976) 5, 22, 39, 71, 67-68, 444, 530, 642, 688, 973, 975, 983, 984, 985. Also Guicciardini in his *Cose fiorentine* refers to the Byzantines as Greeks and never as Romans, even when he

Particularly interesting in this respect is the way Italian humanists rendered into Latin the 'Ρωμαῖοι' they encountered in Byzantine sources.[214] They had several options to translate the culturally sensitive word. They could choose to faithfully transliterate it into Latin ('Romaei') as they did when they referred to the 'imperator Romaeorum', or they could fully explicate its Roman import by using 'Romani'. They could also suppress Roman associations by turning the Romans into 'Graeci'. Although most Byzantine historians were translated only in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Raphael Maphaeus' rendering of Procopius' history of the Persian Wars provides one of the interesting exceptions.[215] In his translation of the Greek text, Maphaeus chose to translate 'Ρωμαῖοι' with either 'Romani' or 'Romaei'.[216] In a revealing introductory note, he explained the rationale behind his choice to do so:

> 'Monendum postremo censui quod a Romanis Romaeos diduxi quo Graeci uocabulo Romanos Latinosque ante Constantinum uocabant. Postea uero in antiqua nominis et Imperii possessione peruersantes Romaeos se item dici contenderunt: quapropter non tam nominum potestates quam gentes his appellationibus discretas adnotaui'.[217]
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> *I thought it necessary to warn that I distinguished Romaeans from Romans; by the former name the Greeks called the Romans and Latins before Constantine. Thereafter, however, insisting on their ancient possession of both name and empire [of the Romans], they demanded to be called Romaeans themselves. Hence by these designations I denote not so much distinct nominal nuances as distinct peoples.*

Maphaeus did not acknowledge the relation of identity between Italian Romans and eastern Romans that was implied by the Greek word 'Ρωμαῖοι' as Procopius had used it. He moreover deconstructed this relationship by distinguishing the Romans and the Romaeans. For him, the 'Romaei' were Greeks who had claimed the Roman name together with the empire, but were not really Romans. The Romans ('Romani') and Latins ('Latini') were entirely different peoples. Interestingly, a similar dissociation

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mentions them in conjunction with their Roman emperor (see, e.g., Guicciardini, ed Ridolfi 1945: 263, 'lo imperadore e greci vennono in sulle galee del papa').

[214] Pertusi (2004) 13-20.

[215] Pertusi (2004) 6-20. Other early Latin translations of Byzantine authors are by Leonardus Brunus (Procopius, 1470) and Christophorus Persona (Procopius, Agathias) in addition to translations into Italian by Nicolaus Leonicenus of Vicenza (Procopius) and Benedictus Aegius (Procopius).

[216] See, e.g., Procopius, trans. Maphaeus (1509) fols. Diii^{v}, Ei^{r}, Fii^{v}, Giv^{v}, Iii^{r}, Iii^{v}, Iiii^{r}, Ki^{r}, Kii^{r}, Liii^{v}, Niii^{r}, Nv^{r}. Botley (2004) 38 observed that Brunus sometimes styled Procopius' 'Ρωμαῖοι' 'Graeci'.

[217] Procopius, trans. Maphaeus (1509) Ai^{r}.

between Romaeans and Romans is suggested by the usage of the Byzantine scholar Kanavoutzes (Canabutius) in his treatise about Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *Roman Antiquities* (ca. 1430–1455), where he distinguished between 'Ρωμαῖοι' and 'Ρωμᾶνοι', but without explaining why he did so.[218] While Italian humanists discussed such matters occasionally at the semantic level of naming, as did Marcantonius Sabellicus and Raphael Maphaeus, in general they did not voice any awareness of the Greco-Roman hybridity expressed by, for instance, Manuel Chrysoloras (discussed below in chapter 1, pp. 37-40).

Just as the Byzantines in general, individual Byzantines were identified as 'Graeci' if they were not identified with their birth-place. For example, Nicolaus Capranica called cardinal Bessarion a 'Trapezuntine' and a 'Byzantine' in his funeral oration for the cardinal, while an anonymous eulogist called him a 'Greek by nation'.[219] By the same token, Petrus Bembus referred to Constantine Lascaris as a man who outranked all 'Graeci' living today.[220] No one ever styled them 'Romani'.[221]

There is, perhaps, one exception. In the Latin epitaph that Vergerius the Elder composed for Manuel Chrysoloras in 1415, the poet stated that the Byzantine professor was a 'Constantinopolitan knight from the ancient stock of the Romans (*genus Romanorum*) who migrated with emperor Constantine'.[222] Some have taken Vergerius'

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[218] Cf. Kaldellis (2007a) 399-400. Kanavoutzes composed his treatise for Palamede Gattilusio between 1433 and 1455, available in the Teubner edition of M. Lehnerdt (1890) (see on Kanavoutzes *PLP* nr. 10871). There are no full studies on him. See Hinterberger (2002), Diller (1970) and Mercati (1927) in addition to Lehnerdt's introduction.

[219] Capranica, ed. Mohler (1942) 407 l. 10 and Anonymus, ed. Migne (1866) XCV ('greco di nazione'). In his *Chronicon* Forestus introduced several popes and rulers as Greeks by birth: pope Saint Zosimus (Forestus 1485: fol. 197^{v}), pope Leo I the Great (*id.* fol. 205^{r}), Eleutherius the Exarch (*id.* fol. 219^{r}), pope Saint Zachary (*id.* fol. 227^{r}), Andronicus (*id.* fol. 249^{r}), and Michael VIII Palaeologus (*id.* 279^{r}).

[220] Cited in Donadi (1975) 127

[221] It has been argued that Marullus' fellow poet Manilius Cabacius Rallus called himself 'Manilius Romanus' in an edition of Paul the Deacon's epitome of Festus, published in 1475 in Rome. However, it seems that the edition is misattributed to Cabacius Rallus and should perhaps be attributed to Sebastianus Manilius Romanus. See on this Lamers (forthcoming a).

[222] The Latin text is as follows: 'miles | constantinopolita | nus ex vetusto | generi romanorum | qui cum consta | ntino imperatore | migrarunt'. See Guarinus, ed. Sabbadini (1915) 114 ll. 77-79 (= nr. 54). Cf. the epitaph by Piccolomineus, ed. Van Heck (1994) ep. 4, esp. ll. 8-9: 'Roma meos genuit maiores; me bona tellus | Bizantina tulit, cinerem Constantia seruat' (note that in the title of the poem he is called 'Emmanuel Chrysoloras Graecus'). Cf. Thorn-Wickert (2006) 121-122 without reference to Van Heck's edition. Piccolomineus' epitaph for Chrysoloras is fashioned

claim literally.[223] Others have proved him wrong and revealed that the Chrysoloras-family originated from the Greek islands and not from Rome.[224] Yet the significant thing about Vergerius' epitaph resides in the fact that he ranked Chrysoloras among the Romans instead of the Greeks, probably because he was aware that the Byzantine scholar and diplomat was so proud of his Roman background.[225] Rather than a historical lapsus on the part of Vergerius this is an exceptional example of Italian recognition of a Byzantine as a Roman rather than a Greek – exceptional especially in the light of the otherwise sharp dividing lines between Greeks/Byzantines and Latins/Italians.[226]

In the final section of this chapter, I will investigate the implications of the Greek rubric in more detail. The name which the Italians ascribed to the Byzantines was obviously not 'just' a name, but implied expectations and stereotypes (see p. 20 above). As Greeks, the Byzantines were not the heirs but the former subjects of the Romans, as Petrarch had maliciously recalled already in the fourteenth century.[227] They were, moreover, the maligned aggressors of the Trojan War, the enemies of Aeneas, who got their just deserts in 1453 – this was at least the argument of, among others, Philelfus' son Johannes Maria.[228] But the Byzantine Greeks were also the descendants or representatives of those who had civilised Rome and by their learning and wisdom had 'conquered their conqueror'.[229] As we shall see at the end of this chapter, Italian attitudes towards the Byzantine Greeks were typically ambivalent. Before turning to these issues, however, it is imperative to ask how the Byzantine intelligentsia responded to their imposed Greekness in Italy. Did they resist it? Embrace it? Did they explicitly reject their traditional Romanity? Or did they tacitly retain it?

The Byzantines' own dissociation from the Romans

When the Byzantines arrived in Italy, they were welcomed as Greeks. What had been a daring experiment in later Byzantium was the norm in the West. The Byzantine

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after Vergil's: 'Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc | Parthenope. Cecini pascua rura duces' (Donat. *Vit. Verg.* 36).

[223] So, for instance, Hody (1742) 12 and Schöll (1830) 502-503.

[224] Thorn-Wickert (2006) 12-15, 120.

[225] Cf. Guarinus, ed. Sabbadini (1915) 63 ll. 16-20 = nr. 25.

[226] Similar interpretations in N. Zorzi (2002) 87-88 n. 2 with bibliography and esp. Maltezou (2000) 533-534.

[227] For Petrarch's views on the Greeks see further Bisaha (2004) 118-122.

[228] Cf. Bisaha (2004) 131-132.

[229] Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.156: 'Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit'.

intelligentsia in the Italian diaspora generally embraced the Greek rubric that the West had put on them ever since the ninth century. While Chrysoloras still maintained the Greco-Roman hybridity of the Byzantines, most of the Byzantines in Italy rather followed Laonikos Chalkokondyles and perhaps also Johannes Argyropulus in accepting that the Romans of their times were not they, but the Italians or Latins. It is noticeable that in Italy they did not attempt to explain or justify their cultural or ethnic kinship with the ancient Greeks, probably because the Italians already saw them as Greeks and not as Romans. But they were explicit about their dissociation from the Romans. Although Byzantine scholars did not reflect extensively on Byzantine history, we can gauge their views on their relations with the Romans from several cursory remarks in their works, and for illustration I will zoom in on a treatise on Athenian chronology, a letter about etymology, and a poem about the cultural decline of the Hellenes.

In his *De mensibus Atticis* (ca. 1470), Theodore Gaza accounted for the fact that the Attic calendar had fallen into disuse.[230] As an explanation he put forward that the Romans had superimposed their own calendrical system upon the original Greek one. Under Roman rule the Hellenes lost 'the purity and elegance of their own language' by mixing it up with Latin elements. In this way, Gaza explained, 'even now, after receiving the colonies of the Romans, they still call themselves Romans instead of Hellenes, using the names of the Romans for the months as if they were their own'. Unlike Chrysoloras (asserting that the Byzantines had *almost* lost the name of their ancestors) Gaza claimed that the Hellenes had taken over the name of the Romans and had also adopted their cultural practices as if they were their own (like naming the months). In this way, according to Gaza, they had perverted their Hellenism:

> Τῆς δὲ περὶ ταῦτα ἀγνοίας τοῖς πρὸ ἡμῶν αἴτιον τὸ Ῥωμαίους ἅμα καὶ διορθῶσαι τὰ περὶ τὸν ἐνίαυτον καὶ ἄρξαι ὥσπερ τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν καὶ τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ [πρὸς γὰρ τῷ ἄρχειν ἑτέρων]. καὶ

[230] For a very short introduction to the life and works of Gaza with a concise bibliography see Harris (2000f). It must be noted that Gaza's reconstruction of the Athenian calendar was not an isolated project and seems to fit in with a reviving interest in ancient chronology in the fifteenth century, both in Byzantium and in Italy. Gemistos Plethon (whose calendar is prominent in Gaza's treatise) had special interest in ancient Greek chronology (on which see still Anastos 1948). Cyriac of Ancona moreover outlined the Roman calendar for Constantine Palaeologus in Greek in 1448 (Lambros 1930, Castellani 1896). Italian humanists were particularly interested in the Athenian calender, which bore on their interpretation of Greek historiography. It seems that, before Gaza, Manuel Chrysoloras composed a guide to the Greek calendar which is now lost (see most recently Botley 2006). For a concise overview of the awakening interest in chronology and calenders more generally see also Grafton (2010).

