# Byzantium at Early Modern Courts
## Reception, Confrontation and Projects

Matthias Schnettger · Jan Kusber · Klaus Pietschmann · Stefan Albrecht (eds)



Leibniz-WissenschaftsCampus
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Matthias Schnettger

# Introduction

This volume is based on the papers presented at the conference of the same name held in Mainz in November 2022. It is dedicated to the various dimensions of the presence of Byzantium at early modern courts. It therefore addresses, among other things, the treatment of artefacts of Byzantine provenance, the reception of Byzantium in the representation of power, and the knowledge of Byzantium available at court. The authors also examine the competition for the Byzantine heritage and the extent to which attempts were made to revive and exploit it.

Byzantium was present at early modern courts in a variety of ways. Not only the classical Roman period, but also the late antiquity and the early Byzantine period, i. e. the era of the Christian Roman emperors, offered many points of reference for the representation of early modern rulership. Emperors such as Constantine the Great or Heraclius, who recovered the Holy Cross from the Persians, as well as women such as the Saint Empress Helena provided such points of reference for early modern monarchs and princesses, for example, but not only in their religious practices or their representations as exemplary Christian rulers[1].

Byzantine themes were quite present at courts in the fine arts as well as in the court opera[2]. The princely cabinets of art and wonders also contained numerous artefacts of Byzantine provenance – even if this origin was not always recognised. A well-known example is the agate bowl (Achatschale), one of the two inalienable heirlooms of the House of Habsburg since 1564, which was occasionally associated with the Holy Grail. It was almost certainly made in the palace workshops of Constantinople in the fourth century, and it probably reached Western Europe after 1204 as war booty, coming into the possession of the Habsburgs as part of the Burgundian heritage after 1477[3].

An entirely different area of engagement with the Byzantine heritage was the confrontation with the Ottoman Empire, which saw itself as the successor to the Byzantine Empire. The sultans not only resided in the capital Constantinople from 1453 onwards, they also claimed the imperial rank, which they, in turn, denied to the Habsburgs until the seventeenth century. Instead of being recognized as Roman Emperors, the Habsburgs were occasionally downgraded to »Kings of Vienna«[4]. From the second half of the seventeenth century onwards, there was a marked shift in military balance of powers. The Ottoman Empire was now in a more defensive position and there were times when the renewal of the Byzantine Empire was envisaged, e. g. with the »Greek project« of Catharine II of Russia in the 1780s. However, the Ottoman Empire was not only a political opponent of the Christian monarchs – and by no means of all of them. It is well known that the French kings cultivated good relations with the Sultans, as they were potential allies against their common enemy, the Habsburgs[5]. But there was not only the political view of the Ottoman Empire and its Byzantine heritage. Scholars and other travellers were also concerned with the legacies of the Byzantine Empire they found in Constantinople and other cities of the Eastern Mediterranean and disseminated their perceptions in publications of different characters[6].

It is an irrefutable fact that the Orthodox church was firmly rooted in the Byzantine tradition. Early modern rulers also found opportunities and necessities to confront and discuss the Byzantine heritage on this level. The most evident example is the ongoing discussion on the Muscovite Tsars and their claim to a Third Rome based on the *translatio imperii* from a Second to a Third Rome[7]. However, there were also Western European powers ruling over an Orthodox population, such as the Republic of Venice since the thirteenth century[8] and, especially since the 1680s, the Habsburgs[9]. The Patriarch of Constantinople's claim to be an »Ecumenical Patriarch«, imposed a problematic limitation on the papal primacy of the Roman Curia, while Protestant rulers and their theologians might have perceived the Patriarch as an potential ally against Rome[10].

1 For the reception of Constantine cf. Bonamente/Cracco/Rosen, Costantino; Demandt/Engemann/Binsfeld, Konstantin; Girardet, Kaiser Konstantin; Goltz/Schlange-Schöningen, Konstantin.
2 For Herakleios cf. Scheitler, Metamorphosen.
3 cf. www.khm.at/de/object/100474/ (03.02.2025).
4 cf. Petritsch, Dissimulieren; Strohmeyer, Friede.
5 cf. Duvauchelle, François I.
6 cf. Gruber/Strohmeyer, On the Way; Kranen, Historische Topographien; Melvani, Byzantium.
7 cf. Schaeder, Moskau; Khunchukashvili, Anfänge; Kusber, Autocracy, with further literature.
8 cf. Gullino/Ivetic, Geografie confessionali; Paradoulakis, Loyal to the Republic; Dermitzaki, Shrines.
9 cf. Himka/Szabo, Eastern Christians; Ransmayr, Untertanen; for Greek presences in the Holy Roman Empire Saracino, Griechen.
10 cf. Runciman, Patriarchat; for Western perceptions of Post-Byzantine Christians Tudorie/Benga, Manifold Faces.

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The present volume seeks to examine the aforementioned aspects, in addition to other dimensions of engagement between early modern courts and Byzantium and its heritage, up to the eighteenth century:

- The various forms (fine arts, opera, literature etc.) of representation of rulership and propaganda
- Knowledge on Byzantium
- Influence of Byzantium-reception on politics

The chapters of the volume take up the above-mentioned thematic fields in different ways and for very different examples, covering a wide space geographically as well as temporally. They have been organized into three sections, each representing large geographical and cultural areas.

The first section is devoted to the presence of Byzantium in early modern Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, areas that were under direct Byzantine rule or at least under Byzantine influence during the existence of the Byzantine Empire. For the Orthodox population, and especially for Orthodox rulers, Byzantium remained a primary point of reference in the early modern period. This is particularly evident in the case of the Russian tsars, who not only claimed to be the legitimate heirs of the Byzantine emperors. Catherine the Great's famous »Greek project« even aimed to resurrect the Byzantine Empire as a Russian secundogeniture. In his article, Jan Kusber discusses the ideas about Greece that existed at the St Petersburg court in the second half of the eighteenth century. In doing so, he sheds new light on the background to the (never realised) Greek project.

However, less powerful Orthodox rulers also sought to place themselves in the succession of the Byzantine *Basileus*, as Hans-Christian Maner points out for the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia. During the period referred to as the »Phanariotic phase« reference to Byzantium played a pivotal role in the legitimation of rulership, for the rulers' relationship to the Church and for the sphere of education.

Yevgeniya Ignatenko's research seeks to evaluate the significance of Byzantium in the cultural and political life of the Orthodox in the Commonwealth of Poland-Lithuania. In the face of intensifying Catholic pressure towards the end of the sixteenth century, the Orthodox population of Poland-Lithuania turned to the Byzantine religious and cultural heritage, leading to a period of »Greek revival«. The article examines the role of Prince Kostiantyn Ostrozkyi in this context. In particular, it demonstrates that the ideas and activities in Ostrozhskyi's residence had a considerable impact on the development of Ukrainian church music.

In the Middle Ages, Italy had already played a prominent role in mediating between Byzantium and Western Europe. It retained this role in the early modern period. The second section is therefore devoted to the peninsula at the centre of the Mediterranean. With Milan, Naples and Rome, three Italian capitals are taken into consideration in order to evaluate their significance for the mediation of the Byzantine heritage in the decades following the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

Raf Van Rooy outlines the scholarly perceptions of Byzantium at the Sforza court. In particular, he confronts the perceptions of Byzantium of the migrant refugee Theodore Lascaris and of the Milanese humanist Bonino Mombrizio who translated Lascaris' elementary Greek grammar into Latin verse, constructed an image of the fallen Byzantine Empire, and portrayed the Duke of Milan Francesco Sforza as the saviour of the Greek migrants.

Sonja Schönauer focuses on the so-called *Chronicon maius*, a compilation of various, mostly Byzantine historiographical sources describing the rise and fall of the Palaeologan dynasty after the reconquest of Constantinople from the Latins (1261) until the conquest of the City by the Ottomans (1453) and the first 25 years of Turcocracy. It was composed during the 70es of the sixteenth century at the instigation of the Metropolitan of Monembasia, Makarios Melissenos, who had found refuge at the court of the Spanish viceroy in Naples. Among other things, Sonja Schönauer shows how the compilers managed to convey orthodox positions without snubbing the leading Catholic personalities.

Filip Malesevic looks at the shaping of the Basilian liturgy within the Roman Curia during the pontificate of Gregory XIII. In particular, he highlights the efforts of the Cardinal Librarian and Prefect of the Congregation of the Index, Guglielmo Sirleto, to ensure that Greek patristic texts were given appropriate weight in the liturgical understanding of the curial ceremony.

The third section deals with the presence of Byzantium in the Holy Roman Empire. Since the German territories had never been under the rule of the Byzantine emperors, in the case of the Holy Roman Empire, a close relationship with the Byzantine Empire was rather based on the fact that both empires claimed to be the heirs of the late antique *Imperium Romanum Christianum*. In other words, they were founded on the same, albeit disputed, basis.

The Burgundian court was an important gateway to the Byzantine heritage and knowledge of Byzantium. As Francesco Monticini points out, the chronicle written by the Florentine merchant Jacopo Tedaldi provided the Burgundian court with many data on the last defence of Constantinople and was transformed into a medium of propaganda against the Turks that was disseminated throughout Europe.

From the sixteenth century onwards, the travel accounts of imperial diplomats provided new knowledge about the Ottoman Empire and its capital. The Late Roman/Byzantine imperial monuments of Constantinople were described thoroughly, as well as depicted in images produced by artists accompanying the delegations. Nicolas Melvani shows how these media contributed to the knowledge and reception of Byzantium in the German-speaking world, and how this knowledge affected the relations between the Holy Roman Empire and the Ottoman Empire.

In his contribution, Ivan Parvev spans a wide chronological arc, from the fall of Constantinople to the end of Emperor Charles VI's Second Ottoman War in 1739. As he points out,

Constantinople was certainly not a vital cornerstone in the Habsburgs' Ottoman policy. At the same time, from the point of view of state ideology, dynastic authority, and also considerations of geopolitics and military necessity, the Viennese court never neglected the former Byzantine capital. It was this ambiguity that allowed the Habsburgs to easily declare the conquest of Constantinople as important strategic goal of the monarchy in the late seventeenth century. However, the idea of a »Habsburg Constantinople« never came close to being realised.

Nevertheless, as Matthias Schnettger points out in his article, references to Byzantium were quite common in representations of the early modern imperial court. While the early modern Habsburg emperors claimed to be the successors of Constantine the Great, several empresses found a role model in his mother Helena. Thus the veneration of the Holy Cross was an important link between the imperial courts of Constantinople and Vienna.

Byzantium was also present on stage. Characters such as Justin I and Theophanu often appeared in court operas. Gwendolyn Döring, instead, focuses on Reinhard Keiser's Singspiel *Heraclius*, which, although honouring the reigning Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI, was first performed not at court but at the Hamburg Oper am Gänsemarkt in 1712.

Far from offering a comprehensive account of the presence of Byzantium at early modern courts, we hope that the contributions in this volume provide a variety of starting points for further research.

We would like to thank the Leibniz ScienceCampus – Byzantium between Orient and Occident – Mainz/Frankfurt for generously supporting not only the conference, but also the printing of the proceedings. We are very pleased that the volume will appear in the series of the Leibniz ScienceCampus. We would also like to thank Lea Milnazik and Julian Münch for their support in editing and proofreading the contributions. And, of course, our sincere thanks go to the authors who submitted their manuscripts.

We were deeply shocked to hear that Sonja Schönauer passed away in October 2023. She had sent us her manuscript a few weeks earlier. We hope that the posthumous publication of her most precious text will be in her spirit.

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# I. Eastern and Southeastern Europe

Jan Kusber

# Catherine II, the Greek Project, Byzantium and the Russian Court

## The Setting

Russian foreign policy during the reign of Catherine II was characterized by a far-reaching southward expansion. In the period between 1768-1774 and 1787-1791, Catherine waged two successful wars against the Ottoman Empire, in between the annexation of the Crimean peninsula in 1783, which was promoted by Grigorj Potemkin, and the Empress's famous Tauride journey in 1787, on which she was accompanied for parts by Joseph II and Stanisław August Poniatowski. This journey can be considered the most outstanding example of Catherine's court on tour, which played with references to antiquity in its staging strategies, not only, but in many ways[1]. Russia's conflict with the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the eighteenth century not only influenced the balance of power between the powers in Europe, but also had effects within Russia on several levels, above all on the level of court culture, architecture, fine arts and literature. In a certain sense, it changed Russia's perspective on itself in the context of its self-positioning in Europe and in relation to Europe. It was the time when the Ottoman Empire, as a core power of the entire Orient, was stylized as the antithesis of the Orient in Russia's self-descriptions. Some research has already been done into how the strategic opposition between the two great empires not only shaped the images of the Ottomans in Russia, but how the images of the Ottomans that were created also prefigured the national self-confidence of the Russian elites in the late eighteenth century and served to reassure the autocratic power of its imperial status[2].The direction of the progressive Orientalization of the Ottoman world in Russian discourses was, of course, not directed towards the East: the reception of Western European images of the Ottomans and the Orient in Russia since the early eighteenth century became intertwined with imperial claims to legitimacy, and this claim had already been formulated by Catherine at the beginning of her long reign, when Catherine made the statement in her »Great Instructions for the Preparation of a Code of Law« in 1766 that Russia was a European power[3]. The discursive creation of orientalizing images of the Ottoman foreigner on the basis of reception and transfer as well as personal experiences of encounters with the Ottomans, mostly as a result of imperial wars, served not least to intellectually process the processes of »westernization« of the elites and their cultural practices since Peter I, i. e. to confirm their own European identity. An important feature of the self-description of the Russian elites in the eighteenth century is the fact that this took place over many decades against the background of the permanent territorial expansion of the empire and it required immense reception and translation efforts to transform European topoi and concepts into the modes and strategies of imperial appropriation.

These were the decades in which the »Greek Project« occupied the European courts, i. e. the idea that Catherine II could establish an empire on the Bosporus after the conquest of Constantinople, either as a second-generation empire or in union with the Russian Empire. The content and form of this plan have been the subject of much debate among contemporaries and in various historiographical traditions. Some saw the »Greek Project« as a continuation of the idea of »Moscow as the Third Rome« and in this sense as a possible completion of a Translatio Imperii idea[4]. Voltaire, for example, suggested a mission to liberate and conquer Constantinople from the infidels[5]. Against the background of Russian expansionist efforts in the Black Sea during the Oriental Question, Konstantin Leontev, for example, recommended the reconquest of Byzantium as the completion of an Orthodox area of rule under the leadership of the autocracy[6]. Even after the February Revolution, Pavel Miljukov, an important historian and temporary foreign minister of the Provisional Government in 1917, saw the conquest of Constantinople as Russia's central war aim in the First World War[7]. Against the background of these positions in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, philhellenism was also read and understood in Catherine's court circles and by the monarch herself.

1 Kusber, Katharina die Große 234-241.
2 Zorin, Kormja.
3 Instruction ch. I and II.
4 Hösch Griechisches Projekt; Tuschinski, Gerüchte; Ragsdale, Evaluating; Kamenskikh »Antiquising imagination«.
5 In a letter to Catherine, 2 September 1769: »It is truth that your majesty has two great enemies, the Papa and the padishah of the Turks. Constantin did not imagine that once his city of Rome would belong to the Priest, nor that he would build his city of Constantinople for the Tartars; but neither did he foresee that at some time near the river Moscow and the Neva an empire as vast as his own would be established« (Reddaway, Documents 33-34)
6 Leontiev, Vizantinism.
7 See his famed note from April 1917: Acton/Cherniaev/Rosenberg, Critical companion 62-64.

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But was the monarch concerned with a Byzantine heritage of some kind? Did references in court culture play a tangible role? Or was the debate about the »Greek project« just a variation of the Europeanization discourse?

## War, Diplomacy and Rumors

The first Russian political ventures in the era of Catherine II caused a great stir in this context and seemed to indicate ambitious goals. After the outbreak of the first war against the Ottoman Empire after her rise to power, a total of five Russian squadrons were sent one after the other from the Baltic to the Mediterranean from 1769 onwards. There they took part in the military operations in Ottoman waters in the early 1770s. The most significant was the Battle of Chesme, which became the greatest Ottoman defeat at sea since the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. Catherine the Great immediately tried to make symbolic capital out of this and ordered the construction of four monuments to honor the victory: the Chesme Palace and the Chesmenskii Church in Saint Petersburg (1774-1777), the Obelisk in Gatchina (1775), and the Chesme Column in Tsarskoye Selo[8].

Chesme Palace and the Church, for example, were actively incorporated by Catherine into her mobile court: The palace stood on the road from St Petersburg to Tsarskoye Selo with its imperial summer residences. It was often described as one of the empress's »maisons de plaisance«[9], resembling a medieval castle. Later, in 1780 a church was erected next to it, also designed by Yury Felten. Dedicated to the birth of St. John the Baptist, it was frequently called the Chesme Church. The ensemble was to mark the place where Empress Catherine II presumably received the news of the grand victory over the Ottoman Empire. In the reign of Catherine II, the interiors of the ceremonial halls of the Chesme Palace featured fifty-nine portraits of monarchs from European royal houses (French, Swedish, Danish, Prussian, English, etc.). Some of these portraits were given to the empress as presents. Beside the portraits on the walls of ten of its rooms, the palace also featured a gallery of bas-reliefs of the Rurikids and Romanovs. Fifty-eight roundels by Fedor Shubin were placed just above almost the same number of monarchs' portraits. The front staircase led into the hall where the portrait of Catherine herself eventually appeared. Thus, the empress symbolically opened the Russian dynastic series and was placed at the head of the entire community of European monarchs[10]. Military symbolism was to be found in the marble statue of Catherine II as Minerva, an allegory of her victories. Catherine II treated this dynastic series in a small literary work called The Chesme Palace (Chesmenskii dvorets), a short text originally written in French at the end of the century and brilliantly interpreted by Ekaterina Boltunova[11].

With regard to practical political politics, the battle increased Russia's confidence in the fleet and secured Russian control of the Aegean during the war. In the Ottoman Empire, the destruction of the fleet inspired many minorities to revolt. Constantinople came within sight of Russian warships several times and a Russian archipelago principality was founded on 31 Greek islands, although it only existed between 1771 and 1774[12]. Strategically more important were the territorial expansions on the mainland, where the Russian armies literally overran the Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. With the Peace of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774, the Russian Empire acquired the vast, long-desired territories between the Terek and Dnieper rivers[13]. In 1783, it annexed the territories of the Crimean Khanate to the empire, thereby securing its position in the Caucasus and on the Black Sea. These new territories were incorporated into the empire as part of the governorship of Ekaterinoslavl (which included the governorates of Novorossiya and Azov) and as the Tauride region (with the Crimea, Taman and Kuban). Immediately after acquiring these territories, their governor, Prince Grigory Alexandrovich Potemkin, began to develop them. The corresponding, almost grandiose program included, among other things, the transformation of the landscape and the founding of new cities[14]. The future of these territories and the neighboring Moldavia, Wallachia and Bessarabia was a popular topic of conversation not only at courts, but also among the public inside and outside Russia. Legally, the annexation of Crimea to the Russian Empire seemed to be secured: in 1784, the Sublime Porte had recognized the affiliation of Crimea and the Kuban region to the Russian Empire. The Russian military successes on the Black Sea, the weakness of the Ottoman Empire and the general mood in Europe prepared fertile ground for far-reaching speculation about what steps Catherine would take next. The commander-in-chief of the Russian fleet and the initiator of the so-called Archipelago Expedition, Aleksei Grigoryevich Orlov and his brother Fyodor Grigoryevič, who were in Italy with their squadron, made no secret of their dreams of conquering Constantinople and from there fueled the rumor mill at the European courts, but also in St Petersburg itself[15].

At the same time, Voltaire implored the empress in his letters to break the barbaric rule of the Muslim fanatics on ancient soil, indeed in the cradle of European civilization. In his letter of 1768, he wrote to the empress that it was already part of Peter I's plans to make Constantinople the capital of the Russian Empire. The empress took up the ball: Catherine II reported to her old pen pal Voltaire with expansive exuber-

8 Kusber Katharina die Große 102
9 Batorevich, Chesmenskii dvorets 42.
10 Skvortsova, Representing 455-460.
11 Boltunova, The Historical Writing.
12 Smilyanskaya, Protection; Smilyanskaya, Grecheskie ostrova.
13 On the broader context: Davies, The Russo-Turkish war.
14 Kusber, Katharina die Große 214f.
15 Smilanskaya Protection.

ance: »If the war continues like this, the only thing left for us is the conquest of Byzantium, and I am actually beginning to believe that this would not be impossible«[16]. Since the correspondence was only partly private in nature and was very quickly circulated in society, the intense rumors about the territorial-political ambitions of the Russian tsarina are not surprising. English, German, Italian and French newspapers of the time reported on Catherine's intentions to end the Sultan's rule on the Bosporus and either to establish a kingdom on the Black Sea with the capital in Constantinople or to expand the Russian Empire to Asia Minor. A slightly different rumor was that Potemkin, the Tsarina's all-powerful favorite, would strive for his own crown and use Russian troops to have himself declared king of a Greek state[17]. The balance of power in eighteenth century Europe, however, led not only the Russian government to consider the future distribution of power on the Black Sea. As Maria Petrova showed using diplomatic sources, this idea particularly occupied the Austrian Chancellor Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz-Rietberg. As notes with different variants on the division of Turkey from the years 1772-1774 show, he showed keen interest in the so-called Masino Plan. Giorgio Giuseppe Maria Valperga, Count (de) Masino, Knight of the Order of Malta, joined the Russian squadron of the Orlov brothers in Livorno in 1771 with his own ship. After some time, Masino met with Archduke Leopold, the brother of Joseph II and future Holy Roman Emperor, in Florence. Masino presented him with ideas on possible divisions of the Ottoman Empire. Archduke Leopold, Joseph II and Kaunitz were both carried away by these ideas and developed more detailed plans over the next few years. However, as can be seen from his instructions to Joseph von Kaunitz-Rietberg in 1777, only the Russian Empire was believed to have the military strength necessary to take Constantinople[18]. The first known evidence of serious Russian interest in a large-scale division of the Ottoman Empire only emerged with the rise of Catherine II's new private secretary, the future Imperial Count Aleksander Andreevich Bezborodko[19]. These written documents were created in preparation for an alliance treaty with Austria. In terms of content, the considerations contained therein were similar in some respects to the Masino plans, as they were further developed by Kaunitz.

The rapprochement between Catherine II and Emperor Joseph II began in 1780, when the latter expressed his wish to visit the Russian Empire. As Count Falkenstein, he was received in Mogilev by Catherine, Grigory Potemkin and the Empress's secretary, Aleksandr Bezborodko, and accompanied to St Petersburg. This meeting marked the beginning of an intensive correspondence between the two monarchs[20]. When the situation in the Crimean Khanate escalated in 1782 and threatened to slip out of Russia's control, Catherine asked the Emperor about the possible annexation of the peninsula and the possible resulting war with the Ottoman Empire. Joseph II responded almost euphorically that he would support Russia whatever the outcome[21]. Catherine II then formulated her ideas about the future of the Ottoman Empire. In this context, the first Russian written evidence of the Greek Project was created: Bezborodko drafted the so-called Memorial on Political Affairs, which was commented on and corrected by Potemkin and finally incorporated by Catherine II into the famous letter to the Emperor dated 10/23 September 1782. The contents of Bezborodko's memorandum and the secret letters implied that the ancient Greek Empire should be restored if circumstances, i.e. the course of a coming war against the Ottoman Empire, allowed this. The border between the new Greek and Russian Empires would run through the Black Sea; the border with Austria would depend on what conquests Joseph II would make in the course of the obviously impending war. The archipelago islands that had until recently been occupied by Russia would also fall to the Greek Empire; finally, the Danube would form the border between the Greek Empire and a buffer state to be created, Dacia. Dacia would be an independent state, located between the three empires of Austria, Russia and Greece or the Ottomans, formed from Moldavia, part of Bessarabia and Wallachia. The founding of Dacia was therefore treated by Catherine II as a kind of precondition for the later, eventual restoration of Greece and the conquest of Constantinople. In Bezborodko's memorandum, Dacia was to be formed even if the two monarchs did not intend or consider the destruction of the Ottoman Empire possible and wanted to end the impending war as quickly as possible. The secret letters were not treated as too secret: Joseph II showed them to State Chancellor Kaunitz and sent copies to his ambassadors in St Petersburg and Paris, as well as to his brother Leopold in Tuscany. It is therefore not surprising that the »Grand Project«, as the emperor called it, soon became known throughout Europe[22]. As Dmitry Gorbatov pointed out, the lack of an official statement under these circumstances encouraged the intensification of rumors[23]. Free interpretations of the project's content spread quickly and aroused great public interest. Catherine II knew how to maintain this interest for her own purposes; in fact, she basically mythologized the »Greek Project«. She obviously worked deliberately to give the »Greek« dimension of Russian-Austrian foreign policy an appropriate aesthetic framework. Her most important propaganda medium in the educated public of Europe was her semi-private correspondence with international correspondents – such as Voltaire, Friedrich Melchior von Grimm,

16 Katharina II. to Voltaire, 19./30. March 1772, in: Schumann, Monsieur – Madame 283.
17 Sebag Montefiore, Prince of Princes 215-222.
18 Tuschinski, Gerüchte 245-246.
19 Hösch, Griechisches Projekt 193.
20 On his first visit in Russia: Petrova, Ekaterina II i Iosif II, 126-178.
21 Also on the following the still valuable article by Madariaga, The secret Austro-Russian Treaty; Kusber, Katharina die Große 228-231.
22 Petrova, Ekaterina II i Iosif II 94f. 271.
23 Gorbatov, Sluchi 36.



**Fig. 1** Richard Brompton, Portrait of Grand Dukes Alexander Pavlovich and Constantin Pavlovich, 1781. – (After Richard Brompton, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons; Hermitage Museum inv. nr. ГЭ-4491).

Johann Georg Zimmermann and Johanna Dorothea Bielke. In these letters, for example to Voltaire and Madame Bielke, Catherine II had been toying with the idea of conquering Constantinople since the 1760s[24]. She described to Baron von Grimm in great detail how Grand Duke Constantine, born in 1779, was surrounded by noble Greeks so that Greek culture would become his own and flirted with the idea of ruling with both her grandsons at her side.

Constantine's baptism was carried out according to the Greek Orthodox rite. The Greek wet nurses who were specially brought to Moscow and the Greek playmates who were given to the young man are just as much a part of this context as the birthday hymns based on the Greek model or the medals that were designed and in some cases minted on the occasion of the birth and symbolically captured Russia's future goals. First and foremost, it was a commitment to the philhellenic ideals of the time, presented in the pose of a classically educated, enlightened monarch. The propaganda effect that inevitably resulted from these unmistakable gestures was taken into account by the Empress. She wanted to »win the sympathy of the nation over which her grandson would one day rule«. She founded the Institute of Greek Cadets in Petersburg, formed her own troop corps in her army from Greek emigrants, recruited respected Greeks into her civil service, appointed Greek clergy to high and lucrative church offices in her empire, sought through her consuls and agents in the Ottoman Empire to maintain and re-establish the old ties between the Greeks and Russia in every way possible, and above all spread the belief there that Russia alone was capable and willing to protect Christians against the Turks.

The context of such actions and speeches had become obvious since the conclusion of the widely known secret treaties and became politically significant. For example, the Swedish ambassador and the French envoy discussed the »Greek« future of the tsarina's second eldest grandson far from their homeland in Istanbul[25].

This topic was not only mentioned in correspondence and conversations of Catherine, but also in her art commissions from the 1780s onwards. References to the Greek-Byzantine patron saints were promoted in all art genres, particularly in connection with the future heir to the throne, Alexander, and his brother Constantine. Thanks to the Tsarina's personal explanation in a letter to Baron von Grimm, for example, Richard Brompton's painting became famous, which depicts the two brothers in reference to Alexander the Great and Emperor Constantine. Brompton owed his artistic and material survival to the Empress. Extravagant living and debtors[26] brought him to court, but he was rescued by the Empress of Russia, at whose request he went to St Petersburg, where he was appointed portrait painter to the empress, and where he met with much employment. During this time he was patronized by the empress favorite, Grigory Potemkin[27] (**fig. 1**).

The dynastic political options of the »Greek Project« were thus constantly present in everyday court life. Vera Proskurina examined how these and similar allegories were repeatedly explained in poetry and plays. She showed how the theme of the »Greek Project« was trend-setting for the entire literary mythology of the Russian Empire in the late eighteenth century. She also showed how Russia's role in the wars against the Ottoman Empire changed at the intersection of the »literary field« and the »field of power«: the empire striving for territorial gain was stylized as a liberator taking revenge on the enemies of Christ[28].

## Court Architecture as a Tool

The exploitation of the »Greek« theme in Catherine's impression management was not limited to that, however. With the strategy of evocative naming, which not only affected the

24 Tuschinski, Gerüchte 255 f.
25 Bode, Flottenpolitik 180.
26 Schulz-Forberg, Hagen Unravelling Civilisation 229.
27 Andreeva, Tvorchestvo 47-48; Kross, Britancy 335.
28 Proskurina, Vera. »The War in Greek Garb – see also Zorin, Russians.

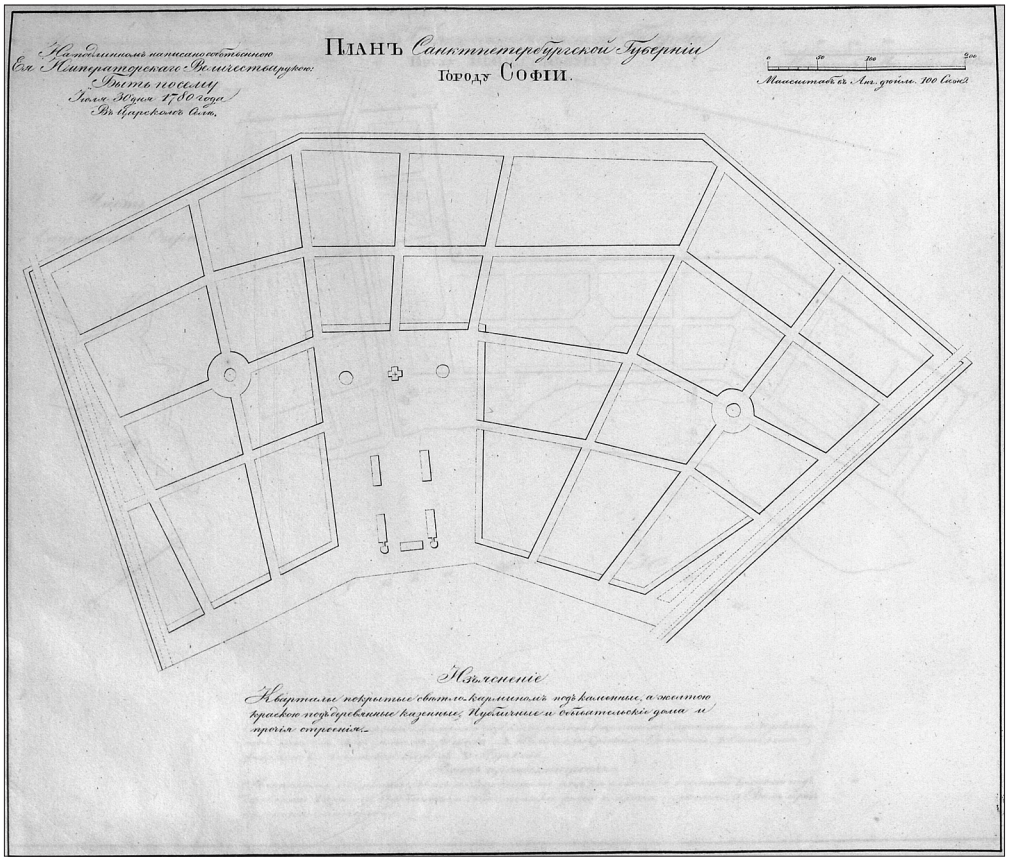



**Fig. 2** Plan of city of Sofiya as printed in the Polnoe sobraine zakonov. – (After Sobranie pervoe. Kniga chertezhei i risunkov 1839).

two grand dukes, the peculiarity of the Greek discourse of the time was probably taken into account for the first time in the Russian Empire. Since the second half of the eighteenth century at the latest, the topos of Greece stood on the one hand for the Byzantine Empire with its »Greek« faith, and on the other hand for pre-Byzantine Greek antiquity with its pagan high culture. This was widely reflected in the court and church architecture: The Greek project and Russia's successes in the wars with the Ottoman Empire determined the ideological program of many structures in the park of Tsarskoye Selo near St Petersburg. The beginning of the work coincided with the successful actions against the Turks in the war of 1768-1774, after the already mentioned projects around the victory at Chesme. The first project of the architect V. I. Neelov (with the participation of the empress) assumed the creation of a kind of Roman Forum in the park with the Crimean Column (to commemorate the annexation of Crimea) and the Orlov Triumphal Gate. On the far bank of the Bolshoy Pond they planned to create »Turkey« (decorations depicting a Turkish city)[29]. A »Turkish tent« was temporarily built. The empress wanted to examine the »Turkish coast« through a telescope from the Cameron Gallery[30]. In the center of the Tsarskoye Selo pond on an island, the already briefly mentioned Chesme rostral column was erected on a granite pedestal according to the design of A. Rinaldi. The column is 25 m high and is crowned with a bronze eagle (from the coat of arms of Russia) breaking a crescent moon – a symbol of Muslim Turkey.

The idea of creating the city of Sofia was likely connected with the Greek project of Catherine the Great. Rumors on this plan were mentioned in a memoir of Sir James Harris to London in 1779:

> »Prince Potemkin pays little attention to the politics of Western Europe: his thoughts are constantly occupied with the plan to found a new empire in the East. The Empress shares these intentions to such an extent that, pursuing her dream, she has already named the newborn Grand Duke Constantine, assigned a Greek woman named Elena as his nanny, and in her inner circle talks about elevating him to the throne of the Eastern Empire. Meanwhile, she is building a city in Tsarskoe Selo, which will be called Constantinegorod[31]«.

In 1780, then, this district town was founded southwest of the Tsarskoye Selo park. The plan was developed by the Scottish architect Charles Cameron according to the »Project of large territories« conceived by Catherine: six parks and settlements up to the village of Pavlovskoye should be united by a regular layout similar to Plato's ideal state or the legend-

29 Vasiliev, architektory Neelovy.
30 Petrov Znachenie 17-18.
31 Harris, Rossiya 154.



**Fig. 3** Giacomo Quarenghi: View of Sophia Cathedral near Tsarskoe Selo, 1790s. – (After Giacomo Quarenghi, Architetture e vedute. Bergamo, Palazzo della Ragione, 14 maggio – 17 iuglio 1994 [exhibition cat.] (Milano 1994) No. 255).

ary Atlantis. Cameron designed standard houses, buildings of the magistrate, the City Council, and the People's School. »Model houses« were to be built in a line (**fig. 2**).