τὸ τῆς φωνῆς δὴ καθαρὸν, τὸ κομψὸν Ἕλληνες ἀπολωλεκότες, πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀρχόντων φωνὴν ᾗ φιλεῖ γίγνεσθαι ἐξίσταντο καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν ὀνομάτων ἄλλοις τε πολλοῖς καὶ δὴ καὶ ταῖς τῶν μηνῶν προσηγορίαις τοῖς σφετέροις ἀναμιγνύντες ἐχρῶντο· δεξάμενοί τε ἀποικίας Ῥωμαίων αὐτούς τε ἄχρι καὶ νῦν ῥωμαίους ἀντὶ Ἑλλήνων καλοῦσι καὶ ὥσπερ οἰκείαις ταῖς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀμφὶ τοὺς μῆνας χρῶνται ὀνομασίαις'.[231]

A reason for the ignorance of those before us regarding this [i.e. the Attic calendar] is the fact that the Romans set matters straight concerning the year-cycle, and ruled the Hellenic people like the other peoples. And the Greeks, having lost the purity and elegance of their speech, changed towards the speech of their ruler, as usually happens, and of the Roman words they used many others and especially the names of the months, mixing them with their own. After having received the colonies of the Romans, they even now still call themselves Romans instead of Hellenes, and used the names of the Romans for the months as if they were their own.

This passage elucidates how a Byzantine intellectual could recast the historical and cultural relations between 'Byzantines', Romans and Hellenes. It comes very close to what Laonikos Chalkokondyles told us in more detail in his history (see chapter 1, pp. 52-54). In the passage from Gaza's treatise, the Byzantine past is reframed as part of Hellenic rather than Roman history. The people whom we now call Byzantines appear to be Hellenes whom the Romans initially subjected (traditionally after the Battle of Corinth in 146 BC). Yet after almost 500 years of Roman rule, they 'received' the Roman colonies, assumedly when Constantine the Great transferred the capital of his empire to Byzantion and renamed it after himself.[232] After the transfer, the Hellenes began to call themselves Romans, which explains that in Gaza's day the Byzantine Hellenes still styled themselves by that name. Hence, the 'Byzantines' are really Hellenes who in different phases of their history for various reasons adapted their language, customs and name to the Romans, at first because the Romans ruled over them, later because the Hellenes stepped into the red shoes of the Roman emperors.

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[231] Gaza (1495) fol. avii^{v}. I left 'πρὸς γὰρ τῷ ἄρχειν ἑτέρων' ('that is in addition to the ruling of others') outside the translation and placed it between square brackets in the Greek text, because it seems to be an intrusive gloss explaining 'καὶ τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ' (which might also be the case for 'τὸ κομψόν' explaining 'τὸ καθαρόν'). As it is beyond my scope to examine the textual tradition of Gaza's text, this must obviously remain a speculative emendation.

[232] Compare the curious testimony of George Amiroutzes who saw the Romans just as the Macedonians as foreign occupiers who eventually handed over their empire to the Greeks out of admiration for their civilisation (Amiroutzes, ed. De La Cruz Palma 2000: 4 ll. 6-20). Gaza may also refer to the moment in the fifth century AD when the western Roman empire had definitively declined and the eastern Roman empire remained to the Greek-speaking emperors (and the Hellenes so 'received' the Roman colonies).

Interestingly, Constantine Lascaris offered a similar analysis in a very different context in a letter to Georgius Valla regarding the meaning and etymology of the Greek transliterations 'ὀφφίκιον' (Latin *officium*) and 'ὀφφικιάλιος' (*officialis*). 'Although [the words] are used by us', Lascaris wrote, 'they are Roman words, and we employ them as if they were our own due to our habitual use of them ever since the Romans became masters over the Hellenes and in particular from the moment that Constantine the first established his marvellous *patris*'.[233]

In the past, Byzantines had sometimes also referred to Latin words in Greek, but then they had used them to corroborate their claims to the Roman legacy. In the thirteenth century, for example, the patriarch Ioseph adduced precisely the word 'ὀφφίκιον' to justify in the context of Latin polemic that the Byzantines called themselves Romans.[234] Gaza and Constantine Lascaris, on the contrary, are not interested in claiming (back) a Roman cultural or political legacy for the Byzantines. Rather the contrary. They perceived of the Roman impact on Greek civilisation (its calendrical system and its language) as an externally imposed and foreign intervention in Greek affairs, culminating with the adoption of the Roman name. Gaza even explicitly rejected Roman influence as something undesirable because in his view it perverted the purity ('τὸ καθαρόν') and elegance ('τὸ κομψόν') of the Greek language. Similar views would much later be reformulated – in broader terms and with wider implications – by Greek national historians eager to brush away the Roman aspects of what they had begun to represent as medieval Greek and not eastern Roman history.

The anti-Romanity of Gaza's analysis in *De mensibus* found fuller expression in a Greek epigram by Janus Lascaris, who was the most prominent proponent of a new generation of Byzantine scholars after Gaza's and Bessarion's. The epigram also exemplifies the broader implications of what it meant to be called a Hellene. In the small piece, Lascaris praised Demetrius Lascaris for his wisdom and vigour.[235] Even so, his praise for the nobleman rapidly turned into vehement criticism of the Hellenes in general. In particular, the poet disapproved of the general inertia of the yoked Hellenes.

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[233] C. Lascaris, ed. Martínez Manzano (1994) 171 ll. 7-11: 'τὸ ὀφφίκιον καὶ ὁ ὀφφικιάλιος, εἰ καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν λέγονται, ἀλλὰ Ῥωμαίων φωναὶ εἰσὶ καὶ χρώμεθα διὰ τὴν συνήθειαν ὡς οἰκείαις, ἐξ ὅτου Ῥωμαῖοι ἐγκρατεῖς Ἑλλήνων ἐγένοντο καὶ μάλιστα ἐξ ὅτου Κωνσταντῖνος ἐκεῖνος τὴν θαυμαστὴν ἐκείνην ᾠκοδόμησε πατρίδα'. Compare in this context the statement of George Trapezuntius of Crete, also recording that after the transferral of the *imperium Romanum* the Greeks began to use the Roman names of the months (Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani 1984g: 299, §6).

[234] Kaldellis (2007a) 384.

[235] On the identification of this personage see Lascaris, ed. Meschini (1976) 138.

In the poem, the daemons of the earth give air to their fear that Demetrius Lascaris is a new Heracles sent by Zeus to take revenge for Greece, so ruining the works of mother earth. However, mother earth personally consoles her daemons. 'Dear sons', she says, 'this is not the moment to fear this. He will have the name and the fame of a great leader, but he will do hard work for others like a second Heracles: Zeus is not yet gentle towards the Hellenes and won't be as long as they wickedly hate the name, customs, and wisdom of their ancestors'.[236] Together with the name of their ancestors ('σφῶν προγόνων … οὔνομα'), the Hellenes abandoned their ancestral customs and wisdom ('ἔθη', 'σοφίην') so that they cannot escape the oppression of the Ottoman Turks.

The anti-Roman idea of Lascaris' poem is spelled out in an as yet unpublished commentary to Lascaris' Greek poems, written by the scarcely known humanist Christophorus Contoleon from the island of Kythira.[237] In his commentary to Lascaris' epigrams, Contoleon explained that 'Zeus no longer favours the Hellenes as long as they hate the name of their own ancestors: the Hellenes (as they do not want to be called Hellenes but Romans instead), and as long as they do not aim for the customs and wisdom of their ancestors, but lead their lives in ignorance and stupidity'.[238] In other words, the way to recovery would be to follow the deeds and wisdom of the ancient Greeks and to claim back their name.

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[236] Lascaris, ed. Meschini (1976) 57 ll. 8-12: 'τέκνα φίλ', οὔτι δέος καίριον ὔμμι τόδε· | ἡγεμόνος μεγάλου τῷδ'οὔνομα καὶ κλέος ἔσται, | ἀλλ'ἑτέροις πονέει, δεύτερος Ἡρακλέης· | οὐ γὰρ ἔθ' Ἕλλησι Ζεὺς ἤπιος, ἄχρις ἀλιτροὶ | σφῶν προγόνων στυγέουσ' οὔνομ', ἔθη, σοφίην'.

[237] A thorough study and complete edition and translation of the works of Contoleon are still a serious desideratum. It may not only increase out knowledge about the activities of Leo X's Greek Academy, but it is also relevant to the field of Homer-studies (esp. in connection with the reception and allegorical interpretation of the poet). For some observations regarding Contoleon's place in the reception of Homer see Pontani (2005) 459-460, 496, 509 n. 1141. The only pioneering work on Contoleon is Meschini (1973) which went almost entirely unnoticed. Apart from Meschini, the most informative source about Contoleon is the equally neglected Paranikas (1867) 134 and 152 with note 8 (note that Paranikas did not know Matranga's edition of four of Contoleon's writings on Homer on which see Matranga 1850: 22-24). For the rest, Contoleon is most often only mentioned in passing (Saladin 2000a: 173-174, Morgan 1983: 186, Geanakoplos 1973: 149). In addition to the works listed by Matranga, Contoleon wrote a treatise entitled *De immortalitate animae*, edited by Meschini (1973), on which see further Kristeller (1983) 112, Omont (1889) 205, Paranikas (1867) 152 n. 8, Haenel (1830) col. 882. BAV, Vat. gr. 2141 preserves Contoleon's extracts from Plotin.

[238] BAV, Vat. gr. 1352, fols. 225^{v}-226^{r} (cf. Lascaris, Meschini 1976: 139): 'οὐκέτι Ζεὺς εὔνους τοῖς Ἕλλησι ἕως οὗ τὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τῶν ἑαυτῶν προγόνων ὄνομα μισοῦσιν (οὐ θέλουσι γὰρ Ἕλληνες καλεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ Ῥωμαῖοι), οὔτε τὰ ἐκείνων ἤθη καὶ σοφίην περιποιοῦνται, ἀλλ' ἀγνοίᾳ καὶ ἀπαιδευσίᾳ τὸν βίον διάγουσι'.

Hellenism and Greekness: Competence and ancestry

In Italy, the Byzantine intelligentsia indeed claimed back the name of the Hellenes. Unlike thirteenth-century Byzantines, they did not identify as Hellenes in order to explain to themselves and the Latins *what kind of* Romans they were; instead they transformed themselves into Hellenes, while they conceded the Roman rubric to the westerners, and the Italians in particular. The generic labels they applied to themselves must be discussed in some detail, not only since naming is by definition the most important way of identifying and categorising, but also because names indicate claims to the past.[239] The bilingual oeuvre of cardinal Bessarion composed for a mixed audience of Latins and Greeks offers a good example of the Byzantines' usage. In his many Greek works, Bessarion called the Byzantines either Hellenes ('Ἕλληνες') or Greeks ('Γραικοί'). In sharp contrast to the Byzantine tradition, he confined the Roman label ('Ῥωμαῖοι') to speakers of the Latin language (alternatively the 'Λατῖνοι'), the members of the Roman Church and the ancient Romans.[240] He did not apply it to the Byzantines, apart from the obligatory stock phrase 'βασιλεὺς Ῥωμαίων' which he rendered into Latin as 'imperator Graecorum' in his Latin correspondence.[241]

It seems that for Bessarion there was a difference between the 'Ἕλληνες' and 'Γραικοί' that is not adamant, but still clearly noticeable. Bessarion used to call the Byzantines Greeks ('Γραικοί') when he referred to them in religious contexts (when we would perhaps call them the 'orthodox').[242] This usage is consistent with what we find in the ecclesiastical writings of his Byzantine contemporaries, where the Byzantines are also called Greeks instead of Romans or Hellenes.[243] In the diaries of Sylvester Syropoulos, for example, recording the council of Ferrara-Florence, we find 'Γραικοί' to

[239] This appears, for example, from the debate over naming the Turks which boiled down to the question where the Turks came from and how they related to the peoples of Europe. On naming the Turks see the discussion of Meserve (2008) 142-154.

[240] Bessarion, ed. Mohler (1927), 234 ll. 27-39 (with 235 ll. 23-34), 496 l. 36 – 498 l. 6 (with 497 l. 32 – 499 l. 7), 514 l. 36 – 516 l. 4 (not translated), 580 l. 16 (with 581 l. 16), 602 ll. 21-43 (with 603 ll. 18-37), 612 l. 2 (with 613 ll. 5-6). For the opposition of Latin versus Greek speakers in terms of 'Ἕλληνες' versus 'Ῥωμαῖοι' see Bessarion, ed. Mohler (1927) 282 l. 1.

[241] Bessarion, ed. Mohler (1942c) 491 l. 32, 564 l. 14, p. 542 ll. 33-37 ('Graeci').

[242] On 'Γραικοί' see also p. 36 n. 122 above. Note that Bessarion sometimes called the Greek fathers 'teachers of the Hellenes' or 'Hellenic fathers' as in Bessarion, ed. Mohler (1942a) 73 l. 23-24 ('καὶ πολλοὺς ἄλλους τῶν διδασκάλων Ἑλλήνων τε καὶ Λατίνων') or 80 l. 25 ('Ἕλληνες πατέρες').

[243] A notable exception is Theodore Gaza who in a letter to his brothers used 'Ἕλληνες' and 'Ῥωμαῖοι' to refer to the Byzantine orthodox and Roman catholics respectively (Gaza, ed. Leone 1990: 48-49 ll. 17-31 = Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 573 ll. 7-19).

refer to the Byzantines, and Syropoulos even speaks of the 'βασιλεὺς Γραικῶν' with reference to the eastern Roman emperor.[244] In the same vein, Isidore of Kiev (another participant in the council) called the Byzantines 'Γραικοί' (often in opposition to the Latins) both in his *Sermones* and in his *Ad synodum Florentiae*.[245] This equally applies to late-Byzantine works such as Markos Eugenikos' *Dialogue* between a 'Λατῖνος' and a 'Γραικός',[246] and Scholarios' *Disputationes Florentinae*.[247] At the same time, however, the usage was not entirely uncontested. When the Greek label was used by a Latin to denote the Byzantines, it was easily interpreted as an insult. So, for example, the metropolitan of Thracian Medea was outraged against Eugenius IV as the pope had dared to call the Romans of Byzantium 'Greeks'.[248]

Bessarion's usage of the Hellenic rubric is more complex. While he retained its 'pagan' meaning in some contexts,[249] he equally applied it to the Byzantines in a distinctively positive sense. His employment of the word "Ελληνες' typically sits at the crossroads of Hellenism and Greekness as defined in the previous chapter, i.e. between the study and stylistic imitation of ancient Greek literature, and the ethno-cultural identification with the ancient Hellenes. For Bessarion, in a narrow sense, the Hellenes were those who had privileged access to ancient Greek language and literature, often in opposition to the Latins.[250] But he also used the label with a more collective meaning

[244] Syropoulos, ed. Laurent (1971) 244 (4.41.16-17).

[245] See, e.g., Isidore, ed. Candal & Hofmann (1971) 65 l. 27, 84 l. 24, 95 l. 1, 118 l. 36.

[246] Eugenicus, ed. Petit (1977). Note, however, that Janus Lascaris uses the word once outside the ecclesiastical context in one of his Greek epigrams (Lascaris, ed. Meschini 1976: 44.12)

[247] See, e.g., Scholarios, ed. Jugie, Petit & Siderides (1928) 3.18.29, 4.5.29, 4.17.24, 5.18.6, 7.1.1, 7.1.18.

[248] Syropoulos, ed. Laurent (1971) 124 (2.21.22-23) with 125 n. 5: "Ὑβρίζει ἡμᾶς· καλεῖ γὰρ ἡμᾶς Γραικούς, καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν ὕβρις. Πῶς οὖν ἀπελευσόμεθα ἐκεῖ, ἐπεὶ ὑβρίζει μας;' *[He insults us as he calls us Greeks, and this is an outrage. How then shall we depart thither (i.e. to the council in Italy), seeing that he insults us?]*.

[249] In his *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, for instance, Bessarion called Plato and Aristotle 'Hellenes', which he rendered in Latin as 'gentiles'. This was common usage in Greek Christian literature. Cf. Bessarion, ed. Mohler (1927) 108 ll. 19-20 with the Latin on 109 ll. 17-18, 146 l. 15 with 146 l. 17, 154 ll. 13-14 with 155 ll. 12-15, 154 l. 23 with 155 l. 24, 156 l. 24 with 157 l. 24-25, 166 l. 38 with 167 l. 33, 176 l. 33 with 177 l. 33, 186 l. 2, 618 l. 1 (not translated into Latin). Cf. Bessarion, Mohler (1927) 140 ll. 12-13 with 141 ll. 14-15, 154 l. 12 with 155 l. 14, 178 l. 24, 300 l. 16 with 301 l. 15 (cf. 384 ll. 36-37 with 385 ll. 35-36 and 402 ll. 8-9 with 403 ll. 7-8), 310 l.23-24 with 311 l. 23-24, 314 l. 13, 364 l. 22 with 365 l. 20, 444 ll. 9-10 with 445 ll. 10-11.

[250] Examples of this usage are legion. See, e.g., Bessarion, ed. Mohler (1927) 8 ll. 12-35 (with the Latin text on p. 9 ll. 15-35), 24 ll. 23-28 (with 25 ll. 24-29), 84 l. 31 – 86 l. 3 (with 85 l. 36 – 87 l. 6),

when he lamented over the destruction of the 'remaining Hellenes' or when he feared the 'complete obliteration of the Hellenes'.[251] In these instances, Bessarion was not only referring to the cultured elite of Byzantium. As we shall see in our discussion of Bessarion's *Encomium to Trebizond* in the next chapter, for him the Hellenes constituted a group that was tied together not only by a shared language, but also by origin and descent. His calling the Byzantines 'Hellenes' probably was in itself intended to make the link between the ancient Greeks and the Byzantines as explicit as possible. Even though Aristotle had maintained that 'Γραικοί' was the more ancient name of the Hellenes,[252] Bessarion did not refer to the ancient Greeks as 'Γραικοί', preferring 'Hellenes' both for the ancient Greek *auctores* as well as the ancient Greeks as historical agents with whom he felt associated through descent.

Bessarion's usage is typical for that of the Byzantines in his circle as well as for the expatriate Byzantine intelligentsia in general.[253] In their Greek works, post-Byzantines such as Theodore Gaza, Andronicus Callistus, Michael Apostoles, Nicolaus Secundinus and others all referred to themselves and their compatriots as Greeks or Hellenes instead of Romans. In his threnody on Constantinople, for example, Callistus referred to Hellenes instead of Romans to designate his compatriots collectively.[254] He bemoaned the fortune of the Hellenes, called Constantinople their common hearth, and referred to the Byzantines collectively as the 'flock of the Hellenes'.[255] The same usage can be found

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168 ll. 6-8 (with 169 ll. 5-7), 201 ll. 13-14, 220 ll. 19-25; 538 ll. 3-10 (with 537 l. 12 – 539 l. 2), 630 ll. 6-9 (with 631 ll. 20-22).

[251] Bessarion, ed. Mohler (1942c) 479 ll. 11-12, 480 ll. 11-12, 482 ll. 13-14.

[252] See Arist. *Mete.* 352b2: 'αὕτη [ἡ Ἑλλάς ἡ ἀρχαῖα] δ' ἐστὶ ἡ περὶ Δωδώνη καὶ τὸν Ἀχελῷον … ᾤκουν γὰρ οἱ Σελλοὶ ἐνταῦθα καὶ οἱ καλούμενοι τότε μὲν Γραικοὶ νῦν δ' Ἕλληνες' *[Old Hellas is the country around Dodona and Acheloüs … Here dwelt the Selloi and the people then called Greeks and now Hellenes]*. See also *FHG* 1.542 (= Parian Marble, 11); Apollod. 1.7.3; Call. *Fr.* 104; Lyc. 532, 891, 1195; Paus. 3.20.6; S. *Fr.* 2, 160 (with the useful note of Pearson on fr. 518). See Hall (2002) 70, 129, 170 for some discussion.

[253] These groups largely overlap. Until his death in 1472, Bessarion's circle in Rome was the primary meeting place for learned Byzantines who had chosen or had been forced to live in Italy. Most Byzantines living in Italy were somehow associated with the cardinal's circle at a certain stage of their career. See also chapter 3.

[254] Callistus ed. Migne (1866) 1131, 1133, 1137, 1138, 1140.

[255] Callistus, ed. Migne (1866) 1131 and 1133 ('ἡ κοινὴ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἑστία, τὸ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἑσμόν, ἡ τῶν Ἑλλήνων πληθύς'). See also Callistus' letter to George Palaiologos Disypatos (1476), ed. Migne (1866) 1017-1020 (esp. 1020: 'τὸ δυστυχὲς τῶν Ἑλλήνων γένος'). On the further unknown Disypatos see Papadopulos (1962) 95 (nr. 189). At the same time, Constantinople remained 'New Rome' (see Callistus, ed. Migne 1866: 1133).

in the voluminous correspondence of Michael Apostoles, who fled from Constantinople to Venetian Crete and was closely connected with Bessarion's circle in Rome. In his letters, addressed to a mixed audience of Greeks and Italians, he referred to the Byzantines as 'Hellenes'.[256] Incidentally, he also called them Greeks, mainly in the context of the church of Constantinople.[257] Most importantly, he never called them Romans, a label which he reserved for the Romans of the West, the Italians, whom he considered a *genos* just as the Hellenes.[258] We find the same patterns in the works of later generations of Byzantine scholars in Italy such as Apostoles' son Arsenios, Marcus Musurus, Janus Lascaris and others. Both Arsenios and Musurus identified their contemporaries as Hellenes instead of Romans both collectively and individually, both for a Latin and for a Greek audience.[259]

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[256] Apostoles, ed. Noiret (1885) 70-71 (nr. 47: 'ταῖς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀχθόμενοι συμφοραῖς ἔπειθον ῥαίσειν τὰ τῶν Γραικῶν, τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων, τοῖς Γραικοῖς ἐξουθενημένον'), 72-73 (nr. 53: 'τὸ πολύπονον γένος Ἑλλήνων, τὰ δίκαια τῶν σῶν Ἑλλήνων τηρῶν'), 77 (nr. 58: '[Βησσαρίων] ὁ τοῦ γένους νυνὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων προστάτης καὶ κόσμος τῆς ἐκκλησίας'), 82 (nr. 63: 'βασιλέων οὐκ ὀλίγων Ἑλλήνων ἀπόγονος' = Thomas Palaiologos), 88 (nr. 70: 'τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ Ῥωμαίων σοφῶν'), 114 (nr. 93: 'Χριστιανοὶ πάντες, οἵ τ' Εὐρωπαῖοι καὶ ὅσοι λείψανα τῶν Ἑλλήνων'), 117 (nr. 95: 'οἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀμείνους'), 121 (nr. 100: 'τῶν Ἑλλήνων τὰ πράγματα'); M. Apostoles, ed. Legrand (1885) 236-237 (nr. 6, *passim*), 239-240 (nr. 10: 'τὸ κάλλος σώζοντα τῶν Ἑλλήνων' (= Manuel Chrysaphis, cf. Noiret 1889: 30), 'ὑμῖν ἐμὲ συνδιάγειν Ἕλληνα Ἕλλησι'), 249 (nr. 27: '[Βησσαρίωνος] ὅς οὐχ ὅσον τὸ γένος τῶν Ἑλλήνων κοσμεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ Ῥωμαίων καὶ Ἰταλῶν'), 249 (nr. 28: 'τὸ γένος ... τῶν Ἑλλήνων'). This usage is also attested both in his treatise against Demetrius Chalcondylas (see Apostoles, ed. Stefec 2010: *passim* but esp. 138: 'τοῦ σοφωτάτου τῶν νῦν ὄντων Ἑλλήνων' = Plethon), and in his tract against Theodore Gaza (see Apostoles, ed. Powell 1938: 132 l. 24 : '"Ελληνες ὄντες καὶ τὴν ἀχαριστίαν κακίζοντες'), 134 ll. 98-99 ('οἱ .. τῷ γένει τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀνδραποδισμοί'), 134 ll. 108-109 ('"Ελληνας ἰταλίζοντας').

[257] Apostoles, ed. Noiret (1885) 70-71 (nr. 47), 89 (nr. 70). In both instances, Apostoles complained that his fellow Greeks bullied him because of his Latin sympathies. So, he referred to the Greeks as adherents of the Byzantine rite in opposition to the Roman Church. This is not so in Apostoles, ed. Noiret (1885) 76 (nr. 57: 'ἐν τῶν Γραικῶν τοῖς ὑστάτοις κἀν τοῖς πρώτοις τῶν Εὐρωπαίων, ἑκατέρου τοῦ γένους τοῖς πᾶσι γε ὑπατεύοντος [Βησσαρίωνος]'). Obviously, Bessarion is the foremost of the Greeks collectively, certainly not of the adherents of the Byzantine Church specifically.