The colonnade led to St Sophia Cathedral. At the request of the Empress, its architecture was to be associated with that of St Sophia in Constantinople, hence the name of the church and the city (and also by association with the »ideal rationality« of the state structure in the spirit of the works of the French Enlightenment thinkers Ch.-L. Montesquieu and J.-J. Rousseau). The cathedral was built in 1782-1788 according to Cameron's design under the supervision of Ivan E. Starov. Square in plan, with low domes, it only partly resembles the Constantinople shrine. When the overgrown trees in the park obscured the »Turkish city« on the shore of the Great Pond, the empress looked from the Cameron Gallery at the dome of the St Sophia Cathedral. Cameron had little understanding of Byzantine architecture[32], so the cathedral, cross-domed in plan, with facades decorated with Doric porticoes, was interpreted more similar to the famous villa Capra la Rotonda, built by Andrea Palladio near Vicenza, and, in part, to the 4th century mausoleum of Santa Costanza in Rome[33]. But overall: With this architectural program the parks of Tsarskoye Selo became a courtly space, in which the Byzantine discourse was on display (**fig 3**).

Catherine's most ambitious project in this context was to build a palace for her son not far from Saint Petersburg, which has not been preserved. It points in the direction of the pagan antiquity discourse in the Empresses enlightened discourse: Pella Palace was planned as lavish and luxury summer residence was started to build during the reign of Catherine II of Russia for her grandson, future emperor Alexander[34]. It was situated on the left bank of the Neva River, then 30 km east of Saint Petersburg. If completed, it would have been Russia's largest imperial palace. Pella, partially built in 1785-1789, has been razed to the ground by Catherine's son, Paul I of Russia. Not only the buildings disappeared, but very few images of it survived the Battle of the Palaces: existing knowledge of Pella relies on a few facade elevations and watercolors by Giacomo Quarenghi and an elaborate drawing on Catherine's fan, also based on Quarenghi's drafts. Extremely fond of her grandson Alexander, the Empress liked to think of him as the new Alexander the Great. In November 1784 she purchased the estate of Pallila (also called Ivanovskaya Myza) from the heirs of the noble Ivan Neplyuev. Ivanovskaya had already been a well-appointed estate with a two-storey wooden manor, four guest houses and various services. The park contained a pool, connected to the river Neva by a canal, and was modestly adorned with statues and follies. Catherine stayed in the manor occasionally before major construction commenced. In 1785 Ivanovskaya was renamed to Pella, an allusion to the birthplace of Alexander the Great and the illustrious future envisioned for Alexander. In April 1785 Catherine wrote to Melchior Grimm that she planned to set up an English landscape park around Pella. In fact, earlier, on March 13, 1785, she authorized Ivan Starov's draft for a spacious, proper imperial palace. Groundbreaking ceremony was celebrated on July 17, 1785 when work was already underway. Grigorij Potemkin's favorite architect, Ivan Starov, was instructed to recreate the palace of the ancient rulers of Macedon in the Neoclassical style and to suitably adorn the residence with antique objects. Giacomo Quarenghi provided regular consultancy to Catherine, liaising with Starov, the English gardener John Bush was appointed to do the landscaping in 1787[35]. In order to accomplish the task, Starov obtained copies of Étienne-Louis Boullée's grandiose designs for rebuilding the Versailles Palace. His design for Pella, mod-

32 Tuschinski, Gerüchte 260.
33 Hayden, Russian Parks and Gardens 92-94.
34 For the following: Shvidkovsky, Russian architecture 286-288.
35 Voronov, Ivan Starov 245-250.

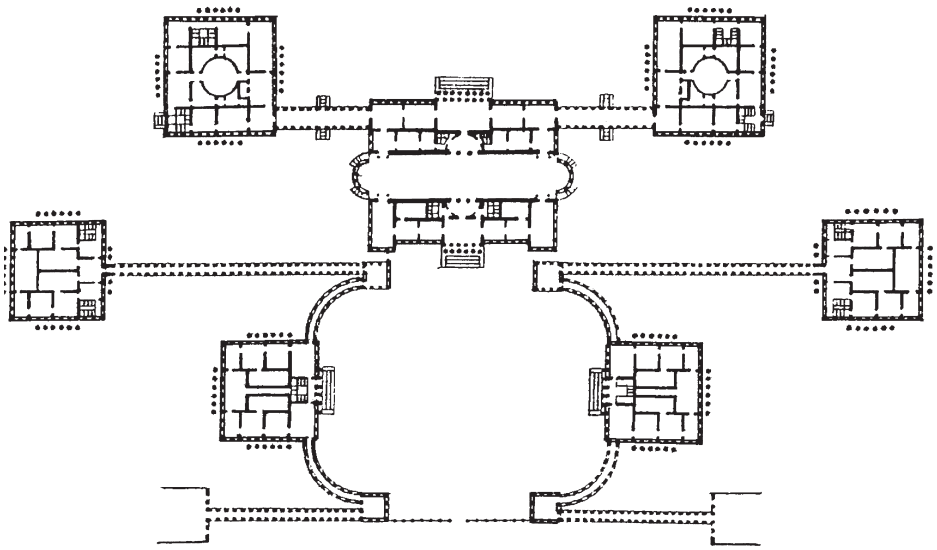


**Fig. 4** Ivan Starov, Plan of the Pella Palace, 1784-1789. – (After Shvidkovsky, Russian architecture 287 fig. 306).

eled on Boullée's unexecuted project, pleased the Empress so much that she declared to her European correspondents: »all my summer residences are mere huts if you compare them with Pella, which rises like Phoenix from ashes«. Catherine called Pella »rising phoenix«, alluding to Alexander's ascension to power after her own death[36]. Pella, designed by Ivan Starov, was the largest Russian imperial palace of the period, and more complex in composition than anything in Russia. According to the design, the core palace was to be encircled with eight auxiliary residences and sixteen smaller service buildings in Palladian style, connected with double-colonnaded galleries[37] (**fig. 4**).

The Empress invested the enormous sum of 823 thousand roubles before the Russo-Turkish War of 1787-1792 broke out and construction works were suspended in November 1789. By this time, nine core buildings and two of five connecting galleries were completed; the service buildings had not been started. The project consumed 25 million bricks, 1383 cubic sazhen of granite cladding; palaces have already been equipped with 350 heating ovens and furniture made by David Roentgen[38]. The palace shell, with a riverside frontage stretching for 500 m (1600 feet), remained in place until December 1796, when Catherine's successor Paul, eager to obliterate the memory of his mother's undertakings[39], ordered the palace to be demolished and materials to be reused for construction of Saint Michael's Castle in St Petersburg. Demolition, authorized by Paul on December 7, 1796 actually commenced in May 1797, starting with connecting galleries. By January 1801 six of the nine buildings had been completely demolished, three others were razed during Alexander's reign. Thus, the most significant representation of the »greek discourse« was destroyed after Catherine's death (**fig. 5**).

## Byzantium as a Separate Topic in the Discourse?

But what about this play with the design options of courtly representational strategies and Catherine's interest in Byzantium? Catherine II inspired many Russian projects in historical studies. She herself was an active, although amateur, historian. The Empress used history avidly to promote her own political ideas and was an avid reader of Russian and ancient history[40]. But what about Byzantine history? One might think that she should have been interested in it too, since she kept talking about dismembering the Ottoman Empire and rebuilding Byzantium with Constantinople as its capital. This »Greek Project,« generally considered the main thrust of Russian foreign policy for the past fifteen years, had very solid cultural »shells,« such as the briefly discussed architectural projects, poems, dramas, paintings, medals, etc. But were these elements of courtly and imperial representation accompanied by a deeper interest and knowledge of the history of Byzantium that Catherine wanted to revive? Perhaps more direct information than her correspondence or the evacuation of Greece and/or Byzantium may be her study of history. Apart from Slavic-Byzantine relations, Byzantine history did not become the subject of scholarly research during her reign. Catherine II, we know, began reading Edward Gibbon's The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, but gave up after the eighth volume of the French translation and did not get further than the fifth century, when Byzantium proper was just emerging. In her piece Oleg's Early Reign, she demonstrated, according to Sergei Ivanov, total ignorance of Byzantine history, culture, court ceremonies, etc[41]. Finally, numerous and obvious errors in the »Byzantine« sections of her notes on Russian history indicate

36 Quotations in: Shvidkovsky, Russian architecture 286-287.
37 Kjučarianc, Starov 99-112.
38 Voronov, Ivan Starov 250-252.
39 Kusber, Katharina die Große 286f.
40 Kusber, Katharina die Große 191-193.
41 Ivanov, Catherine.

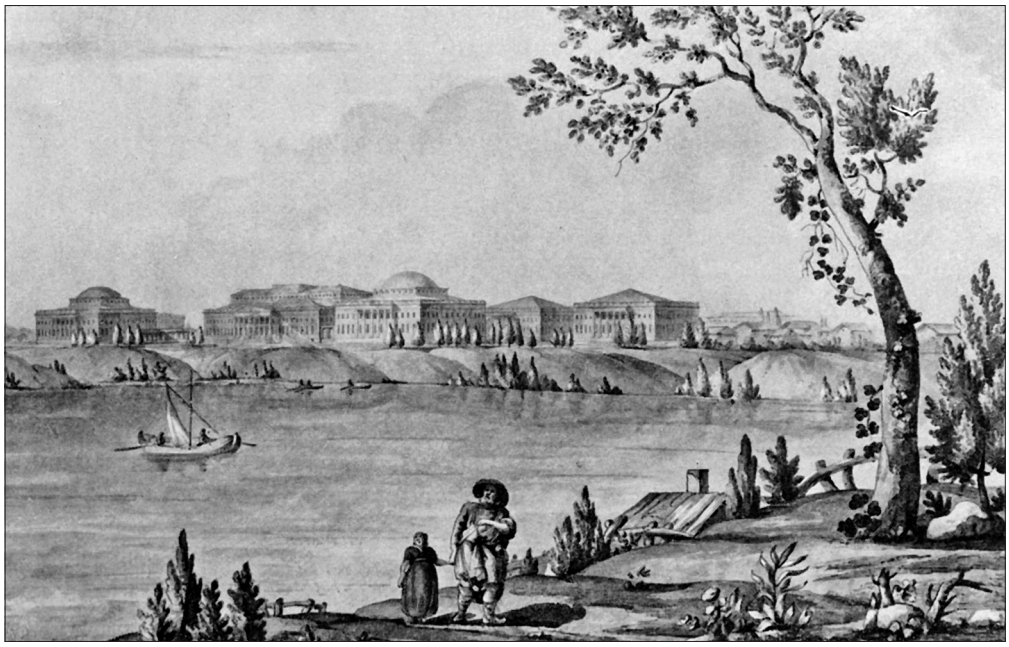


**Fig. 5** Pella Pallace. Drawing by Giaccomo Quarenghi, 1791. – (After Piljavskij, Džakomo Kvarengi 57).

that Catherine had no interest in Byzantine history. Only once in this voluminous book, and then only in a footnote, do we suddenly come across a very precise, thoughtful and detailed description of Byzantine facts, namely the Varangian guards at the imperial court of Constantinople. This suggests that when Catherine considered a subject important, she could find comprehensive information on any »Byzantine« question. But, as Sergey Ivanov has convincingly argued, Catherine showed interest in Byzantine history only when it came to the »Norman question«, a highly sensitive issue in her time, and since »Byzantium« was now and then an argument for Catherine in practical politics; in court culture, ancient pre-Byzantine Greece was popular, not Byzantium. This was very much in the spirit of the Enlightenment. Catherine II distanced herself from the ideas of her pen-friend Voltaire, if she ever really shared them. The ideas of the Enlightenment were diverse and could point in completely different political directions. Voltaire's enlightened-utopian concept of the ideal state referred neither to real Greece nor to Byzantium, but to Hellas as the utopia of a secular state far removed from the imperial idea, and could more easily be applied to a territorial nation-state: When le philosophe de Verney called Catherine the »conqueror of the Ottoman Empire«[42], he was thinking beyond religious, dynastic and imperial-expansionist categories; on the contrary, he dreamed of the end of a religiously legitimized oriental despotism[43]. In Russian discourse, however, the fight against the Ottomans was explained with decidedly imperial-expansionist motives and with strong reminiscences of a new crusade.

## Conclusions

It is striking that Catherine's architectural projects around the capital breathed much more of the discourse of the »greek project« and it's possible references to Byzantium than her historical writings or the Tauride Journey in 1787, which was intended to bring about the annexation of New Russia and the Crimea. Marginal references to Byzantium were offered there. Although Potemkin had the illustrious traveling party pass through a triumphal arch on which an inscription pointed the way to Byzantium, this was to be understood more as the geographical direction of imperial expansion than just as a political and cultural heritage. In Catherine's representation, Chersones and the Crimea were established more as a sacred space, as a place of worship for the holy Prince Vladimir. The annexation of the Crimea was proclaimed as the recovery of the cradle of Orthodoxy, namely the place where the Kievan Prince Vladimir was to be baptized. The Russian Orthodox Church was now in charge here and no longer Constantinople[44]. The representative and politically symbolic high point of this wide-ranging imperial-expansive rule program was the famous trip of Catherine II and Joseph II to Crimea in 1787, the solemn »holy campaign« through which Catherine symbolically acquired new territories of the empire through her own physical presence[45]. The poet Gavriil Derzhavin proclaimed the annexation of Crimea not as the conquest of new territories but as a reunification with the territories that had formerly belonged to Russia, i. e. not an annexation but the restoration of the empire[46].

42 Schumann, Monsieur – Madame 227-228.
43 Schumann, Monsieur – Madame 71-75.
44 Sebag Montefiore, Prince of Princes 244-259.
45 Jobst, Taurische Reise; Schonle, Garden.
46 Derzhavin, Na priobretenie Kryma 181-188.

It can be assumed that Catherine never regarded the »Greek Project« as a practical endeavor to restore a real state with its own laws, officials, territorial divisions and, ultimately, the church. Instead, the »Greek Project« of Catherine II functioned as an almagamation of foreign diplomatic and economic regulatory objectives as well as ethical-aesthetic ideas of civilization and self-presentation strategies of the Russian government and thus displayed in art, literature and especially architecture. At the same time, architectural forms were developed that symbolically exaggerated the historical potential of this alliance with a view to the restoration of the Greek Empire. Independently of this Russian-Austrian foreign policy cooperation, the conflicts with the Ottoman Empire and the incorporation of the territories on the Black Sea were mythologized depending on the target audience and political needs. The Greek theme could be inscribed in any religious, moral-philosophical or aesthetic context due to the diversity and presence of the enlightened discourse on antiquity. This diversity and topicality also allowed for a variety of interpretations, attributions and classifications that became at some point independent of the official mythologization. Ultimately, the »Greek Project« became more of a powerful rumour with an impact on Russian court culture than a concrete political project.

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé

### Catherine II., the Greek Project, Byzantium and the Russian Court

Russia's conflict with the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the eighteenth century not only influenced the balance of power between the powers in Europe, but also had effects within Russia on several levels, above all on the level of court culture, architecture, fine arts and literature. In a certain sense, it changed Russia's perspective on itself in the context of its self-positioning in Europe and in relation to Europe. This change is also reflected in the so called »Greek Project«. Its upcoming in the context with the Austro-Russian Treaty of 1780, its representation in court culture and its possible connection that mixed an enlightened discourse on ancient Greece with the Russian Monarchy as a possible heir of the Byzantine Empire, is discussed in the essay. For Catherine II and the Russian court the rumor that the Russian Empire could conquer the European parts of the Ottoman Empire and its capital was as much of importance than the actual geopolitical result.

### Katharina II., das griechische Projekt, Byzanz und der russische Hof

Der Konflikt Russlands mit dem Osmanischen Reich in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts beeinflusste nicht nur das Kräfteverhältnis zwischen den Mächten in Europa, sondern hatte auch Auswirkungen innerhalb Russlands auf mehreren Ebenen, vor allem auf der Ebene der höfischen Kultur, Architektur, bildenden Kunst und Literatur. In gewisser Weise veränderte er Russlands Perspektive auf sich selbst im Kontext seiner Selbstpositionierung in Europa und in Bezug auf Europa. Diese Veränderung spiegelt sich auch im sogenannten »Griechischen Projekt« wider. Sein Aufkommen im Zusammenhang mit dem österreichisch-russischen Vertrag von 1780, seine Darstellung in der höfischen Kultur und seine mögliche Verbindung, die einen aufgeklärten Diskurs über das antike Griechenland mit der russischen Monarchie als möglichem Erben des Byzantinischen Reiches vermischte, werden in dem Aufsatz diskutiert. Für Katharina II. und den russischen Hof war das Gerücht, dass das Russische Reich die europäischen Teile des Osmanischen Reiches und seine Hauptstadt erobern könnte, ebenso wichtig wie das tatsächliche geopolitische Ergebnis.

## Catherine II, le projet grec, Byzance et la cour de Russie

Le conflit entre la Russie et l'Empire ottoman dans la seconde moitié du XVIII[e] siècle n'a pas seulement influencé l'équilibre des forces entre les puissances en Europe, mais a également eu des effets à l'intérieur de la Russie à plusieurs niveaux, surtout au niveau de la culture de cour, de l'architecture, des beaux-arts et de la littérature. D'une certaine manière, la Russie a changé de perspective sur elle-même dans le contexte de son positionnement en Europe et par rapport à l'Europe. Ce changement se reflète également dans ce que l'on appelle le »projet grec«. Son apparition dans le contexte du traité austro-russe de 1780, sa représentation dans la culture de la cour et son lien possible entre un discours éclairé sur la Grèce antique et la monarchie russe en tant qu'héritière possible de l'empire byzantin, sont examinés dans cet essai. Pour Catherine II et la cour de Russie, la rumeur selon laquelle l'Empire russe pourrait conquérir les parties européennes de l'Empire ottoman et sa capitale était aussi importante que le résultat géopolitique réel.

Hans-Christian Maner

# Rule and Byzantine Heritage in Moldavia and Wallachia from the Seventeenth to the Early Nineteenth Century. Some Case Studies

The study of the reception of the Byzantine heritage north of the Danube can be traced back significantly to the work »Byzance après Byzance« by Nicolae Iorga, which was written in the interwar period[1]. This interpretation was and still is very influential today. It has been taken up and developed further by numerous historians. The role of the imperial Byzantine tradition in the rule of the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia has been meticulously examined in several works, especially by Iorga's grandson, the historian Andrei Pippidi[2]. Other scholars, however, have made claims in the context of the modern national ideology of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries concerning the possible survival of a true »Christian empire« at the time of the Turkocracy in Moldavia and Wallachia. These include the Byzantinist Dumitru Năstase as well as other historians from Iaşi. The well-known Byzantinist Petre Ş. Năsturel also advocated the thesis of an imperial Byzantine inheritance by the Romanian rulers, but he formulated it in a much more moderate way. Apart from Pippidi, the legal historian Valentin Alexandru Georgescu and especially the Bucharest Byzantinist Nicolae Şerban Tanaşoca were the most critical of the idea of imperial-Byzantine continuity north of the Danube[3]. In his book published in 2001, the Romanian historian Daniel Barbu goes the furthest and even poses the provocative question of whether it would not be more accurate to speak of »Byzantium against Byzantium« in the case of the principalities[4].

According to Andrei Pippidi, author of the most important monograph concerning the political Byzantine tradition in the Romanian principalities, the characteristic outlines of the political programme that the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia took from the Byzantine tradition are the following[5]:

- the protection of the Orthodox Church
- governing according to byzantine models in a spirit of concord
- and the fight against the »pagan languages«.

This political programme, according to historians such as Pippidi and Tanaşoca, Wallachian and Moldavian princes tried to put into practice. However, according to Pippidi, the suggestive power of this byzantine programme begins to crumble from the second half of the seventeenth century, when »the Phanariotic political order is initiated«[6].

In the following, a few examples from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries will be discussed, since particularly striking features of the adaptation of the Byzantine heritage can be found here. Among the characteristics of rulers, we will focus on names and titles, on the legitimation of rulership through symbols of power, and on the role of the church and culture in this context. Finally, some aspects of the so-called »phanariotic phase« will be mentioned.

When speaking of a Byzantine political programme of Romanian princes in this period, it must be said in advance that the only legitimate and possible emperor, the only successor with the title of Byzantine *Basileus* after the capture of the capital and the constitution of the Islamic Empire was the Ottoman sultan, the Padishah of Constantinople. I will give one example from a whole series of evidence. According to an inscription from 1538 in the fortress of Bender, it says there about Suleiman the Magnificent »I am the servant of Allah, and as ruler of the world I am Sultan … I am the Shah of Baghdad and Iraq, Caesar of Rûm and Sultan of Egypt …«[7]. The principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, which emerged in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries respectively as medium-sized dominions in northern south-eastern Europe and looked to Byzantium as a model in their ecclesiastical and political matters, very quickly came under the influence of the Ottoman Empire with its advance and had to pay homage to the Sultan as well as tribute and military service. Unlike the central Balkan territories, which were placed under direct Ottoman administration, the two principalities north of the Danube continued to exist as independent political and

1 Iorga, Byzance; Maner, Byzance; Olar, Byzance.
2 Pippidi, Tradiția; Pippidi, Byzantins.
3 Georgescu, Bizanțul; Tanaşoca, Tradiție bizantină; Tanaşoca, Bizanțul.
4 Barbu, Bizanț. For a comprehensive and fundamental discussion of the topic »Byzantium after the Nation« or the Byzantine heritage in the national historiographies for Romania as well as for the Balkans, see Stamatopoulos, Byzantium; Mishkova, Rival Byzantium; Mishkova, The Afterlife 118-273.
5 Pippidi, Tradiția 96 f.
6 Pippidi, Tradiția; Neagoe, Instaurarea 33-44.
7 Quoted according to Tanaşoca, Tradiție bizantină; Pippidi, Tradiția 107-114.

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administrative units until the beginning of the eighteenth century. Although their own Orthodox spiritual, political, military, social and economic elites as well as the rule of the voivodes and other institutions were able to survive, a profound change due to the adaptation to the Ottoman context cannot be denied[8].

Incorporated into the Ottoman political order, the Christians of Southeast Europe had no possibility to lay claim to the Byzantine imperial succession or to establish an empire of any kind under the authority of a Southeast European prince. Only the open armed revolt of an Orthodox League or the participation of Orthodox south-eastern European Christians in a crusade organised by the major Christian powers, led by the Holy See, the Habsburg Empire or the Russian Empire, would, if successful, have made such a daring enterprise, the restoration of the Byzantine Empire under the authority of a Southeast European ruler, possible. But neither the Habsburgs nor the Romanovs would have accepted to grant a possible Southeast European pretender to the throne any rank other than that of a vassal prince entrusted with the duties of an imperial general[9].

The Orthodox clergy, for their part, were also not convinced that it had really been the destiny of the princes of Moldavia or Wallachia to assume the imperial inheritance from Byzantium. Patriarch Dositheos II of Jerusalem (1669-1707), who spent a long time in Wallachia and became a trusted advisor to Şerban Cantacuzino (1678-1688) and Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714), was a secret supporter of the idea of an anti-Ottoman crusade, but he disapproved of possible efforts by Wallachian princes to imagine themselves as successors to Byzantine emperors. This can be seen in his statements about Prince Mihnea III, who ruled for only a very short time – he was in power for only one year from 1658 to 1659 – but also about Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714)[10].

Nevertheless, imperial references can be found in the eulogies of Greek clerics and scholars addressed to the princes. These are, of course, at best merely a form of recognition of their own rule in a traditional Byzantine manner within the boundaries of their own principalities, and at worst, however, simple flattery to obtain public funding[11].

Research has so far not denied that princes of Moldavia and Wallachia, especially in the seventeenth century, selected elements from the imperial Byzantine ideology or resorted to attributes and functions of the *Basileus* that were necessary for the doctrinal foundations of their princely authority. The princes of Wallachia Matei Basarab (1632-1654), Şerban Cantacuzino (1678-1688), Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) and Ştefan Cantacuzino (1714-1716) as well as the prince of Moldavia Vasile Lupu (1634-1653) can be mentioned in this context.

The latter is singled out in particular. Iorga described his reign, as I have argued elsewhere, as a culmination of Byzance après Byzance. According to Iorga, Vasile Lupu explicitly modelled himself on Byzantine rulers. Born as Lupu Coci south of the Danube in the Razgrad region of present-day Bulgaria, he took the name »Vasile« (basileios) when he ascended the throne[12].

Starting with Iorga and other researchers, it has been pointed out several times that the name Vasile, or in Greek βασίλειος (deriving from the sovereign title of the Byzantine emperors βασιλεύς) means something like »imperial«, following the adjective. As a voevode, Lupu signed in Slavic and Romanian documents with the name »Iō Vasilïe voevoda« (Иѡ Василїе воевода), respectively in Greek documents with »Ιωάννης Βασίλειος Βοεβόνδας« and in Latin with »Basilius Dei gratia Princeps Terrarum Moldaviae«. In a letter of 1643 there is the description »Der ieczige Moldauische Wayuoda Lupolo oder Basileo«[13].

The Greek name, which was part of the strategy of self-stylisation, seemed suitable to confer dignity, since it was an old ruler's name that had already been used by Byzantine emperors. Moreover, Greek had a higher prestige than the local language and culture, especially among the country's elites (from the seventeenth century)[14].

In letters to the High Porte, however, the Moldavian prince refrained from using the name Vasile. He referred to himself as an »old subject of his lord« and called himself »The subject […], Lupul, the present voivode of Moldavia«. A document that is not more precisely dated, dating from the period between 1638-1644, is introduced as follows: »I lay my face on the ground after the presentation of my submission to the earth under the feet of the illustrious person of His Highness, my strong and happy lord«[15]. In a letter from 1641, which was probably addressed to the Grand Vizier, it says the same of Lupu, the »lowly slave and speck of dust«: »I lower my face and wipe with my cheek the blessed dust of the illustrious feet of His Highness, my mighty and generous and fortunate Sultan […] The most just and exalted Lord […] the generous Sultan may increase his life and power and glory and greatness day by day; Amen!«[16]

How did the name Vasile, referring to the title of the Byzantine emperor, fit in with the submissive tone of the documents sent to Constantinople? Throughout his reign, Lupu always saw himself as a loyal servant of the High Porte, and in no way did he intend to provoke the leadership of

8 Ursprung, Walachei; Ursprung, Moldau; Panaite, Status; Papp, System 399-404.
9 Tanașoca, Tradiție bizantină.
10 Tanașoca, Tradiție bizantină; Pippidi, Tradiția 312.
11 Tanașoca, Tradiție bizantină; Pippidi, Tradiția 149.
12 Maner, Byzance 35; Șerban, Vasile Lupu; Babinger, Originea 137-146; Cotovanu, L'émigration sud-danubienne 4.
13 Here quoted according to Ursprung, Herrschaftslegitimation 142; Năstase, Coroana 48; Mureşan, Bule de aur 52.
14 Ursprung, Herrschaftslegitimation 142. On the importance of the Greek language for the principalities, see Nicolau, Pătrunderea limbii greceşti 231-249.
15 Mehmed, Documente nr. 166. 165f.
16 Gemil, Relațiile nr. 107. 244f.

the Ottoman Empire. The adoption of the name »Vasile« was primarily related to the person of the ruler as well as the local ruling conditions.

Lupu quickly made up for the lack of legitimacy due to his foreign origin. Once he succeeded in purchasing landed property, he also achieved the high rank of a high judge (»vornic«) among the boyars. He also married the daughter of a high Moldovan official, Costea Bucioc, who was himself related to the Cantacuzino family from Wallachia. In this way, Lupu established kinship relations with the most notable boyar families of the principalities[17]. Despite the integration, or precisely because of the striking rise, Lupu »because he was also one of the Greeks« had to defend himself against opposition not only from the ranks of the local boyars[18].

Lupu also gained recognition and prestige in other ways. The pomp that the prince staged at his court, which fascinated many of his contemporaries, served to illustrate his claim to power in a way that could be grasped by the senses. In this way, the Byzantine model, which was used for legitimation purposes, was to be given a material form. In general, the princes gave their court an imperial appearance not only through the splendour and festivities of the ceremonial but also through the buildings[19].

Vasile Lupu not only had to compensate for his lack of autochthonous roots. In addition, when he came to power he was considered a favourite of the High Porte, who had gained his position through intrigues and bribery, among other things against potential rivals or even his predecessor Miron Barnovschi[20]. The name Vasile was intended to serve the prestige of the Moldovan prince. The prince did not intend to challenge the sovereignty of the sultan. He repeatedly expressed his devotion to the Ottoman Empire. Thus on his seal is written: »Lupu, voivode in the territory of Moldavia, servant in the dust of the feet of the Osman dynasty«. Lupu's letters to the High Porte are written in a similarly submissive tone[21].

As Daniel Ursprung explains, such verbal subordination rituals, which in today's understanding are reminiscent of slavish dependence, cannot be understood as stigmatising submission. Rather, the position of a servant was expressed, which presupposed closeness to the ruler and thus honour as well as the possibility of influence[22].

By using the name »Vasile«, Lupu finally signalled that he followed an autocratic imperial ideal of rule. The idea of Lupu is traced in research to Emperor Basileios I (the Macedonian, 867-886), but the Moldavian prince is said to have followed the policies of the last imperial dynasty of the Palaiologians[23]. This was not only met with approval by contemporaries, as can be seen from Miron Costin's characterisation. The chronicler saw in Lupu a »man of arrogant and imperial disposition«[24]. This view was also held by an oligarchic boyar opposition[25].



**Fig. 1** Prince Matei Basarab, receives the sceptre of rulership from the Archangel Gabriel. – (Photo Ţetcu Mircea Rareş, CC BY-SA 2.5, via Wikimedia Commons).

In addition to the sultan as a source of rule and as a justification for rank and dignity, the princes of Wallachia and Moldavia in the period considered in these explanations also make references to the divine legitimation, indeed the divine origin of their absolute power as autocratic rulers. The image of princes chosen by divine grace is often found in the iconographic representations of the monasteries, as can be illustrated by two examples. In the monastery church of Arnota in Wallachia, in a fresco from 1644, its founder, Prince Matei Basarab, receives the sceptre of rulership from the Archangel Gabriel (**fig. 1**)[26]. God's grace becomes even clearer in a fresco in the church of the Horezu Monastery, which was built

17 Cândea, Istoria Românilor 136 f.
18 Costin, Letopiseţul 81; Armbruster, Grausame Zeiten 128.
19 Wasiucionek, Simulation von Souveranität. For the buildings, see below.
20 For the procedure, see also Kármán, Networks 125, fn. 20.
21 Ursprung, Herrschaftslegitimation 143. 180-182; Iorga, Vasile Lupu 212.
22 Ursprung, Herrschaftslegitimation 144.
23 Cândea, Istoria Românilor 138; Negrău, Cultul suveranului 108.
24 Costin, Letopiseţul 100; Armbruster Grausame Zeiten 151. The characterisation must take into account Miron Costin's pro-Polish stance. Joudiou, Le rôle des chroniques roumaines 215.
25 Pippidi, Tradiţia politică 176-178. The extent to which the boyars pursued a »Polish model« through their resistance, as Ursprung (Herrschaftslegitimation 136. 180) assumes, cannot be read from the sources. According to Murgescu (Ţările Române 215), Lupu possessed the Polish indigenous status and thus benefited from the rights of the Polish nobles. In order to be able to shed more light on this fact, the difficult position of the principality between the great powers of the Ottoman Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian noble republic must be considered. Chelcu, Istorie moldo-polonă 37-78; Baidaus, Politica şi diplomaţia; Gemil, Ţările române. Moldavia's position between the powers was also recorded by contemporaries such as the chronicler Miron Costin. Costin, Letopiseţul 123; Armbruster, Grausame Zeiten 178.
26 Pippidi, Tradiţia 68 Anm. 210 Fig. 4, 187.



**Fig. 2** Constantin Brâncoveanu receives crown from Christ. Votive image in the monastery church of Horezu. – (Photo Dan Mihai Pitea, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons).




**Fig. 3** Abraham van Westervelt, Basilius Prince of Moldovia. – (Photo Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, P-Slg. illum. 3.8).

in 1690-1693. The depicted founder Constantin Brâncoveanu receives the crown from Christ (**fig. 2**)[27].

The extent to which the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia related to Byzantium to legitimise their rule can also be illustrated by other elements. In the case of the Wallachian princes Şerban and Ştefan Cantacuzino, the name was already the programme and, as already mentioned, Vasile Lupu and Constantin Brâncoveanu are also related to the Cantacuzini.

Other symbols stood for the special lordly authority. First of all, the components that characterised his rule appear in the images of Vasile Lupu. In addition to the coat of arms with the imperial crown, there are contemporary images showing Lupu wearing a fur cap derived from regional or Ottoman influences (**fig. 3**). Furthermore, in addition to the Moldavian bull's head, the Moldavian prince also used the emblem of the Byzantine double-headed eagle as his coat of arms and sigil[28]. The symbol of the double-headed eagle is frequently encountered in the context of the princes mentioned here. The elements frequently appear on the rulers Şerban and Ştefan Cantacuzino[29]: for example, on the tomb slab for Şerban Cantacuzino from the Cotroceni monastery dated 21 October 1689 (**fig. 4**)[30]. The preface of Şerban Cantacuzino's Bible of

27 For both illustrations see Negrău, Cultul suveranului 119 f.
28 One example is the bronze candelabra that Lupu gave to the monastery church of Trei Ierarhi. Illustration in Cândea, Istoria Românilor 139.
29 For Şerban Cantacuzino see. Cosovan, Domnitori 25-27. Coat of arms and seals of the rulers Şerban and Ştefan Cantacuzino in Lazăr, Cantacuzinii 50-69.
30 For the Cantacuzini and Cotroceni see also Cantacuzino, Cantacuzinii şi Cotrocenii 73-82.



**Fig. 4** Tombstone of Prince Şerban Cantacuzino, Cotroceni Monastery October 21, 1689. – (Photo Colecţia Mânăstirea Stavropoleos, no. 87).