[258] M. Apostoles, ed. Legrand (1885) 236-237, 249 (nr. 27: '[Βησσαρίωνος] ὅς οὐχ ὅσον τὸ γένος τῶν Ἑλλήνων κοσμεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ Ῥωμαίων καὶ Ἰταλῶν')

[259] For Arsenios see A. Apostoles, ed. Manoussakas (1968) 28 ll. 128-131 ('ἀπόδοτε τὸ πανταχοῦ διεσπαρμένον γένος ἡμῶν τῇ πατρίδι· ἐπανασώσατε τὰς ἑλληνίδας τῶν πόλεων· νομίσατε τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀκούειν βοώντων ἱκετῶν καὶ πρὸς ἐλευθερίαν ἐπεκκαλουμένων') (cf. 31 ll. 37-41), 32 l. 4 ('ἐπὶ τὸ τοὺς τῶν Ἑλλήνων λόγους ἐπανακτήσασθαι'), 34 l. 7 ('μὴ μόνον τοῖς Ἑσπερίοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς Ἕλλησιν'); ed. Bandini (1764) 86 ('Γραικῶν ... τὴν Ἐκκλησία'); ed. Legrand (1885a) 223

While the word '"Ελλην' entailed high cultural status, it seems that the Roman and Greek rubrics were less appreciated. So, for example, in his famous *Hymn to Plato* (1513), Marcus Musurus placed Janus Lascaris on a par with the Athenians and Spartans of ancient Hellas, and differentiated them from those 'who we are nowadays, called Greeks or Romans'.[260] Similar patterns are found in the oeuvre of Janus Lascaris. While in Latin and Italian he called his compatriots 'Graeci' and 'greci', in his Greek works he referred to them as Hellenes or, only incidentally, Greeks.[261] In Latin and Italian, the Byzantine refugees could not differentiate between Hellenes and Greeks as they could in Greek, and complied with Latin usage. The examples are legion. In his *De familia Otthomanorum* (ca. 1456), for example, Nicolaus Secundinus referred to the Byzantines as 'Graeci', and he even refers to the Byzantine emperor as 'imperator Graecorum' as did cardinal Bessarion in his Latin correspondence.[262]

('"Ελληνας ἰταλίζοντας'), 171 ('τῶν ταλαιπώρων Ἑλλήνων'); ed. Legrand (1885b) 340 (nr. 5: 'ὁ τοῦ γένους τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐπισημότατος' = J. Lacaris), 341 (nr. 5: 'τὸ πολύπονον γένος Ἑλλήνων, Ἑλλήνων βοώντων καὶ πρὸς ἐλευθερίαν ἐπεκκαλουμένων, ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ "Ελληνας ἰταλίζοντας'), 343 (nr. 6: 'ἐγὼ "Ελλην ὢν τὸ γένος'). For Marcus Musurus see Musurus, ed. Belloni (2002) 652 l. 35 ('Λασκάρεως τοῦ ὄντως "Ελληνος'), 671 l. 28 ('"Ελληνι' = Demetrios Chalkokondyles); ed. Legrand (1885a) 49 ('τῶν καθ' ἡμας Ἑλλήνων'), 59 ('οἱ γὰρ ἀφ' ἱρῆς Ἑλλάδος Ἑλλάνων παισὶ πρέπουσι τύποι'); ed. Legrand (1885b) 318 (nr. 6: 'τοῖς ἑκασταχοῦ τῆς Ἰταλίας "Ελλησι διαζῶσιν'). See also Justin Dekadyos in A. Apostoles, ed. Manoussakas (1968) 17 l. 9 (= 6a l. 9) ('τῶν νῦν Ἑλλήνων').

[260] Musurus, ed. Legrand (1885c) 108 ll. 55-58: '"Εξοχα δ'αὖ περὶ κῆρι φιλεῖ δύο, τὸν μὲν ἀφ'ἱρῆς | Ἑλλάδος οὐχ ἕνα τῶν οἳ πελόμεσθα τανῦν, | Ῥωμαῖοι Γραικοί τε καλούμενοι, ἀλλὰ παλαιοῖς | Ἀτθίδος ἢ Σπάρτης εἴκελον ἡμιθέοις· | Λασκαρέων γενεῆς ἐρικυδέος ἄρκον ἄωτον...' *[Most of all, he loves two men in his heart: one of them is from holy Greece, not one of those who we are nowadays, called Greeks or Romans, but equal to the ancient half gods of Attica and Sparta: the finest flower of the very famous race of the Laskarids…]*. Note that in his Latin translation of the hymn, preserved in BML, Plut. 36.35 (fols. 27^{r}-30^{r}), Janus Lascaris translated "Ρωμαῖοι' with 'Romani' (see fol. 28^{r}: 'Romani Graecique vocati') (cf. Gentile 1986: 56). Roald Dijkstra and Erik Hermans are currently preparing the publication of a new English translation of the Greek *Hymn* with a concise literary commentary.

[261] For his Greek poetry: J. Lascaris, ed. Meschini (1978) nr. 52 ll. 2 and 4, nr. 30 l. 11, nr. 45 l. 15. For his Greek letters: J. Lascaris, ed. Meschini (1992) 380 l. 26-27 ('τῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων κακοδαιμονίας τε καὶ ἀθλιότητος'), 386 l. 5. For his Italian treatises: J. Lascaris, ed. Meschini (1985) 266 l. 354 ('imperio de' Greci'); 267 l. 382; 280 l. 700; 293 l. 87 ('li Graeci gentilhomini'); 303 l. 226 ('Thraci, Macedoni, Thesali, Peloponensi et altri Graeci et Illyrici'); 313 l. 466 ('Graeci delle nobilissime prime case e coniuncti a quelle'); 336 l. 921 ('noi Graeci') (cf. 282 l. 761: 'sono anchora in Grecia homini che se ricordeno de la libertà et tenghano la relligione christiana'). For his Latin works see chapter 5.

[262] Secundinus, ed. Philippides (2007) 56, §2 ('negligentia Graecorum'), 60, §5 ('inter Graecos', 'Graecorum ductu', 'Graecorum viribus'), 62, §5 ('Graecos', 'Graecorum imperium'), 70, §7

The Greek rubric entailed the notion of either Hellenism or Greekness, depending on the context. The Greek word '῞Ελλην' retained its traditional meaning of 'learned in Greek', much in the same way as in contemporary Dutch 'graecus' denotes an expert on ancient Greek language and literature, but does not imply nationality. This explains why Byzantines could call individual Italian humanists 'Hellenes', if they found that they were not inferior to native Greeks as regards their understanding of ancient Greek language and literature.[263] In a letter of 1483, for example, Manuel Adramyttenus wrote to Politianus that he was 'a perfect Hellene as regards [his] speech'.[264] The usage is explicitly thematised in a poem by Janus Lascaris that was attached to the Greek lexicon of Guarinus (1523):

« τοιγὰρ ἐγὼν ἐποίευν καὶ ἀμείψομαι οἷα μ' ἐρωτᾷς.
« Τίς; πόθεν; ἠὲ τίνων; » « Εἶπα τίνων· Μεδίκων. »
« Οἶδα τόδ', ἀλλ' ῞Ελλην; » « ῞Ελλην δοκέω. » « Φορέουσιν
ἡμεδαποὶ δ'ἄλλοῖ'. » « Αὐσονίων γονέων. »
« Πῶς ῞Ελλην; » « Πεδόθεν· τεκμαίρομαι Ἑλλαδικαῖσι
σπουδαίς· καὶ δ'ἄλλως, εἴρεο Πυθαγόρην
Εὐφόρβου ψυχὴν πῶς ἔλλαχεν· εἰ θέμις εἰπεῖν,
ὥδε Βαρῖνος ἔφυν Γραικὸς ἐν Οἰνοτρίῳ. »[265]

'I am the author and I will respond to anything you ask'. 'Who are you? Where are you from? To whom do you belong?' I told you: the Medici'. 'I know, but are you a Greek?' 'I think so'. 'But our men wear different clothes'. 'I stem from Ausonian parents'. 'How can you be a Greek then?' 'From childhood on I proved it with my Greek studies. Otherwise, ask Pythagoras how he obtained Euphorbos' soul. If it is allowed to say so, that is how I, Guarinus, became a Greek in [the body of] an Oenotrian'.

('manus Graecorum', 'naves Graecorum', 'emissus a Graecis'), 74, §8 ('imperator Graecorum'), 78, §8 (twice 'Graecis').

[263] These 'Hellenes' must be distinguished from philhellenes, or those favourable to the Greeks or the Greek case. In this sense, Theodore Gaza called both pope Nicholas V and Leonello d'Este 'philhellenes', comparing the latter to Titus Quinctius Flamininus, the ancient Roman liberator of the Greeks (see Gaza, ed. Mohler 1942c: 262 ll. 11-12 and Gaza, ed. Leone 1990: 49-50 ll. 38-43 = Bessarion, ed. Mohler 1942c: 573 ll. 24-29).

[264] Philelfus, ed. Legrand (1892) 356-358 (July 4, 1483): '῞Ελλην ἤδη τέλειος τὴν φωνὴν ὢν καὶ κομιδῇ ἀττικὸς' *[being already an accomplished Hellene by speech and perfectly Attic]*. On Manuel Adramyttenus see still Bianchi (1913) (cf. Hody 1742: 314-316). An important manuscript with works of Adramyttenus is preserved in Munich (BSB, Cod. gr. 321).

[265] Lascaris, ed. Meschini (1976) nr. 44 ll. 5-12 (with pp. 155-158). The commentary of Contoleon to this poem is available in BAV, Vat. gr. 1352, fol. 229^{r}-229^{v}.

Italian humanists could allude to the same idea, calling colleagues Greek or Attic,[266] and Gaza in a Latin letter praised the Greek competence of Christophorus Persona as almost native knowledge.[267] Such identifications of Italians as Hellenes were limited to the language competence of singular individuals. As we shall see in chapter 5, however, Janus Lascaris elsewhere pushed the limits of this usage, giving a deeper historical significance to the Hellenism of the Italians by alluding to the ethnic origins of the Latins and Romans collectively.

It is significant that Byzantines began to use the language of descent and kinship to characterise their relation with the ancient Hellenes. In a letter to cardinal Bessarion, for example, Michael Apostoles boldly claimed that 'we boast that we are children of the Hellenes and follow in their footsteps – and in theirs only'.[268] In a response, Andronicus

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[266] 'Graecus' is used with this meaning in a Latin translation of Politianus' only transmitted Greek letter (XII, 20). Politianus (attr.), ed. Fabbri (2008) 28. See also the letter of Picus to Politianus in Politianus, ed. and trans. Butler (2006) 28 (= 1.8.2), where Picus asserted that Politianus' fluency in both Latin and Greek made it difficult to determine which language is foreign and which native. It seems that 'Atticus' was also used to apply to a non-Greek in the context of language competence. I found an example of it in an elegiac epitaph for Hermolaus Barbarus, preserved in BAV, Vat. lat. 3353, fol. 49^{r}: 'Barbarus Hermoleos atque Atticus atque Latinus | Hic iacet, hoc qui sit forsitan ipse roges. | Barbarus est gentis nomen, Latiumque et Athenas | Utraque de tenebris eruta lingua dedit. | Romae obiit merito, priscis miscere suum qui | Nominibus nomen, dignus et ossa fuit' *[Barbarus Hermoleos, both Attic and Latin, reposes here, and you may perhaps ask who he is. Barbarus is his family name, and both languages, rescued from the shadows, gave him Latium and Athens. He aptly died in Rome, he who was worthy of mixing his name with ancient names, and his bones with ancient bones.]*. Note the play both with the name 'Barbarus' (also meaning 'barbarian'), contrasting with Barbarus' competence in the two primary languages of civilisation, and with the alternation of Latin and Greek name endings (-us and -os), reflecting Barbarus' being both 'Atticus' and 'Latinus'. Cf. Gaza, ed. Leone (1990) 79-80

[267] Gaza, ed. Leone (1990) 79-80, esp. 79 ll. 3-13. This strategy was not confined to competence in Greek. So, for example, in his dedication of Homer's *Iliad* (1504), Aldus Manutius praised Hieronymus Aleander for his competence in both Greek and Hebrew (Manutius, ed. Orlandi 1975: 82): 'tanta praeterea linguae volubilitate verba Graeca pronuntias, tantaque aptitudine et facilitate inspiras Hebraica, ac si mediis Athenis mediaque Israelitarum urbe, quo stabant tempore, natus et educatus esses' [*You moreover pronounce Greek words with such fluency of speech, and the aspirates of Hebrew with such aptitude and facility, that you seem to be born in the heart of Athens or the city of the Israelites, in the time when these cities were in their prime*]. Cf. Trapezuntius, ed. Monfasani (1984k) 386-387 (§23).

[268] Apostoles, ed. Mohler (1942) 169 ll. 5-6: 'Ἡμεῖς φαμεν, θαυμασιώτατε ἄνθρωπε, παῖδες Ἑλλήνων εἶναι καυχώμενοι κἀκείνων τοῖς ἴχνεσιν, οὐχ ἑτέρων ἑπόμενοι…'. Also elsewhere in his *Ad Theodorum Gazae obiectiones* Apostoles uses the term 'Ἕλληνες' to refer to his learned contemporary Byzantines. See Apostoles, ed. Mohler (1942) 168 ll. 20-22: 'Ἐξ ὧν σὺ ταῦτ' ἔμαθες

Callistus sardonically stated that 'we know that you are a child of the Hellenes, and that you are the worst and parricidal son of a good father at that.'[269] Other examples leave little doubt that some Byzantines indeed perceived of themselves as the descendants of the ancient Hellenes, and not only as the custodians of their heritage. Marcus Musurus, for instance, eulogised Demetrius Chalcondylas and Janus Lascaris together as 'the autochthones (αὐτόχθονες) of most ancient Hellas' and claimed that they sprung from the same ancestors as the country's primeval heroes.[270] As we shall see in the next chapters, Bessarion explicitly defined the Hellenes in terms of descent, shared history and culture, and a common character (chapter 3, pp. 99-105); Janus Lascaris predicated his argument in favour of Hellenism upon the idea that Byzantines stemmed from the ancient Hellenes (chapter 5, pp. 171-176); and Johannes Gemistus spoke of his ancient kinsmen from Epidaurus, while he also pointed at the ethnic links between the ancient Greeks and other European peoples (see chapter 6, p. 214 and pp. 218-219).

More than their Byzantine predecessors (except Plethon) had ever done, the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy articulated their connection with the ancient Hellenes in ethnic terms. In Italy, it helped them to strengthen and corroborate their claims to the prestigious legacy of the ancient Greeks. Their 'ownership' of this legacy enabled them not only to bolster their self-esteem, but could also serve to give substance to their appeals to the western powers to liberate Greece (see esp. chapter 3, pp. 120-122).

As Byzantines identified with the ancient Hellenes they also recognised the rift in time and place that separated them from their glorious ancestors. While some pointed at Roman colonisation as a cause for cultural decline, the impact of the fall of their capital city and the subsequent Turkocracy were commonly considered to be disastrous to the continuity of Hellenism. At the same time, the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy saw itself clearly as the custodian of the Greek literature and the wisdom and knowledge purveyed in it. In a letter to Andronicus Callistus, Secundinus wrote that he could barely stop lamenting over the destruction of their common people and the Greek language, except perhaps when he thought of his addressee:

λέγειν τὰ δεξιά, οὐδ' ἐμὲ λελήθασιν, ὦ δαιμόνιε. ἐκεῖνοι γὰρ εἰσιν οὗτοι, οἳ τῶν νῦν ὄντων Ἑλλήνων οὐ μόνον οἴονται σοφώτεροι γεγονέναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ Σωκράτους αὐτοῦ καὶ Πυθαγόρου καὶ Πλάτωνος'. Cf. p. 168 ll. 35-36: 'οὐδεὶς τῶν Ἑλλήνων, οὔτε τῶν παλαιοτέρων, οὔτε τῶν νεωτέρων'.

[269] Callistus, ed. Mohler (1942) 200 ll. 1-3: Ἑλλήνων μέν σε παῖδα ἴσμεν καὶ ἀγαθοῦ πατρὸς κάκιστον μέντοι καὶ πατρολοίαν υἱόν.

[270] Musurus, ed. Legrand (1885d) 146: '"Επειτα δὲ καὶ οἱ περὶ Χαλκονδύλην καὶ σὲ, τοὺς αὐτόχθονας τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ἑλλάδος καὶ τοῖς ὠγυγίοις ἐκείνοις ἥρωσιν ὁμοσπόρους, ἐπεχείρησαν ἡμεδαπῶν ἐντυπώσει βιβλίων'. The text is in the preface to the Aldine edition of Pausanias (1516).

Ὅτι γὰρ ὁρᾷν ἕνεκά γε σοῦ ἔτι λείψανα τῆς καλῆς περιόντα Ἑλλάδος καὶ παῖδας Ἑλλήνων τοὺς πατέρας ἀπομιμουμένους, τό γε θεῖον ἐκεῖνο τῆς ἐρασμιωτάτης ἐμοὶ καὶ πάντων τιμιωτάτης φωνῆς διασώζοντας κάλλος. *Τῶτοι* ὁμηρικὸν ἐκεῖνο παρῳδῆσαι μικρὸν ἔπεισί μοι καὶ ἴσως κατὰ καιρόν. Ὅμηρος μὲν γὰρ Ἀγαμέμνονα τῷ Νέστορι φάναι ἐποίησεν, ἐγὼ δ' ἐναλλάξας φημί· Εἴ μοι δέκα μόνοι Θεόδωροι ἢ δέκα Ἀνδρόνικοι γένοιντο, *ἐξαρκέσαι ἄν* οὐ τὸ Ἴλιον πολίχνιόν τι βάρβαρον ἐκπορθῆσαι, ἀλλὰ γένους πάντων γενῶν σοφωτάτου ποτὲ καὶ ἡμερωτάτου φωνὴν καὶ παιδείαν, μεθόδους τε καὶ λόγων [καὶ] ἰσχὺν, πᾶσάν τ' ἐπιστήμης ἰδέαν ναυαγήσασαν φεῦ! ἀνασώσασθαι'.[271]

Thanks at least to you it is possible to see that some remnants of this beautiful Hellas still exist and that children of the Hellenes are still imitating their fathers, and so safeguard this divine beauty of our language that for me is the most lovely and the most worthy of all. Therefore, it occurs to me to parody (and perhaps appropriately) this small piece of Homer. Homer made Agamemnon say to Nestor, and I say, mutatis mutandis: if I should only have ten Theodoroi or ten Andronikoi, that would suffice not to conquer the small and barbarian town of Ilion, but to preserve the language and the learning of the once wisest and most civilised people of all peoples, the method and power of speech, and every sort of knowledge now shipwrecked.[272]

This passage from Secundinus' letter reveals something very important about how the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy saw their own role in the diaspora. They saw themselves, or at least some among themselves, as perpetuators or even embodiments of the language and the wisdom of the ancient Hellenes.

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[271] See Secundinus, ed. Boissonade (1833) 386 with notes 2, 4 and 5. In my display of the Greek text, I relied on the text-critical remarks of Jean François Boissonade. Τῶτοι *scripsi** : Τῷ τοι *ms* : utrum delendam an mutandam? *Boissonade* | ἐξαρκέσαι ἄν *scripsi* : ἐξαρκέσαι *ms.* : ἐξαρκέσαιεν ἄν? *Boissonade* | [καὶ] ἰσχὺν *scripsi* : καὶ ἰσχὺν *ms.* : delendum καὶ ante ἰσχὺν, ni perierit nonnihil, verbi causa, ἕξιν, φορὰν· φορὰν λ. καὶ ἰσχὺν *Boissonade*.

* There is no reason to eliminate or emend τοι in 'τῷ τοι' as Boissonade suggested. Even though in classical Greek literature 'τῷ τοι' occurs only three times in Plato (see *Resp.* 409b4, *Soph.* 230b1, *Tht.* 179e1), later Byzantine authors like Choniates and Pachymeres adopted it and began to use it more often. In his *Grammatica*, Scholarios defined 'τῶτοι' (spelled this way as one word) as 'διὰ τοῦτο' ('therefore') for which see Scholarios, ed. Jugie, Petit & Siderides (1936) 491 ll. 7-8 together with the *Etym. Gudianum*, *s.v.* τῶτοι ('οἱ ποιηταὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ τότε'). To avoid misunderstanding, and for reasons of historical synchrony, I adopted Scholarios' spelling.

[272] Boissonade placed everything between 'εἴ μοι' and 'φεῦ! ἀνασώσασθαι' between quotations marks. Even so, Secundinus did not really cite lines from Homer here. In fact, his words are only very loosely inspired by *Il.* 2.370-374, where Agamemnon, in response to Nestor, expresses the wish that if he 'only had ten such counselors among the Achaeans, then would the city of king Priam immediately bow its head'. Interestingly, the same Homeric passage was parodied in a similar context in a letter of Angelus Politianus to Hermolaus Barbarus. See Politianus, ed. Butler (2006) 34 (= 1.10.1).

For them, their philological pursuits also were attempts to revive Hellenism and to bridge the gap with their Hellenic ancestors. With Gaza's explanation of the decline of the Attic calendar in mind, for example, his *De mensibus* does not solely present an illustrative example of a humanist's sophisticated interest in ancient Greek chronology. It also reflects a means of reviving the 'customs and wisdom' of the Byzantines' Hellenic ancestors. The same holds true for Janus Lascaris' reconstruction of the ancient Greek characters which he set out in his dedicatory letter to the *editio princeps* of the Greek Anthology (1494), printed in the restored Greek majuscules he believed to be in their 'most ancient and truly authentic form'.[273] At the basis of Lascaris' restoration was the idea that the ancient Hellenes originally used a uniform set of characters that had however degenerated in the course of time as an increasing number of people began to adapt the letters to their own use (a process Lascaris described in terms of corruption and degeneration).[274] He believed that the original set of characters used by the pristine Hellenes could be restored through an attentive review of the ancient testimonies.[275] Just as Gaza's *De mensibus Atticis*, Lascaris' paleographical project shows that via the philological skills typical of the humanist movement in Italy Byzantine scholars could regain their lost connection with ancient Greek culture they saw as their ancestral legacy.

The Byzantines' scholarly endeavours aimed at the restoration and revival of ancient Greek culture. At the same time, the production and collection of manuscripts aimed at the reproduction and preservation of the Greek legacy. Some scribes explicitly framed their copying activity as a patriotic activity. So, for instance, Michael Souliardos stated that he copied the ancient Greek orators not for his own profit, but for the sake of his

[273] Lascaris, ed. Pontani (1992) 201 ll. 68-70 ('… ut illam potissimum formam eligerim … quae vetustissima et inprimis vera esse videretur'); cf. 200 l. 14 ('priscas litterarum figuras'). The text is available in Botfield (1861) 185-192 and with extensive discussion in Pontani (1992a). See also Alfieri (1984).

[274] Lascaris, ed. Pontani (1992) 201 l. 61 – 203 l. 113.

[275] Lascaris, ed. Pontani (1992) 200 l. 30, 201 l. 51 and l. 62, 203 ll. 109-110. Even if Greek inscriptions were known to Lascaris' contemporaries, the Byzantine scholar preferred to use literary evidence to underpin his *instauratio*, on which see Pontani (1992a) esp. 105-114. Interestingly, Pontani was able to show that Lascaris' majuscules are not the ancient characters he had possibly seen during his travels to the East, but rather a restyling of a type of majuscule already attested in epigraphic and calligraphic writing in Italy. See Pontani (1992a) esp. 117-137.

fatherland.[276] Also collecting Greek manuscripts was a means of cultural survival. While most Byzantine scholars in Italy were obviously not so affluent that they could establish large collections, cardinal Bessarion is an exception. A later generation of Byzantine scholars in Italy continued to disseminate Greek learning via the printing presses, most notably Marcus Musurus and Janus Lascaris.[277]

Bessarion's collection of Greek manuscript (donated to Venice in 1468) was inspired by patriotic motives and explicitly aimed at the preservation of the Hellenic patrimony. After the fall of Constantinople, he began collecting Greek manuscripts as well as attracting Greek scribes to copy them. The cardinal articulated the reasons for and the aims of his collection in a much-cited letter to an acquaintance (probably Michael Apostoles). According to the cardinal, his collection was an attempt to avoid the present-day Hellenes from 'remaining entirely voiceless and differing in nothing from barbarians and slaves through losing the few present monuments in addition to the many and beautiful monuments of those divine men we have already lost a long time ago'.[278] He conceived his Greek library as a fixed and safe site of collective memory for

[276] Cf. Vogel-Gardthausen (1909) 319 with reference to BAM, Cod. Ambr. 26 [A 99 sup.]: 'ἐν Φλωρεντίᾳ [ἐξέγραψα] οὐ χάριν δώρων, ἀλλ'ὑπὲρ πατρίδος' *[In Florence [I copied this] not for my own profit but for the sake of my fatherland]*.