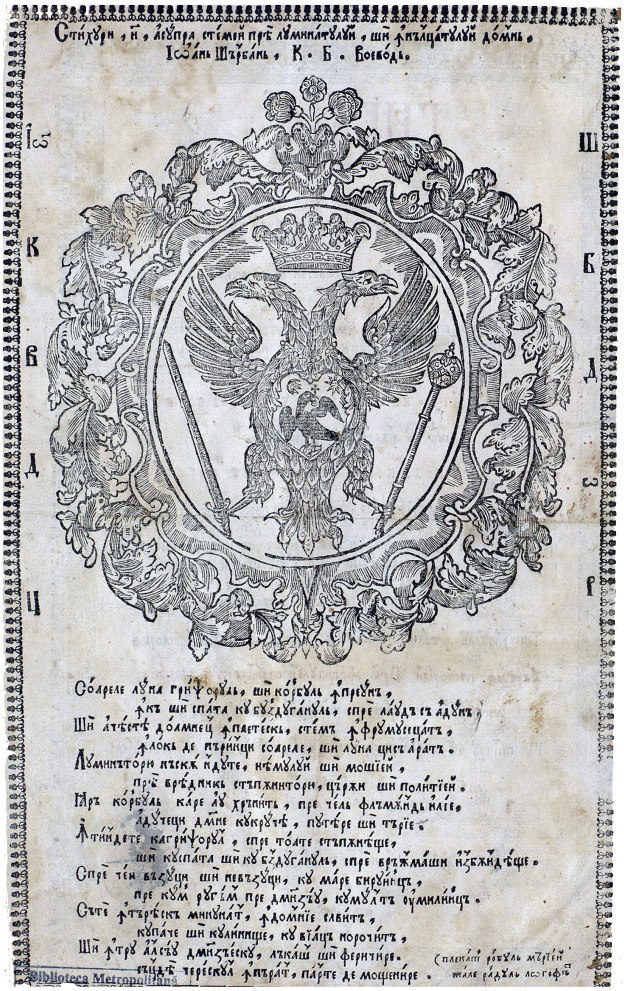


**Fig. 5** Coat of arms of Serban Cantacuzino. – (After Biblia de la Bucureşti [1688] fol. 1).

1688 (**fig. 5**) says of the prince[31]: »Pride of the Hellenes, glory of Byzantium, splendour of the Cantacuzini and power of all Mysia«. The double-headed eagle can also be seen prominently on various building complexes. Mention can be made here of the Mogoşoaia Castle, built by Constantin Brâncoveanu between 1698 and 1702, and the Horezu Monastery[32].

The close ties to the Church, its support and the protection of the Orthodox faith can be illustrated once again by Vasile Lupu. His »imperial project« or self-presentation, which he pursued with particular coherence[33], also included strong influence on the Orthodox Church in the Ottoman Empire. He established foundations throughout the empire and intervened in the political affairs of the Orthodox Church by exerting decisive influence on the deposition and appointment of patriarchs, e. g. in the deposition and subsequent execution of Kyrillos Loukaris in 1638. He also exerted influence on dogmatic disputes. In 1642, for example, he convened an ecumenical synod in the Trei Ierarhi church in Iaşi, which he himself presided over like his Byzantine models[34].

Researchers also see a similar approach to the Church and tendencies to exert influence in the case of the Wallachian prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714), who came from the Cantacuzini family on his mother's side. He fought the propaganda of the Church united with Rome and favoured Orthodoxy. He, like other princes of the seventeenth century, apart from Vasile Lupu, especially Matei Basarab and Şerban

31 The preface is by Nikolaos Glykys and the Bible was printed in Venice. https://muzeulbibliei.ro/biblia-de-la-bucuresti (11.02.2025). For the Bible of 1688: Piticari, Cultură şi heraldică 61-96.

32 For the castle: Szemkovics, Coats of Arms 187-197; for the Horezu Monastery: Szemkovics/Teodorescu, Analysis 703-711. On the role of the Cantacuzini and the Byzantine references, see Cândea, Stolnicul 113. 116.

33 See Wasiucionek, Simulation von Souveränität 113.

34 Suttner, Vasile Lupu 32-72; Iorga, Vasile Lupu 207-236; Pall, Les relations 66-140. See also Păcurariu, Istoria bisericii 29. 261 f.



**Fig. 6** Church of the Three Hierarchs, Iași. – (Photo Pudelek, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons).

Cantacuzino, built numerous churches and monasteries[35]. An outstanding example that illustrates the ruling claim as well as the Byzantine programme is the monastery church of Three Hierarchs (Trei Ierarhi) built by Vasile Lupu in 1637-1639 (**fig. 6**)[36].

The princes mentioned here also supported monasticism financially, spiritually and culturally on an extensive scale, showering all the monasteries from the Holy Mountain of Athos, from the Near and Middle East with donations and protecting them. Iaşi, the princely seat of Moldavia and Bucharest that of Wallachia were considered centres of Byzantine concentration for the heads of Orthodoxy. The cultivation of Byzantine traditions was also expressed in the »Brâncoveanu style« named after Constantin Brâncoveanu, which contains Byzantine elements and was reflected in both ecclesiastical and secular buildings even after the prince's death (**fig. 7-8**)[37].

Not only Brâncoveanu, but also the other princes mentioned here, promoted a style in culture and art that borrowed from Byzantine elements, although this was primarily mediated by Bulgarian and Serbian precedents and models. In short, they adapted the Byzantine heritage to local needs and necessities, as Pippidi points out[38].

The princes also founded printing works where books were published not only in Greek. And just as lasting were the schools founded, where instruction in Greek was offered to the children of the boyars and the clergy by and for the Greeks who had emigrated and emigrated to the principalities in not insignificant numbers. These included the academy founded by Vasile Lupu in Iaşi in 1640 and the school founded by Şerban Cantacuzino in Bucharest, probably in 1679, which was transformed into an academy by Brâncoveanu in 1694[39]. In addition to the Byzantine tradition, from the seventeenth century onwards these institutions were influenced not only

35 Păcurariu, Istoria bisericii 216 f.
36 Trişcu, The »Three Hierarchs«; Păcurariu, Istoria bisericii 26 f.; Szekely, Un proiect nerealizat 537-540.
37 Mihăescu, Artele brâncoveneşti; Barbu, Arta brâncovenească 233-261; Negrău, Byzantine legacy 89-100. On Bucharest in the time of Constantin Brâncoveanu, see Panait, Oraşul Bucureşti 46-67.
38 Pippidi, Tradiția politică 293-306. 315-344.
39 Camariano-Cioran, Academiile Domneşti. On the cultural model at the time of Brâncoveanu, see Duțu, Modelul 156-169. See also Busuioceanu, Constantin Brâncoveanu 9-23.



**Fig. 7** Kretzulescu church, Bucharest. – (Photo Diego Delso, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia-Commons).



**Fig. 8** Stavropoleos church, Bucharest. – (Photo Andrei Dan Suciu, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons).

by Western and Russian influences, but also by Greek ones. Evidence of the activity in the printing works and schools are a whole series of manuscripts, including manuscripts with theological, legal and philosophical content, but also texts concerning Byzantine music[40].

Among the teachers of the Academy in Bucharest are some renowned Greek scholars: Sevastos Kyminitis (1689-1703); Grigorios Konstantas (1782-1787); Lambros Photiadis (1792-1805, rector) or Rigas Feraios or Velestinlis (1757-1798). While the teachers of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries in particular were still oriented towards the imperial Byzantine model, from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards the ethnonational concept increasingly appeared in the speeches and writings of the scholars.

A high point of the borrowing from Byzantine models under Vasile Lupu was also evident in the prince's extra-ecclesiastical activities. Thus, he initiated a collection of legal texts in order to put an end to the uncertainty in the finding of law, which was predominantly based on customary law and, in addition, on a number of Byzantine legal sources. The great code of laws compiled under Vasile Lupu brought together Byzantine legal sources (an agrarian and penal code dating back to Justinian) into a unified body of law. In 1646, the »Cartea românească de învățătură de la pravilele împărătești și de la alte giudețe« (Romanian textbook according to the imperial laws and other judgements) appeared in Iaşi in Romanian[41].

The borrowing of Byzantine forms was not intended to question Ottoman rule in south-eastern Europe and to resurrect the Eastern Roman Empire, as it were. The Ottoman Empire formed the framework in which the representation of rule took place. In all cases, the invocation of Byzantine models probably arose from more obvious local reasons.

For example, Vasile Lupu was not only able to express his aversion to the model of limiting the power of the rulers, as advocated by various boyar factions, but also to expand his sphere of influence. The reference to Byzantium cannot be interpreted as a questioning of the Ottoman claim to sovereignty; on the contrary, it represented a strategy of integration into the Ottoman ruling alliance, in contrast to the repeated orientation of policy towards Poland-Lithuania in Moldavia in the seventeenth century.

But the link to Byzantium also offered a point of connection for the large number of Greeks who came to Moldavia and Wallachia from the Ottoman Empire[42]. To a certain extent, it stood for their own cultural identification, for the connection with the glorious past of the Orthodox Empire in the Eastern Mediterranean, in whose tradition they saw themselves. Byzantium could therefore become the common point of reference for the local elites as well as for the Greek upper class newly settling in the country. Existing fierce conflicts could thus be masked and an integrating, meaningful effect could unfold based on the reference to the idea of a Byzantine tradition. Beyond the daily quarrels and disagreements, the disputes between different boyar factions, i.e. the native boyars and the *homines novi*, about power and influence, the Byzantine model established a shining example on which everyone could in principle agree. This also concealed a centralist-absolutist policy of the princes that was opposed to the aspirations of the boyars[43]. The focus was less on concrete questions of implementation, but rather on affective attributions of meaning that condensed into a symbol in which the most diverse meanings overlapped. The values shared with Byzantium, above all the Orthodox confession, made it easier to internalise the Byzantine model and to identify with it. The symbol could thus be declared binding without much resistance and the elites committed to it. The consensus established in this way represented a powerful resource from which legitimacy could be drawn by whoever gained the power of interpretation over it.

Byzantium was therefore not so much a real phenomenon as a concept that was conceived in the mind, onto which a whole series of ideas about society and its functioning could be bundled. The decisive factor was that this invented tradition had a meaningful effect that placed the rule of the Moldavian and Wallachian princes in a larger context and thus granted them a place in a universal divine plan of salvation. The reference to Byzantium, the handling of the ideal and material complex described as »Byzantine heritage« at the Moldavian and Wallachian princely courts is not least a reference to the ideal striving for sovereignty on the one hand and the real political conditions and claims of the local powers (Poland-Lithuania and the Ottoman Empire in the case of Moldavia and the Ottoman Empire in the case of Wallachia) on the other[44].

In a final short section, some observations on the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, referred to by historiography as the »period of the Phanariots«, will be summarised[45]. Even if the demarcation, as Bogdan Murgescu pointedly points out, is a historiographical construct, according to Andrei Pippidi, who agrees with this construct, new developments can also be identified from the eighteenth century onwards, some of which, however, were already present in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries[46]:

40 Cartojan, Istoria literaturii 91-173; Păcurariu, Istoria bisericii 18-28; Jumară, Tradiția bizantină.
41 Georgescu, Bizanțul 119. 191. 225. 230.
42 On the following see Ursprung, Herrschaftslegitimation 181f.; Nastase, Imperial claims 185-224.
43 Negrău, Cultul suveranului 106.
44 Wasiucionek, Simulation von Souveränität 107.
45 Murgescu, Țările Române 59.
46 Pippidi, Tradiția politică 313.

1. the transformation of the princes into officials of the Ottoman Empire, appointed by the Sultan without being elected in advance in the country;
2. the administration of both principalities by a bureaucracy of Greek origin;
3. the intensification of the economic exploitation of the two principalities; and
4. the emergence of a new epoch in the history of culture and mentality, which comprised the eighteenth century and the first twenty or thirty years of the nineteenth century.

The form of rule of the Phanariots in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is characterised by the following main features: an even greater openness to Western European modernity, an increase in the intellectual standard of living, a decline in the interest of the boyars in pursuing a military career for the planning of a crusade in favour of employment in advantageous economic enterprises or in administration, and the increase in the importance of Constantinopolitan Greekness in the public and cultural life of the Danubian principalities.

Byzantine elements are thus found both in the ideology of the native princes and in that of the Phanariots, because their common purpose was to justify and consolidate, in Christian terms, the authority of the rulers. One piece of evidence is an allegorical painting from 1789, which shows an apotheosis of the deeds of the Prince of Wallachia Nikolaos Mavrogenis (1786-1790). The person of the prince can be seen in the centre as a luminous figure by the grace of God, sitting elevated on a gilded throne. The text to the left and right of the image refers to two central intentions, both of which were denied to him: to rule over a large empire and to achieve hereditary rule[47].

The Phanariots did deepen dependence on the Porte and the Constantinopolitan patriarchy through their rule. At the same time, however, they contributed to an opening towards Western European influences. The victory of Greek as the language used in culture and in not only elevated communication in the eighteenth century among the Phanariots can be seen as the fulfilment of a development that was in the offing in the sixteenth century and came to fruition in the seventeenth century. However, while at the time of Constantin Brâncoveanu Greek was still cultivated as the language of the »Christian people«, so to speak of the orthodox Romaic millets (millet-i Rûm), it was to gradually become the language of the Greek people among the Phanariots, through the victory of Enlightenment thought and the new concept of the nation.

Finally, from the eighteenth century onwards, a new component of the Byzantine idea, a new chapter, began to emerge through the increased infiltration of knowledge from Western Europe: Next to the Greek Empire came the Roman Empire and the increased reference in the principalities to Roman roots. A new myth was to replace another.

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé

### Rule and Byzantine Heritage in Moldavia and Wallachia from the Seventeenth to the Early Nineteenth Century. Some case studies

Based on historiography, the paper focus on the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, since we find here particularly striking features of the adaptation of the Byzantine heritage in the two principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. Finally, some aspects of the so-called »Phanariotic phase« are discussed. Using the example of the princes of Wallachia Matei Basarab (1632-1654), Şerban Cantacuzino (1678-1688), Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) and Ştefan Cantacuzino (1714-1716) and the prince of Moldavia Vasile Lupu (1634-1653) it is about the Byzantine legacy in the political and cultural sphere. The reference to Byzantium played a central role in the legitimation of rule (e. g. symbols of rule), the relationship to the church and in the area of education. Finally, continuities and new developments in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are pointed out.

### Herrschaft und byzantinisches Erbe in der Moldau und der Walachei vom 17. bis zum frühen 19. Jahrhundert

Ausgehend von der Geschichtsschreibung konzentriert sich der Beitrag auf das 17. und frühe 18. Jahrhundert, da wir hier besonders auffällige Merkmale der Anpassung des byzantinischen Erbes in den beiden Fürstentümern Moldau und Walachei finden. Schließlich werden einige Aspekte der sogenannten »Phanarioten-Phase« diskutiert. Am Beispiel der Fürsten der Walachei Matei Basarab (1632-1654), Şerban Cantacuzino (1678-1688), Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) und Ştefan Cantacuzino (1714-1716) und des Fürsten von Moldau Vasile Lupu (1634-1653) geht es um das byzantinische Erbe im politischen und kulturellen Bereich. Der Bezug auf Byzanz spielte eine zentrale Rolle bei der Legitimation der Herrschaft (z. B. Herrschaftssymbole), dem Verhältnis zur Kirche und im Bildungsbereich. Schließlich werden Kontinuitäten und neue Entwicklungen im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert aufgezeigt.

### Le pouvoir et l'héritage byzantin en Moldavie et en Valachie du XVII^e au début du XIX^e siècle

En partant de l'historiographie, la contribution se concentre sur le XVII^e siècle et le début du XVIII^e siècle, car c'est à cette époque que l'on trouve les caractéristiques les plus frappantes de l'adaptation de l'héritage byzantin dans les deux principautés de Moldavie et de Valachie. Enfin, certains aspects de la »phase phanariote« sont discutés. L'héritage byzantin dans les domaines politique et culturel est abordé à travers l'exemple des princes de Valachie Matei Basarab (1632-1654), Şerban Cantacuzino (1678-1688), Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) et Ştefan Cantacuzino (1714-1716) et du prince de Moldavie Vasile Lupu (1634-1653) il s'agit de l'héritage byzantin dans les domaines politique et culturel. La référence à Byzance jouait un rôle central dans la légitimation du pouvoir (par exemple les symboles du pouvoir), dans les relations avec l'Église et dans le domaine de l'éducation. Enfin, les continuités et les nouveaux développements au XVIII^e siècle et au début du XIX^e siècle sont mis en évidence.

Yevgeniya Ignatenko

# Byzantium in the Religious, Political and Cultural Life of the Orthodox of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

## Historical Context

The years 1570-1630 were a difficult period in Ukrainian history, a period of religious struggle. In the sixteenth century, ethnic Ukrainian lands were part of various states, in particular, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland. In 1569, Poland and Lithuania united to form the federal state of Rzeczpospolita (Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth). As a result of this union, most of the Ukrainian lands became part of the Kingdom of Poland.

Poland was a Catholic state, while the Ukrainians at that time had an Orthodox Metropolitanate in Kyiv, subordinated to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The King of Poland, Sigismund III Vasa (1566-1632) and his government had the idea of uniting the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. This idea was supported by the Kyiv Metropolitan Mykhailo Rahoza (1540-1599) and most of his bishops, who wanted to consolidate their rights in the Catholic state. Thus, the attack of the Roman Catholics ended with the proclamation of the Uniate Greek Catholic Church in Brest in 1596. After the Union of Churches, the question of religious self-identification became relevant for every Ukrainian. Most of the Ukrainian magnates became Roman Catholics or accepted the new Greek Catholic Church, while the burghers and peasants remained faithful to Orthodoxy. The union of the churches provoked a religious war. With the creation of the Greek Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church officially lost its metropolitan and hierarchs because they accepted the union.

The Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophanes III, returning from Moscow in 1620, had been living in Kyiv for almost a year (March 1620 - January 1621). With credentials from three Eastern patriarchs – Timothy II Marmarinos of Constantinople, Cyril Lucaris of Alexandria, and Athanasius II Dabbas of Antioch – he restored the Orthodox hierarchy in the Ukrainian and Belarusian lands of the Rzeczpospolita, which Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics considered illegitimate. The recognition of three churches – Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Greek Catholic – did not take place until 1632. The difficult religious and political circumstances of that time led to the consolidation of the Ukrainian people. In Ukrainian historiography, the period spanning from the last quarter of the sixteenth century to the first half of the seventeenth century is called the period of Ukrainian national and cultural renaissance. The Greek-Byzantine trend played an important role in it. The Orthodox in the Ukrainian and Belarusian lands of Rzeczpospolita turned to the Byzantine religious and cultural heritage as a source of their national, religious and cultural identity. Constant contacts with the Eastern Greek church hierarchy, the establishment of Stauropegial church fraternities, the development of Hellenistic studies and the appearance of Greek church chants in monasteries and parish churches testify to the importance of the Greek-Byzantine influence. One of the initiators and promoters of the »Greek revival« was Prince Kostiantyn Vasyl Ostrozkyi, Voivode of Kyiv. Religious and political component of »Greek revival« was covered in Ukrainian historical works. Instead, its musical component is usually not mentioned, which determines the relevance and novelty of our research. The purpose of our article is to show how the ideas and activities of Prince Ostrozkyi indirectly influenced the development of Ukrainian church music.

## Prince Kostiantyn Vasyl Ostrozkyi (1526-1608)[1]

In the late sixteenth century, Ostrozkyi family was among the most powerful Orthodox magnates of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: only the Polish king had more lands than Prince Kostiantyn Vasyl Ostrozkyi. His great wealth allowed him to maintain a large court, which numbered about 2000 Catholic nobles and Orthodox boyars[2]. The Ostrozkyi family gained great fame and respect by constantly protecting Ukrainian lands from the Crimean Tatars and defending the Orthodox faith and the rights of its people.

1 Comprehensive bibliography is here: https://heritage.oa.edu.ua/resursy/lib (01.05.2023).

2 Perlshtejn, Neskolko slov 44.

In: Matthias Schnettger · Jan Kusber · Klaus Pietschmann · Stefan Albrecht (eds), Byzantium at Early Modern Courts. Reception, Confrontation and Projects. Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident 34 (Mainz 2025). DOI: 10.11588/propylaeum.1617.c23248

A contemporary of Prince, the anonymous author of the anti-Uniate work »The Warning« (»Perestoroha«, 1605-1606) wrote, that the goal of the Prince's life and activity was the confirmation of the Orthodox faith. To achieve it, with the support of the Eastern Greek patriarchs, he developed Greek-Slavic education, printed church and polemical books and defended the rights of the Orthodox in Poland: »At that time, by God's permission, the pious Prince Konstantyn Konstantynovych, in holy baptism named Vasyliy, Prince Ostrozkyi, […] stirred up by the Holy Spirit, intended to affirm the Orthodox faith, established everywhere by his ancestors. First of all, he asked His Holiness the Patriarch to send teachers to spread the sciences of the Orthodox faith, and he did not spare his estates, because he had already built a school, a hospital, and donated his estates to them. In Ostroh, he started Slavic and Greek sciences, founded a printing house, and with the blessing and epistle of the Ecumenical Patriarch, he established all that. […] After it our Orthodoxy began to shine like the sun. Learned people began to appear in the Church of God, printed books of the Church of God's teachers and builders began to multiply«[3].

## Ostroh Scientific Circle (the Late 1570s-1608)

Describing the activities of the Prince K.-V. Ostrozkyi since late 1570 onwards, historians refer to a scientific circle in his Ostroh residence. It united the activities of the lyceum (academy), printing house and scientists. The latter were school teachers, authors, translators and editors of printing house publications.

In around 1576, Prince Kostiantyn established a trilingual Slavic-Greek-Latin school, emulating the trilingual schools of Europe that had been conceptualized by Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536). European trilingual schools were established as educational and scientific institutions in which the sacred languages (ancient Hebrew, Greek, and Latin) were taught for textual study and translation of the Bible. The Ostroh School taught Church Slavonic instead of Old Hebrew, which ensured the preservation of Slavic self-identity and proved to Western polemicists that the Church language of the Slavs, developed by Saints Cyril and Methodius, was also sacred[4]. Until the death of Prince Ostrozkyi in 1608, the Ostroh lyceum (academy) was a center of Orthodox education, which trained teachers, church preachers and polemicists.

Ivan Fedorov (c. 1510-1583) founded a printing house in Ostroh in 1577-1579 on the initiative and at the expense of Prince Ostrozkyi. Its first publication became the Greek-Slavic »Primer« of 1578. It provided the Cyrillic and Greek alphabets and the text of prayers in Greek and Church Slavonic languages. The most significant print of Ostroh printing house was the Church-Slavonic Bible of 1581. The Church-Slavonic translation of the Bible was checked against many Old Slavic copies and corrected on the basis of Greek, Latin, Polish, Czech and Jewish sources.

In the late 1570s and early 1580s, the prince engaged Greek scholars to prepare the publication of the Bible: Dionysius Ralli-Paleologus, Eustathius Nathanael, Emmanuel Moschopoulos, the Bishop of Meglena Theophanes the Greek and others. The Cretan Dionysius Ralli-Paleologus, Metropolitan of Cyzicus, brought a manuscript of the Slavic Bible from Pope Gregory XIII and unsuccessfully persuaded the prince to unite with Rome. Later, in the principality of Ostroh, he became the archimandrite of the Dorohobuzh monastery. The Cretan Eustathius Nathanael worked on the translation of the Bible and also taught the prince's children, Alexander and Constantine.

From the late 1580s, Ostroh's circle of scholars focused on the struggle against the Greek-Catholic religious union. Among the famous Greeks of that period were graduates of the University of Padua Cyril Lucaris and Nikephoros Parasches Kantakuzin, as well as a graduate of the Greek College of Saint Athanasius of Rome Emmanuel Achilleas from Lviv. Among the outstanding Ruthenians were a graduate of the University of Padua Blessed Cyprian of Ostroh and Isakiy Boryskovych, a disciple and syncellus of the Patriarch of Alexandria St. Meletius Pegas (1535/1540-1601), the future Bishop of Lutsk and Ostroh[5].

Prince Ostrozkyi corresponded with Meletius Pegas, Patriarch of Alexandria from 1590 to 1601 and locum tenens for the Patriarchal Throne of Constantinople in 1597/1598, a famous Orthodox teacher, preacher and theologian of the Greek East. Already in 1594, Meletius Pegas sent to the Prince Kostiantyn his protosyncellus hieromonk Cyril Lucaris (1572-1638), who would later become Patriarch of Alexandria and then of Constantinople[6]. Cyril Lucaris taught in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from 1594 to 1600. He was a Greek teacher and rector of the Ostroh Academy and of the Wilno (now Vilnius) Orthodox Fraternal school. In 1597, Ostrozkyi sent the monk Cyprian of Ostroh to Meletius Pegas with a request to come to his residence, however, this project was not implemented[7].

After the Union of Brest, which left the Orthodox Church of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth without a metropolitan and most bishops, in 1597, Meletius Pegas appointed three exarchs of the Ecumenical Throne of Constantinople: his protosyncellus Cyril Lucaris, the bishop of Lviv Hedeon Balaban, who did not accept the union, and the Prince Ostrozkyi. The exarchs were given full power, even the authority to choose the metropolitan and bishops[8]. In his letters, Saint Meletius called Prince Ostrozkyi »a victorious leader« and »the new Great Constantine«[9].

3 Krekoten', Ukrainska literatura 28-29.
4 Isaievych, Lycaeum trilingue 8-12.
5 Mytsko, Akademiia 17; Kempa, Akademia i Drukarnia 25-26.
6 Malyshevskij, Meletij Pigas 27.
7 Malyshevskij, Meletij Pigas 74.
8 Malyshevskij, Meletij Pigas 66. 78. 93.
9 Malyshevskij, Meletij Pigas 73.

Nikephoros Parasches Kantakuzin (1537-1599) received the title of Protosyncellus from the Patriarch of Constantinople Jeremias II Tranos (1536-1595) in the early 1580s. In 1583 he visited Ostroh, where he taught at the Academy. Later, together with Prince Ostorozkyi, they became leaders of anti-Union activities in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. They prepared the Orthodox Council (Brest, 1596), which condemned the apostate hierarchs of the Kyiv Metropolitanate[10].

Among other church hierarchs of the Orthodox East and the Balkans who visited the prince in Ostroh were Metropolitan Jeremias of Pelagon, Bishop Avraam Gatsidou of Stagon, Archimandrite Theophanes (later the Patriarch of Jerusalem), Archbishop Athanasius I of Ohrid[11]. Historian Ihor Ševčenko noted that the authority of the Greek hierarchs on the Ukrainian and Belarusian lands was indisputable. The Greeks were required by the Orthodox of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which were under the storm of Catholic expansion. The Greeks helped them to create schools and to restructure the local system of the Orthodox hierarchy. At that time, Greeks and Ukrainians were united not only by a common faith, but also by a similarity of fate. In the Ottoman Empire the Turks ruled over the Greeks, and in the Commonwealth the Poles pursued the Orthodox Church[12].

K.-V. Ostrozkyi established permanent contacts with the monasteries of Mount Athos. The graduates of the Ostroh academy, Reverend Job Kniahynytskyi and Isakiy Boryskovych, reached the Holy Mountain, where they spent much time. Subsequently, they reformed the Ukrainian Orthodox monasteries in Derman and Univ on the Athos model.

The residence of Prince Kostiantyn Vasyl in Ostroh became an anti-Catholic center, the most active among Romanians, Moldavians, Eastern and Southern Slavs in the early seventeenth century. Along with the Patriarchal academy in Constantinople and the Venice Exarchate, whose influence extended to Greek lands and Mediterranean colonies, it became one of the leading Orthodox centers of Europe[13]. In the late sixteenth century, the Ostroh academy and the Fraternal School of Lviv were important centres of Orthodox education.

## Greek Chant in the Ukrainian and Belarusian Church Chant Tradition of the Late Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries

Chants with the remarks »Greek« (грецкий, грецкое), »in Greek« (по грецку) appeared in Ukrainian and Belarusian church musical manuscripts (Heirmologia[14]) in the sixteenth – seventeenth centuries and remained in the liturgical repertoire until the end of the eighteenth century[15]. Not only remarks but also the Greek verbal text transcribed in Cyrillic indicate the oriental origin of these chants. Some chants have a Church Slavonic text and only the remark »Greek« indicates their foreign origin. In the Ukrainian and Belarusian manuscripts Greek chants were written not in Byzantine, but in Kyiv square notation.

Greek chants from Ukrainian and Belarusian Heirmologia have not yet been cataloged and published. There is a general catalog of Ukrainian and Belarusian staff-notated Heirmologia by Yuriy Yasynovsky, from which the scholar should select information about Greek chants[16].

Greek chants were not collected in the separate books. Manuscripts with traditional Ukrainian-Belarusian repertoire (not all, about 10 %; altogether about 100 manuscripts) contain additional Greek chants. Most of these manuscripts have only one, two, sometimes three Greek compositions. Trisagion, Cherubic Hymn and Axion Estin are the most common. However, there are few musical manuscripts with a dozen and more Greek chants. These are manuscripts of the monasteries in Supraśl, Kuteino, Kyiv-Mezhyhiria, Univ, Lavriv and Manyava:

- Supraśl 5391: Supraśl Heirmologion of 1596-1601[17]
- Kuteino 1381: Kuteino Heirmologion of the 1620-1630s[18]
- Kyiv-Mezhyhiria 112/645: Kyiv-Mezhyhirskyi Heirmologion of the 1640s[19]
- Univ 490503: Univ Heirmologion of around 1650[20]
- Lavriv 1902: Lavriv Heirmologion of 1677[21]
- Manyava 10846: Manyava Heirmologion of 1675-1676[22]
- Manyava 10845: Manyava Heirmologion of 1684[23]
- Manyava 525: Manyava Heirmologion of 1731-1733[24].

Until recently, the question, whether or not the chants with the remark »Greek« from the Ukrainian and Belarusian Heirmologia are really Greek remained without answer, as they are all anonymous. As a result of our comparative study of

10 Kempa, Proces Nicefora 145-168.
11 Mytsko, Akademiia 17.
12 Ševčenko, Ukraine 1-11; 92-111.
13 Mytsko, Akademiia 19.
14 Ukrainian and Belarusian Heirmologion is a chant collection, similar to the Byzantine Anthology.
15 Yasynovskyi, Repertuar 107-117; Ignatenko, Istorychni vidomosti 7-19.
16 Yasynovskyi, Kataloh.
17 Institute of Manuscript of V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine, Kyiv, fond I, unit 5391.
18 State Historical Museum, Moscow, Synodal chant collection, unit 1381.
19 Institute of Manuscript of V. I. Vernadskyi National Library of Ukraine. Collection of the Saint Sophia Cathedral of Kyiv, fond 312, unit 112/645.
20 Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv, Unit 58, Heirmologion 490503.
21 National Library of Russia, Saint-Petersburg, A. Titov's collection, fond 775, unit 1902.
22 National Library of Romania, Bucharest, Ms. slav. 10846; Toncheva, Holiam Skyt.
23 National Library of Romania, Bucharest, Ms. slav. 10845; Toncheva, Holiam Skyt.
24 Romanian Academy Library, Bucharest, BAR 525; Toncheva, Holiam Skyt.

Ukrainian-Belarusian and Greek-Byzantine manuscripts, we attributed a significant number of Greek chants, in particular, the kalophonic works of the prominent Byzantine composers of the thirteenth – fifteenth centuries, such as Ioannes Glykys, Ioannes Kladas, Manuel Chrysaphes[25]:

- Ioannes Glykys, Cherubic song of the plagal second mode Ита херовѣм / Οἱ τὰ Χερουβεὶμ,
- the Monk Longin, Cherubic song of the Presanctified Gifts' liturgy of the plagal second mode Нине динамисъ / Νῦν αἱ Δυνάμεις,
- Ioannes Kladas, Communion verse of Wednesday and of the Virgin holidays of the first mode Потириωн сотириоу / Ποτήριον σωτηρίου,
- Manuel Chrysaphes, Communion verse of Sunday of the first mode Енѣте тонъ Кириωн / Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον[26],
- Manuel Chrysaphes, Communion verse of Tuesday and of the days of the Saints' remembrance of the third mode Изъ мнимосиωнъ еωнωнъ / Εἰς Μνημόσυνον Ἀιώνιον,
- Manuel Chrysaphes, Cherubic song of the first mode Ита херувим / Οἱ τὰ Χερουβεὶμ, (**fig. 1**),
- Joakeim Harsianites, Communion verse of Sunday of the second mode Енѣте тон киριωнъ / Αἰνεῖτε τὸν Κύριον,
- Manuel Gazis, Matins' Prokeimenon of the plagal fourth mode Паса пнои / Πᾶσα πνοὴ[27],
- Anthimos Lavriotes, Cherubic song of the fourth mode Итай херувимъ / Οἱ τὰ Χερουβεὶμ.

The preservation of the Greek text of borrowed Greek chants in the conditions of the religious war had political meaning: language served as a confessional indicator. Slavic and Greek referred to the Orthodox, Latin and Polish – to the Catholics and Greek Catholics. Discussions about the advantages of these languages accompanied religious disputes. The tension that existed at that time in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth around the language issue was evidenced by the episode with the school of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, founded in 1631 by Petro Mohyla (Petru Movilă, 1596-1647) the future Orthodox Metropolitan of Kyiv. As soon as classes began, the people rose up against the teachers. Rumors spread among the Kyivans that the teachers were not Orthodox, but Greek Catholics. One of the reasons for such speculation was the fact that they taught Latin and Polish. The anger of the people was so strong that the teachers confessed before their death, expecting that the stomachs of the Dnieper sturgeons would be stuffed with their bodies[28]. The people believed that the study of Latin sciences led to apostasy of Orthodoxy. Knowledge of Greek was respected, whereas Latin looked suspicious.

Sylvester Kossov († 1657), the Orthodox metropolitan of Kyiv after Petro Mohyla in his polemic work »Exegesis«, published in 1635, convinced that the knowledge of Latin was necessary for the Orthodox living in a Catholic state: »Why do our people need Latin sciences? Firstly, for poor Rus not to be called stupid Rus. Learn, says the cheater, in Greek, not in Latin. The advice is truly good, but more useful in Greece than in Poland, where Latin is most important. […] No need to drive us to learn Greek: we care and will take care about it near Latin, so with God let it be Greek in the choir and Latin at the market« (Coby zaś za potrzeba łacinskich nauk narodowi naszemu byla? Ta napierwsza, żeby biedney Rusi naszey głupią Rusią nie zwano. Uczżesię, prawi udawca, po graecku, a nie po łacinie. Dobra rada wprawdzie, ale naywięcey pożyteczna w Graecyey, niż w Polszcze, gdzie ięzyk łacinski nawięcey płuży. […] Nie trzeba nas zaganiac y do graeki: staramy się y postaramy się o onę przy łacinie, że, da Bog, będzie *graeca ad Chorum*, a łacina *ad forum*)[29]. The bishop's proposal to use Greek in church choir is a valuable historical testimony about the Ukrainian-Belarusian church chant tradition of the seventeenth century.

Cyrillic transcription of Greek texts of borrowed Greek chants, typical for the Ukrainian and Belarusian musical manuscripts of the late sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, indicates that scribes and singers could not write and, accordingly, read Greek. Despite this, they did not replace the Greek text with its Church Slavonic translation. Singing in Greek demonstrated their belonging to the Byzantine religious and cultural heritage[30].

The attribution of Greek chants showed that Ukrainian and Belarusian singers preferred the works of early Byzantine composers to those of their contemporaries. Ukrainian and Belarusian manuscripts from the late sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries include the works of Greek-Byzantine composers from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. On the one hand, this fact proves their long-term popularity in the Greek East and in the territories under Byzantine religious and cultural influence. On the other hand, it is a marker of a certain liturgical and stylistic selection, since these are kalophonic compositions of the Divine Liturgies, which are the most important and difficult. What were the reasons for it?