[277] See on their activities as promoters of Greek letters in the spirit of Bessarion esp. Pardos (1998).

[278] The letter was probably addressed to Michael Apostoles. See Bessarion, ed. Mohler (1942c) 479 ll. 10-21: Ἔμοὶ δ'ἔτι τῶν τε θύραθεν τῶν τε καθ' ἡμᾶς διδασκάλων ἐλλείπει οὐκ ὀλίγα συγγράμματα. Ἱσταμένης μὲν οὖν τῆς κοινῆς Ἑλλήνων καὶ μόνης ἑστίας οὐκ ἐφρόντιζον, πάντα εἰδὼς ἐκεῖ ἀποκείμενα· πεσούσης δέ, φεῦ, μεγάλη τις ἐγένετο ἐπιθυμία τῆς πάντων αὐτῶν κτήσεως, οὐκ ἐμοῦ γε ἕνεκα, ὅς γε τῆς ἰδίας ἕνεκα ὠφελείας ἀρκοῦντα κέκτημαι, ἀλλ' ὡς ἄν εἴ που νῦν τέ τινες λειφθεῖεν Ἕλληνες, εἴ τέ τι εἰς ἔπειτα βέλτιον πράξαιεν – πολλὰ δ'ἐν τῷ μακρῷ χρόνῳ γένοιτ' ἄν (cf. Hdt. 1.32.2) –, ἔχοιεν ὅπη τὴν αὐτῶν φωνὴν ἅπασαν, τήν γε νῦν οὖσαν, ἕν τινι ὁμοῦ ἀποκειμένην ἀσφαλεῖ τόπῳ εὕροιεν καὶ εὑρόντες πολλαπλασιάσαιεν καὶ μὴ πρὸς οἷς πολλοῖς τε καὶ καλοῖς τῶν θείων ἐκείνων ἀνδρῶν πάλαι ἀπολωλέκαμεν ὑπομνήμασι καὶ τὰ ὀλίγα ταῦτα νῦν ἀπολέσαντες ἄφωνοι τὸ πάμπαν μένοιεν καὶ βαρβάρων τε καὶ ἀνδραπόδων οὐδὲν διαφέροιεν' *[As long as the common unique centre of the Hellenes was still in existence, I was not worried, knowing that everything was stored there. After it fell, alas, an enormous desire occupied me to possess all of these manuscripts, not for my own sake as I possessed enough of them for my own use, but so that, in case some Hellenes would somewhere remain now and would fare better in the future (many things can come to pass over a long period of time), they would know where to find their entire language that now exists, remaining together at a safe place, and, after its rediscovery, they would reproduce it. Also I wanted to possess all manuscripts lest they would lose, apart from the many and beautiful writings of those divine men we have already lost a long time ago, also their few present works and so stay behind entirely voiceless and differ in nothing from barbarians and slaves]*.

the present and future Hellenes; as a site where they could find or rediscover their language and literature in order to reproduce it.[279] It is perhaps not surprising that Bessarion's letter has provoked modern scholars to refer to his collection as a 'national library'.[280] The next chapter will show how Bessarion's library project fitted in with his ideas about freedom that according to him characterised the Hellenes throughout their history. These instances show that Hellenism and Greekness, competence and ancestry, were inextricably intertwined.

The ambivalence of being Greek in Italy

The first section of this chapter showed that for Italian humanists the Byzantines were Greeks ('Graeci') and not Romans, and explained why this was so. But what did it mean for the Byzantines to be called that way? What were the advantages and disadvantages of the Greek rubric in Italy?

In order to understand Italian attitudes vis-à-vis the Byzantines, we must first of all differentiate between two different things that are not always properly distinguished. First, humanist views on the qualities of ancient Greek language and literature. Second, Italian evaluations of contemporary Greeks. While I will touch upon humanist evaluations of Greek studies in chapter 5, it is important to note here that there was no simple relationship between the humanist admiration for Greek learning and the appreciation of contemporary 'Graeci'. Italians who admired Greek learning and were themselves composers of epigrams in ancient Greek fashion, could at the same time express deep and bitter contempt for contemporary Greeks. They often repudiated the Greeks in general, but also the respected and learned Hellenes, either because of suspicions of heresy, or because of their arrogance or any other of the many vices the Italians traditionally associated with them.

At the same time, esteem for the Byzantine Greeks almost always revolved around their role in the transmission Greek learning. From the end of the fourteenth century onwards, Italian humanists became increasingly interested in the ancient Greek authors whom their Roman forebears had so often cited and praised.[281] At the invitation of the

[279] Compare Bessarion's letter to Theodore Gaza (1453/1454), where he also explained his plan to collect manuscripts. See Bessarion, ed. Mohler (1942c) 486 ll. 4-29.

[280] M. Zorzi (2002) 55 ('national library'); Irmscher (1976) 183 ('Nationalbibliothek').

[281] For an overview of how the humanist concern for Greek language and literature developed in western Europe see now Celenza (2009) with useful bibliography and concise suggestions for further reading.

Florentine chancellor Salutati, the first Byzantine professor of Greek in the west, Manuel Chrysoloras, arrived in 1397. He initiated a tradition of Byzantines teaching first in Italy and, from the second half of the fifteenth century, also north of the Alps. As representatives of ancient Greek learning, the Byzantines were generally esteemed by the Italians. Another motive for esteem was Christian philhellenism, i.e. sympathy with the Greeks because they were fellow Christians, even if they were in error.[282] But in any case, positive views of the Byzantine Greeks had nothing to do with the kind of Romantic-nationalist admiration for the nation's native or natural virtues as we find it for example in the nineteenth century.

As Hellenes, or representatives of ancient Greek learning, the Byzantines who came to Italy posed a problem to the way Italian humanists normally responded to foreign peoples with pretensions to culture and learning. The humanists' appropriation of the Roman legacy went hand in hand with a strong feeling of superiority vis-à-vis other peoples that lived outside the ancient Roman heartland. The best indication of this was the fact that the Italian humanists revived the notion of the *barbari* which they found in their ancient Roman sources applied to foreign peoples such as the Germans and Persians. However, their application of the notion of barbarism differed a great deal from ancient uses of the concept. While ancient authors had generally not addressed the *barbari* they ridiculed, Italian humanists even entered into polemics with those 'ignorant brutes [who were] supposed to understand insults in elegant Latin'.[283] By addressing French and German humanists as *barbari*, they stimulated the non-Italians to defend their cultural honour against Italian insults.[284]

Not so with the Byzantine Greeks. From their ancient sources the humanists learned who the barbarians were, but the Greeks were not among them. In his *In disciplinas et bonas artes* (1482), for example, Andreas Brentius emphasised that all barbarian peoples in the world were somehow indebted to the Latin language, an idea previously expressed by, among others, Poggius.[285] According to him, the only people perhaps comparable with the Romans were the Greeks. Just as Plato had been grateful that he was a Greek and not a barbarian, an Athenian and not from another Greek city, so Brentius' Roman

[282] For the history of philhellenism see still Pfeiffer (1968). A comprehensive modern study on the phenomenon is lacking.
[283] Hirschi (2012) 143.
[284] This aspect of the humanists' attitude towards foreigners is explained most lucidly in Hirschi (2012) 142-152.
[285] See his 'Italorum laus' in *De vera nobilitate* (Poggius, ed. Canfora 2002: 10 ll. 24-28).

listeners must rejoice in the fact that they were Italians, not barbarians, and Romans at that.[286] The Greeks held a special position among the non-Italians.

As the vehicles of Greek learning, the Byzantines were regarded as the representatives of the ancient Hellenes. This appears for the first time most articulately from the *Chrysolorina*, the unfinished literary monument in honour of Manuel Chrysoloras, projected by Guarinus Veronensis almost four decades after the Byzantines' death.[287] In a letter that was probably intended as part of this collection, Guarinus put Chrysoloras on a par with famous Greek teachers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras.[288] Similarly, Johannes Antonius Campanus praised his teacher Demetrius Chalcondylas for the fact that he 'seem[ed] to represent the illustrious and excellent wisdom, character and elegance of the ancient Greeks',[289] while Aldus Manutius claimed that he 'alone with [his] wisdom represent[ed] for us [ancient Athens]'.[290]

The examples can be multiplied. In a letter to Ludovicus Odasius, for instance, Politianus asserted about the same Chalcondylas that he 'would of course match [him] with absolutely any of the ancients'.[291] Although in these instances individual scholars are praised for their parity with the ancient Greeks, Donatus Acciaiuolus described the Byzantines scholars together as 'vestiges of ancient Greece',[292] while Vespasiano da'Bisticci famously observed that the Greeks who visited the Council of Florence in 1439 wore the same garments as the ancient Hellenes since they had not changed the style of their dress during the last fifteen hundred years or more. 'This may still be seen',

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[286] Brentius, ed. Campanelli (1995) 66-67 (§§9-14). Cf. Pade (2012) 15-16.

[287] For details on the collection see Piacente (1999).

[288] Guarinus, ed. Sabbadini (1915) 63 ll. 44-45 (= nr. 25); 64 ll. 55-59. Cf. Guarinus, ed. Sabbadini (1915) 580 ll. 11-15.

[289] In a letter of about 1450. See Campanus, ed. Menckenius (1707) 72: 'Venit graecus quidem homo ex illa, ut aiunt, recentiore Academia, qui quanta sit et graecarum et latinarum litterarum eruditione refertus, quanta etiam humanitate atque prudentia, ad te non prescriberem, nisi sperarem omnia haec ab aliis prope diem auditurum. Coepit me et quidem fideliter edocere; *cujus disciplinis ob id quam maxime delector quod Graecus, quod Atticus, quod etiam Demetrius illustrem illlam atque excellentem antiquorum Graecorum sapientiam, mores, elegantiam videtur effingere. Platonem, medius fidius, si hunc videas, magis tamen si audias, existimabis*' (italics mine).

[290] In the preface to the Aldine edition of Euripides (1503). See Manutius, ed. Legrand (1885) 81: 'Sed quoniam Athenae jamdiu nullae sunt, tecum, qui solus tua doctrina nobis illas repraesentas, hanc visum est deflere calamitatem'.

[291] Politianus, ed. Butler (2006) 313 n. 7: '…[Demetrio] communi preceptore nostro, quem quidem audacter cum quovis veterum conmiserim'.

[292] BNC, Magl. VIII 1390, fol. 89^{v}, cited after Bisaha (2004) 125 with n. 161 (cf. 124 with n. 158).

Bisticci continued, 'in Greece in a place called "the fields of Philippi", where are many records in marble in which are men clothed in the manner still used by the Greeks'.[293] We find similar observations in the diaries of Cyriac of Ancona, who travelled extensively in Greece, where he met Plethon and the young Chalkokondyles. Apart from ancient monuments and inscriptions, he also observed the 'ancient' customs of the population. When visiting the ruins of Amathea in Epirus, he noted down that some of the inhabitants of Dry had preserved ancient customs and manners of speech 'for they say that their dead, no matter what their religion was, have gone off "ἐς τὸν Ἅδην", that is, to the lower world'.[294] Such sparkles of antiquity roused the admiration of Italian humanists. The identification of the Byzantines with the ancient Greeks by the Italians had both advantages and disadvantages for the Byzantine intelligentsia in Italy .[295]

In the fifteenth century, the context of interaction between Byzantines and Italians changed in significant respects. Long after Byzantium had ceased to be a political and military threat to the Latin West, after 1453 also its ideological claims to the Roman legacy did not have to be taken seriously by what was now a dominant Italian context. The Italians could afford to host only accommodating Byzantines who did not threaten their own claims to ancient Rome. The Byzantine intellectuals who had to make a living in the West had to accept that the 'real' Romans did not live in Byzantium, but in the Latin West. Not coincidentally, most if not all Byzantine intellectuals who found employment in Italy were either converts or – after the council of Ferrara-Florence – Unionists. It seems that their pro-Catholic attitude was a precondition for acquiring positions of some recognition in the West. As early as 1396 Salutati had expressed his great joy that Demetrios Kydones was not only erudite, but also orthodox (meaning Roman-Catholic). In a letter, he plainly stated that the 'bound of faith' ('nexus religionis') was more important than allegiances on account of a common fatherland ('coniunctio patriae'), mutual friendship ('coniunctio amicorum') or shared blood

[293] Bisticci, ed. Greco (1970) 19: 'Non passerò che io non dica qui una singulare loda de' Greci. E' Greci, in anni mille cinquecento o più, non hanno mai mutato abito, quello medesimo abito avevano eglino in quello tempo, ch'eglino avevano nel tempo detto, come si vede ancora in Grecia nel luogo si chiama i campi Filippi, dove sono molte storie di marmo, drentovi uomini vestiti a la greca, nel modo erano alora'.