The kalophonic style of Byzantine church chant was formed in the era of the Palaiologan Renaissance (1261-1453) under the influence of the hesychastic theology[31]. It can be expected that the genetic connection between kalophony and hesychasm was preserved when Byzantine kalophonic works enriched the Ukrainian-Belarusian church repertoire. Indeed, the Ukrainian historians noted the significant role of hesychasm in the development of Ukrainian spiritual culture

25 Ignatenko, Die byzantinischen Gesänge 189-210; Ignatenko, Metodolohiia atrybutsii 64-80.
26 Ignatenko, Hretskyi repertuar 17-31.
27 Independently of us, this work was authorized by Eustathios Makris: Makris, Two Unusual Cases 291-317.
28 Kossow, Exegesis 423.
29 Kossow, Exegesis 444. Obviously an allusion to the saying: *neque ad chorum neque ad forum* = »Ni do rády ni do zwády« (Rysinius, Centuriae [59]), »Ani žák ani dvořák« (Komenský, Didaktika 252).
30 Ignatenko, Hretskyi spiv 51-69.
31 Alexandru, Kalofonicheskoe penie 578-582.

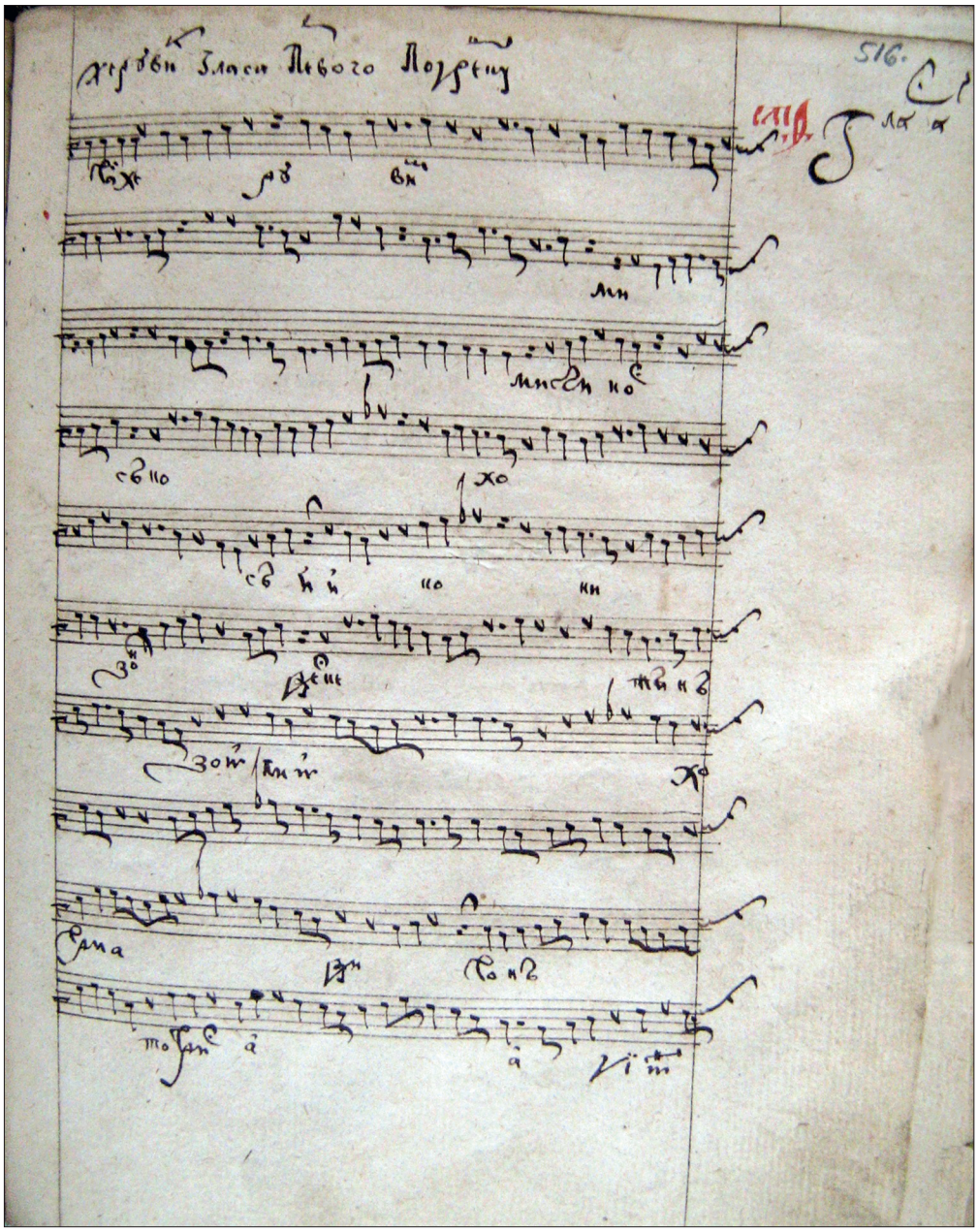


**Fig. 1** Supraśl Heirmologion of 1596-1601, fol. 516r. The beginning of Manuel Chrysaphes Cherubic song Ита херувим / Οἱ τὰ Χερουβεὶμ of the first mode. – (Photo © Institute of Manuscript of V. I. Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Kyiv, fond I, unit 5391).

of the sixteenth – seventeenth centuries. The influence of the hesychastic ideas is traced in works and activities of Saint Ivan Vyshenskyi, Saint Job Kniahynytskyi, Saint Job Pochaivskyi (Zhelizo), Isakiy Boryskovych, Blessed Cyprian of Ostroh, Univ Archimandrite Isaiah Balaban, Dubno abbot and poet Vitalyi, Kyiv Metropolitan Job Boretskyi, Kyiv Metropolitan Isaiah Kopynskyi, Wilno Archimandrite Leonty Karpovych and others[32]. Almost all of them were connected with Ostroh.

Ivan Vyshensky belonged to the scientific circle gathered by the Prince Ostrozkyi. Job Kniahynytskyi, Isakiy Boryskovych, Cyprian of Ostroh, Kyiv Metropolitan Job Boretskyi, Kyiv Metropolitan Isaiah Kopynskyi were graduates of the Ostroh Academy. Job Pochaivskyi (Zhelizo) was the priest of the Prince Kostiantyn Vasyl Ostrozkyi! From the late 1580s for about twenty years, he was the abbot of the Dubno monastery of Exaltation of the Holy Cross. In this family monastery, Prince Kostiantyn, as monk, annually celebrated Lent.

With the support of Princes K.-V. Ostrozkyi and Andriy Kurbskyi († 1583) the elder Artemij (Troitskyi, † 1575) lived in Ostroh and Lutsk. He was a representative of the hesychastic school of Nil Sorsky (c. 1433-1508). »Elder of Ostroh« Artemij had connections with Athos, from where he received books. Ukrainian historian Serhij Shumylo suggested that the elder Artemij influenced the life and worldview of religious

32 Shumylo, Ioann Vishenskij; Harat, Idei isykhazmu.

philosopher and polemicist Ivan Vyshenskyi (c. 1550 – after 1620)[33]. Saint Job Kniahynytskyi (1550-1621) was a friend of Ivan Vyshenskyi. Their lives are closely intertwined: both belonged to the Ostroh Orthodox center; both lived for many years in Athos monasteries; both took care of the renewal of Orthodox monasteries in the Ukrainian lands. Job Kniahinitskyi founded the famous Manyava monastery (Galician Great Skete), whose musical manuscripts contain the richest collection of borrowed Greek kalophonic chants[34].

It seems paradoxical that Byzantine kalophonic chant, which is the most difficult in the Greek-Byzantine church repertoire, became relevant in the Ukrainian and Belarusian lands in the circumstances of the religious war. In our opinion, Greek kalophonic chant in the Ukrainian and Belarusian Orthodox monasteries was a hesychastic response to the challenges of the time: not only to defend one's church and identity with weapons, not only to plunge into the debate, but to delve deeper into oneself to find the way to God and thus to affirm the faith.

## Conclusion

Our research has shown that the borrowed Greek chants from Ukrainian and Belarusian musical manuscripts of the late sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries were an important component of the Greek revival, powerfully initiated in the late 1570s by Prince Kostiantyn Vasyl Ostrozkyi, Voivode of Kyiv.

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé

### Byzantium in the Religious, Political and Cultural Life of the Orthodox of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

The years 1570-1630 were a difficult period in the history of the Kyiv Metropolitanate: The Catholic attack ended with the proclamation of the Uniate Greek Catholic Church in 1596. The activities of the Protestants in the Ukrainian-Belarusian lands were very successful. Thus, the Orthodox of Rzeczpospolita turned to the Byzantine religious and cultural heritage, which led to the »Greek revival«. Constant contacts with the church hierarchy of the Greek East, the establishment of Stauropegian church fraternities, the development of Hellenistic studies and Greek chant in the churches testify to the importance of the Greek influence.

It is well known that the religious and political component of the »Greek Revival« has been covered in historical writings. However, its musical component is usually not mentioned.

In the Ukrainian and Byelorussian church music manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, chants with the note »Greek« appeared in the liturgical repertoire until the end of the eighteenth century.

The question of whether or not the chants marked »Greek« in the Ukrainian and Belarusian manuscripts are really Greek remains unanswered, since they are all anonymous, but a considerable number of them can be attributed to certain authors. Among them are kalophonic works by prominent and lesser-known Byzantine composers from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, such as Ioannes Glykys, Ioannes Kladas, Manuel Chrysaphes, or the monk Longin and Joakeim Harsianites. The appearance of Greek chant in the Ukrainian-Belarusian church repertoire was a response to the challenges of the time, a step towards the Greek East. The attribution of Greek chants to certain authors materialises this step with names and facts hitherto unknown to the historians of Ukrainian and Belarusian church music.

### Byzanz im religiösen, politischen und kulturellen Leben der Orthodoxen im polnisch-litauischen Commonwealth im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert

Die Jahre 1570 bis 1630 waren eine schwierige Zeit in der Geschichte der Metropolie Kiew: Der katholische Vorstoß endete 1596 mit der Proklamation der griechisch-katholischen Kirche. Die Aktivitäten der Protestanten in den ukrainisch-weißrussischen Gebieten waren sehr erfolgreich. Daher wandten sich die Orthodoxen der Rzeczpospolita dem byzantinischen religiösen und kulturellen Erbe zu, was zu einer »griechischen Renaissance« führte. Ständige Kontakte zur kirchlichen Hierarchie des griechischen Ostens, die Gründung von stauropegialen Bruderschaften, die Entwicklung der hellenistischen Studien und des griechischen Gesangs in den Kirchen zeugen von der Bedeutung des griechischen Einflusses.

Es ist bekannt, dass die religiöse und politische Komponente der »griechischen Renaissance« in historischen Schriften behandelt wurde. Ihre musikalische Komponente wird jedoch in der Regel nicht erwähnt.

In den ukrainischen und weißrussischen Kirchenmusikhandschriften des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts tauchten Gesänge mit der Bezeichnung »griechisch« auf und behaupteten sich bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts im liturgischen Repertoire.

Die Frage, ob die in den ukrainischen und weißrussischen Handschriften als »griechisch« bezeichneten Gesänge tatsächlich griechisch sind, bleibt unbeantwortet, da sie alle anonym sind, aber eine beträchtliche Anzahl davon kann bestimmten Autoren zugeordnet werden. Darunter befinden sich kalophonische Werke von bekannten und weniger bekannten byzantinischen Komponisten aus dem 13.-15. Jahrhundert, wie Ioannes Glykys, Ioannes Kladas, Manuel Chrysaphes oder der Mönch Longin und Joakeim Harsianites. Das Auftauchen griechischer Gesänge im ukrainisch-weißrussischen Kirchenrepertoire war eine Antwort auf die Herausforderungen der Zeit, ein Schritt in Richtung des griechischen Ostens. Die Zuordnung griechischer Gesänge zu bestimmten Autoren konkretisiert diesen Schritt mit Namen und Fakten, die den Historikern der ukrainischen und belarussischen Kirchenmusik bisher unbekannt waren.

## Byzance dans la vie religieuse, politique et culturelle des orthodoxes de la Pologne-Lituanie au XVI^e^ et XVII^e^ siècles

Les années 1570-1630 ont été une période difficile dans l'histoire de la métropole de Kiev: l'attaque catholique s'est terminée par la proclamation de l'Église grecque-catholique uniate en 1596. Les activités des protestants dans les terres ukrainiennes et biélorusses ont été très fructueuses. Ainsi, les orthodoxes de la Rzeczpospolita se sont tournés vers l'héritage religieux et culturel byzantin, ce qui a conduit à la »renaissance grecque«. Les contacts constants avec la hiérarchie ecclésiastique de l'Orient grec, la création de confréries ecclésiastiques stauropégiques, le développement des études hellénistiques et du chant grec dans les églises témoignent de l'importance de l'influence grecque.

Il est bien connu que la composante religieuse et politique du »renouveau grec« a été traitée dans les écrits historiques. Cependant, sa composante musicale n'est généralement pas mentionnée.

Dans les manuscrits de musique sacrée ukrainiens et biélorusses des XVI^e^ et XVII^e^ siècle, des chants portant la mention »grec« ont figuré dans le répertoire liturgique jusqu'à la fin du XVIII^e^ siècle.

La question de savoir si les chants marqués »grec« dans les manuscrits ukrainiens et biélorusses sont réellement grecs reste sans réponse, car ils sont tous anonymes, mais un nombre considérable d'entre eux peuvent être attribués à certains auteurs. Parmi eux, on trouve des œuvres kalophoniques de compositeurs byzantins éminents et moins connus du XIII^e^ au XV^e^ siècle, tels que Ioannes Glykys, Ioannes Kladas, Manuel Chrysaphes, ou encore le moine Longin et Joakeim Harsianites. L'apparition du chant grec dans le répertoire ecclésiastique ukrainien et biélorusse était une réponse aux défis de l'époque, un pas vers l'Orient grec. L'attribution des chants grecs à certains auteurs concrétise cette avancée en apportant des noms et des faits jusqu'alors inconnus des historiens de la musique sacrée ukrainienne et biélorusse.

# II. Italy

Raf Van Rooy

# The Downfall of Byzantium at the Sforza Court (c. 1460-1565): The Migrant Lascaris Versus the Local Mombrizio

> »The whole of Greece is smashed under the hostile Turk; the heavenly powers had given their assent to such a great defeat. Am I wrong or is it that the learned adorns the Latin lands? O and well-destroyed walls! O excellent crime, and offence that deserves our approval, as Troy once had succumbed to Greek fires!« [1]

The fall of Constantinople is hailed by the Italian scholar Bonino Mombrizio (1424–?1478/82) as a great opportunity for Milan to attract promising Greek scholars to the duchy, including Constantine Lascaris (1434-1501). In fact, Mombrizio made the above statement in his Latin verse adaptation of the Greek grammar Lascaris had dedicated to Ippolita Maria Sforza, the duke's daughter, around 1465. Obviously, Lascaris himself had not praised the misery of his people in terms similar to Mombrizio's but instead deplored their fate. This paper tackles the ways in which these two scholars perceived Byzantium as they were working in service of the Sforza court in Milan during the early 1460s – and for Lascaris also during his later life. I first sketch the historical context in which these scholars lived and worked. Next, I discuss how the Byzantine migrant Constantine Lascaris (1434-1501), who kept ties with the Sforza court in his later career, perceived the Byzantine empire and especially its downfall, still fresh in his memory as he witnessed the events in 1453 himself. I do so using his written works and correspondence, especially from the years 1460-1485, including a well-known letter to his Spanish friend and former student Juan Pardo.

I then put Lascaris' conceptions next to those of the Italian humanist Bonino Mombrizio. Mombrizio translated Lascaris' elementary Greek grammar into Latin verses, in which he also construed a picture of the fallen Byzantine empire, hailing the duke of Milan Francesco Sforza as headhunter of Greek migrants and benefactor of his city's culture. Both Lascaris' and Mombrizio's versions of the Greek grammar were dedicated to Ippolita Maria Sforza, then the duke's teenage daughter, around the same time, circa 1463-1465[2]. The two scholars no doubt knew each other, and might even have discussed the fate of Byzantium at the Sforza court. I confront the perceptions of Byzantium of the migrant Lascaris and the local Mombrizio, highlighting similarities but especially their numerous differences. On the one hand, their perceptions were similar in as far as both of them deplored the downfall of Constantinople and, more broadly, the subjugation of former Byzantine lands to the so-called barbarous Turks. On the other, their perceptions also differed in that Mombrizio focused on the Sforzas' generous embrace of tormented Greek migrants, whereas Lascaris emphasized the precarious situation of Greek migrants in Italy, and the misery they experienced both in their native lands and in their new Italian homes.

## Lascaris and Mombrizio in Sforza Milan

To sketch the positions of Lascaris and Mombrizio in Sforza Milan, there is no better starting point than the dedicatee of their Greek grammars, Ippolita Maria Sforza (1445-1488). Her parents, duke Francesco I Sforza and Bianca Maria Visconti, made sure that their daughter could boast tremendous cultural capital by giving her a humanist education[3]. started her studies in the early 1450s with Latin and rhetoric, under the supervision of local humanist Baldo Martorelli, who also taught her one-year-older brother Galeazzo Maria[4]. In fact, brother and sister were often in the same classroom for their initial education. Elsewhere, I have argued at length that in the early 1460s Ippolita Maria Sforza also studied Greek with Constantine Lascaris, probably again under Martorelli's

1 BA, Ambr. N 264 sup. fol. 5$^{v}$. See below for a fuller quote, with the original text in footnote (n. 40). Research for this paper was funded by the Horizon 2020 program under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement no. 890397, MigraLing, hosted at the Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas at the University of Oslo. Additional support came from a BOFZAP research professorship at KU Leuven.

2 See Van Rooy, Ippolita Maria Sforza; Van Rooy, »Lend Me Your Apt Ears«, with further references.

3 The historical sketch is based on Van Rooy, Ippolita Maria Sforza; Van Rooy, »Lend Me Your Apt Ears«, where the reader can find more details and further references. In the footnotes below, I limit myself to citing the most important literature for this paper. For Milanese culture in this period, see Garin, La cultura milanese.

4 On Martorelli, see Cingolani, Baldo Martorello.

In: Matthias Schnettger · Jan Kusber · Klaus Pietschmann · Stefan Albrecht (eds), Byzantium at Early Modern Courts. Reception, Confrontation and Projects. Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident 34 (Mainz 2025). DOI: 10.11588/propylaeum.1617.c23249

supervision, in a kind of didactic triangle[5]. She was renowned for combing her talent for languages and letters with dancing skills, French singing, lute playing, vernacular writing, and hunting. In addition, she gained a reputation for beauty and piety.

In token of her education, no less than three grammar manuscripts were dedicated to Sforza, one Latin (by Martorelli) and two Greek grammars (by Lascaris and Mombrizio), revealing that she was not only perceived as a student but also as a nascent patron of scholars and artists, embodying the cultural politics of her father. She indeed came to fulfill a patronage role once she moved to Naples in 1465 to marry Alfonso (1448-1495), then the duke of Calabria and heir to the Kingdom of Naples, after a ten-year-long engagement. Mombrizio's grammar alludes in interesting ways to this episode in Sforza's life[6]. In the south of Italy, however, her ambitions as a patron were thwarted as she became caught up as a political pawn in the power relations between the duchy of Milan and the kingdom of Naples.

Two of Sforza's teachers, Lascaris and Martorelli, traveled with her from Milan to Naples in 1465, Lascaris even being appointed professor of Greek and rhetoric by King Ferdinand of Naples, Alfonso's father. Lascaris' relationship with Ippolita Maria Sforza, her family, and her city is important for my analysis of representations of Byzantium; he built up this relationship during the almost seven years he spent in the city between late 1458 and mid-1465. Born in 1434, Constantine Lascaris studied with Johannes Argyropulus in Constantinople[7]. During the siege of that city in the spring of 1453, Lascaris was taken hostage but managed to regain his freedom soon after. He ended up roaming across the eastern Mediterranean (including Rhodes and Santorini), before arriving in Milan, where he sustained himself by teaching Greek and writing grammar manuals[8]. In 1463, he won the public Greek chair thanks to the backing of more than forty Milanese notables, excluding, however, Francesco Filelfo, who supported another Greek migrant for the position: Demetrios Kastrenos, a collaborator of Lascaris. Kastrenos eventually returned to his Ottoman-occupied homeland, after unsuccessful attempts at obtaining a position in Italy, a move which even Lascaris considered in 1466, after an awful experience in Naples.

In the end, Lascaris settled in Messina, on the island of Sicily, having found a middle ground between hostile Italy and occupied Greece in the Hellenic cultural atmosphere of southern Italy and Sicily, where he does seem to have felt lonely and isolated[9]. In Messina he took up a Greek (1466) and a Latin (1482) professorship. He stayed in that city until the end of his life, donating his library to a local monastery, from where it ended up in the Spanish national library in Madrid. There are indications that Lascaris enjoyed further patronage from the Sforza family in his later life. For instance, a lavishly decorated copy of his grammar was produced for the sixth duke of Milan Gian Galeazzo Maria Sforza sometime after 1476 (see **fig. 1**, with the Milanese coat-of-arms in the right-hand margin, in the middle of the folio). Moreover, duke Gian Galeazzo invited him to take up the Greek chair in Milan in 1488, which Lascaris refused in a brief letter he wrote in Latin[10]. Lascaris reflected on the fate of Byzantium and its migrants in two letters he wrote – one from the 1480s, the other undated – against the background of his experiences with the Sforzas and other people in power on the Italian peninsula[11]. Lascaris' fame rests on the many epitomes of major Greek works he composed and his grammatical manuals[12]. One of the earliest testimonies of his Greek grammar – if not the earliest – was dedicated to Ippolita Maria Sforza and probably also used for her instruction in that language (see **fig. 2**)[13].

Not only the migrant Lascaris, but also the local humanist Bonino Mombrizio dedicated a Greek grammar to Ippolita Maria Sforza. To be more precise, Mombrizio adapted Lascaris' generic grammar to Sforza's personal situation, while converting Lascaris' dry Greek prose to Latin hexameters, which heighten the liveliness of the contents but sacrifice didactic clarity[14]. Born around 1424 in Milan, Bonino Mombrizio spent his youth in Ferrara, studying with Guarino Veronese and entertaining contacts with the Este family[15]. In 1458, notably the same year as Lascaris arrived there, he moved back to Milan, where he managed to get into the grace of the Sforzas. Mombrizio started this endeavor even before settling again in his native city, through the Estes, as in 1455 he composed an epithalamion for Tristano Sforza and Beatrice d'Este. For the same marriage, his later dedicatee Ippolita Maria Sforza also held an oration[16]. In 1476, Mombrizio authored a threnody for Galeazzo Maria Sforza, the fifth duke of Milan. To Galeazzo's second wife Bona of Savoy, the humanist dedicated his *Momidos libri XII,* a long poem on female vices. Such didactic-moral writings are typical of Mombrizio's oeuvre, which includes a Latin translation of Hesiod, an edition of

5 Van Rooy, Ippolita Maria Sforza, where I argue that an unexperienced Lascaris, a migrant with a limited knowledge of Latin, needed support and supervision from a local Latinist (Martorelli) in teaching Greek to Sforza, Latin being the language of instruction for Greek grammar and literature.

6 Van Rooy, Lend Me Your Apt Ears.

7 On Lascaris' life and works, see Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris; Martínez Manzano, Constantino Láscaris.

8 Lascaris' teacher, John Argyropulus, also migrated to Italy, where he ended up in misery: see Section 3.

9 This is suggested by Lascaris' correspondence from that period (see notes 10-11 below).

10 The letter is edited in Gabotto, Tre lettere 15. See below for more details on the contents of this document.

11 In particular: (1) Lascaris' well-known letter to Juan Pardo, dating to c. 1481 (edited in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 160-162); (2) an undated philological letter to Giorgio Valla (edited in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 171-172). See Section 3 for discussion of these letters' contents.

12 See most notably Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris.

13 Van Rooy, Ippolita Maria Sforza.

14 Van Rooy, Lend Me Your Apt Ears. The verse grammar is preserved in one copy only, seemingly unfinished: see BA, Ambr. N 264 sup.

15 On Mombrizio, see Spanò Martinelli, Mombrizio, Bonino, the source of the biographical information mentioned in this paragraph.

16 For Sforza's three extant orations see Robin/Westwater, Ippolita Maria Sforza 171-196.

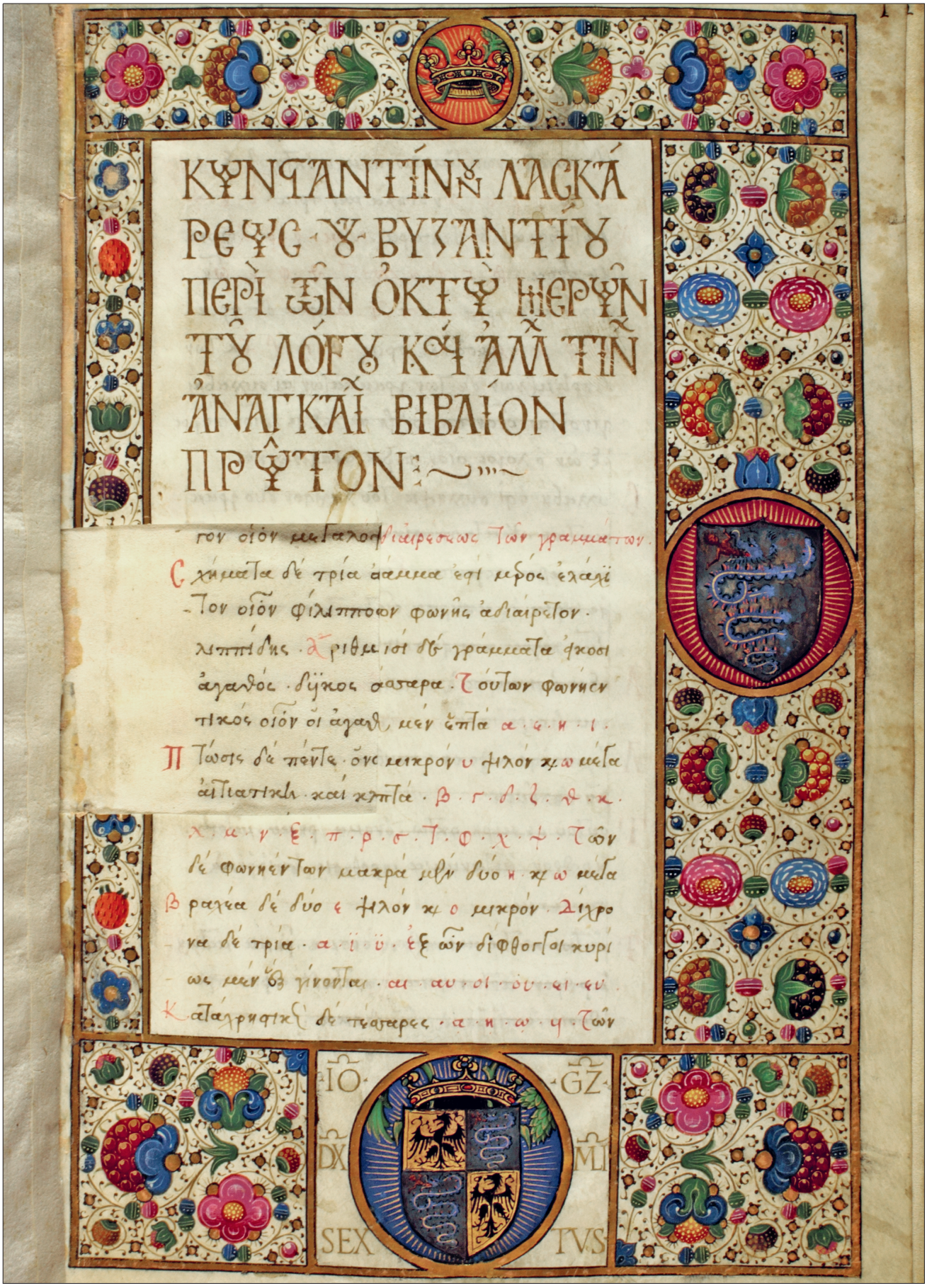



**Fig. 1** ASC, MS Triv. 2147, fol. 1r (with Milanese coat-of-arms in the right-hand margin). – (Photo © Comune di Milano).

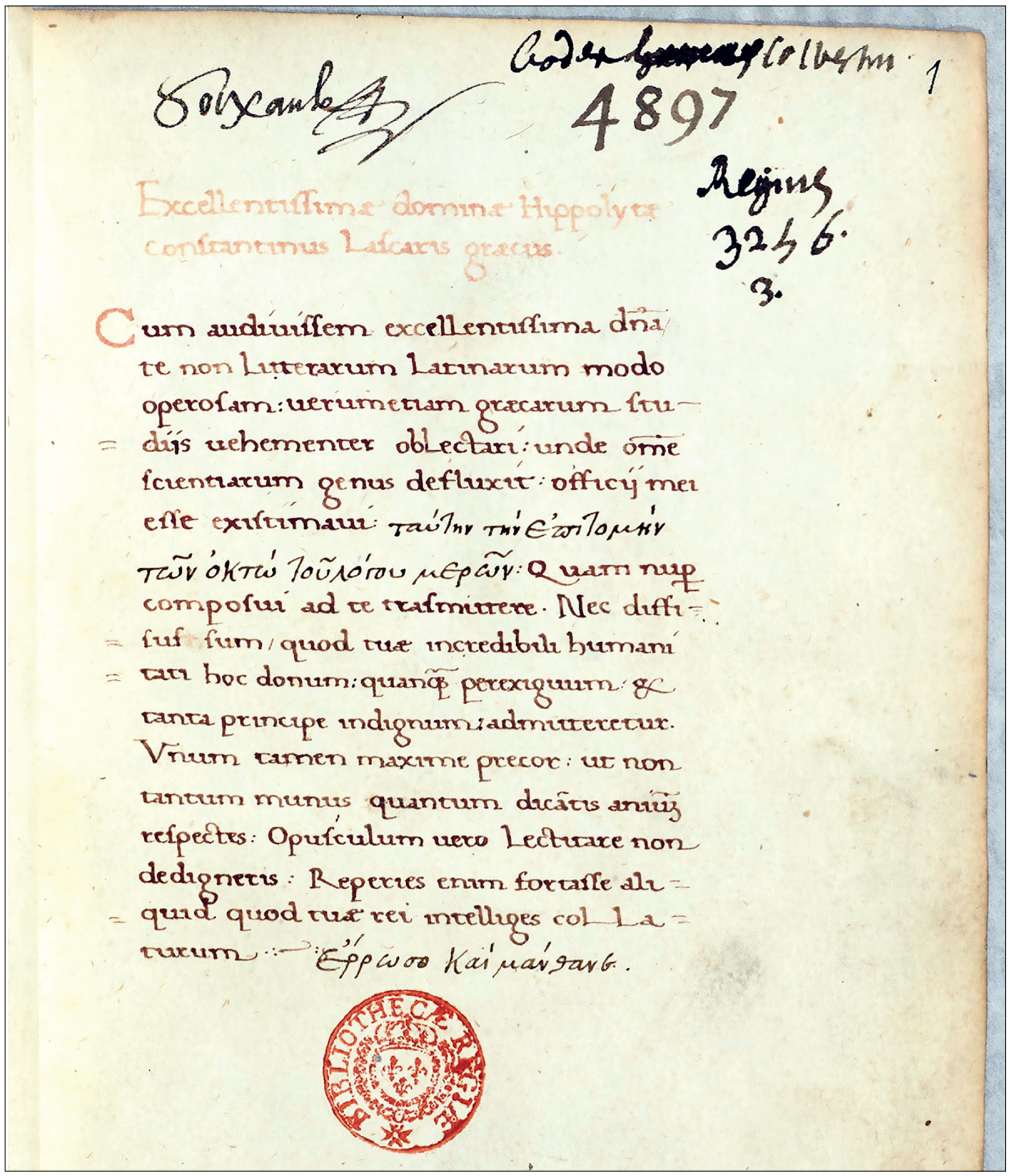



**Fig. 2** BnF, grec 2590, fol. 1r. – (Photo Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris).

the Latin grammarian Priscian, and a substantial contribution to hagiography. Mombrizio also worked as professor at the public gymnasium in Milan, as successor to Francesco Filelfo, teaching both Latin and Greek, while also holding several public offices in Milanese administration. He furthermore financed early printing endeavors in the city and was as an investor implacable toward debtors, even sending them to prison when they did not pay their dues. In sum, Mombrizio formed part of Milanese state administration and fostered local culture, thus taking the interests of his native city to heart and keeping order in it. This patriotic attitude also emerges from his Greek verse grammar for Sforza princess Ippolita Maria and the image of Byzantium that he presented in this text (see below).

## Lascaris, a Displaced Greek Looking Back

As a Greek migrant working after 1453, Constantine Lascaris can be expected to have developed a nostalgic attitude toward the recently perished Byzantine empire, not destitute of psychological trauma. After his arrival on the Italian peninsula in 1458, Lascaris self-identified as ξένος (»foreigner«), *Graecus* (»Greek«), and Βυζάντιος. The last Greek label matches the Italian term *constantinopolitano* found in the 1463 petition of Milanese notables supporting Lascaris' candidacy for the Greek chair in the city[17]. Βυζάντιος should therefore be taken to mean »Constantinopolitan« rather than »Byzantine« in the modern sense, the latter referring to the empire rather than its capital. Lascaris nonetheless provides the perspective

17 For ξένος, see e. g. the letter to cardinal Bessarion in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 171: δι᾽ ἐμοῦ γὰρ οὐχ οἵοντε ξένου ὄντος καὶ ἀδυνάτου. For *Graecus*, see e. g. Lascaris' dedication letter to Ippolita Maria Sforza in BnF, grec 2590, fol. 1r: *Excellentissimæ dominæ Hippolytæ constantinus Lascaris græcus* (see also Van Rooy, Ippolita Maria Sforza n. 77 for information on the text). For Βυζάντιος, see e. g. the 1501 manuscript subscription in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 24: Κωνσταντίνου Λασκάρεως τοῦ Βυζαντίου καὶ ὁ κόπος καὶ τὸ κτῆμα καὶ μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ τοῦ συνιέντος. For *constantinopolitano*, see Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 105: […] *ritrovandosse in questa città Constantino constantinopolitano homo excellente de doctrina et de costumi* […].

of a Greek displaced from the lost Byzantine empire and culture, which he notably does not call »Roman,« in keeping with the broader self-refashioning trend of Greek migrants in Renaissance Italy[18]. Lascaris' status as a displaced Greek is apparent not only from the first two self-labels (ξένος and *Graecus*) but also from various sources he created: his grammar book and the letters mentioned above (in Section 2), into which I delve now.