[294] Cyriac, ed. Bodnar (2003) 322.

[295] A systematic study of the ways Italian humanists looked at the Byzantines is not available. However, an extensive study of how they were represented in Italian visual art of the period between 1438 and 1472 is the unpublished dissertation of Peter Bell.

('vinculum sanguinis securitatis').[296] As long as the Byzantines did not claim the 'Roman' label for themselves and accepted the spiritual guidance of the pope, they were no immediate ideological threat to the worldview of the Italian humanists.

All the same, tensions between Byzantine Greeks and Latins did not vanish. Notwithstanding the fact that many Italian humanists valued ancient Greek learning, they were not by definition well-disposed towards the 'Graeci' who transmitted it to them. Even though most of the Byzantine intellectuals in Italy professed faithful to the pope, suspicions of heresy lingered on. As we shall see in chapter 3, even the Greekness of a refugee as eminent as cardinal Bessarion could be instrumentalised in order to sabotage his election to the papacy. More generally, Italian humanists had a love-hate relationship with the Greeks of their own times, just as the Romans had both admired and despised their Greek contemporaries. Ancient stereotypes of Greek vices had never ceased to circulate together with more recent Christian biases against the Greeks.[297] But contexts changed.

In the fifteenth century, the immediate reason for anti-Greek sentiments among the Italian intellectuals probably was the fierce competition in which the humanists worked. When Byzantine intellectuals began to enter Italian society, they vied for the same positions as their Italian colleagues. Due to the cultural prestige of Greek, Byzantine scholars posed a threat to ambitious Italian humanists. As teachers of Greek, they were welcome, but as rivals for posts at Italian courts, schools and universities they could become a threat to the interests of Italian scholars. While some Italian humanists would admit that the Greeks knew their own literature better than the Latins, others went so far as to claim that Italians had surpassed or at least equalled the Byzantines. For example, Scipio Carteromachus admitted that the Greeks were superior in their own language, but simultaneously claimed that they were not as good in teaching Latin as the Latins were in teaching Greek.[298] Among other examples, he cited Cicero's case to illustrate that it was possible for a Latin to surpass the 'Graeca natio' through studying the precepts of its own orators.[299] In one of his Greek letters, Carteromachus' teacher Angelus Politianus boasted that he himself was 'a match for the most esteemed among

[296] Salutati, ed. Novati (1896) 108-109.

[297] An excellent overview of such stereotypes and an analysis of their application by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomineus is Agapiou (2007).

[298] Carteromachus (1517) fols. c4^{v}-c5^{r}. Carteromachus originally delivered his speech in praise of Greek letters in Venice in 1504 (see the *impressum* in Carteromachus 1517: fol. c6^{r}). On the humanist see still esp. Chiti (1902). For full references see Gaisser (2002) 291.

[299] Carteromachus (1517) fol. c3^{v}.

today's Hellenes'.[300] As we shall see in chapter 5, Politianus' case in particular illustrates that anti-Greek prejudice was not confined to misohellenists; admirers of Greek learning could equally fall back on anti-Greek stereotypes, which depicted the Greeks as an alien and hostile people.

That some Byzantines indeed perceived their Greekness as an impediment to their success appears from a speech of Theodore Gaza. In 1448, he openly attacked those who had vainly opposed his election as *rector* of the arts students of the university of Ferrara.[301] In his celebration address to the academic community of Ferrara, he protested that if a Greek was in competition for a position some people 'contend even against the Greek nation, as if Greeks were barbarians and alien to the Latin people rather than the ancestors, teachers and benefactors of the entire Italian nation'. Gaza also praised his Ferrarese audience because it followed in the footsteps of its ancestors (*maiores*) and considered the Greeks as 'intimately connected (*coniunctissimi*) to [itself] due to similarities of religion, customs, arts, and all other things'.[302] Gaza's speech shows that even in the realm of Greek studies Greekness could be seen to pose a serious problem of alterity. In chapter 4, we shall see how Janus Lascaris tried to counteract such anti-Greek prejudice by demonstrating that the Greeks were not alien to the Latin people with the provocative argument that Greeks and Latins could be considered to be 'idem et unum genus' at root.

Latin literature traditionally abounds in anti-Greek stereotypes, and Italian humanists could find many of them in Juvenal, Cicero and Vergil as well as in Christian

[300] Politianus, ed. Ardizzoni (1951) 41 ('τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς Ἑλλήνων τοῖς δοκιμωτάτοις ἀντιτεταγμένος').

[301] Gaza, ed. Mohler (1942c) 259-263. It must be noted that Gaza showed genuine interest for Latin and Latin science and literature. So, for instance, he translated two medical tracts by Michele Savonarola in Ferrara, and is also known as the translator of two works of Cicero into Greek (see Gaza, ed. Salanitro 1987 and *idem*, ed. Göz 1801). He remained in Ferrara until 1449, when he left it for the papal court. There, he dedicated his energies to the translation of scientific and technical texts from Greek into Latin.

[302] Gaza, ed. Mohler (1942c) 261-262 (paragraph 6): 'Nonnulli adeo contentioso, invido, perversoque animo sunt, ut si forte is, qui ad magistratum gerendum eligendus proponitur, Graecus sit, de graeca et natione contenderent, quasi Graeci barbari quidam essent et a genere Latinorum alieni, non maiores, praeceptores fautoresque totius italicae nationis. Vos recte Romanos, maiores vestros, homines humanissimos, e vestigio sequentes, graecos homines vobis coniunctissimos esse religionis, morum, artium omniumque rerum similitudine putatis'.

literature from Origen onwards.[303] Many of the stereotypes Italians launched against their Greek rivals appear together in an invective of Petrus Bravus directed against Andronicus Contoblacas, 'latini nominis impugnator'.[304] The brief text reads as a small catalogue of anti-Greek stereotypes.[305] Moreover, it shows that anti-Greek sentiment was not merely personal slander; individual Greeks were typically discredited by the vices of their group or *natio*, as Gaza signalled in the speech cited above. Contoblacas had apparently offended Latin honour (*nomen latinum*), which was particularly painful as he was a Greek. According to Bravus, the 'nature of the Greeks' (*natura Graecorum*) was predisposed to malign 'Latin princes and its masters'.[306] In his invective, he accused Contoblacas of arrogance, heterodoxy, perfidy, drunkenness, intemperance, garrulousness, loquacity, and perversity.[307] He moreover emphasised that Contoblacas' recklessness was 'inborn', as it was to all Greeks.[308] Such conversion of salient features into representative propria (known as the 'typicality effect') is a recurring strategy in the

[303] On Roman and Italian attitudes towards the Greeks and Byzantine Greeks see still Hunger (1987) esp. 18-19, 25-28 for the stereotypes used. For a convenient overview of the Roman positions with an up-to-date bibliography see now Barchiesi (2009). An overview of Roman negative stereotypes against the Greeks generally is in Petrocheilos (1974) 35-53 (he mentions *volubilitas*, *ineptia*, *arrogantia, impudentia, levitas,* deceit, and luxury).

[304] Petrus Bravus (Pietro Bravi in Italian) remains an obscure figure. Apart from being a scribe of Greek manuscripts (Gamillscheg, Harlfinger & Hunger 1981: 345, Bernardinello 1979: 20, 48, 49) and a composer of Italian verse (Maïer 1965: 426), he was also a public notary and secretary in Padua, as it appears from a document drafted by him on November 20, 1477 and published in Bottaro (2003) 187-189 (188 *fin.*) (cf. Gualdo 1979: 234 for another official document composed by Bravus).

[305] Hankins (2003) 417 assumed that Bravus' 'quidam Greculus Andronicus' was Andronicus Callistus. I believe, however, that Bravus' 'Andronicus' must be identified with Andronicus Contoblacas. According to Bravus' account, his 'Andronicus' had been incarcerated (Bravus, ed. Hankins 2003: 417, l. 19), but as far as I know Callistus did not experience imprisonment. Andronicus Contoblacas, on the other hand, mentioned his own incarceration in Brescia in his *Dialogus invectivus* (Contoblacas, ed. Monfasani 1990: 319). In the short dialogue, he also asserted that the Brescians had tortured him and left him 'semivivus' (318-319). This is largely consistent with Bravus' account that 'Andronicus' had been flogged so badly that he fell seriously ill (417, ll. 19-20). Whether or not Bravus responded to Contoblacas' *Dialogus* is difficult to know, but it seems very likely that the addressee of his invective was Contoblacas and not Callistus.

[306] Bravus, ed. Hankins (2003) 417 ll. 1-14.

[307] The Latin text is available in Hankins (2003) 417-419.

[308] Bravus, ed. Hankins (2003) 417 ll. 3-12. Note that at the end of his letter (Hankins 2003: 419 ll. 81-84), Bravus changed his attitude and emphasised that his words were not aimed at *all* Greeks but only at those *of the kind of* Andronicus.

way Italian humanists loaded their Byzantine colleagues with stereotypes.[309] The Italian humanist further substantiated his charge of perversity by playing on the etymology of his adversary's name:

> 'Scimus inconstantiam, scimus intemperantiam et ebrietatem tuam, nec nos fugit quam detestando morbo illo labores, quo et caeteri Graeci. Ἀνδρόνικος quidem tibi nomen est, a cuius nominis ethimologia tua penitus abhorret natura. Id enim (ut nosti) hominum victor latine sonat. Melius autem significantius tibi Παιδόνικος affuisset. Tu enim pueros potius quam homines uincere solitus es'.[310]

> *We know your fickleness, we know your lack of self-control and your drunkenness, and it does not escape our attention how much you suffer from this detestable disease from which all Greeks suffer equally. Indeed your name is 'Andronikos', but your nature is in complete disaccord with the etymology of that name. In Latin it means (as you know) 'victor of men'. However, a far better and more significant name for you would have been 'Paidonikos'. For you usually subdue boys rather than men.*

Competition between Italians and Byzantines peaked in the so-called *lotte*, or battles between Greek and Italian humanists.[311] One of the most famous 'battles' between Byzantine and Italian humanists is that between Argyropulus and Politianus, to which I will come back in chapter 5 (pp. 191-192). A more illustrative example is the *lotta* between George Trapezuntius and Andreas Agaso whom he believed to be Guarinus Veronensis.[312] Agaso's attack on Trapezuntius shows how Italians could fall back on Roman and Christian authorities to discredit the Greeks, even if they had to manipulate their ancient source for it. The reason for Agaso's attack on Trapezuntius is illustrative of cultural sensitivities of Italian humanists that would not evaporate together with this *lotta*.

In the fifth and last book of his magnum opus, the *Rhetoricorum libri*, George Trapezuntius had critiqued the Latin style of Guarinus Veronensis. In his choleric response, Agaso argued that it was inappropriate for an Italian to learn Latin from a Greek. Time and again he played on Trapezuntius' Greekness to stain his adversary's

[309] On the so-called 'typicality-effect' see Leerssen (2000) 283-284 and Leerssen (1997).
[310] Hankins (2003) 418 ll. 66-72.
[311] The word 'lotte' in this context was introduced by Sabbadini (1885) 81-88. According to Sabbadini, these 'battles' originated in the fact that the Italians were, and felt themselves to be, primarily *Latins*. 'This innate and common sentiment among the Italians, who were the new Latins', he claims, '(…) was soon transformed into jealousy between Latins and Greeks' (81).
[312] See on the affair Monfasani (1976) 29-32.

reputation, calling him a 'Greekling' ('Graeculus'), a typical deprecatory word.[313] Just as Petrus Bravus had done in his attack on Contoblacas, Agaso transformed a (perceived) feature of an individual Greek into a representative characteristic of the Greeks in general. When, for example, he recalled Trapezuntius' funerary oration in honour of Fantino Michiel, he took the opportunity to stress what he saw as a characteristic vice of the Greek nation ('Greca natio'), namely extreme admiration ('assentatio').[314] Unlike Bravus, Agaso moreover adduced ancient *auctores*, both pagan and Christian, in support of his negative stereotyping of the Greek. His most important authority was Cicero, whom he quoted, or rather purposefully misquoted. Agaso claimed that Cicero, like himself, would have been opposed to the Greeks and 'those who are of the kind of [Trapezuntius]'. As proof for his claim, he cited Cicero's letter to Quintus regarding social intercourse with Greeks (Cic. *QFr.* 1.1.16):

> 'Non enim ignorat quam improbis suique similibus Greculis gravis homo semper obstiteris. Meminit namque ad Q. fratrem te ita scripsisse: "atque etiam e Grecis ipsis diligenter cavende sunt familiaritates preter hominum perpaucorum, si qui sunt vetere Grecia digni. Sic vero fallaces sunt permulti et leves et diuturna servitute ad nimiam assentationem eruditi. Nimie familiaritates eorum neque tam fideles sunt (non enim audent adversari nostris voluntatibus) et vero invident non nostris solum sed etiam suis."'
>
> *And he [Trebizond] does not ignore how much you [Cicero], a dignified man, have always been against the shameless Greeks and those who are similar to himself. He remembers well that you wrote to your brother Quintus as follows: "much caution is called for with respect to friendships which may arise with certain among the Greeks themselves, apart from the very few who may be worthy of ancient Greece. Nowadays a great many of these people are false, unreliable, and schooled in overcomplaisance by long servitude. Too close intimacies with them are not trustworthy*

[313] Agaso, ed. Monfasani (1984) 365 (§2): 'Unum enim tuo vel cachinno vel stomacho dignum opus in manus incidit, cazambanicam redolens loquacitatem verius quam eloquentiam, quo cum auctor Greculus Latinis dicendi rationem aperire profiteatur (est enim De rhetorica liber inscriptus). (…) Non dicam quam absurdum sit et Latinis studiis turpissimum ab Greco Latine dicendi rationem accipere, qui vix Grece, male autem Latine sciat' *[I came across a work, worthy either of your laughter or anger, and redolent of twaddle rather than of eloquence, as in it the author, a Greekling, professes to explain to the Latins the art of speech (the book is after all entitled* De rhetorica*). (…) I cannot say how absurd it is, and most scandalous in Latin studies, to be taught the art of speaking Latin by a Greek who hardly knows Greek and speaks Latin badly]*. See also Agaso, ed. Monfasani (1984) 367 (§15).

[314] Agaso, ed. Monfasani (1984) 365 (§5). The text of the oration Agaso referred to is available in Monfasani (1984) 445-458 (with biographical notes on pp. 446-447).

(they do not dare to oppose our wishes) and they are jealous not only of us, but also of their fellow countrymen".[315]

In his tendentious quotation from Cicero's letter, Agaso omitted a crucial passage from the original text between the Latin words 'eruditi' and 'nimie', so just before Cicero's advice not to get involved in too close intimacies with Greeks. In the omitted line, Cicero said about the Greeks that his advice would be 'to admit them freely to your company in general and to form ties of hospitality and friendship with the most distinguished' ('quos ego universos adhiberi liberaliter, optimum quemque hospitio amicitiaque coniungi dico oportere').[316] This sentence is crucial to understand Cicero's ambivalent, but also mildly positive attitude towards the Greeks. Even so, Agaso manipulated his authority's testimony in the direction of outright misohellenism.

In addition to Cicero, Agaso also cited a persistent cliché from Christian antiquity as proof for the Greeks' bad character, for which Trapezuntius was representative. In particular, he attacked Trebizond's birthplace, which was not Trebizond, but the island of Crete. Agaso recalled a famous passage from Paul's letter to Titus: 'A Cretan is a liar, an evil brute, an idle belly',[317] and added that 'this is the man who shortly before dwelled for years on public expenses in Vicenza, that ancient and noble city, from which he was banned and expelled because he filled the youth with fables and other inappropriate stuff'.[318] By citing the authority of the Apostle, Agaso played on religious prejudices

[315] Agaso, ed. Monfasani (1984) 370 (§§37-38).

[316] That the adaptation is intentional can be inferred from the fact that in the *apparatus criticus* of Shackleton Bailey (Teubner, 1988), the line is not recorded as missing in one of the manuscripts examined.

[317] Paul *Tit.* 1.12: 'εἶπέν τις ἐξ αὐτῶν, ἴδιος αὐτῶν προφήτης, Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί', which is in the Vulgate: 'dixit quidam ex illis proprius ipsorum propheta Cretenses semper mendaces, malae bestiae, ventres pigri'. It must be noted that in the Latin tradition (both the Vulgate and Jerome's commentary to Paul's letter as in Hieronymus, ed. Migne 1845: 571-572), the hexametrical rhythm of the original Greek is absent. In his own Latin version, Agaso restored it which forced him to change the singular into plural (which suited his purpose here) and the Vulgate's 'ventres pigri' into his own 'segnis et alvus' (with 'et' postponed: hence my adapted punctuation in n. 318). The fact that Agaso so explicitly referred to the line as an hexameter suggests in my view that he wanted to draw the reader's attention to his metrical reconstruction. To allude to it in this context was particularly useful as it showed that Agaso had recognised the metre of the Greek original and mastered the translation of Greek prosody into Latin verse.

[318] Agaso, ed. Monfasani (1984) 368 (§§19-20): 'De cuius insulae hominibus et eorum ingenio tacebo ipse, ne homini litterato conviciari videar, sed beatum Paulum audies, qui acceptum ab

towards the Byzantines Greeks in general.[319] I shall come back to Trapezuntius' response to Agaso's slander in chapter 4. For now it suffices to observe in conclusion that the *lotta* shows the sensitivity of Italian humanists to Byzantine colleagues intervening in what they saw as an affair of Latins, i.e. Latin language and literature. This kind of sensitivity was long-lived among Italian humanists. Writing more than a century after Agaso, Floridus Sabinus for instance similarly critiqued foreign writers because they had intervened in Latin letters, most of them decades before he published his defence of Latin 1540. There were many Byzantine authors among them, such as Theodore Gaza, Janus Lascaris, Johannes Argyropulus, and Michael Marullus. 'Who can stand it that a Greekling digressed into provinces that are alien to him?' Floridus Sabinus asked about Marullus,[320] and subsequently loaded him with suspicions of femininity and racist arrogance as the poet had dared to rank the Roman poets in one of his Latin epigrams.[321]

It must finally be noted that Italian animosity over Greek sentiments of cultural superiority was not entirely groundless. Byzantine intellectuals in Italy did not conceal their opinion that Greek literature was superior to Latin, and that the ancient Greeks had generally achieved more significant things than the Romans. The paradox of the Byzantines' situation was that, just at the moment that the Ottoman Turks trampled their homes and dispersed them all over Europe, they were claiming superiority over all

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vetusto poeta versum hexametrum de illis breviter explicat: "Cretensis mendax, mala bestia, segnis et alvus".' Hic est qui aliquot ante annis Vicentiam, oppidum vetus ac nobile, publico salario conductus, dum fabulis iuventutem implet et ineptiis, explosus et exibilatus est' *[I myself will be quiet about the people on this island of his (i.e. Crete) and about their intellect, so that I do not seem to slander a literate man. But listen to the blessed Paul, who put forward about them this hexametric verse (received from an ancient poet): "A Cretan is a liar, an evil brute, an idle belly". This is the man who shortly before dwelled for years on public expenses in Vicenza, that ancient and noble city, from which he was banned and expelled because he filled the youth with fables and other inappropriate stuff.]* In 1428, Trebizond had been expelled from Vicenza, and he believed that Guarinus had had a hand in the affair. See on this Monfasani (1976) 30.

[319] Agaso did not mention the name of the Greek poet, and it seems that he was not generally known in the early modern period. So, for instance, Hieronymus Donatus attributed the line to Simonides and, like Agaso, provided a metrical Latin translation (Donatus 1525: fol. Civ^{r}: '… Paulus illo Simonidis poetae Cretensis antiquissimi carmine inuectus est: Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί, idest Cretensis mendax, mala bestia tardaque uentre'). Interestingly, Donatus warned his readers not to apply this line to all Cretans, but especially to the Jews who lived on the island in Paul's time.

[320] Floridus (1540) fol. 45.

[321] Floridus (1540) fols. 48, 49, 53 (Floridus repeatedly stressed the Greeks' sense of superiority over others, e.g., on fols. 95, 98). For discussions of Marullus' complex poem see Harrauer (1992) and Jansen (2009) (cf. Notter 2008: 84-85).

others. Michael Apostoles, for example, agreed that the Byzantines were nothing but 'the remnants of the Hellenes' ('τὰ λείψανα τῶν Ἑλλήνων'), a paradigmatic phrase also used by cardinal Bessarion and Nicolaus Secundinus. Yet on the other hand, he also maintained that the ancient Hellenes had invented the 'beauty of letters of philosophy itself' and that even the *remnants* of the Hellenes were superior to the Italians.[322] While Europe had Cicero and Vergil, Athens alone had been able to give birth to more philosophers than Italy could ever bring forth.[323] Moreover, even though the Italians were now in their prime, they did not teach Greek in Greece, while the Hellenes, laid low by fortune, did teach Latin in Italy. Hence, even in decline the Hellenes were superior to the Latins in their prime.[324]

Such attitudes obviously annoyed the Italians since they had their own claims to cultural superiority. Valla's preface to his *Elegantiae linguae latinae* (which I quoted in the first section of this chapter) is a very clear expression of this. Valla there argued that not the Persians nor the Greeks, but the Romans deserved the highest praise for their benefactions to humanity. They had not only established a long-lasting world-empire, but, more importantly, they had disseminated the Latin language throughout the world. In this way, the Romans had expelled barbarism and civilised.[325] According to Valla, this was a lasting achievement with which the Greeks in particular could not compete. Although they tried to make everyone speak Greek, their language was ultimately unfit for universal use because all their authors wrote in different variants of it.[326] As we shall see, Byzantines in Italy made similar claims of cultural precedence for the Greeks and themselves. Also they had not only invented civilisation, but disseminated it to the benefit of all. Although Apostoles' view may count as extreme in its anti-Italian overtones, also decidedly pro-western Byzantines such as cardinal Bessarion and Janus Lascaris maintained their sense of cultural superiority. They did not directly reply to Latin arguments for Roman superiority or Greek inferiority such as Valla's. Even so, they did point out to their Italian audience that Greek culture was older and that the Romans

[322] Apostoles, ed. Laourdas (1946) 243 ll. 10-11: 'οὐχ ὑπεκσταίητ' ἂν τοῖς Ἑώοις, τὸ κάλλος εὑροῦσι τῶν λόγων καὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν αὐτήν;' For a discussion of the text see Geanakoplos (1958).
[323] Apostoles, ed. Laourdas (1946) 243 ll. 19-24. The ancient Easterners were superior to the ancient Europeans in all fields of knowledge: philosophy, historiography, oratory, poetry, theology, and grammar (p. 243 ll. 11-19).
[324] Apostoles, ed. Laourdas (1946) 243 ll. 24-35. For an English translation of the passage see Geanakoplos (1958) 160-161.
[325] Valla, ed. Garin (1952) 594-596.
[326] Valla, ed. Garin (1952) 596-598.

had generally freely borrowed from the Greeks. The implication of this was that Roman achievements were in their nature *Greek* successes. In chapter 3 and 5 we shall see that Bessarion and Janus Lascaris dealt with their notion of Greek superiority in very different ways when they faced a Latin audience. Despite the differences both of them maintained their idea of Greek superiority and sought strategies to support it.

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Being Greek in Italy was an advantage but also had its drawbacks. The advantage was that the cultural prestige of Greek shed new light on the Byzantines and revealed them as the representatives of ancient Greece, which enabled them to maintain a high degree of self-esteem. On the other hand, as Greeks they were also prone to negative stereotyping, especially in contexts of competition. For what follows it is important to realise that the ambivalent attitude of the Italians vis-à-vis the Greeks prompted Byzantines to operate carefully when they identified as and with the Greeks. As Greeks in Italy they continuously balanced between acceptance and rejection. In Italy, they had to find ways to claim cultural honour for themselves, to galvanise western powers against the Turks, to create an image of a country that had never existed before. In the case studies in the next chapters, we shall see how they negotiated to simultaneously maintain their Greek distinctiveness and to find common ground with their Italian audience, i.e. to be both recognised and respected as Greeks. Although the Hellenic rubric might suggest that they held a uniform view on what it meant to be Greek, the following case studies show that their opinions and emphases could vary as much as the way they used the ancient Greek past to present themselves and their group.