In the grammar book Lascaris dedicated to Ippolita Maria Sforza, he self-identified as *Graecus* (»Greek«), presenting a manual that had deep roots in Byzantine written culture and grammaticography. The handwriting is entirely in Byzantine tradition, preserving conventions with regard to ligatures and the use of capital letters. The manual moreover starts with Greek prayers (the Hail Mary and Lord's Prayer) and moral *sententiae*, showing the religious and ethic concerns of the society in which Lascaris was educated but at the same time chiming with the Italian humanists' concern over linguistic and moral integrity[19]. Lascaris moreover involved a fellow Byzantine Greek, Demetrios Kastrenos, in the production of the manuscript, who added some corrections and marginal notes[20]. At the same time, the grammarian engaged an Italian scribe to write the dedicatory letter to the Sforza princess, except for the two Greek phrases, which he inserted himself afterward (see **fig. 2** above). In keeping with Byzantine tradition, Lascaris adopted a generic approach to grammar rather than offering a tailormade handbook for his new Italian audience[21]. In sum, the grammar has features that seem to reflect Lascaris' being in between the lost Byzantine society and the flourishing Renaissance culture hosting him in Italy.

Lascaris' correspondence allows one to construe a variegated picture of the scholar as a displaced Greek in Renaissance Italy, one showing nostalgia for his homeland and aversion to Italy, its rulers, and its climate. In the 1488 Latin letter responding to the invitation of the Milanese duke Gian Galeazzo Sforza, Lascaris emphasized the climatological hardships he had had to endure and wanted to avoid in the future:

> »By Hercules, I do not regret lightly that I am unable to satisfy this desire of yours. On the other hand, as my age is becoming burdensome, I am frequently distressed by bad health and I cannot live in such cold areas. On account of these elements, I have left that place to go elsewhere, as is very well-known in Milan among the most learned Milanese men«[22].

The vagueness with which Lascaris mentioned the »elsewhere« he went to evokes the idea of a roaming migrant scholar without a home, even though he had settled in Messina quite definitely two decades before he wrote this refusal letter. Modestly signing as the Sforza duke's *servulus*, »humble servant«, he pictured himself to be dependent on the good graces of Italy's rulers for his subsistence.

From his Greek correspondence more details can be gathered about his feelings and views of the lost Byzantine empire in relation to his status as a migrant in Italy. In the undated philological letter to the Italian humanist Giorgio Valla (1447-1500), a student of his in Milan from 1462 until circa 1465, Lascaris reflected on words borrowed from Latin into the Greek language and their meanings[23]. In this letter, Lascaris fashioned himself a patriotic and nostalgic philologist:

> »*Offíkion [< officium]* and *offikiálios [< officialis]* may be said among us, but they are Roman words, and we use them out of habit as our own, ever since the Romans obtained power over the Greeks and especially since the great Constantine built that wonderful fatherland. So it is by force of habit that we use also many other of those words in the common dialect [the *koine*], not because we lack our own words, for instance: *foûrnos [< furnus], ospítion [< hospitium], vígla [< villa], defendévo [< defendo], defféstor [< defensor],* and others«[24].

Lascaris deplored the cultural-political and hence linguistic influence of the Romans on the Greeks and their tongue, while at the same time admiring the founding father of the Byzantine empire and its capital, Constantine the Great (died 337). Lascaris thus experienced mixed feelings with regard to the protohistory of his ancestral empire, which had emerged under the cultural dominance of the Romans. The remainder of the letter reflects on the meaning of the Greek word καθῆκον, »duty«, which according to Lascaris involved

18 See Lamers, Greece Reinvented for an excellent account of this development, in particular p. 61, pp. 195-199, and p. 279 for C. Lascaris, whose views are compared to his namesake Janus Lascaris'. Lamers emphasizes that due to the loss of the empire »Constantine Lascaris dissociated the Greek tradition from its traditional heartland of Greece« (p. 279), »remov[ing] the heartland of Hellenism from Sparta and Athens to Calabria and Sicily« I argue below in this section that this decentralization of tradition went hand in hand with substantial psychological trauma and nostalgia vis-à-vis the lost Greek »heartland«.

19 See e. g. Nuti, Longa est via, for the development of Greek grammar from late Byzantium to the Renaissance.

20 Orlandi, Sette nuovi manoscritti 233-235.

21 One structural difference is, however, remarkable. Typically, late Byzantine handbooks were in a question-and-answer format called Ἐρωτήματα (*Erōtḗmata*), recreating – somewhat artificially – the interaction between teacher and student in writing. See e. g. Ciccolella, Donati Graeci; Rollo, Gli Erotemata. As an eager epitomist, Lascaris opted to leave out this genre feature and brand his manual an ἐπιτομή (»epitome«).

22 Lascaris in Gabotto, Tre lettere 15: *[…] ego me hercule non mediocriter doleo quod huic desiderio tuo satisfacere non valeo; nam, etate iam ingravescente, adversa valetudine crebro angor ac vivere in frigidissimus* [sic pro *frigidissimis*] *regionibus nequeo, ob quae alias isthinc recessi, ut Mediolani viri doctissimi mediolanenses optime sciunt*.

23 On Valla, see Raschieri, Valla.

24 Lascaris in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 171: 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 ὠκοδόμησε πατρίδα. διὰ δὴ τὴν ἐπικρατοῦσαν συνήθειαν ἄλλαις τὲ [*sic*] πολλαῖς τῶν λέξεων χρώμεθα ἐν τῇ κοινῇ διαλέκτῳ καὶ ταύταις, οὐχ ὡς ἀποροῦντες οἰκείων· ὅθεν φοῦρνος καὶ ὀσπίτιον καὶ βίγλα καὶ δεφεντεύω καὶ δεφέστωρ καὶ ἄλλα. I have transcribed the Greek words in keeping with Lascaris' contemporary pronunciation. See also the analysis of Lamers, Greece Reinvented 61, where this quote is partly cited and discussed.

honoring and never abandoning one's ancestors, siblings, fatherland (πατρίς, the one founded by Constantine the Great), and friends[25]. Lascaris concluded his letter on a rather pessimistic note, betraying great nostalgia for his lost fatherland: »But due to bad luck we have cast off, together with other principles, also those concerning duties«[26]. The implications are grim: Lascaris no longer had a fatherland to serve and to honor. Hence, as a displaced Greek, he was unable to fulfil his duties and, by extension, to act ethically.

Lascaris' feelings of nostalgia and depression culminated dramatically in a letter he wrote to his Spanish friend Juan Pardo sometime in the 1480s, filled with classical references and thus leaving one wonder to what extent the piece of writing forms an instance of literary and rhetorical play rather than a sincere expression of emotions. It is, however, clear that Lascaris complained about the fates of Greek migrants in Italy, while assessing the situation in his native lands also in very negative terms[27]. Melancholically, he referred indirectly to Byzantium as a past state lost to the »barbarians« (i. e. the Ottomans), a consideration triggering suicidal thoughts:

> »I sit here as earth's burden, fainting from pain, considering my time there slavery, and my move from there a new misfortune. For what could I do? Or where on earth would I leave for, the weak and unfortunate man I am, in such a terrible situation, in which my fatherland is slave to wretched barbarians, and the whole of Hellas. Neither a kingdom, nor a state is left for us. Everything is in servitude, full of both fear and danger. If I were alone, I would not hesitate to visit Herakles' columns«[28].

Lascaris went on to point out the sandwich situation between Greece and Italy he found himself in – a situation aggravated by responsibilities toward family in Messina and leaving him to consider once more the option of a premature death:

> »But as I now am a slave because of my relatives, I have to bear everything and cling to whomever I run into, like they say the octopus does in winter time, and being at the borderland between two evils I need to pick the lesser evil. For when I consider the terrible circumstances of the present and the brutality here, I not only long for Milan and the cities in that direction, but even the British Isles and, if you like, the Isles of the Blessed«[29].

But such a move from Messina to the north was out of the question for Lascaris, who explained his reluctance to leave Sicily by claiming that there was a general disinterest in the Greek heritage on the Italian peninsula:

> »There is no care for Greek letters: Homer is driven away from everywhere, Demosthenes and Plato are despised, and everywhere there is an invisible tyranny and servitude much worse than Sisyphus', and they would do everything except paying a Greek. But if you don't believe me, let the crucial proof of the mortals persuade you: for the tyrants' thrift drove Theodore [Gaza], who had reached the top of all wisdom, away to Calabria, and forced him – ingloriously alas! – to die in Policastro. It drove Andronikos Kallistos to the British Isles, where he died without friends. As to Frangkoulios, a wise man, I don't know where in Italy he is, but I do know that Demetrios [Kastrenos?] returned to the fatherland to serve barbarians. And I leave unmentioned my wise teacher John Argyropulus who lives in poverty in the center of Rome, selling his own books one by one. That great Rome does not exist anymore, nor do those admirable Roman citizens, who took an interest in both Latin and Greek letters. Naples is no longer a colony of the Chalcidians and Athenians, the school of Greek letters, to which the Romans came running. All is gone and changed«[30].

This catalogue of misery ends with a reference to the city of Naples, where Lascaris had been his addressee's teacher in 1465-1466 during one of the most miserable periods in the migrant's lifetime. For Lascaris, the Greek heritage was

25 Lascaris in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 172.

26 Lascaris in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 172: ἡμεῖς δὲ κακῇ τύχῃ σὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις καὶ τὰ περὶ τῶν καθηκόντων ἀπεβάλομεν.

27 See Lascaris in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 160-162 for a recent edition, with further references. Martínez Manzano, Constantino Láscaris 167-169, offers a Spanish translation and additional references. Martínez Manzano traces all the classical sources in both of her monographs on Lascaris: see the footnotes there.

28 Lascaris in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 160: κάθημαι ἄχθος ἀρούρης ἀπειπὼν τῷ ἄλγει τὴν ἐνταῦθα διατριβὴν δουλείαν ἡγούμενος καὶ τὴν ἐντεῦθεν μετάστασιν καινὴν δυστυχίαν. τί γὰρ ἂν ποιοίην ἢ ποῦ γῆς ἀπίοιμι ἀνὴρ ἀσθενὴς καὶ δυστυχὴς γεγονὼς ἐν τοιούτῳ χαλεπωτάτῳ καιρῷ, ἐν ᾧ πατρὶς μὲν δούλη αἰσχίστων βαρβάρων καὶ πᾶσα Ἑλλάς. οὔτε δὲ βασιλεία οὔτε πολιτεία ἡμῖν ὑπολείπεται. πάντα δὲ δοῦλα καὶ φόβου καὶ κινδύνου μεστά. εἰ μόνος μὲν ἦν, οὐκ ἂν ὤκνουν καὶ τὰς στήλας τοῦ Ἡρακλέους ἰδεῖν.

29 Lascaris in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 160: νῦν δὲ δοῦλος διὰ τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἀνάγκη πάντα φέρειν καὶ τοῦ τυχόντος ἀντέχεσθαι ᾗ φασι τὸν πολύποδα ἐν χειμῶνος καιρῷ, καὶ ἐν μεταιχμίῳ δυοῖν ὄντα κακοῖν τὸ μὴ χεῖρον αἱρεῖσθαι. ὅταν μὲν γὰρ τὰ παρόντα διανοοῦμαι δεινὰ καὶ τὴν ἐνταῦθα θηριότητα, οὐ μόνον Μεδιόλανον καὶ τὰς ἐκεῖσε πόλεις ποθῶ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς βρεττανικὰς νήσους καὶ εἰ βούλει γε τὰς μακάρων […].

30 Lascaris in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 161-162: λόγων δὲ ἑλληνικῶν λόγος οὐδείς, ἀλλ᾽ ἀπελήλατο μὲν Ὅμηρος πανταχόθεν, καταπεφρόνητο δὲ Δημοσθένης καὶ Πλάτων, πανταχοῦ δὲ τυραννὶς ἄφαντος καὶ ἀνελευθερία πολλῷ πλείων τῆς τοῦ Σισύφου καὶ πάντ᾽ ἂν δρᾷεν ἢ μισθώσαιντο Ἕλληνα. εἰ δ᾽ ἀπιστεῖς, πειθέτω σε ἡ τῶν βροτῶν ἔλεγχος διάπειρα· ἡ μὲν γὰρ τῶν τυραννούντων φειδωλία Θεόδωρον ἐς ἄκρον πάσης σοφίας ἐληλάκοτα ἐς Καλαβρίαν ἀπήλασε καὶ ἐν Πολυκάστρῳ φεῦ ἀδόξως θανεῖν ἠνάγκασεν. Ἀνδρόνικον δὲ τὸν Κάλλιστον ἐς τὰς βρεττανικὰς νήσους, ὅπου φίλων ἔρημος τέθνηκε. Φραγκούλιον δὲ ἄνδρα σοφὸν οὐκ οἶδα ποῦ τῆς Ἰταλίας. Δημήτριον δὲ ἐς τὴν πατρίδα ἐπανήκειν βαρβάροις δουλεύοντα. παραλείπω δὲ τὸν σοφὸν ἐμὸν καθηγητὴν Ἰωάννην τὸν Ἀργυρόπουλον ἐν μέσῃ Ῥώμῃ πενόμενον καὶ καθ᾽ ἑκάστην τὰς ἑαυτοῦ βίβλους ἀποδιδόμενον. οὐκ ἔστι νῦν Ῥώμη ἐκείνη οὐδὲ οἱ θαυμαστοὶ ἐκεῖνοι πολῖται [*sic in mss. pro* πολῖται] Ῥωμαῖοι, οἷς ἅμα λατινικῶν λόγων καὶ ἑλληνικῶν ἔμελλεν. οὐκ ἔστι Νεάπολις ἀποικία Χαλκιδέων καὶ Ἀθηναίων, τὸ γυμνάσιον τῶν ἑλληνικῶν λόγων, εἰς ἣν Ῥωμαῖοι τρέχοντες ἤρχοντο. πάντα φροῦδα καὶ μεταμεμορφωμένα.

in the past, together with a state reuniting the Greeks, his people[31]. This realization took away Lascaris' lust for life, which he emphasized again several times at the end of his letter to Pardo: »what is scary for others, may that come as something sweet to me«[32]. And finally: »Farewell and don't wait around for me«[33]. There was no future for him, as the greatness of his people was in the past.

In the end, Lascaris concluded that his fatherland was enslaved to the barbarian Turks, while he himself was a *servulus* to the Italian courts, including the Milanese, and a δοῦλος of his duties in Messina. As his enslavement was least pressing and mostly metaphorical in Sicily, he remained there, idealizing the Byzantine empire as a lost fatherland (»that wonderful πατρίς«; see above).

## Mombrizio, Spokesman of Milanese Cultural Ideology

Diametrically opposed to the severe nostalgia and suicidal tendencies of a migrant caught between two worlds (one that is now versus one that no longer exists) is Bonino Mombrizio's Milanese perspective on Byzantium, developed in direct dialogue with Lascaris' Greek grammar. In his verse adaptation of Lascaris' manual, Mombrizio provided a handbook tailormade for Ippolita Maria Sforza. This tailoring involved a Sforzafication on two levels. On the one hand, as a state official, Mombrizio expressed Milanese cultural ideology in the non-grammaticographical passages, mainly the *prologus*[34]. On the other, his grammar did not offer generic examples as Lascaris' did, but introduced a significant number of grammatical examples that featured and even praised members of the Sforza family, not least the dedicatee Ippolita Maria Sforza. For instance, when discussing Greek adverbs, Mombrizio alluded to the upcoming wedding ceremony of the princess with Alfonso II of Naples:

> »And when asked whether you'd like to have Alfonso as your husband, you should (if you'd like to respond in Greek), say *naí*, for this seems to give great confirmation«[35].

Or when outlining Greek prepositions, Mombrizio offered the following example for ὑπέρ (*hypér*): »For instance, the duke's snake excels every symbol«[36]. This is obviously a reference to the man-devouring snake in the Visconti-Sforza coat-of-arms[37]. The duke himself is praised in the section on the comparatives: »As they say, Francesco is better than all rulers«[38]. This patriotic attitude forms the backbone of Mombrizio's views on Byzantium. As a spokesperson of the Sforzas and their cultural ideology, the Milanese humanist and state official applauded in the *prologus* of his grammar the way in which the duke advanced culture by bringing Greeks from their occupied lands to his city. That way, Milanese youths did not have to undertake a risky trip abroad:

> »For thanks to the goodness of your divine father [Francesco Sforza], no one is forced to go begging for literature from Roman [Italian] territories along the foreign shores of Greece [Hellas]. He is preparing the road for talents through the smell of some profit, and he is claiming the good arts for the city with the proposed gift«[39].

Rather than saving them, Francesco Sforza headhunted the Greeks from their destroyed empire, Mombrizio continued in his prologue:

> »And there's space to say how many excellent poets and orators our Caesar has brought into this city. The number itself defies belief. Who will recount the peace gifts by our duke? Who will not speak of the times as golden, or will say that these times are becoming even better than gold? Add to this that we also see Greek sophists and grammarians arrive here at once from their destroyed world. The whole of Greece is smashed under the hostile Turk; the heavenly powers had given their assent to such a great defeat. Am I wrong or is it that the learned race adorns the Latin lands? O race well cut down and well-destroyed walls! O excellent crime, and offence that deserves our approval, as Troy once had succumbed to Greek fires!«[40]

31 Lascaris' strong sense of belonging to the Greek people emerges in a very particular way in his epitome of the twelfth book of Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica*, in which he describes an action by the Greeks in the first person plural. See for details Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 161, n. 18.

32 Lascaris in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 162: […] ὃ τοῖς ἄλλοις φρικτόν, τοῦτο ἡμῖν ὡς ἡδὺ ἐπαγάγοι […].

33 Lascaris in Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 162: ἔρρωσο καὶ ἡμᾶς μὴ περίμενε.

34 cf. Raschieri, Bonino Mombrizio 746, for a preliminary discussion of this aspect of Mombrizio's verse adaptation.

35 BA, Ambr. N 264 sup. fol. 37$^{r}$: *Cumque rogata uirum uellesne Alphonson habere / Debebas (Graece si respondere uolebas) / Dicere* ναί. *Nanque hoc longe affirmare uidetur*. Translation adopted from Van Rooy, »Lend Me Your Apt Ears«. The transcription of the Latin text has been normalized, whereas Mombrizio's Greek is rendered semi-diplomatically.

36 BA, Ambr. N 264 sup. fol. 35$^{v}$: Ὡς ἄρχοντος ὄφις σημεῖον πᾶν ὕπερ ἐστι.

37 cf. **fig. 1** above and Rossetti, Sotto il segno della vipera.

38 BA, Ambr. N 264 sup. fol. 16$^{r}$: Ὡς φασιν ἀρχόντων πάντων φραγκῖσκος ἀμείνων.

39 BA, Ambr. N 264 sup. ff. 4$^{v}$-5$^{r}$: *Namque tui factum est diui bonitate parenti* [in margine: *Fr. Sphor.*] */ Helladis externas ne mendicare per oras* [in margine: *Hellas*] */ grammata Romanis quisquam cogatur ab aruis. / Ille uiam facit ingeniis nidore lucelli, / propositaque bonas urbi stipe uendicat artes*.

40 BA, Ambr. N 264 sup. fol. 5$^{r-v}$: *Nec uacat egregios uates nec dicere quantos / rhetoras hanc noster caesar conduxit in urbem.* [in margine: *Caesar Fr. Sphor.*] */ Ipse fidem numerus uincit. Quis munera pacis / a duce narrabit nostro? Quis saecula dicet / aurea uel non haec fieri meliora uel auro? / Adde quod et Graios huc aduentare sophistas / grammaticosque simul deleto ex orbe uidemus. / Tota sub aduerso contrita est Graecia Turco;* [in margine: *Graecia Turcus*] */ annuerant tantae caelestia numina cladi. / Fallor an ut terras ornet gens docta Latinas? / O bene succisam deletaque moenia gentem! / O scelus egregium, crimenque probabile nobis, / Troia quod ad Graios ignes subsiderat olim!* [in margine: *Troia*]

The Byzantine empire is pictured here as »a destroyed world« (*deletus orbis*), »smashed« (*contritus*) by the Turks in agreement with God's plan to promote culture in Milan. The fall of Constantinople was inevitable payback for the fall of Troy, which according to Roman beliefs had led to the foundation of their empire and in the Renaissance was given a wider application to other cities, including Venice and also the Milan of the Viscontis, and to a lesser extent the Sforzas[41]. This teleological take on Byzantine history, with the influx of Greek talent in Milan, not least that of Lascaris, also implied for Mombrizio that Milanese territories came to rival Attica, and hence the greatest Greek city of all time, Athens:

> »Hence, while thinking by myself about the time past and the days lost, why, oh, most learned Lascaris, why have you been so slow to come to our city? Jupiter has ensured you would be our teacher, and become the leader of the new race, leading them to Greek books. With you as leader, [Jupiter] decided there to be an Academy in these lands, so that the Insubrian [Milanese] would cede in nothing to the Attic world«[42].

Mombrizio implied that Lascaris would single-handedly make Milan, and by extension Italy, into a new Athens. What is more, Milan would supersede Athens as it cultivated both Greek and Latin, as Mombrizio did himself in his bilingual verse grammar for Ippolita Maria Sforza, which »was produced in both languages«[43]. This idealized picture starkly contrasts with Lascaris' letter to Juan Pardo, in which the migrant emphasized the decay of Greek learning in his host country, albeit some fifteen years after Mombrizio made his verse adaptation.

## Conclusion: Two Conflicting Perspectives on Byzantium

In conclusion, the fate of the Byzantine empire in the decades after the fall of Constantinople was appreciated rather differently by the migrant Lascaris and the local Mombrizio, both working in Sforza Milan in the years after 1458. Mombrizio's verse grammar modelled on Lascaris' manual voiced Sforza cultural politics, which was notably oriented toward the heritage of ancient Greece. As such, Mombrizio seems to have made explicit why the duke of Milan, Francesco I Sforza, encouraged and promoted Greek learning for his daughter: so that she would embody his broader cultural politics. In order to secure this cultural capital for his city, the duke headhunted Greek refugees, including Constantine Lascaris. For Lascaris, self-identifying as a Greek foreigner from Constantinople, such patriotic cultural ideology was meaningless, since he did not have a state to project his ideas onto. Lascaris obviously experienced the downfall of Byzantium as a deplorable loss and a personal trauma, leaving him between Scylla and Charybdis, a fatherland occupied by barbarians and an unwelcoming host country[44]. He felt caught up between east and west, past and present, resulting in great nostalgia. Mombrizio, on the other hand, adopted quite a different view, echoing Sforza cultural politics. A kind of sadistic opportunism embraced the influx of Greek migrants as common cultural benefit for Milanese citizens, with a taste of revenge for the fall of Troy in the distant past. Mombrizio and the Sforzas thus actively appropriated the Greek heritage, no doubt adding to the feeling of loss experienced by Lascaris. Their views on Byzantium and its downfall did have something in common in the end, despite their great differences: their joint aversion to the so-called barbarous Turks who had cruelly enslaved Greece and its inhabitants. Mombrizio mentioned them by name in his verse grammar, but the traumatized migrant Lascaris, who had personally experienced the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, generally avoided calling this people by name.

41 For Milan, see Rossetti, Sotto il segno della vipera 14. 17. For Venice, see Pincus, Venice and the Two Romes 105, with n. 14.

42 BA, Ambr. N 264 sup. fol. 6$^{r}$: *Vnde ego praeteritum mecum dum cogito tempus / amissosque dies, quid io, doctissime, tantum,* [in margine: *Constantinus Lascaris*] */ Lascari, quid nostram tantum tardaris ad urbem? / Te dedit ut nobis praeceptor Iupiter esses* [in margine: *Iupiter*] */ duxque nouae fieres ad Graia uolumina gentis. / Te duce consuluit sit ut his Academia terris,* [in margine: *Academia*] */ ne foret Actaeo quo cederet Insuber orbi.* [in margine: *Latium*].

43 BA, Ambr. N 264 sup. fol. 6$^{v}$: *[…] lingua tamen est confectus utraque.* On the adoption of both Roman and Greek-Byzantine heritage by Italian city-states in the Renaissance, cf. Pincus, Venice and the Two Romes.

44 Lascaris used the Scylla and Charybdis saying himself in his letter to Pardo. See Martínez Manzano, Konstantinos Laskaris 162.

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé


### The Downfall of Byzantium at the Sforza court (c. 1460-1465): The migrant Lascaris versus the local Mombrizio

This paper discusses how the Byzantine migrant Constantine Lascaris (1434-1501), who worked in service of the Sforza court in Milan around 1460-1465 and kept ties with it in his later career, perceived the Byzantine Empire and especially its downfall. This discussion is based on his written works and correspondence, especially from the years 1460-1485, including the well-known letter to his friend Juan Pardo. The paper also discusses how Lascaris perceived the Byzantine Empire in light of the events of 1453, which he witnessed himself. In his correspondence with Juan Pardo, the author articulated his concerns regarding the circumstances of Greek migrants residing in Italy, while also alluding to the prevailing conditions in his country of origin.

In this study, Lascaris' conceptions are compared with those of the Italian humanist Bonino Mombrizio (1424-1478/1482?), who was also active at the Sforza court in the same period. Mombrizio translated Lascaris' elementary Greek grammar into Latin verses, in which he also constructed a picture of the fallen Byzantine empire, hailing the Duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza, as the saviour of Greek migrants. It is noteworthy that both Lascaris' and Mombrizio's versions of the Greek grammar were dedicated to Ippolita Sforza, the duke's teenage daughter, around the same time. It is reasonable to assume that they were acquainted with each other, and perhaps even engaged in discourse regarding the fate of Byzantium at the Sforza court.

This paper sets out to explore the perceptions of Byzantium held by the migrant Lascaris and the local Mombrizio, highlighting both the similarities and differences between them. On the one hand, both parties shared a similar perspective, expressing dismay at the fall of Constantinople and the broader subjugation of former Byzantine territories to the Turks. However, their respective analyses diverged in their focus on specific aspects of the Sforzas' reception of Greek migrants. While Mombrizio highlighted the Sforzas' benevolent acceptance of those facing hardship, Lascaris accentuated the vulnerable circumstances confronting Greek migrants in Italy, underscoring the challenges they faced both in their countries of origin and in their new Italian homes.

### Der Untergang von Byzanz am Hofe der Sforza (ca. 1460-1465): Der Einwanderer Lascaris gegen den Einheimischen Mombrizio

Dieser Beitrag untersucht, wie der byzantinische Emigrant Konstantin Lascaris (1434-1501), der um 1460-1465 im Dienst des Mailänder Hofes der Sforza stand und auch später mit diesem in Verbindung blieb, das Byzantinische Reich und insbesondere dessen Untergang wahrnahm. Ausgangspunkt sind seine Schriften und seine Korrespondenz, insbesondere aus den Jahren 1460-1485, darunter der bekannte Brief an seinen Freund Juan Pardo. Der Beitrag untersucht auch, wie Lascaris das Byzantinische Reich vor dem Hintergrund der Ereignisse von 1453 wahrnahm, die er selbst miterlebt hatte. In seiner Korrespondenz mit Juan Pardo äußert der Autor seine Besorgnis über die Lebensumstände griechischer Migranten in Italien und spielt dabei auch auf die vorherrschenden Verhältnisse in seinem Heimatland an.

In dieser Studie werden die Vorstellungen von Lascaris mit denen des italienischen Humanisten Bonino Mombrizio (1424-1478/1482?) verglichen, der zur gleichen Zeit ebenfalls am Hofe der Sforza tätig war. Mombrizio übersetzte Lascaris' griechische Grammatik in lateinische Verse, in denen er auch ein Bild vom untergegangenen Byzantinischen Reich zeichnete und den Herzog von Mailand, Francesco Sforza, als Retter der griechischen Einwanderer pries. Bemerkenswert ist, dass sowohl Lascaris' als auch Mombrizios Version der griechischen Grammatik etwa zur gleichen Zeit Ippolita Sforza, der jugendlichen Tochter des Herzogs, gewidmet waren. Es ist anzunehmen, dass sie sich kannten und vielleicht sogar am Hofe der Sforza über das Schicksal von Byzanz diskutierten.

Dieser Beitrag untersucht die Wahrnehmung von Byzanz durch den Migranten Lascaris und den Einheimischen Mombrizio und hebt dabei sowohl die Gemeinsamkeiten als auch die Unterschiede zwischen ihnen hervor. Einerseits teilten beide eine ähnliche Perspektive und äußerten sich bestürzt über den Fall Konstantinopels und die Unterwerfung der ehemaligen byzantinischen Gebiete unter die Türken. Ihre jeweiligen Analysen unterschieden sich jedoch in ihrer Fokussierung auf bestimmte Aspekte der Aufnahme griechischer Einwanderer durch die Sforzas. Während Mombrizio die wohlwollende Aufnahme der Notleidenden durch die Sforzas hervorhob, betonte Lascaris die prekäre Lage der griechischen Einwanderer in Italien und unterstrich die Herausforderungen, denen sie sowohl in ihren Herkunftsländern als auch in ihrer neuen italienischen Heimat gegenüberstanden.

### La chute de Byzance à la cour des Sforza (vers 1460-1465): le migrant Lascaris contre le local Mombrizio

Cet article examine comment Constantin Lascaris (1434-1501), migrant byzantin qui travailla à la cour des Sforza à Milan vers 1460-1465 et conserva des liens avec celle-ci tout au long de sa carrière, percevait l'Empire byzantin et en particulier sa chute. Cette analyse s'appuiera sur ses écrits et sa correspondance, en particulier ceux datant des années 1460-1485, notamment la célèbre lettre adressée à son ami Juan Pardo. L'article examinera également la perception que Lascaris avait de l'Empire byzantin à la lumière des événements de 1453, dont il fut lui-même témoin. Dans sa correspondance avec Juan Pardo, l'auteur exprimait ses préoccupations concernant la situation des migrants grecs résidant en Italie, tout en faisant allusion aux conditions qui prévalaient dans son pays d'origine.

Dans cette étude, les conceptions de Lascaris sont comparées à celles de l'humaniste italien Bonino Mombrizio (1424-1478/1482?), qui était également actif à la cour des Sforza à la même époque. Mombrizio a traduit la grammaire grecque élémentaire de Lascaris en vers latins, dans lesquels il a également brossé un tableau de l'empire byzantin déchu, saluant le duc de Milan, Francesco Sforza, comme le sauveur des migrants grecs. Il est intéressant de noter que les versions de la grammaire grecque de Lascaris et de Mombrizio ont été dédiées à Ippolita Sforza, la fille adolescente du duc, à peu près à la même époque. Il est raisonnable de supposer qu'ils se connaissaient et qu'ils ont peut-être même discuté du sort de Byzance à la cour des Sforza.

Cet article vise à explorer les perceptions de Byzance qu'avaient le migrant Lascaris et le local Mombrizio, en soulignant à la fois leurs similitudes et leurs différences. D'une part, les deux parties partageaient une perspective similaire, exprimant leur consternation face à la chute de Constantinople et à la soumission plus large des anciens territoires byzantins aux Turcs. Cependant, leurs analyses divergeaient dans leur focalisation sur des aspects spécifiques de l'accueil réservé par les Sforza aux migrants grecs. Alors que Mombrizio soulignait l'accueil bienveillant réservé par les Sforza à ceux qui étaient en difficulté, Lascaris mettait l'accent sur la situation vulnérable des migrants grecs en Italie, soulignant les défis auxquels ils étaient confrontés tant dans leur pays d'origine que dans leur nouvelle patrie italienne.

Sonja Schönauer †

# The Heirs of Byzantium at the Court of the Spanish Viceroy in Naples: New Research Perspectives on the Basis of a New Edition of the *Chronicon maius**

Filip Malesevic

# Byzantium in the City of the Dragon. Cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto, the Cappella Gregoriana, and the Establishment of a Basilian Liturgy in Late Cinquecento Rome

On 29 March 1582, the painter Girolamo Muziano was commissioned to execute two altar paintings for the recently finished Cappella Gregoriana in New St Peter's Basilica to be installed in the two corresponding altars dedicated to the Church Fathers St Jerome and St Basil the Great. About four years ago, Muziano had painted the figures of the Church Fathers Jerome, Basil the Great, St Gregory of Nazianzus and St Gregory the Great in the four lunette caps of the chapel in St Peter's. The two altar paintings, on the other hand, were to demonstrate narrative paintings showing *St Jerome Preaching with Hermits* and the *Mass of St Basil the Great*. While the first of these two large oil paintings still remains extant in Santa Maria degli Angeli, the latter altarpiece that was to be finished by Muziano's associate Cesare Nebbia only after the painter's death in 1592 remains only accessible through an incision plate in Jacques Callot's *Les Tablaux de Rome*, published between 1609 and 1612 (**figs 1a-b**)[1].

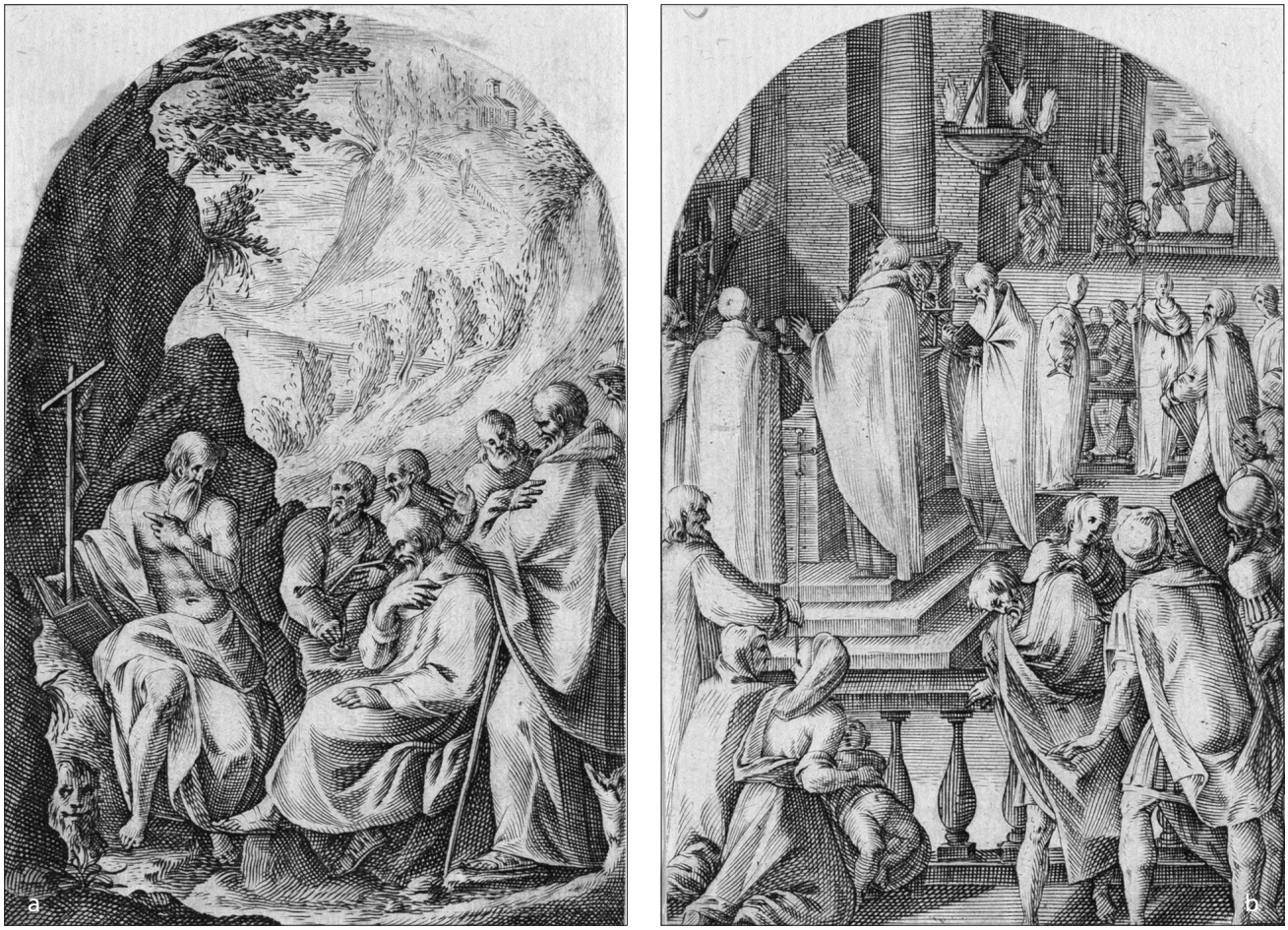



**Fig. 1** **a** St. Jerome Preaching with Hermits. **b** Mass of St. Basil the Great – (After J. Callot, Les Tableaux de Rome, Les Eglises Jubilaires, pls 11-12).

1 In 1708 the painting is still recorded decorating the Altar of St Basil the Great in St Peter's by Filippo Titi, but thirteen years later the painting is no longer mentioned, and in 1763 it is considered »perished«: Titi, Descrizzione 12. Regarding a discussion of Muziano's painting, see Vannugli, Giacomo Boncompagni 62-63; Savettieri, Le pale d'altare; Marciari, Girolamo Muziano 454. 484-485; Tosini, Girolamo Muziano 470-471; Zollikofer, Cappella Gregoriana 60-66.

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The engraving that reproduces Muziano's original pictorial solution for the *Mass of St Basil the Great* shows a church interior, wherein the figure of St Basil of Caesarea is celebrating Mass with his hands held above an altar that is placed within a column framed niche, ultimately reproducing the position of the altar dedicated to St Basil in the *navi piccole* of the Cappella Gregoriana inside New St Peter's Basilica. Behind the officiating figure of St Basil is a large crowd gathered within the sacred space attending the solemn celebration. A man rubbing his eyes with his garments is leaning upfront in the foreground of the pictorial space. According to St Gregory of Nazianzus' *Oratio in laudem Basilii*, which the Cappadocian Church Father whose relics were transferred to the Cappella Gregoriana a year befor Muziano would receive the commission of decorating the altars had delivered upon St Basil the Great's death in 379, and which was included in the Paris edition of St Gregory of Nazianzus's *opera omnia* from 1580, allows to identify this figure with the Roman Emperor Valens[2]. When St Basil the Great had celebrated Mass on the solemn feast day of the Epiphany in 371, the Emperor also visited this ceremonial occasion and was supposedly moved by the Church Father's charm as well as by the solemnity of the celebration. Although Emperor Valens had favored Arianism, he nevertheless wished to bring his gifts to the altar while St Basil was officiating the liturgy, although no participant at the celebration knew, whether the Church Father would even accept the Emperor's gifts, considering St Basil's orthodox observance of the Nicene decrees. Muziano's pictorial solution for the altarpiece that was commissioned for the Altar of St Basil the Great in the Cappella Gregoriana nonetheless demonstrates how the Emperor's gifts are brought to St Basil, who is officiating the solemn liturgical celebration with other priests, in the upper right corner of the background. Several participants are gathering alongside the balustrade, highlighting the celebration of Mass as a solemn occasion that is initiated by the community of believers. The painted architecture of the church interior, as depicted in Callot's etching, demonstrates a strong resemblance with the altars of the Cappella Gregoriana. The altar in Girolamo Muziano's pictorial solution was therefore painted on an elevated pedestal and inserted into a fictive niche that is divided by a balustrade from the rest of the sacred space, just as Pope Gregory XIII's altar chapels in New St Peter's Basilica.

The description of the painter and biographer Giovanni Baglione of Muziano's altarpiece for the Cappella Gregoriana is particularly remarkable, since it proposes an association between Muziano's pictorial language in his altarpiece of *St Basil celebrating the Mass* and the ritual celebration of the liturgy in the setting of St Peter's Basilica and especially that of Pope Gregory XIII's chapel:

> »Servì il Pontefice Gregorio XIII, & era sopraintendente delle sue opere. E dalle bella, e ricca cappella fatta fare in s. Pietro Nuovo, dal nome di s. Gregorio Nazianzeno ivi riposto dal Papa; e dal nome anche del Pontefice Gregorio, detta Gregoriana, a proprie spese del Papa edificata, il Mutiano hebbe la cura: e fece li disegni, e cartoni delli belli musaici della cappella, e non solo contentossi de' cartoni ma volle con le sue proprie mani formare molte reste, & altre cose importanti di musaico, si come hoggi dì veggonsi, con ogni esquisita diligenza, e perfetta bontà lavorate; e questo è il più bel musaico, che sia stato fatto da gli antichi infin' al nostro tempo. Per entro la medesima cappella vi sono due suoi lavori quadri grandi di tela a olio. In uno evvi s. Girolamo con diversi Romiti assai divoti […] felicissimamente terminato: e l'altro è, quando s. Basilio celebra la messa *alla Greca*, ma non fu comito affatto dal Mutiani per mancamento di vita […]«[3].

Baglione's description thus appears to demonstrate that Muziano's pictorial solution employed for his altarpiece in the Cappella Gregoriana manifested the ritual celebration of the Mass as prescribed by a Greek-Byzantine rite. However, Muziano's composition of his lost altarpiece showing *St Basil celebratin*g Mass at the Altar of St Basil in the Cappella Gregoriana, as deduced from Callot's etching, appears to be derived from the pictorial tradition established by the Mass of St Gregory the Great, which became a recurrent model in various decoration campaigns inside the Apostolic Palace as well as in private commissions, the most prominent being Jacopo Zucchi's oil painting for Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici (**fig. 2**)[4]. Considering this background of monumental pictorial production in Pope Gregory XIII's Rome, Muziano's second altarpiece for the Cappella Gregoriana rather demonstrates an organic incorporation of a Byzantine liturgy into the larger fabric of Curial Ceremony as it was being

2 The translation of the relics of St Gregory of Nazianzus from Santa Maria in Campo Marzio to St Peter's Basilica ad already been planned for 1578. Its postponement was conditioned by the still incomplete Cappella Gregoriana, but especially by the heavy rainfalls that hindered the solemn procession to take place, as Tiberio Alfarano reports: »Stupenda cosa fu quel giorno della Domenica de Passione che essendo la stazione di S[an] P[ietro] concorse tanto populo che non se poteva passare ne per le strade de borgo ne per il ponte S[ant'] Angelo che andavano dove era il corpo a S[anta] M[ari]a de Campo Marzo et sebene tutto quel giorno piobbe grandemente, per la qual cagione non si possette far la processione ne transferire detto corpo santo […]. Ma detto ostaculo delle acque quel giorno hanno cagionato che il detto sommo pontefice con magior amore et zelo si desse tutto a far più presto adornare et finire detta Cappella gregoriana et con maggior ornamanti et bellezze […]«. (BAV, Arch. Cap. S. Pietro.H.85, c. 136) Regarding the translation, see most recently Zollikofer, Cappella Gregoriana 114-138; Malesevic, Kardinal Cesare Baronio 407-417.

3 Baglione, Le vite de' pittori 51.

4 On the Mass of St Gregory the Great as an established pictorial tradition since the fifteenth century, see esp. Meier, Gregorsmesse. Concerning Jacopo Zucchi's famous altarpiece for Cardinal de' Medici from 1576, see Vannugli, Jacopo Zucchi 163. 170; Hochmann, Villa Medici 270. The pictorial model of the Gregorian Mass also figured prominently in the two Sale dei Foconi inside the Vatican Apostolic Palace, which decoration the Boncompagni Pope Gregory XIII commissioned to Muziano's associate Cesare Nebbia shortly after the superintendent Lorenzo Sabbatini died in 1576: Eitel Porter, Cesare Nebbia; Di Marco, Sale dei Foconi; Malesevic, Cesare Baronio 388-399.

developed in the particular setting of the Cappella Gregoriana in New St Peter's Basilica. Kaspar Zollikofer has recently argued that the pictorial decoration of Gregory XIII's chapel presents an »oecumenical assemblance« of Latin Roman and Greek Byzantine Church Fathers, but without exploring the possible curial prelates who were likely to be involved in the design of the pictorial program for the vault of the Cappella Gregoriana that presents the four most prominent Church Fathers as well as in the commission for Girolamo Muziano's decoration of the altars dedicated to St Jerome and St Basil the Great[5]. The present paper argues that by including a circle of distinguished curial prelates and members of Gregory XIII's Sacred College of Cardinals in designing the pictorial arrangement of the Cappella Gregoriana in St Peter's Basilica according to the directives prescribed by Curial Ceremony, which were ultimately manifested in the solemn translation of the relics of St Gregory of Nazianzenus, the Boncompagni Pope sought to gradually create a Roman liturgy, wherein the traditions of the Latin Roman rite were compatible and to be regarded as equally significant as those ritual elements derived from a Byzantine liturgy as conveyed in the treasure of Greek patristic texts.

The principal protagonist in this papal curial program of including a Greek Byzantine liturgy into the grand structure of the *Caeremoniale Romanae Curia* as exhibited by the pictorial organization of the Cappella Gregoriana was the eminent Cardinal Librarian and Prefect of the powerful Congregation of the Index, Guglielmo Sirleto. Before demonstrating Sirleto's own enterprise of administering Greek patristics during Gregory XIII's Boncompagni pontificate in relationship with the development of Roman liturgy, it will be essential to explain the resurgent interest for the Church Fathers of the Byzantine East in late Cinquecento Rome that resulted in the establishment of a curial congregation confided with the control of the Basilian monasteries in Southern Italy, which eventually became the so-called Congregazione dei Greci, as well as in the establishment of a Jesuit Collegio Greco at Sant'Atanasio in the Roman rione of Campo Marzio, presided by Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santori and particularly preoccupied with ascertaining a canon of Byzantine liturgy as approved by the Roman Curia and the papacy. The paper then concludes with an assessment of Cardinal Sirleto's endeavors in preserving a proper Byzantine liturgy that was compatible with the Roman rite as outlined by the *Caeremoniale Romanae Curiae*. The paper thus argues that by establishing a conformal unity between the Roman and Greek liturgies, which eventually represented Gregory XIII's own program of manifesting a universal perception of the Roman Church and of Roman ecclesiastical government, the Gregorian Curia of the late sixteenth century largely manufactured an image of a Byzantine ceremonial aesthetics, which correspondingly demonstrated the ritual elements of a unified Eastern liturgy.



**Fig. 2** Jacopo Zucchi, Ritratto del cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici, c. 1573-1575, Accademia di Francia. – (After Carlo, Ritratto fig. 1).

The scope of Pope Gregory XIII's ecclesiastical policies for reuniting the Greek as well as other churches, such as the Maronite as well as Coptic Churches, in the East with the Roman Church was the result of a general effort in reorganizing the non-Italian communities in the south of the peninsula, the so-called Italogreci, according to the Tridentine decrees[6]. The social mobility of these communities in the southern hemisphere of the Italian peninsula still remains to be explored in more precise terms, especially since their settlement can be traced back to the Byzantine rulership in Italy that appears to have been preserved despite the Norman invasion. Since the fourteenth century, and especially after the Fall of Constantinople during the following Quattrocento, Albanian as well as Greek communities came along which were subordinated to the jurisdiction of the local bishoprics, but which were supported by clerics who had received their ordination by Greek bishops. Only after the pronouncement of the Tridentine decree regarding the residence of bishops was the Roman

5 See esp. Zollikofer, Praeclarissima lumina.

6 These »Italo Greek« communities in Southern Italy spoke Greek and celebrated the Byzantine liturgy, as affirmed in Barri, De antiquitate et situ Calabriae 173: *Hi pagi graeci sunt, & rem divina[m] graeca latina & graeca lingua utuntur*. See also the passage in ibid. 228: *A Leucopetra villa huc usque incolae in familiari sermone latina & graeca lingua utuntur, sacra vero graeca lingua, graecove ritu faciunt*. See also Galatei, Liber de sity Iapygiae 94-95. 101-103.

Curia enabled to introduce an appropriate organization of these population groups that conformed to the proper administration of the remaining Basilian monasteries during the Ghislieri pontificate of Pius V[7].

A year after the election of Cardinal Ugo Boncompagni as Gregory XIII in 1572, Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santori requested the pontiff to convene a cardinal commission to be responsible for the Albanian and Greek communities in southern Italy. The main task of this Congregation of the Greeks (Congregazione dei Greci) would be to establish a normative set of regulations as well as a general decree of reform that complied with the Tridentine decrees of administering the clergy on the one hand, while on the other the same congregation was to prevent that the time-worn and irregular liturgical customs were to be condemned by the local bishops, because of their differences with the Roman liturgical models that were developed and standardized through the revision of the liturgical books of the Breviarium and Missale Romanum. In a consistory held on 10 June 1573, the Boncompagni Pope appointed the Cardinals Guglielmo Sirleto, Antonio Carafa and Giacomo Savelli as members of the Congregation of the Greeks alongside Cardinal Santori[8]. Although the activities of this cardinal commission would considerably be diminished by Gregory XIII's successor, Pope Sixtus V, Cardinal Santori's own prefecture would nevertheless allow the Cardinal Inquisitor to advance to become the »Protector of the Oriental Nation« (*Protector nationum orientalium*) during the last decade of the sixteenth century. Eventually, the revival of the Congregation of the Greeks during Clement VIII's pontificate, which essentially motivated the Aldobrandini Pope in reintegrating the Ruthenian bishops into the Roman Church in 1595, enabled the Cardinal of Santa Severina to administer it as his own personal enterprise, ultimately forcing Clement VIII to transform the Congregation of the Greeks into a *Congregatio de Fide Catholica propaganda*, even though he left the choice to Santori to select an appropriate denomination for the new cardinal commission[9]. Prior to these alterations of the cardinal commission that Pope Gregory XIII had first instituted, the members of the Congregation of the Greeks actively pursued a reunification with the Greek Church according to the brief unification established between the Roman and the Eastern Church at the Council of Ferrara/Florence in 1439 by the papal constitution *Laetentur coeli*[10].

Apart from these programs that were implemented within the administration of the Roman Curia through the creation of specific cardinal congregations that were entrusted with the issues concerning the formation of a sustainable interrelationship with the Greek Church in the east, and more specifically with the Patriarch of Constantinople Jeremias II Tranos, the Boncompagni Pope also established a Jesuit seminar in 1577 that was endowed with the training of Jesuit priests to be sent out to Constantinople and other parts of the Eastern Mediterranean. The Collegio Greco, as the seminar came to be named, was established upon an initiative that the Jesuits had already proposed to Pope Gregory XIII during the Jubilee Year of 1575, and to which the pontiff finally complied with a constitution that assigned several buildings on the Via del Babuino to the newly erected College[11]. A year

7 Pope Pius IV had already issued the constitution Romanus Pontifex on 16 February 1564 that submitted all the Greek monks and regular canons to the administration of the bishops, whereas it had been Pius V Ghislieri who established the liturgical demarcations between the Greek and Latin clergy: BDR, VII, 271-273. 473-475. See also Peri, Chiesa latina 340. 351; Peri, Chiesa romana 50-51; Herklotz, Academia Basiliana 15-19. The first Basilian monks that were reorganized were those Calabrian monks in Reggio Calabria, who appealed to the Congregation of the Council to incur the local bishop, Gaspare Ricciullio Del Fosso, to cease his canonical visits. For these local conflicts between episcopal governors and the Basilian monks, see esp. Peri, Documenti 424-428. Regarding the Basilian monasteries during the Middle Ages, see esp. Hofmann, Monaci 348-349.

8 See Peri, Chiesa latina 300-301; Peri, Chiesa romana 78-79. – Concerning Santori's suggestion to the Boncompagni Pope, see also Cugnoni, Autobiografia 356. In 1579, Gregory XIII issued the papal constitution *Benedictus Dominus*, upon a proposal presented by Cardinal Sirleto, by which he instituted the Italian and Spanish Congregation of Basilian Monks: Lacava Ziparo, Dominazione bizantina. – Already during Pius V's pontificate, Cardinal Sirleto was aware of the state of the Basilian monasteries, having himself been appointed to as Bishop of San Marco in Calabria on 6 September 1566. See also a letter by Paolo Marullo from 24 October 1568, enumerating some Basilian convents in Grottaferrata: BAV, Vat. lat. 6184, II, fol. 398$^{r}$.

9 AAV, Arm. LII, 20, fols. 185$^{r-v}$; AAV, Arm. LII, 20, fols. 120$^{r-v}$; Peri, Chiesa latina 294-295; Krajcar, Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santoro 153. A particularly significant event for this new congregation was the reunion between the Coptic Churches with the Holy See, solemnly celebrated on 15 January 1595 in the presence of twenty-four members of the Sacred College of Cardinals in the Sala degli Apostoli of Pope Pius V's private apartments inside the Apostolic Palace: BAV, Urb. lat. 1063, fol. 29$^{r}$.

10 Around 1580, the eminent Cardinal Librarian, Prefect of the Congregation of the Index and member of the Congregation of the Greeks, Guglielmo Sirleto, composed an *Exhortatio ad Graecos* that also included the decrees issued during the Council of Ferrara/Florence, and which found a wide dissemination in southern Italy: BAV, Vat. lat. 6792, fols. 8$^{r}$-31$^{v}$; Peri, Chiesa romana 80-81; Malesevic, Cesare Baronio 407. Sirleto's transcription of the Exhortation to the Greeks will be included in the forthcoming edited series: Monumenta Sirletana Romanae Curiae, Epistulae, vol. 4. – The most significant attempts at establishing a reunification with the Greek Church, however, were undoubtedly the efforts made at issuing a new calendar that would supersede the imprecise Julian Calendar, for which Cardinal Sirleto was again consulted as one of the members of the papal congregation regarding the issues of accomplishing a calendar reform. See a letter by Leonardo Donà, writing from Constantinople to Rome on 12 February 1583 about the promotion of the reformed calendar before the Patriarch of Constantinople, Jeremias II Tranos: »Questi [Michael Esparchus and Giovanni Buonafè] sono stati chiamati da Sua Santità per servirsi dell'opera loro in Constantinopoli appresso il Patriarca dei greci, per disponerlo ad accettare et a far accettare dalla Chiesa sua la correttione dell'anno […]«. As quoted in Mutinelli, Storia arcana 133. – Cardinal Sirleto's agent in Constantinople, Lelio Cellini, also directly reported to the Cardinal Librarian about the negotiations with the Patriarch of the Greek Church: BAV, 6194, I, fol. 140$^{r}$; BAV, Vat. lat. 6194, II, fols. 373$^{r}$, 400$^{r}$, 430$^{r}$, 434$^{r}$, 507$^{r}$, 553$^{r}$.

11 BDR, 8: 159-162. See also Pastor, Geschichte der Päpste 9: 179-180. 737. See also the passage in Maffei, Degli Annali 1: 206-207, where the foundation of the Greek College is ascribed to the desolate state of the Greek clergy in the Ottoman Empire: »Di più essendo egli informato, che i Cristiani di Pera Borgo (se dir si può) di Costantinopoli ricevevano continuamente mali esempi, e disgusti da chi doveva in quelle remote parti dar loro consolatione, e cibo spirituale, ordinò ai Generali di S. Domenico, e di S. Francesco Conventuali, ed Osservanti, che di tanta copia di virtuosi, ed eruditi soggetti andassero facendo scelta, e rinuovando con fresco supplemento quei Monasteri. In oltre destinò tre Gesuiti a Ragusi, ed altri e tanti a Cattaro transmarine Città, e poste in molto bisogno per la troppa vicinanza de' Turchi«. Another passage then records the foundation as follows: »Pari sollecitudine, ma in generale, mostrò Gregorio questo anno verso la Greca Nazione, mandando in quelle parti ben dodici mila Catechismi tradotti a posta in lingua greca moderna, e gran numero di volumi del Concilio Tridentino con somma cura stampato di commissione, ed a spese di lui. E per ridurre col tempo la misera Grecia alla unione della Chiesa Cattolica fondò nella Città di Roma un Collegio, o vogliamo dire Seminario, di giovanetti scelti di quelle Provincie con molti privilegij, e con assegnamento sino a migliore occasione di scudi cento il mese, e con applicazione dell'entrate di una Chiesa derelitta nel Regno di Candia. Il sito fu in aria salubre, ed amena sotto il monte Pincio: l'abitazione fu buone, e capace, ed ornata

later, the members of the Collegio Greco acquired a neighboring property for erecting their church in commemoration of St Athanasius. But due to an initial financial deficiency of the College, the construction of the church of Sant'Atanasio dei Greci could only begin in November 1580, when the Cardinal Protector of the College, Giulio Antonio Santori, lay the ground stone. In a report from the papal consistory that was held on 3 November 1580, Santori remarked that he also examined the building plans proposed to the College by the architect Giacomo della Porta, and also explained the choice for consecrating the church edifice of the Collegio Greco to Saint Athanasius:

> »Del disegno nuovo della chiesa del Collegio greco – lo viddimo insieme, che si seguiti. Dell'invocatione di S. Atanasio da imporsi alla chiesa nuova – gli piace et che è ben fatto per le raggioni dette e che di questo anno santo non vi è chiesa, ma de altri dottori greci vi è S. Basilio, la Cappella Gregoriana sua di S. Gregorio Nazianzeno e di S. Giov[anni] Crisostomo vi sarà l'altra all'incontro di S. Pietro« [12].

The construction of the church of Sant'Atanasio dei Greci was thus to constitute an expansion of what Pope Gregory XIII and the Roman Curia were aiming with the arrangement of the Cappella Gregoriana in New St Peter's Basilica[13]. However, immediately after Cardinal Santori laid the keystone of Sant'Atanasio, an issue concerning the architecture of the church space was addressed in a papal consistory on 17 December of the same year as the consecration of the church of the Collegio Greco. Either the church interior was to be divided into two spaces, one Latin and the other Greek, or two separate church building were to be constructed[14]. Still, according to the recorded payments disbursed to the architect Giacomo della Porta as well as another report of a papal audience held on 20 April 1581, this issue appears to have been resolved swiftly, for the work on constructing the church proceeded without interruptions. Regarding the arrangement of the church space for the celebration of liturgical offices inside Sant'Atanasio, the interior was originally planned to have only one High Altar, installed for the offices *all'uso de' Greci* (»for the use of the Greeks«) and flanked by two minor altars, a *diakonikon* on the right for the clerical vestments and with a *prothesis* on the left for the preparation of the Eucharist. Ideally, the organization of the church interior of Sant'Atanasio dei Greci was eventually to demonstrate a sacred space which established a balance between the Greek and Roman rite[15]. Nevertheless, Leone Allacci, a former member of the Collegio dei Greci and librarian working in the services of Cardinal Francesco Barberini until he was appointed Librarian of the Vatican Library in 1661, commented in his 1645 published discourse *De templis graecorum recentioribus* that the church of Sant'Atanasio had nothing in common with a Greek church edifice, for the traditional arrangement of the *narthex*, *naos* and *bema* was not observed. The overall organization of the church interior was therefore still indebted to the celebration of the liturgy according to a Roman ritual[16].

The realization of a church interior, wherein a coexistence between a Greek Byzantine and Latin Roman liturgy could be

di vaghi acquedotti, e giardini«. (ibid. 249-250) See also a written Relazione by Giacomo Siranzo from 1578 in BAV, Urb. lat. 382$^{r}$-392$^{v}$, that correspond with other official notizie from the city on the Bosporus: BAV, Urb. lat. 1044, fols. 412$^{r}$, 425$^{v}$, 433$^{r}$, 627$^{r}$, 647$^{r}$, 669$^{r}$, 674$^{r}$, 701$^{r}$; BAV, Urb. lat. 1045, fols. 11$^{r}$, 30$^{r}$, 44$^{r}$, 94$^{r}$, 112$^{v}$; BAV, Urb. lat. 1046, fols. 123$^{r}$-405$^{r}$. Concerning the foundation of the Greek College in Rome, see also Porfyriou, Presenza greca 22-28.

12 AAV, Arm. LII, 18, fols. 26$^{r-v}$; Krajcar, Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santoro 36; Pastor, Geschichte 9: 878. However, in another report from a papal audience Cardinal Santori was given by Gregory XIII on 24 March 1580, the Cardinal of Santa Severina explained that the construction of the church edifice was to start when »other works« were completed: »Di applicatione per far la chiesa del Collegio Greco – Quod aliis completis reminiscetur«. (AAV, Arm. LII, 18, fol. 6$^{r}$) By these »other works,« Santori must have likely meant those carried out for the Cappella Gregoriana in New St Peter's. The Boncompagni Pope is reported twice of having visited the church during its construction: BAV, Urb. lat. 1046, fol. 303$^{v}$ (3 September 1578); BAV, Urb. lat. 1050, fol. 145$^{r}$ (5 May 1582). Regarding the progress of construction of Sant'Atanasio dei Greci, see esp. Tancredi, Costruzione; Tancredi, Giacomo della Porta; Fiore, Gregorio XIII.

13 This is also confirmed by Cardinal Santori's prior consecration of the High Altar in the Cappella Gregoriana, which was celebrated on 11 June 1580, one day before the solemn translation of the relics of St Gregory of Nazianzus. See for this the account in the diary of the Master of Ceremonies Mucanzio, in BAV, Vat. lat. 12286, fol. 352$^{v}$; BAV, Chig.L.II.31, fols. 687$^{v}$-688$^{r}$. See also NiGrimaldi, Descrizione 407; Zollikofer, Cappella Gregoriana 118.

14 AAV, Arm. LII, 18, fol. 35$^{r}$: »[…] che pare che la chiesa si divida o se ne faccino due, una greca e una latina«. Regarding Santori's laying of the foundation stone, see the extensive description in the diary of the Master of Ceremonies, Francesco Mucanzio, in BAV, Chig.L.II.31, fols. 720$^{v}$-722$^{v}$, at 720$^{v}$-721$^{r}$: *Die 23. Eiusdem fer[i]a 4.a in festo s[anc]ti Clementis Pap[a]e Ill.mus D. Julius Ant[oniu]s Sanctorius Cardinalis s.tae Severinae, summo mane de mandato s. mi D. N. accessit ad Collegium Graecorum ad effectum imponendi p[ri]mum lapidem in fundam[en]tis Ecclesiae ibi aedificatione, sub Invocatione s.ti Athanasij Epi[scopi], et Confessoris, ubi iam p[er] diem antea erigi fecerat Cruce ligneam, et ap[er]tam Altari ligneu[m], ordinaris ergo prius quatuor, seu quinq[ue] ex illis pueris Graecis ad prima[m] Tonsura[m] […] et Cappella, venit ad locum designatum pro Ecclesia instruenda ubi paratus amuctu, alba, cingulo, stola et Pluviali aureo cum mitre, et bacculo ministrantibus sibi Diacono, et subdiacono etia[m] Tunicella, et Dalmatica paratis incepit benedicere Aqua[m], […] prout habet in libro Pontificali sub Rubrica de benedictione, et impositione primarij lapidis ad unquem […] pluribus Caeremonijs, quia primo benedixit lapidem Turibulum […].* See also Martinelli, Roma 73-74; Malesevic, Cesare Baronio 405-406.

15 Bedon, Uniatismo 50-52; Tancredi, La costruzione 16-20; Fortino, Liturgia greca 1920. Regarding the mentioned papal audience as well as the documented payments to Giacomo Della Porta, see AAV, Arm. LII, 18, fol. 67$^{r}$; ASR, Camerale I. Tesoreria segreta, b. 1309, fols. 33$^{r}$, 53$^{r}$, 59$^{r}$, 80$^{v}$, 84$^{v}$, 88$^{r}$, 90$^{v}$, 94$^{r-v}$.

16 See Allatius, De templis graecorum 36-37: *Et primum, ante alia illud observo, Templum D. Athanasio sacrum, quod Romae est, non ita ex nationis illius more extructum esse, ut ad constituendas Graecorum hodiernas Ecclesias in exemplum, adduci possit & debeat: cum potius Latinae Ecclesiae modum, eumque non ita antiquum, referat, & non nisi Bemate à Latinis distinguatur. Quod si excipias spatium, inter muros sub fornicem excurrens, nihil habet cum Graecorum Ecclesiis commune; quando & ingressus ipse diversus, nec Embolum nec Narthecem habeat, neque Templum aliis partibus separetur, altaribus utriunque excavatis, nec mulieres à viris secludat cancellis. Templum tamen est, & pro juvenum ibidem Deum colentium usu satis accommodatum. Aliunde itaque Templorum recentiorum imagines petendae sunt. Quae, ut alias diximus, tribus praecipuis partibus constituuntur, Narthece, Nao, & Bemate: & in spatio inter Naon & Bema, Cantores Lectoresque sibi locum habent, non qui aliquo novo Tabulato, ab eo, quod Bematis est, distinguatur, sed qui una cum templi spatiis excurrat, vel cum Bematis rotunditate continuetur. Et haec mens fuerat verborum meorum, nescio an bene expressa; quod optime obseratum in Clementis & Athanasii Templis, […] et sic nulla chori perturbatione, sanctuarii fores, nullo moram aut impedimentum inferente, apertae, & imagines, quae in tabulato Bematis sunt, oculis omnium objiciuntur, ac thure, nullo obstante, perfunduntur.* Regarding the icons in Sant'Atanasio and their installement within the sacred space of the church edifice, see Nesi, Dipinti.

produced, was thus only limited to the aims of the members of the Collegio dei Greci, whereas the cardinals Santori and Sirleto from the Curial Congregation of the Greeks specifically intended to integrate a Byzantine liturgy organically into the larger aesthetic construction of the Roman rite shaped by Curial Ceremony. Moreover, this sophisticated interlacing of a Byzantine liturgy into the aesthetic conditions of the *Caeremoniale Romanae Curiae*, in turn, generated an appearance of various Eastern rites that became virtually unified within the Roman Curia's perception of a Byzantine liturgy, which had primarily been designed through a vigorous effort in administering the heritage of Greek patristic texts as Cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto had been pursuing since his early years, when he arrived in Rome, or as Cardinal Santori aimed at demonstrating by his likely suggestion made to Pope Gregory XIII of transferring the recently discovered relics of St John Chrysostom to the corner chapel of New St Peter's located directly opposite the Cappella Gregoriana[17]. The development of the curial *Congregatio Graecorum* appears to have majorly been involved in the initial conceptualization of Pope Gregory XIII's plans for the Cappella Gregoriana, and for New St Peter's Basilica in general. Initially, the church interior of St Peter's was to be designed as a liturgical space that incorporated not only the Latin Church Fathers but also provided an appropriate setting for integrating the heritage of the Great Fathers from the Greek Byzantine Church. While Cardinal Santori was primarily occupied in administering a proper cooperation between the Collegio dei Greci and the Congregation of the Greeks, the Prefect of the Index Congregation and Cardinal Librarian Guglielmo Sirleto was concerned with the ritual issues that a Byzantine liturgy presented regarding the ceremonial construction of Roman ecclesiastical government.

In its first phase of activities during Gregory XIII's Boncompagni pontificate, the Congregation of the Greeks was principally concerned with the administration of the Basilian clergy, located not only in southern Italy, but also »in the Levant and in the West,« as a 1578 printed compendium of the rules of St Basil the Great also explicitly stated in respect to the reform of the Basilian *italogreci*[18]. A fundamental component in the curial supervision of the Basilian clergy was the proper administration of their liturgical services. Between 1577 and 1579, three discourses appeared in Rome that were addressed to the members of the Congregation of the Greeks, and which the Archbishop of Otranto, Antonio Arcudi di Soleto, procured for Cardinal Santori, since these dispatches were particularly addressing the errors and abuses in celebrating the Byzantine liturgy amongst the Basilian communities[19]. From these liturgical concerns, it soon became evident that a proper celebration of the Byzantine Greek rituals as the Congregation of the Greeks aimed at prescribing, was to be achieved by a meticulous administration of the patristic heritage of the Greek Church Fathers in the manuscript collections of the Vatican Apostolic Library, which the eminent Cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto had been overseeing since his employment in the household of Cardinal Marcello Cervini, for whose private library the later Cardinal Librarian and Prefect of the Congregation of the Index was put in charge[20]. The most extensive results of Sirleto's patristic endeavors were realized during his activities regarding the revisions concerning the *Breviarium* and *Missale Romanum* for Pope Pius V, as well as concerning the publication of a revised *Martyrologium Romanum* under Gregory XIII in collaboration with the Oratorian Cesare Baronio[21]. As for Sirleto's contributions to the activities of Gregory XIII's Congregation of the Greeks, scholarship has largely disregarded the influence of the eminent Cardinal

17 In 1567, Cardinal Santori consecrated the altar dedicated to the Greek Church Father in the old sacristy of St Peter's Basilica. See the record in Giulio Antonio Santori, Autobiografia 344: »Nello anno seguente 1567 dedicai l'altare del ss. Crocifisso per ordine di Sua Beatitudine nella sacrestia di S. Pietro, ove riposa il corpo di san Giovanni Crisostomo mio avvocato, con le reliquie de' santi Sebastiano e Cristofano, sotto il titolo di detto S. Giovanni Crisostomo, S. Lamberto e S. Gervasio, come er prima innanti che detto altare fosse violato«. See also the description in Alpharanus, Structura 140-141: *In hoc item sacello nostris temporibus, ut supra retulimus, Corpus sancti Joannis Chrisostomi sub Altare honorifice collocatum est in nobili marmoreo labio aegyptiaco, cuius etiam honori dictum Altare fuit consecratum a Julia Antonio Sanctorio Cardinali sancti Bartolomei in Insula, tunc S. Severinae Archiepiscopo ad praeces Antonij Caraffae Cardinalis, tunc huius, Basilicae Canonici, anno Domini 1566. Fuit etiam in hoc sacello magna crux argentea ducentarum librarum pondo quae aliquando ad Altare sanctorum Philippi et Jacobi in mediana Basilicae navi stetisse putatur. Item multae Reliquiae sanctorum in theca hic supra Altare posita honorifice conservantur*. It appears that originally the intention was to transfer the relics of St. John Chrysostom to the Cappella Gregoriana instead of the remains of St. Gregory of Nazianzenus, as Fortunio Lelio also noticed. See the passage in Lelio, Pompa c. 4$^{v}$: »*Haveva animo N[ostro] S[ignore] di collocare in quella Cappella (come si diceva) il corpo di S. Giovanni Crisostomo, che sta nella Sacrestia di S. Pietro; ma l'anno poi seguente […] adi 25. di Gennaio andando messer Achille Statio Portughese huomo litteratissimo (come affetionato di Santi Greci) in S. Pietro per visitar il corpo del detto san Giovan Grisostomo, essendo quel giorno la festa di esso Santo, entrato in Sacrestia fatta la sua oratione si maravigliò assai con uno di quegli curati, che lo tenessero cosi racchiuso dicendo loro far il medesimo di questo, che fanno le Monache di Sa[n]ta Maria di campo Marzo del corpo si S. Gregorio Nanzianzeno […]*«. This also confers with the entry in the diary of the Master of Ceremonies in BAV, Vat. lat. 12286, fols. 322$^{r-v}$.

18 Breve raccolto n. p. [internal frontispience]: »Il presente compendio delle Constitutioni Monastiche di S. Basilio magno, gia per opera & studio del Reverendissimo, & sapientissimo Cardinale Bessarione raccolto, nè fin qui stampato giamai, hora à co[m]mune utilità di tutti li. Monaci, li quali nelle parti di levante, & in ponente vivono sotto l'osservanza di quelle […]«. A year later, the Privilegia monachorum divi Basilii Magni was also printed by Antonio Blado's printing press and that of the Impressores Camerales.

19 For a discussion of these missives, see esp. Peri, Chiesa latina 315-316. 374. 450-453; Peri, Congregazione 239-242. – In 1579, however, a more concise compendium regarding the proper celebration of the Byzantine Greek rites was published by the Augustinian friar Antonio Castronovo, entitled *De ritibus et opinionibus Graecorum epilogus*: Minuti, Trattato. See also Gennadius Scholarus, Defensio c. b1$^{r-v}$. – A considerable collection of *errores et abusii Graecorum* is preserved in the Biblioteca Vallicelliana, which also includes a *Discorso sopra il Breviario Greco* (BVR, K 17, fols. 17$^{r}$-20$^{r}$), as well as an *Encomnium* by St. Methodus, together with fragments concerning the lectionaries to be delivered for the celebration of the martyrs, both appearing to have been composed by Cardinal Sirleto: BVR, K 17, fols. 1$^{r}$-6$^{v}$.

20 Sirleto's major preoccupation in Cardinal Cervini's household was reserved to bringing to print the manuscript works in the cardinal's private library, thus chiefly being responsible for having established an association between the administration of a private library collection and a cardinalate curial enterprise of printing in Cinquecento Rome. See for Sirleto's activities for Marcello Cervini esp. Piacentini, Marcello Cervini 105-145; Sachet, Guglielmo il Greco. – Guglielmo Sirleto's activities and endeavors for Marcello Cervini in respect to the changing shape of Roman ecclesiastical government will be thoroughly investigated in Malesevic, Holy Family.

21 See on these revisions as well as the use of patristic excerpts, most recently Malesevic, Cesare Baronio 134-142. 417-429.

Librarian, especially in relationship with the development of manufacturing a distinctively Roman Curial image of the Byzantine Greek Church, which demonstrated a conformity between the liturgical regulations of the Byzantine rite as prescribed for the *italogreci* of the Basilian communities and the visual ceremonial aesthetics of an ecclesiological concord established between the Latin and Greek Church Fathers as developed in the pictorial arrangement of the Cappella Gregoriana in New St Peter's Basilica.

While Sirleto's correspondence with the agent of the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople in Venice, Michael Eparchus, as well as that with his own envoy to the Patriarch Jeremias II Tranos, Livio Cellini, allows a reconstruction of Sirleto's partial involvement in Pope Gregory XIII's ecclesiastical affair concerning a possible reunion with the Greek Church, the contents of thes letters nevertheless omit the cardinal's predominantly liturgical interests in this crucial curial enterprise. Sirleto's 1583 published *Divine Liturgia Sancti Apostoli et Evangelistae Marci*, in which the erudite Cardinal Librarian also included a Latin translation of the rite of the Mass as conveyed through the *Apostolic Constitutions* that were believed to be the work of Pope Clement I, on the other hand, discloses the cardinal's specific concerns for transferring vital elements of a Greek Byzantine ritual ecclesiology into the conditions of the Roman liturgy that were determined by its aesthetic configurations within Curial Ceremony. The dedicatory epistles preceding the translations of the *Liturgy of St Marc* and the *Rite of Mass from Clement I's Apostolic Constitutions* demonstrate that Cardinal Sirleto's intentions in composing this work were especially concerned with the appropriate of the administration of the image of the ὁδηγητρία, the iconographic depiction of the Virgin Mary holding the Child Jesus, within the Basilian Order[22]. Although Sirleto's work was principally addressing the Basilian monastery of Santa Maria Odigitria in Reggio Calabria, the explanation of the liturgical significance of the *Theotokos* as the monastery's precious iconic relic in association with the ritual administration of Mass appears to have likely been stimulated by the solemn transfer of the so-called *Madonna del Soccorso* from its original location on the *muro divisorio* of Old St Peter's to the High Altar of the new Cappella Gregoriana on 12 February 1578.

Sirleto's work for the Canon of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris can therefore equally be considered as part of a literary tradition that addressed the theological controversy regarding the aesthetic importance of the *Dei genetrix* which had first started to be outlined by the Jesuit theologian Petrus Canisius in his 1577 published discourse *De Maria virgine incomparabili et dei genetrici sacrosancta*, where Canisius presented a compilation of testimonies made by the Church Fathers concerning the virginity of Mary[23]. Indeed, Sirleto's *Divina Liturgia* from 1583 demonstrated how the particular veneration of the image of the ὁδηγητρία, as explained by the patristic texts of the Greek Church Fathers, endowed a ceremonial fashioning of an image of a Greek Byzantine Church as well as of the Greek Church Fathers St Basil the Great and St John Chrysostom, which the pictorial decoration of the Cappella Gregoriana and the solemn consecration of its altars in New St Peter's Basilica demonstrated as essential elements in the universal claims concerning the significance of the Roman liturgy and its administration within ecclesiastical government.

## Bibliography

### Archival Sources

Abbreviations: AAV = Archivio Apostolico Vaticano, Città del Vaticano; ASR = Archivio di Stato, Roma; BAV = Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Città del Vaticano; BVR = Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Roma; BDR = Bullarum diplomatum et privilegiorum sanctorum Romanorum pontificum Taurinensis editio: locupletior facta collectione novissima plurium brevium, epistolarum, decretorum actorumque S. Sedis a S. Leone M. usque ad praesens, 24 vols. (Augustae Taurinorum 1857-1872).

AAV, Arm. LII, 18, fol. 6$^{r}$.

AAV, Arm. LII, 18, fols. 26$^{rv}$.

AAV, Arm. LII, 18, fol. 35$^{r}$.

AAV, Arm. LII, 18, fol. 67$^{r}$.

AAV, Arm. LII, 20, fols. 120$^{rv}$.

AAV, Arm. LII, 20, fols. 185$^{rv}$.

22 Sirleto appears to have completed his work in 1582, the year the Canon of Notre Dame in Paris, Jean de Saint-André, gave the work to the printing press of Ambrosius Drovard. For the printing of Sirleto's Divina Liturgia from 1583, see the two letters by the Canon of Notre Dame Cathedral to Sirleto in BAV, Vat. lat. 6194, II, fol. 349$^{r}$ (6 May 1582); BAV, 6195, I, fol. 180$^{r}$ (4 June 1583). Regarding Sirleto's concerns for the proper ritual significance as well as liturgical administration of the mystery of the ὁδηγητρία see Sirleto, H ΘΕΙΑ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ a ij$j^{r}$: *Agamus gratias, ut diximus Deo ipsi, quod tela nobis suggerat praesentiu[m] temporu[m] vexationi opportuna, & operarios optimos in vinea[m] suam mittat […] verum etia[m] antiqua Ecclesiae Catholicae monumenta atq[ue] orthodoxorum patrum libros, quibus profanae vocum novitates redargui possint. Ex horum numero esse arbitramur Beati Marci Eva[n]gelistae sacra[m] Liturgiam, paucis ante annis inventa in Abbatia Beatae Mariae ὁδηγητρίας, quae vulgo dicitur, De lo patire, antiquissimo monachorum Sa[n]cti Basilij monasterio […].* The original intent in composing this collection of translated liturgical texts was therefore stimulated by recovering the collection of manuscripts in the Basilian monastery of Santa Maria Odigitria in Rossano, particularly one specific codex that is now preserved in BAV, Vat. gr. 1970 (apograph in BAV, Ott. gr. 189, fols. 1$^{r}$-29$^{v}$). See on this twelfth-century manuscript esp. Cavallo, La cultura italo-greca 556.

23 Canisius, De Maria virgine incomparabili 124. 183. 234-235. Although Canisius presented a controversial theological argument in defense of the veneration of the *Theotokos*, Sirleto himself had already addressed this particular issue in a discourse concerning the patriarchal basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore that he had dedicated to Cardinal Carlo Borromeo around 1564. For an edition of this discourse by Sirleto, see Malesevic, Heritage. – Concerning the solemn transfer of the Madonna del Soccorso to the Cappella Gregoriana see Tiberio Alfarano's contemporary account in BAV, Arch.Cap.S.Pietro.G5, fols. 28$^{r}$-29$^{r}$; BAV, Arch.Cap.S.Pietro.H85, fols. 34$^{r}$-36$^{r}$.

ASR, Camerale I. Tesoreria segreta, b. 1309, fols. 33r, 53r, 59r, 80v, 84v, 88r, 90v, 94r-v.

BAV, 6194, I, fol. 140r.

BAV, 6195, I, fol. 180r.

BAV, Arch.Cap.S.Pietro.G5, fols. 28r-29r.

BAV, Arch.Cap.S.Pietro.H85, c. 136.

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BAV, Chig.L.II.31, fols. 687v-688r.

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BAV, Urb. lat. 1044, fols. 412r, 425v, 433r, 627r, 647r, 669r, 674r, 701r

BAV, Urb. lat. 1045, fols. 11r, 30r, 44r, 94r, 112v.

BAV, Urb. lat. 1046, fols. 123r-405r.

BAV, Urb. lat. 1046, fol. 303v.

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé


### Byzantium in the City of the Dragon. Cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto, the Cappella Gregoriana, and the Fashioning of Basilian Liturgy inside the Roman Curia in Late Sixteenth Century Rome

Towards the end of Gregory XIII's thirteen-year pontificate, the painter Girolamo Muziano executed an altarpiece, showing the Mass of St. Basil the Great, for one of the patronage altars dedicated to the Greek Church Father inside the recently completed Cappella Gregoriana in New St. Peter's Basilica. Muziano's altarpiece contributed decisively to the ceremonial arrangement of Gregory XIII's chapel in St. Peter's Basilica, which manifested a patristic tradition of the Roman liturgy that had been shaped by the Greek Church Fathers Basil the Great and St. Gregory of Nazianzenus, the other Greek patron commemorated in the Cappella Gregoriana. The paper aims at demonstrating how the administration of Greek patristics inside the Roman Curia, for which the Cardinal Librarian and Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Index Guglielmo Sirleto was primarily responsible, influenced the liturgical amplification of Curial Ceremony. Furthermore, Cardinal Sirleto's rich correspondence exhibits, as the following study will also attempt at showing, his energetic efforts in integrating the importance of a Greek body of patristic texts into the liturgical understanding of Curial Ceremony, which eventually established the authority of Byzantine liturgical thought amongst a select group of intellectuals and erudite cardinals working in the orbits of Gregory XIII's Roman Curia.

### Byzanz in der Stadt des Drachen. Kardinal Guglielmo Sirleto, die Cappella Gregoriana und die Ausgestaltung der basilianischen Liturgie in der römischen Kurie im Rom des späten 16. Jahrhunderts

Gegen Ende des dreizehnjährigen Pontifikats von Gregor XIII. schuf der Maler Girolamo Muziano ein Altarbild, das die Messe des heiligen Basilius des Großen zeigt, für einen der Patronatsaltäre, die dem griechischen Kirchenvater in der kürzlich fertiggestellten Cappella Gregoriana im Neuen Petersdom gewidmet sind. Muzianos Altarbild trug entscheidend zur zeremoniellen Gestaltung der Kapelle Gregors XIII. im Petersdom bei, die eine patristische Tradition der römischen Liturgie manifestierte, die von den griechischen Kirchenvätern Basilius dem Großen und dem heiligen Gregor von Nazianz geprägt worden war, dem anderen griechischen Schutzpatron, der in der Cappella Gregoriana verehrt wird. In der Studie soll gezeigt werden, wie die Pflege der griechischen Kirchenväter innerhalb der römischen Kurie, für die in erster Linie der Kardinalbibliothekar und Präfekt der Indexkongregation Guglielmo Sirleto verantwortlich war, die liturgische Erweiterung der kurialen Zeremonien beeinflusste. Darüber hinaus offenbart die umfangreiche Korrespondenz von Kardinal Sirleto, wie die folgende Studie ebenfalls zu zeigen versucht, seine energischen Bemühungen, die Bedeutung eines griechischen Korpus patristischer Texte in das liturgische Verständnis der kurialen Zeremonie zu integrieren, wodurch schließlich die Autorität des byzantinischen liturgischen Denkens bei einer ausgewählten Gruppe von Intellektuellen und gelehrten Kardinälen, die zur Zeit Gregors XIII. im Umfeld der römischen Kurie tätig waren, etabliert wurde.

### Byzance dans la Cité du Dragon. Le cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto, la chapelle grégorienne et la mise en forme de la liturgie basilienne au sein de la Curie romaine dans la Rome de la fin du XVI$^{e}$ siècle

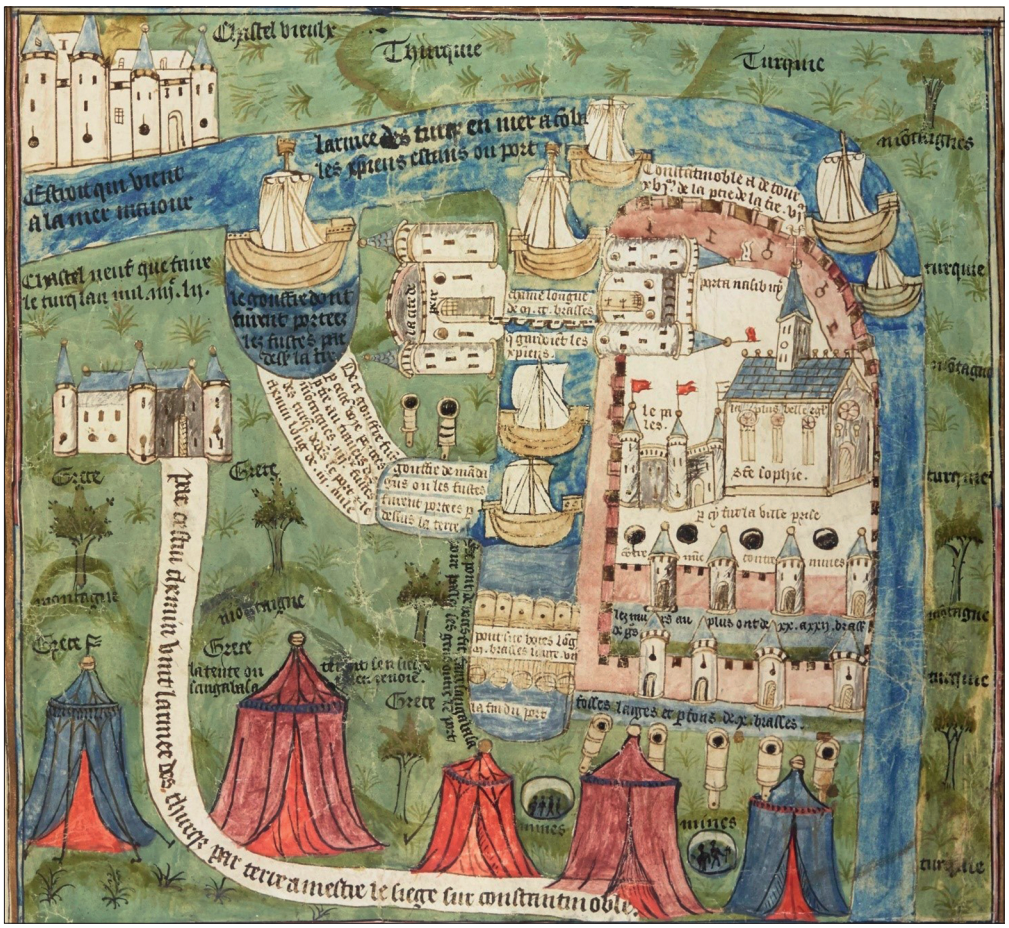
Vers la fin des treize années de pontificat de Grégoire XIII, le peintre Girolamo Muziano réalisa un retable représentant la messe de saint Basile le Grand pour l'un des autels de patronage dédiés au Père de l'Église grecque dans la chapelle grégorienne récemment achevée de la nouvelle basilique Saint-Pierre. Le retable de Muziano a contribué de manière décisive à l'aménagement cérémoniel de la chapelle de Grégoire XIII dans la basilique Saint-Pierre, qui manifestait une tradition patristique de la liturgie romaine façonnée par les Pères de l'Église grecque Basile le Grand et saint Grégoire de Nazianze, l'autre saint grec commémoré dans la chapelle grégorienne. L'article vise à démontrer comment l'administration de la pensée patristique grecque au sein de la Curie romaine, dont le cardinal bibliothécaire et préfet de la Congrégation de l'Index Guglielmo Sirleto était le principal responsable, a influencé l'amplification liturgique de la cérémonie curiale. En outre, la riche correspondance du cardinal Sirleto témoigne, comme l'étude suivante tentera également de le montrer, de ses efforts énergiques pour intégrer l'importance d'un corpus grec de textes patristiques dans la compréhension liturgique de la cérémonie curiale, qui a finalement établi l'autorité de la pensée liturgique byzantine parmi un groupe restreint d'intellectuels et de cardinaux érudits travaillant dans les sphères de la curie romaine de Grégoire XIII.

# III. Holy Roman Empire

Francesco Monticini

# The So-Called *Chronicle* of Jacopo Tedaldi and the Echo of the Fall of Constantinople at the Burgundian Court

The text commonly known as the *Chronicle* of Jacopo Tedaldi is one of the main sources for the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Tedaldi was an eyewitness to the fifty-five-day Ottoman siege of the city, in which he took part as a defender. My two previous articles, however, have focused on demonstrating that Tedaldi did not actually write this text, although he provided most of the information upon which it is based[1]. I have also suggested that it is not a »chronicle« in the strict sense of the word, but rather a private report addressed to the Cardinal of Avignon – Alain de Coëtivy[2] – by someone who was present on Venetian territory in the summer of 1453[3]. Before proceeding any further, it is worth summarising here the key conclusions of these previous articles. I will then discuss the relationship between the Burgundian court and the Byzantine Empire, focusing mainly on the reasons for Duke Philip III the Good's interest in the fate of Constantinople. Finally, I will present the main textual interpolations to which Tedaldi's *Chronicle* (I will continue to use this name for the text, for the sake of clarity) was subjected in Burgundy.


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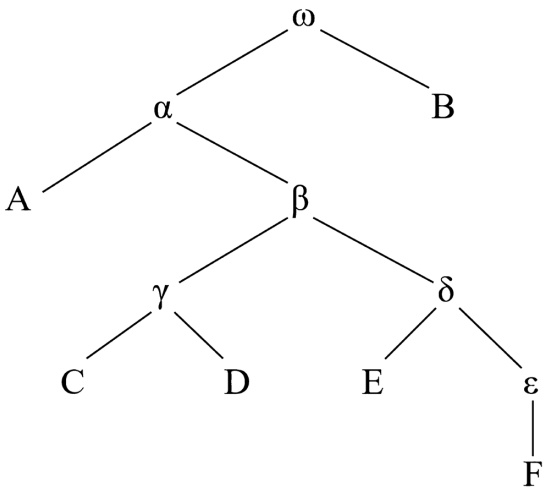
## From the Aegean to the Duchy of Burgundy: The Circulation of Tedaldi's *Chronicle*

P. D. Pogodin was the first scholar to point out that Tedaldi's *Chronicle* has come down to us in both Middle French and Latin versions[4]. In the 1950s, M.-L. Concasty added that the former is transmitted in six manuscripts, while the latter exists only in a *codex unicus*[5]. All six Middle French manuscripts can be traced back to the Duchy of Burgundy[6]. Moreover, Par. fr. 6487 (henceforth A) contains a subscription, which allows us to date this version to 31 December 1453:

> Datum ultima die mensis decembris anno Domini M°CCCC°LIII°. Collompnatum est praesens transumptum per me Johannem Columbi et apportate fuerunt de Constantinopoli per manum Johannem Blanchin. Sic signatum J. Columbi[7].

Below this subscription, we find a map of Constantinople (**fig. 1**) containing some details – especially in its keys – that are missing from the text of the *Chronicle* and therefore cannot have been taken from it. On the basis of these details, as well as of the chronological proximity of this manuscript witness to the fall of Constantinople, Concasty suggested that A transmits the archetype of the Middle French version of the *Chronicle*. Since she noticed many Italianisms in the text, she also suggested that it was the result of a translation from Italian into Middle French. In order to support her hypothesis, she suggested that the term »transumptum« – which appears in the subscription of A – should be taken to mean »translated«. According to Concasty's theory, Tedaldi sent his account of the siege of Constantinople to a person called »Johannes Blanchin«, probably in Negroponte, a few days after the fall of the city. »Blanchin« wrote down Tedaldi's report in Italian. At the end of 1453, in Burgundy, »Johannes Columbi« translated (»transumptum«) it into Middle French. Some months later, the *Chronicle* was altered and translated into Latin, in order to be transformed into a propaganda text inciting Westerners to crusade against the Ottomans[8].

If we compare all the Middle French manuscripts, however, we obtain the following *stemma codicum*:




A Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 6487, 18$^{r}$-21$^{r}$;
B Bruxelles, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, 19684, 253$^{r}$-256$^{r}$;
C Cambrai, Bibliothèque Municipale, 1114, 28$^{r}$-30$^{r}$;
D Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 5036, 293$^{r}$-299$^{v}$;
E Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 15217, 67$^{v}$-72$^{v}$;
F Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 2691, 264$^{r}$-271$^{r}$.

As can easily be seen, this *stemma codicum* contradicts Concasty's theory on at least two points. Firstly, A cannot be regarded as the archetype of the Middle French manuscript tradition. Secondly, if all the Middle French texts are compared with the Latin version, it can be seen that the latter contains many errors that can only be found in F. It follows that the Latin version must derive from an antigraph of F (that is why the letter ε has been inserted in the *stemma*).

This reconstruction is therefore quite different from Concasty's. Since there are many Italianisms in all the Middle French versions, and not only in the text transmitted by A, it can be assumed that they were found in the archetype. However, I would argue that it is easier to explain their presence in the text by assuming that the author was not a native French speaker, than by assuming the existence of an original Italian version, for which we have no evidence.

On the basis of this survey of all the Middle French versions, it becomes clear that the preface to the *Chronicle* – which is only transmitted in C, D, E, and F – must be taken fully into account:

4 Pogodin, Obzor.
5 Concasty, Les informations 96-97. For the Middle French manuscripts see infra. The Latin *codex unicus* is Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, seria nova 12709, 53$^{r}$-58$^{v}$.
6 Monticini, La Chronique. All date to the second half of the fifteenth century.
7 A, 21$^{r}$, ll. 12-14.
8 Concasty, Les informations 103-105. 107-109.
9 C, 28$^{r}$, ll. 17-21.

> Information envoiie par Favesco de Trasne à tres reverent per en Dieu monseigneur le cardinal d'Avignon par Blanchin et Jacques Teceldy marchants florentins, lesquelz estoient en la chité de Constantinoble quant elle fu prise par le Turcq le XXXI[e] jour de may l'an mil IIII[C] LIII[9].
>
> Information envoyee par Francisco de Franc à tres reverend pere en Dieu monseigneur le cardinal d'Avignon que par Jean blanchin et Jacques Edaldy marchant florentin de la prinse de Constantinople par l'empereur turc le XXIX[e] jour de may mil CCCC cinquante trois, allaquelle ledit Jaques estoit personnellement[10].
>
> L'informacion envoyee par Fransesco de Trasne à tres reverend pere en Dieu monseigneur le cardinal d'Avignon et par Jehan Blanchin et Jaques Tetardi, marchans florentins, de l'entreprinse de Constantinoble faite par l'empereur turc le XIX[e] jour de mars l'an mil IIII[C] LIII[11].
>
> Information envoiee par Francisque à tres reverend pere en Dieu monseigneur le cardinal d'Avignon et eue par ycellui Blancet de Jacques Tetaldy marchant florentin, lequel estoit present à la prinse de Constantinoble. Comment Morbesan turcq, lieutenant du grant empereur Duoganes, assiega et prist la cité de Constantinoble[12].

Despite the presence of textual discrepancies, most of which can mostly be explained as the result of the copying process, the content of these lines is clear. A person called »Francesco de Trane« sent a private message about the fall of Constantinople to the Cardinal of Avignon. Francesco had received this information from »Jean Blanchin«, who had in his turn received it from an eyewitness of the siege, i. e. the Florentine merchant Jacopo Tedaldi. Although this *incipit* does not appear in either A or B, it is reasonable to assume that it must have been present in the archetype. Otherwise, it would be impossible to explain the references to Tedaldi and »Blanchin« that are nevertheless to be found in A and B[13].

I have suggested identifying »Blanchin« with Giovanni Bianchini[14], a merchant and diplomat of the Estensi family in Venice, and »Francesco de Trane« with Francesco di Franco[15], nephew or illegitimate son of Tommaso Franco[16]. Given that the latter was the official physician of the king of France in 1453, there is no doubt that Francesco could potentially have been in contact with the Cardinal of Avignon[17]. While Bianchini was a representative of a Signoria with close ties to Byzantium, di Franco – who also had, moreover, Peloponnesian origins – was a member of the Venetian pro-Byzantine party.

I therefore believe that Bianchini met Tedaldi on Venetian territory (in Negroponte or, more likely, in Venice) after the latter's flight from Constantinople and before his return to Florence[18]. Tedaldi gave Bianchini his account of the siege of the city. In the following weeks, Bianchini and/or Francesco di Franco – both based in Venetian territory – received further news of the politico-military situation in the East. If they had been stationed in Venice, as is very likely, they may have learned of this from some of the letters sent from the Venetian colonies in the Aegean[19] to the West. In any case, between July and August 1453, Francesco di Franco finally sent the *Chronicle* – which contained all the information he had at hand – to the cardinal of Avignon. It was not an official document, but, as we have already said, a private message. This is probably why it was not written in Latin – the common language of diplomacy at the time[20] – but in French. Of course, Francesco di Franco's mother tongue was Italian; although he had many connections with France, he was not a native French speaker.

It is clear that the *Chronicle* was sent to its final addressee no later than the end of the summer 1453. D, E, and F, contain the following sentence (below the version from D: the others only differ in minimal details, clearly due to the copying process):

> On extime que à cest esté le Turc ne fera nul autre grant fait d'armes, mais entendra à ses fais pour venir en Constantinople. Ses gens retourner vouldront chacun en sa maison pour recuillir leurs biens et reposer, mais on peult bien tenir pour certain qu'il se apprestera merveilleusement par mer et par terre pour se metre sus en temps nouvel[21].

It is unlikely that it would have made any sense to insert such a sentence in the text after the end of the summer of 1453. Since it cannot be a later interpolation, thus, it must have been part of the original text addressed to the Cardinal of Avignon. We can therefore be sure that the *Chronicle* was sent by its actual author – Francesco di Franco – to Alain de Coëtivy before the issue of the papal bull of 30 September 1453 – *Etsi Ecclesia Christi* – which openly incited the Westerners to crusade against the Ottomans. The fact that this sentence is not found in A is further evidence that this

10 D, 293[r], ll. 3-8.
11 E, 67[v], ll. 2-6.
12 F, 264[r], col. 2, ll. 5-14.
13 A, 20[r], ll. 31, 44 (Tedaldi) 21[r], l. 14, and *supra* (Blanchin); B, 256[r], ll. 5, 21 (Tedaldi).
14 Boffito, Le Tavole 378-388. 446-460; Federici Vescovini, Bianchini 194-196.
15 Harris, Greek 199.
16 On Tommaso Franco, see Hamy, Thomas; Foffano, Tommaso.
17 Alain de Coëtivy wrote some letters of recommendation for Byzantine émigrés in the West, e. g. for John Ierarchis (Cardinal Domenico Capranica also wrote a letter for him). Moreover, after a stay in London, Ierarchis was at the court of the duke of Burgundy in Lille in 1455 (Harris, Greek 67 n. 122; Harris, Who Was Who 160-161).
18 Taking into account the chronology of Tedaldi's escape, they could have met either in early June (in Negroponte) or on 4-5 July (in Venice). Cf. Monticini, La Chronique.
19 It is likely that some letters of Isidore of Kiev were included among their sources (Monticini, La Chronique).
20 Pogodin, Obzor 228.
21 D, 298[r], ll. 13-19.

manuscript cannot be the archetype of the Middle French manuscript tradition, as Concasty supposed. It is therefore more reasonable to understand the term »transumptum« as meaning »shortened«, rather than »translated«, as Concasty understood it[22]; the Italian word »transunto« – »summary«, »abstract« – seems to confirm this hypothesis[23].

We have proof that the *Chronicle* reached its final addressee. In both A and B – that is to say, in the manuscripts that are closer to the archetype – we read the following sentence:

> La brasse est et contient environ pou plus trois paulmes et demie de la cane d'Avignon[24].
>
> La brace contenans environ III paulmes et demy de la cane de Avignon[25].

Of course, it would not have made sense to insert this equation between two units of measurement in any town other than Avignon. Since it is found in two different places in the text transmitted by A and B, it is very likely that it was a marginal note in the archetype. It may have been added in the margin of a manuscript in Avignon; afterwards, it may then have become part of the main text, being inserted in different places in the two branches of the tradition (α and B); finally, it would no longer have been copied in the later manuscripts because, as we know, the tradition developed in Burgundy, at a considerable distance from Avignon.

In fact, it is very likely that the text that arrived in Burgundy from Avignon was the archetype of the surviving tradition. But when exactly did it arrive there? The subscription that is found in A gives us a *terminus ante quem* (31 December 1453). However, the *Chronicle* probably arrived in the Duchy of Burgundy in the autumn of 1453, i. e. between the end of September (when Nicholas V's bull was issue) and December, when Duke Philip the Good sent one of his counsellors – Antoine de Tournai – to the French court, in order to sound out King Charles VII's on his intentions to organise and take part in a crusade against the Ottomans with the aim of reconquering Constantinople[26].

Afterwards, probably in the context of the Feast of the Pheasant – given by Duke Philip the Good in Lille on 17 February 1454, in order to respond to Nicholas V's call for war – the *Chronicle* was altered and became a propaganda text inciting the Western lords to crusade against the infidels. In order to perform this task more efficiently, it would later be translated into Latin[27].

## The Duchy of Burgundy and the Byzantine Empire

The reason why the Duke of Burgundy was so interested in the Eastern Empire is easy to explain: since he was the direct heir of Baldwin II of Courtenay, he could claim the title of Latin Emperor of Constantinople. In fact, the Valois family had been concerned with events in the Byzantine Empire for centuries before Philip the Good became Duke of Burgundy. By his marriage with Catherine I of Courtenay – Latin Empress of Constantinople *de iure*, as granddaughter of Baldwin II – Charles of Valois acquired the imperial title in 1301. As Charles of Anjou – Catherine's maternal grandfather – had done some decades before[28], Charles of Valois planned to attack the Byzantine Empire and restore the Latin throne of Constantinople[29]. His nephew – the King of France, Philip V the Tall – harboured similar ambitions. That their plans did not come to fruition was more due to the Western political situation than to Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos' diplomatic activity[30]. It is not surprising, therefore, that interest in the Byzantine Empire at the court of Burgundy arose with the first Valois Duke, Philip II the Bold, who had inherited the ducal title in the form of a feudal concession from his father, the King of France, John II. Evidence of his concern for the Eastern Empire is the presence in his library of the oldest known manuscript containing the complete translation into Middle French of two treaties by Theodore I Palaiologos, Marquis of Montferrat[31]. But Philip the Bold's ducal library also contained many books about the East, including Geoffrey of Villehardouin's account of the conquest of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade[32]. If the Valois Dukes of Burgundy had succeeded in restoring the Latin throne of Constantinople, they would have taken advantage of their imperial title to assert their sovereignty and royal dignity, which the king of France did not acknowledge. For this reason, Philip the Bold played a leading role in the organisation and financing of the Crusade of Nicopolis against Sultan Bayezid I in 1396, in which Philip's son John personally took part (because of the bravery John demonstrated on this occasion, he gained the nickname »Fearless«). Therefore, Philip the Good – who was John's son – would also have avenged his father's defeat at

22 In fact, Concasty herself admitted that »copié« »c'est le sens du mot transumptum, qui n'implique pas l'idée de traduction« (Concasty, Les informations 101, n. 4).
23 Vocabolario Treccani.
24 A, 18$^{r}$, l. 40.
25 B, 253$^{v}$, ll. 43-44.
26 Concasty, Les informations 105.
27 For the Latin version of Tedaldi's Chronicle, see Martène / Durand, Veterum 785-800; Philippides, Mehmed 134-217.
28 As the Normans did before him, Charles aimed at occupying the Byzantine territories. To do so, he did not hesitate to conclude an agreement with Baldwin II, whom he intended to restore to his throne (Geanakoplos, Emperor 189-257; Laiou/Morrisson, Le monde 16).
29 Laiou/Morrisson, Le monde 17-19; Laiou, Constantinople 212-220.
30 Laiou/Morrisson, Le monde 18-19.
31 Di Branco/Izzo, L'elogio.
32 See Leopold, Crusading 221-222, also for a list of the main works on the East owned by Duke Philip the Bold.

Nicopolis, had he defeated the Ottomans and reconquered the city[33]. He was probably planning a crusade as early as 1436, but it was only in 1438 that he began the construction of a fleet[34] that was sent to Rhodes in response to the Hospitallers' appeals for relief against the Mamluks[35].

Duke Philip the Good's preoccupation with Byzantium led to the production of several literary works dealing with the Eastern Empire and its territory. Yet we do not observe a strong interest in Constantinople in contemporary Burgundian fiction. Moreover, when the city is mentioned in these stories, its description is clearly based on traditional stereotypes, without any reference to historical reality[36]. When it comes to travelogues, espionage reports, and military advice, the situation is quite different. Philip the Good expanded the ducal library's holdings on to the East by acquiring and ordering the translation of many works containing crusade plans[37]. In particular, he encouraged and supported two missions to the East[38]: that of Guillebert de Lannoy in 1421-1423 (Lithuania, Moldavia, the Crimea, Constantinople, Rhodes, Jerusalem, Cairo, Crete, Venice[39]) and that of Bertrandon de la Broquière in 1432-1433 (Venice, Jerusalem, Asia Minor, Constantinople, the Balkans, Hungary, Vienna[40]). Both missions resulted in written reports: Guillebert de Lannoy's *Rapports*[41], and Bertrandon de la Broquière's *Le voyage d'outremer*[42]. It is worth noting, however, that the latter was put into writing no earlier than 1455[43]. It is also worth noting that, in most of the extant manuscripts[44], it is followed by the advice that the Cretan-Venetian Giovanni Torcello – who spent twelve years at Murad II's court (probably 1426-1438) and was later in the service of the Emperor John VIII Palaiologos[45] – gave at the council of Florence on 16 January 1439. Torcello's advice was brought to the Duchy of Burgundy by the Florentine Andrea da Palazzago[46]. In the manuscripts, we also read some of Bertrandon de la Broquière's comments on this text: in some cases, he contested the data provided by Torcello, in particular with regard to the number of Ottoman and Eastern Christian units, which he considered as being higher and lower respectively[47].

Among the main works on the Byzantine Empire commissioned by the dukes of Burgundy we should also include the speech delivered by Jean Germain, bishop of Nevers and Chalon-sur-Saône, in front of King Charles VII in 1452. At that time, Germain was Philip the Good's ambassador at the court of France. It was in this role that he delivered this speech, in which he supported a Christian military expedition to the East, aimed at the reconquest of the Holy Land[48].

## Tedaldi's *Chronicle* in the Duchy of Burgundy

A highly significant interpolation in Tedaldi's *Chronicle* can be noted in the version conveyed by F. This is, in fact, the only manuscript to transmit to us a chapter not found in any of the other manuscripts, which deals with an alleged desecration of Saint Sophia. According to this text, the Ottomans are alleged to have raped many aristocratic women there, including the empress[49]:

> Item, ladite entree fut moult piteuse et doloureuse pour les crestiens, car aprés que lesdis Turcqz eurent pocession paisible de laditte cité se transporterent és eglises d'icelles et par especial en la maistresse appellee Sainte Sophie, qui est belle, large, grande et spacieuse. Et là trouverent pluiseurs dames et damoiselles et femmes de grant auctorité, et pluiseurs aultres filles pucelles, avecq lesquelles ilz commirent adultere, et aux autres eurent leur compaignie charnelle de force et oultre leurs grez et voulentez au comptent de Dieu, nostre createur et de la foy catholicque. Et mesmement ledit Turcq violla en ycelle eglise la femme de l'empereur et la tint pour sa concubine et l'emmena avec lui quant il partist de laditte cité. Pluiseurs aussy de ses gens commirent aussy le pechié de luxure contre nature en pluiseurs et diverses manieres[50].

It is evident that this chapter was inserted in the *Chronicle* to shock the Western readers and elicit a response[51]. This description of the profanation of Saint Sophia would recur – even amplified – in many later Burgundian works on the fall of Constantinople: in particular, in Olivier de La Marche's

33 Barsi, Constantinople 132.
34 It was constructed at Sluis, Brussels, and Antwerp. It is possible that the decision to create a Burgundian fleet was partly linked with the Council of Ferrara-Florence, where the Pope promised to provide some ships to help in the defence of Constantinople (Vaughan, Philip 270-271).
35 The Burgundian fleet was sent to Rhodes in 1441 and 1444 (Vaughan, Philip 270-271; Leopold, Crusading 222; Paviot, Burgundy 71).
36 Colombo Timelli, Cherchez.
37 For a list, see Leopold, Crusading 222; see also infra. Among these works, there was also the crusade proposal that the Cretan-Venetian merchant Emanuele Piloti addressed to Pope Eugenius IV in 1420; it is worth noting that Piloti predicted the fall of Constantinople (Leopold, Crusading 224).
38 Pippidi, Visions 14-15.
39 Vaughan, Philip 269; Arié, Un seigneur 284. 292-298.
40 Vaughan, Philip 270; Bárány, Burgundian 265. Bertrandon came back to the West dressed like a Turk, bringing a copy of the Koran. According to his report, at first the innkeepers of Vienna refused him lodging, believing him an infidel (Schwoebel, Coexistence 171; Vaughan, Philip 270).
41 Guillebert de Lannoy delivered this work to Duke Philip the Good at the end of his mission in 1423 (Arié, Un seigneur 292).
42 For the most recent critical edition of this work, see Cappellini, The Voyage.
43 Barsi, Constantinople 136.
44 That is to say, in three manuscripts out of four: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 5593, 254$^{v}$-257$^{r}$; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 5639, 76$^{v}$-78$^{r}$; Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 4798, 259$^{r}$-261$^{r}$. See also Schefer, Le voyage 263-266.
45 Barsi, Constantinople 143-144.
46 Schefer, Le voyage 263.
47 Schefer, Le voyage 267-274; cf. Barsi, Constantinople 144.
48 Schefer, Le Discours; Barsi, Constantinople 145-148.
49 The legendary presence of a nameless empress in Constantinople at the time of the fall is firstly attested in Nestor-Iskander (Philippides/Hanak, The Tale 46-47. 88-89), but it would also recur later (Philippides/Hanak, The Siege 132-136. 202-204).
50 F, 268$^{v}$, coll. 1-2, ll. 16-23.
51 We also read something similar in Germain's speech, although in this text the infidels are said to have committed sacrilegious acts in Jerusalem (Barsi, Constantinople 147).

*Mémoires* and Georges Chastellain's *Chronique*, but also in Jacques Du Clercq's *Mémoires*, Jean de Wavrin's *Croniques et anchiennes istories*, and Matthieu d'Escouchy's *Chronique*[52]. It is also possible that there exists a connection between this interpolation in F and the speech that the bishop of Tournai, Guillaume de Fillastre, delivered, as the ambassador of Philip the Good, before Pope Pius II in 1463[53].

The most important interpolation to which Tedaldi's text was subjected in Burgundy, however, consists of the long final chapter (henceforth *coda*) to be found only in D, E, and F (as well as in the Latin version of the *Chronicle*[54]). The transcription of the three versions of the *coda* can be found at the end of the article as an appendix. Here we restrict ourselves to summarizing the most important elements that are to be found in it:

a. All Christian princes should make peace with one another;
b. All the main Italian ground forces (Venice, Milan, Florence) should assemble twenty-thousand knights and gather them in Albania;
c. Venice, Genoa, and the king of Aragon should merge their fleets and take control of the Dardanelles, by conquering Gallipoli (in this way, the Ottoman units located in the Balkans could no longer be reinforced from Anatolia);
d. The German emperor, the Hungarians, the Bohemians, and the Poles, under the command of John Hunyadi[55], should attack Adrianople and occupy Greece;
e. The Sultan's army comprises two hundred thousand men; most of them are Christian people who would not hesitate to desert the Ottoman army and join the Catholic one, as soon as they learn that a crusade against the infidels is underway;
f. The Turks are not used to barricading themselves in towns or in any sort of fortification, but they prefer to camp in the countryside; this feature might make them more vulnerable;
g. All these Catholic military operations are parts of a single, well-coordinated plan; were it to succeed, other Christian peoples (e. g. the Russians, the Greeks), and even the Bey of Karaman, Ibrahim II[56], would wage war against the Ottomans;
h. It is essential to act rapidly, so as not to give the Sultan enough time to prepare an attack against the West.

As noted above, we should contextualize this text to the framework of the Feast of the Pheasant, when the *coda* was probably added to Tedaldi's *Chronicle*. The project of a crusade against the Ottomans by land and by sea was partially revived by Philip the Good's military advisers in 1456[57], whereas it was abandoned by later Burgundian authors of tactical plans[58]. But an interesting point to investigate here is the possible source of the *coda*. It is very probable that the author(s) of this interpolation relied on some military plans that were already available at the court of Burgundy in early 1454. Torcello's advice seems to be the most important model. It contains at least two key elements that are to be found in Tedaldi's *coda*. Firstly, the assertion that many Christian people who are presently subjects of the Sultan would rebel against him, if a Catholic army were to embark upon a crusade against the Ottomans (cf. point e):

> Il y a après Albanye où sont deux seigneurs qui pourroyent mettre sus vingt mil hommes à cheval qui pareillement, tantost qu'ilz verroient puissance de chrestiens, prestement se tourneroyent contre le Turc. […] Et oultre ces seigneurs cy, il y a plus de cinquante mil hommes chrestiens qui sont subjectz au Turc et incontinent qu'ilz verroyent la puissance des chrestiens se rebelleroyent contre le Turc et seroyent ceulx qui plus le destruiroyent. Et oultre tous ceulx cy, il y a une grande multitude de chrestiens subjectz au Turc par tribut qui tous se rebelleroyent contre luy[59].

Secondly, the specification that this military expedition should simultaneously be mounted by land and by sea; that is, a ground force should cross the Danube at Vidin, in order to occupy Adrianople, while the Venetians and Catalans should employ their fleets to take control of the Straits and prevent the passage of Ottoman units from Asia to Europe (cf. points c, d)[60]:

> De Vidinc jusques à Andrenopoly a quinze journées: de Andrenopoly jusques à Constantinoble a trois journées et de Andrenopoly jusques à Galipoly qui est port de mer et le passaige de Turquie a trois journées. Et si la puissance peult joindre à Andrenopoly, il n'est plus riens à dobter, car tout le pays se rebellera contre le Turc et ceulx du pays propre seront ceulx qui le destryront[61].

52 Barsi, Constantinople 169-175.
53 Barsi, Constantinople 149-150.
54 Philippides, Mehmed 214-216.
55 He was regent of Hungary between 1446 and 1453 and captain general of that kingdom from 1453 to his death.
56 He was the sovereign of a fairly small Turkoman beylik (»principality«) in southern Anatolia.
57 *S'ensuit ce qui est advisé que se doit mettre à exécution pour le voyage de Monseigneur le Duc* (cf. Barsi, Constantinople 160-162).
58 As in the plans devised by Geoffroy de Thoisy and Walleran de Wavrin, both conceived in 1464: the former advised a crusade by sea, while the latter advised a purely land-based crusade (Barsi, Constantinople 162-169).
59 Schefer, Le voyage 264-265.
60 Schefer, Le voyage 265-266.
61 Schefer, Le voyage 266.

It is worth noting that Guillebert de Lannoy also noted the strategic importance of the Dardanelles[62]. Like Tedaldi's *coda*, Germain's speech contained a reference to an expedition to be mounted by land and sea, with the aim of surrounding the Ottomans and making the Balkans (more specifically, the territory between the Danube and the Straits) a trap for them[63].

## Conclusions

It is clear, in conclusion, that the people who altered Tedaldi's *Chronicle* aimed at creating a perfect propaganda text. Their main goals were to shock the readers and incite them to approve a crusade against the Ottomans. We may add that the person(s) who inserted the *coda* mostly based his/their politico-military tactics on plans that preceded the fall of Constantinople. Torcello's advice – which, we repeat, dates to almost fifteen years before 1453 – remained a very relevant model, despite (or rather, because of) the intervening battle of Varna. On that occasion, in fact, the main reason for the Christian defeat was that the Venetian fleet was not able to prevent Murad II's army from crossing the Dardanelles[64]. In the 1450s, one could still suppose that, if the Christians had taken control of the passage between Europe and Asia, the outcome of the crusade would have been different[65].

Thus, while di Franco's message was originally conceived as a private communication about a specific event – the fall of Constantinople – it was sent from Avignon to the Duchy of Burgundy only to be used as a source of current data to plan a military expedition in the East. In this sense, we may perhaps affirm that the addition of the *coda* to Tedaldi's *Chronicle* in the context of the Feast of the Pheasant was not conceived as being an actual interpolation into a text addressing the siege of the city, but rather as the creation of an updated version – containing reliable new data – of already-existing crusade plans.

## Appendix[66]

**D**[67]

Mais se les crestiens y pourvoyent, on dit fermement que on le chassera du païs et conquestera on le païs pour jamais et la maniere d'y pourveoir sont cestes. Premierement, il fault faire paix entre les princes crestiens. Item, fauldroit que les Veniciens, le duc de Millen, les Flourentins et autres seigneures d'Itallies feissent une armee de vingt mil chevaulx et bien à point et autres bons capitaines, laquelle fust conduite par Albanue jusques aux conduis des crestiens, et là se poser en leur fort, en habundance de vivres, et que là ilz seroient seürs et incontinent aucmités balbanues, Sclavons et autres nations crestiennes qui voulentiers vendroient pour deffendre la foy. Par mer, oultre l'armee faite, à icelle fauldroit adjoindre une autre du roy d'Arragon, de Veniciens, de Jennevois, de corsaires et aultres qui sont à la marine, qui suffiroit à vaincre celle du Turc, se elle n'est plus grosse qu'elle n'est à present. Laquelle armee s'en allast au port de Nigropont pour prendre Sacombolin et ses aultres lieux du Turc, et obvier au passage de l'estroit que le Turc veult faire de Turquie en Grece et de Grece en Turquie. Item, fauldroit que l'empereur, les Hongrés, les Boesmes, les Pollons et autres nations dudit païs, avecques Jehan Uaniode, tres redoubté au Turc, feissent une autre armee et entrast en Grece par Andrinopole et autres lieux occupez du Turc, et fauldroit tenir la maniere que toutes ces armees fussent ung temps ausdit lieux et eussent bonne intelligence l'un de l'autre, de ce qui s'ensuiroit en cest effet. Le Turc qui à ceste fois a fait tout son effort n'a que deux cens mil hommes que bons que meschans, entre lesquieulx y a grant quantité de crestiens et autres ses subgiez qui le suyvent mal voulentiers, lesquieulx, se ilz sentoient l'armee des crestiens, l'abandonneroient et se adjoindroient aux crestiens. Item, le Turc par nature et usance ne tient point la guerre à cité ne à ville ne à chastel, mais tient continuellement aux champs luy et toute sa force, et pour ce se debilitera luy et les siens. En oultre les crestiens de Russie et des aultres païs s'en vendroient tous à l'armee des crestiens. En oultre le Caraman qui est grant seigneur et ennemy capital du Turc, si a advisé que se crestiens guerroyent le Turc et l'oppressent grandement, il leur fera guerre. En Grece n'aura marchant ne laboureur qui ne porte vivre aux crestiens. Les vivres fauldront au Turc en Grece, le païs de Turquie luy sera rompu par la mer. Les crestiens de Grece vouldront à l'espee vouldront recouvrir leurs terres et lieux occupez du Turc. Et aussi se les armees s'aprouchent pou à pou l'une de l'autre, il n'est nul

62 Potvin, Œuvres 66; cf. Vaughan, Philip 269; Barsi, Constantinople 135.
63 Schefer, Le Discours 337; cf. Barsi, Constantinople 148.
64 Accounts differ as to why, some suggesting difficult weather, others implicating Christian traitors (Ravegnani, Bisanzio 181).
65 Later, as has been noted, the Burgundian authors of crusade plans changed their mind and started advising that expeditions be mounted either by land or by sea. The tactical reinforcement of the Ottomans in the Balkans and in the area around the straits probably caused this change.
66 For some commentaries on the transcription of these texts, see Monticini, La Chronique.
67 298$^{r}$-299$^{v}$, ll. 20-13.

doubte que en brief le Turc et son excercite ne soit du tout deffait et affamé et deffait. Se on n'y pourvoie diligemment et que on donne temps et loisir au Turc de se mettre à point en mer et en terre, il n'est nul doubte qu'il ne face grande esclandre en crestienté, dont Dieu nous gard.

**E**[68]

Mais se les chrestiens y pourvoient promptement, on tient fermement qu'on le chassera du pays et acquestera l'en tout le pays à tout jamais, et les manieres d'y pourveoir sont telles. Premierement, il fauldroit faire paix entre les chrestiens. Item, fauldroit que les Veniciens, le duc de Milan, les Florentins et autres seigneurs d'Italye feissent une armee de XX$^{M}$ chevaulx bien en point et bons capitaines, laquelle fust conduicte devers prime par Albanie jusques aux courssans des chrestiens et là se posast, en lieu habondant de vivres, que là où ilz seront ou seroient seürs et augmentez d'Albanoys, Sallompnoys et autres nacions chrestiennes qui voulentiers venrroient pour deffendre la foy chrestienne. Par mer, oultre l'armee ja faitte, à icelle fauldroit adjoingdre une autre du roy d'Arragon, de Veniciens, de Genevoix, de Florentins, de corsaires et autres gens qui sont à la marine, qui souffiroit à vaincre celle du Turq, celle n'est plus grosse que celle de present. Laquelle armee s'en alast au port de Nigrepont pour prendre Sirvapoly et ces autres lieux, pour obvier au passage de l'estroit que le Turq veult faire de Turquie en Grecce et en tout […]. Item, fauldroit que l'empereur, les Hongrés, les Boesmes, les Poullons, les Boasves et autres nacions d'icellui pays, avec Jehan Uawoda, en ceste partie tres redoubté, eulx feissent une autre armee, qui seroit en Grecce par Andronopoly et autres lieux occuppez du Turq. Et fauldroit tenir maniere que toutes ces armees feussent toutes en ung temps esdiz lieux et eussent toute intelligence l'une et l'autre, si s'enssuroit cest effect. Le Turq, qui à ceste fois a fait tout son effort, n'a que deux C mil hommes tant bons que meschans, entre lesquelz y a grande quantité de chrestiens et autres ses subgetz qui le suivent mal voulentiers, lesquelx, sentans l'armee des chrestiens, habandonneroient le Turq et s'ajoundroient aux chrestiens. Item, le Turq par nature et d'usage n'atent point la guerre ne en cité n'en chastiau, mais se tient continuellement aux champs lui et toute sa force: parquoy se debilitera lui et les siens. En oultre les chrestiens de Rucie et des autres pays d'environ venroient tous à l'armee des chrestiens. En oultre le Haramen, qui est grant seigneur en Turquie, ennemy capital du Turq, s'il est advisé que chrestiens guerroient le Turq, oppressera grandement le Turq en Turquie et lui fera guerre. En Grecce n'y aura paysant ne laboureur qui n'apporte vivres aux chrestiens. Les vivres fauldront aux Turqs en Grecce, le pays de Turquie leur sera rompu par la mer. Les chrestiens de Grecce vouldront recouvrer à l'esppee leurs terres et lieux du Turq. Ainsi, mais que les armees s'approchent po à po l'une de l'autre, il n'est nulle doubte que bref le Turq et son excercite ne soit affamé et deffait, mais se on n'y pourvoye diligenment et que on donne temps et loisir au Turq de soy mettre à point par mer et par terre, il n'est nulle doubte qu'il ne face grande esclandre en crestienté, dont Dieu nous gart par sa bonté. Amen.

**F**[69]

Mais se crestiens y pourvoient prestement, on tient fermement qu'on les chassera hors du païs et concquestera l'en sur eulx ce que par cy devant ont concquesté, et la maniere d'y pourveoir seroit telle. Premierement, fauldroit faire paix entre les crestiens. Item, fauldroit que les Veniciens, le duc de Millan, les Florentins et autres seigneurs d'Itallie feissent une armee de vingt mille chevaulx bien en point et bons capitaines, laquelle fut conduite devers Pere par Albanye jusques aux ce<n>sives des chrestiens et là se posast en lieu habondant de vivres, car là ilz sont et seroient sceurs et incontinent augmentez d'Albanoiz, Sclavons et autres nations crestiennes qui voulentiers vendroient pour deffendre la loy catholicque. Item, par mer oultre l'armee ja faitte en ycelle fauldroit adjoindre une autre armee du roy d'Arragon, des Veniciens, des Genevois, des Florentins, corzaire<s> et autres gens qui sont en l'aomee, qui souffiroit à vaincre celle du Turcq s'elle n'estoit plus grosse qu'elle n'est de present, laquelle allast au port de Nygrepont pour prendre Sagripoli et pour prendre autres lieux du Turcq et obvier au passage de l'estroit que le Turcq veult faire de Turquie en Grece et en contee. Il fauldroit que l'empereur, les Hongrés, les Boesmes, les Poulains, les Vaisves et autres nations d'icellui, avecques Jehan Ubayubada, en ceste partie tres redoubté des Turcqz, feissent une autre armee qui entrast en Grece pour prendre Andripoli et autres lieux occuppez des Turcqs. Et fauldroit tenir maniere que toutes ces choses fuissent en ung temps esdis lieux et eussent bonne inteligence l'une de l'autre de ce faire sieuvant cest effet. Item, le Turcq qui a fait tout son effort et toute sa puissance n'a que deux cens mille hommes tant en bons qu'en meschans, entre lesquelz y a grant quantité de crestiens et autres ses subgetz qui le sieuvent mal voulentiers, lesquelz sentans l'armee des crestiens habandonneroient le Turcq et se conjoindroient aux

68 71$^{v}$-72$^{v}$, ll. 21-24.

69 270$^{v}$-271$^{r}$, col. 1-col. 1, ll. 2-13.

aultres crestiens. Item, le Turcq par nature et usage n'aterit point la guerre en cité n'en chasteau, mais se tient continuellement aux champs lui et toute sa puissance: pourquoy se deminuera lui et les siens. Item, les crestiens de Ressine et de ces autres païs vendroient tout à l'armee des crestiens. Item, en oultre se Taramam, qui est grant seigneur en Turquie, est ennemy mortel au Turcq; pourquoy, s'il estoit ainsy que crestiens guerroiassent le Turcq, il l'oppresseroit grandement en Turquie et lui feroit guerre et à pou de chose se tourneroit avec les crestiens. Item, en Grece n'y aura sy puissant ou laboureurs qui ne porte armes aux crestiens. Les vivres lui fauldroient en Grece, le païs de Turquie lui sera empesché par mer. Les crestiens de Grece vouldront recouvrer à l'espee leurs terres et lieux que le Turcq tient et occuppe. Ainsy, mais que les armees s'approuchent pou à pou l'une de l'autre, il n'est nulle doubte que brief le Turcq et son excercite ne soit affamee et deffaitte, mais se on n'y pourvoie dilligamment et que on donne temps et loisir au Turcq de soy mettre en point par mer et par terre, il n'est nulle doubte qu'il ne fache grande esclande aux crestiens, dont Dieu nous gard.

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé

### Jacopo Tedaldi's *Chronicle* and the Echo of the Fall of Byzantium at the Court of Burgundy

This paper deals with the *Chronicle* by the Florentine merchant Jacopo Tedaldi. As he was an eyewitness of the Turkish siege of Constantinople in 1453, his text is one of the main sources of the last days of the Byzantine Empire. By analysing the manuscript tradition of the Chronicle one can observe that it widely spread across the Duchy of Burgundy immediately after the Turkish conquest of the Polis. Thus, studying the textual tradition of Tedaldi's *Chronicle* largely means investigating the echo of the fall of Byzantium at the court of Duke Philip the Good.

We can read Tedaldi's *Chronicle* in a Middle-French version and in a Latin one. A thorough critical analysis of these texts allows us to establish not only that the latter derives from the former, but also that the archetype of the Middle French version originated its own textual tradition in Burgundy. On the basis of some assertions that are to be found in the *Chronicle*, we can reconstruct that the original text was sent from the Venetian territory to Avignon before the end of summer 1453. Since the most ancient manuscript conveying the Middle-French version of the *Chronicle* (Par. fr. 6487) contains a subscription dating from December 31, 1453, we may conjecture that our archetype – probably a direct copy of the original – reached the Duchy of Burgundy in mid-autumn. Thus, it is very likely that Duke Philip had already read Tedaldi's *Chronicle* – which contained much information on the military aspects of the fifty-five-day siege of the Polis – when he sent his counselor Antoine de Tornay to inform the King of France Charles VII about his intention of reconquering Constantinople (December 1453). Following the Feast of the Pheasant (February 1454), the *Chronicle* was altered and translated into Latin, becoming a propaganda message against the Turks to be spread across Europe.

In sum, we may state, on the one hand, that Tedaldi's text provided the court of Burgundy with many data on the defensive structures of Constantinople; and, on the other hand, that Duke Philip's policy conditioned the textual history of the *Chronicle*. By comparing all existing versions of this work between them, it is definitely possible to understand – at least in part – how the politicians of the most pro-Byzantine court in the West perceived the end of the *Basileia ton Romaion*.

### Jacopo Tedaldis Chronik und das Echo des Falls von Byzanz am Hof von Burgund

Dieser Artikel befasst sich mit der Chronik des florentinischen Kaufmanns Jacopo Tedaldi. Da er Augenzeuge der türkischen Belagerung von Konstantinopel im Jahr 1453 war, ist sein Text eine der Hauptquellen für die letzten Tage des Byzantinischen Reiches. Bei der Analyse der überlieferten Manuskripte der Chronik kann man feststellen, dass sie sich unmittelbar nach der türkischen Eroberung von Polis im Herzogtum Burgund weit verbreitet hat. Die Untersuchung der Textüberlieferung von Tedaldis Chronik bedeutet daher im Wesentlichen, das Echo des Falls von Byzanz am Hof von Herzog Philipp dem Guten zu erforschen.

Wir können Tedaldis Chronik in einer mittelfranzösischen und einer lateinischen Version lesen. Eine gründliche kritische Analyse dieser Texte ermöglicht es uns nicht nur festzustellen, dass die letztere von der ersteren abstammt, sondern auch, dass der Archetyp der mittelfranzösischen Version seine eigene Texttradition in Burgund hervorgebracht hat. Anhand einiger Aussagen in der Chronik können wir rekonstruieren, dass der Originaltext vor Ende des Sommers 1453 aus dem venezianischen Gebiet nach Avignon geschickt wurde. Da die älteste Handschrift, die die mittelfranzösische Version der Chronik (Par. fr. 6487) enthält, eine Subskription vom 31. Dezember 1453 aufweist, können wir davon ausgehen, dass unser Urtext – wahrscheinlich eine direkte Kopie des Originals – Mitte Herbst im Herzogtum Burgund eintraf. Es ist also sehr wahrscheinlich, dass Herzog Philipp die Chronik Tedaldis bereits gelesen hatte – die viele Informationen über die militärischen Aspekte der 55-tägigen Belagerung der Stadt enthielt –, als er seinen Berater Antoine de Tornay

entsandte, um König Karl VII. von Frankreich über seine Absicht zu informieren, Konstantinopel zurückzuerobern (Dezember 1453). Nach dem Fasanenfest (Februar 1454) wurde die Chronik geändert und ins Lateinische übersetzt, um als Propagandabotschaft gegen die Türken in ganz Europa verbreitet zu werden.

Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen, dass Tedaldis Text dem burgundischen Hof einerseits viele Informationen über die Verteidigungsanlagen von Konstantinopel lieferte und dass andererseits die Politik von Herzog Philipp die Textgeschichte der Chronik beeinflusste. Durch den Vergleich aller vorhandenen Versionen dieses Werks ist es definitiv möglich, zumindest teilweise zu verstehen, wie die Politiker des byzantinischsten Hofes im Westen das Ende der *Basileia ton Romaion* wahrnahmen.

### La Chronique de Jacopo Tedaldi et l'écho de la chute de Byzance à la cour de Bourgogne

Cet article étudie la Chronique du marchand florentin Jacopo Tedaldi. Témoin oculaire du siège de Constantinople par les Turcs en 1453, son texte est l'une des principales sources sur les derniers jours de l'Empire byzantin. En analysant la tradition manuscrite de la Chronique on peut observer qu'elle s'est largement répandue dans le duché de Bourgogne immédiatement après la conquête turque de la Polis. Ainsi, étudier la tradition textuelle de la Chronique de Tedaldi revient en grande partie à enquêter sur l'écho de la chute de Byzance à la cour du duc Philippe le Bon.

On peut lire la Chronique de Tedaldi dans une version en moyen français et dans une version en latin. Une analyse critique approfondie de ces textes permet d'établir non seulement que le second dérive du premier, mais aussi que l'archétype de la version moyen-française a donné naissance à sa propre tradition textuelle en Bourgogne. Sur la base de certaines affirmations que l'on trouve dans la Chronique, on peut reconstruire que le texte original a été envoyé du territoire vénitien à Avignon avant la fin de l'été 1453. Comme le plus ancien manuscrit transmettant la version moyen-française de la Chronique (Par. fr. 6487) contient une souscription datée du 31 décembre 1453, on peut supposer que notre archétype – probablement une copie directe de l'original – est parvenu au duché de Bourgogne à la mi-automne. Il est donc très probable que le duc Philippe ait déjà lu la Chronique de Tedaldi – qui contenait de nombreuses informations sur les aspects militaires du siège de Constantinople, qui dura cinquante-cinq jours – lorsqu'il envoya son conseiller Antoine de Tornay informer le roi de France Charles VII de son intention de reconquérir Constantinople (décembre 1453). Après le Banquet du faisan (février 1454), la Chronique fut modifiée et traduite en latin, devenant un message de propagande contre les Turcs à diffuser à travers l'Europe.

En résumé, nous pouvons constater, d'une part, que le texte de Tedaldi a fourni à la cour de Bourgogne de nombreuses données sur les structures défensives de Constantinople; et, d'autre part, que la politique du duc Philippe a conditionné l'histoire textuelle de la Chronique. En comparant entre elles toutes les versions existantes de cet ouvrage, il est tout à fait possible de comprendre, du moins en partie, comment les hommes politiques de la cour la plus pro-byzantine d'Occident percevaient la fin de la *Basileia ton Romaion*.

Nicholas Melvani

# Byzantine Constantinople and Habsburg Global Aspirations: The Reception of the Roman Imperial Heritage in Ottoman Istanbul by Scholars from the Holy Roman Empire*

## Introduction: Ambassadors and Antiquities

The Ottoman-Habsburg rivalry in Hungary and Ottoman expansion in eastern and central Europe resulted in intense diplomatic activity between the two empires and in the frequent presence of envoys from Vienna in Istanbul during the sixteenth century[1]. Spending time in the heart of the Ottoman capital brought these travelers into direct contact with the remains of Constantinople or New Rome, the legendary capital of the East Roman Empire and contributed significantly to their knowledge and understanding of the Byzantine city's physical space and its built environment. This paper will explore aspects of this experiential encounter with Byzantium and its impact on Habsburg perceptions of the Byzantine Empire within the framework of the confrontation with the Ottomans.

The diplomats selected to represent the Holy Roman Emperors belonged to the pioneering ranks of humanist and Reformation scholarship of the time: for example, the learned Ogier de Busbecq was a passionate collector of manuscripts containing literary and scientific works from classical antiquity[2]. The embassy's chaplains Stefan Gerlach and Salomon Schweigger were prominent theologians from Tübingen who came into contact with the Greek Patriarchate in an attempt to promote religious dialogue with the Orthodox[3]. Other officials and professionals joined the administrative staff of the delegation: Hans Dernschwam, a highly educated merchant in the service of the Fugger family enterprise[4], and the erudite apothecary Reinhold Lubenau from Königsberg are the most notable examples[5]. They were also joined by artists, some of whom were important figures on the international art scene; these painters and draftsmen were entrusted with the task of producing images of the Ottoman capital. The best-known cases are those of Pieter Coecke van Aelst in 1533 and Melchior Lorck in 1559, who executed, among other pictorial representations, spectacular panoramic views of the city[6]. These visitors recorded their impressions of the antiquities of imperial and Christian Constantinople in travel accounts and journals, some of which were published during their lifetimes, and illustrated their reports with appropriate woodcuts.

## Scholars and the Topography of Byzantine Constantinople

Based on their readings from classical geographers, mainly Strabo, Ptolemy, and Pliny, as well as on recent literature of the time (particularly the study of the Frenchman Pierre Gilles[7]), the visitors had a good knowledge of the geographical space of the Byzantine and Ottoman capital and its natural position, defined by the water volumes surrounding it, namely the Bosporus, the Propontis, and the Golden Horn. They were clearly aware of the limits of the historic capital's urban area, as contained within the three fortification lines, the Theodosian Land Walls to the west and the two branches of the maritime walls to the north (along the Golden Horn coast) and south (along the shore of the Propontis). For example, the aforementioned Reinhold Lubenau, who accompanied emperor Rudolf II's envoy to sultan Murad III in 1587-1588, wrote an extensive description of the three sections, including references to the Byzantine gates[8]. Likewise, Maximilian Brandstetter, the secretary of Adam Herberstein when the latter negotiated the peace treaty of 1608 between Rudolf II and Ahmed III, included in his account data about the overall extent of the fortifications (»Umbfang in der Ringmauer«) and a list of all 25 gates in the city's walls, from Bahçe Kapı (Czifut Kapi in the text) in the northeast, counterclockwise to Ahır Kapı in the southeast[9].

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1 Strohmeyer, Freundschaft; Ágoston, Conquest.
2 Gastgeber, Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq; Arrighi, Écritures.
3 Cazacu, Le patriarcat; Burschel, Topkapı. For the dialogue between the Protestant circles and the Patriarchate of Constantinople, see: Wendebourg, Reformation; Moore, Wittenberg.
4 Birnbaum, The Fuggers.
5 Koder, Lubenau.
6 Born, Mœurs 283-302; Westbrook/van Meeuwen, Reconstructing.
7 Grélois, Itinéraires.
8 Reinhold Lubenau 138-140.
9 Nehring, Herberstein 169.

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**Fig. 1** View of the inner courtyard of the Elçi Hanı facing north with the Column of Constantine in the background. – (After Vienna, Austrian National Library, Codex Vind. 8615 [end of 16th century], fol. 141r).

Indeed, the image of the formidable Land Walls was the first impression experienced by the incoming delegations, as they arrived from Vienna through the old military road that crossed the Balkans[10]. The account of Salomon Schweigger is illustrated with a woodcut depicting the ceremonial entry of the delegation headed by Joachim von Sintzendorf in 1578 and escorted by Ottoman cavalrymen[11].

The first encounter of incoming visitors from the west with the interior of the city was upon entering through the gate of Selymbria (Silivrikapı), from where an avenue leading to the center of Istanbul opened up[12]. By taking this route, they passed by the column of Arcadius (on which, see below) and ended up in their lodgings in the designated caravanserai. From the 1550s onwards the members of diplomatic missions to the Porte resided in the Elçi Hanı, also called the German House, a typical Ottoman urban caravanserai opposite the talismanic porphyry column of Constantine, that had once supported the sunlike statue of the city's founder[13]. The

10 For this road, see Yerasimos, Voyageurs 43-53; Jireček, Heerstrasse; Popovic, Von Budapest.
11 Schweigger, Reiss Beschreibung 50-51.
12 For this street, see Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer 213-214.
13 Eyice, Elçihanı. For the Column of Constantine and the eponymous forum, see Kaldellis, Forum; Ousterhout, Life.



**Fig. 2** Sultan Süleyman I riding through the ruins of the Hippodrome of Constantinople. – (After Pieter Coecke van Aelst, Les moeurs et fachons de faire de Turcz… Antwerp [?], 1553. London, British Museum).

building is no longer preserved, but its location facing the Column of Constantine and the mosque of Atik Ali Pasha is well known thanks to the accurate descriptions in the written sources and its depiction in images by artists residing in it (**fig. 1**). A few days after arriving, the delegation would be pompously collected by a group of chiaus cavalrymen headed by the çavuşbaşı in front of the »German house«, at the plaza between the residence, the Atik Ali pasha mosque and the Column of Constantine, and taken to the Saray for an audience with the Sultan according to the prescriptions of a strict protocol. The procession followed the Divan Yolu road artery eastwards, a route which corresponded with the Byzantine thoroughfare of the Mese and drove them past the Hagia Sophia and the Hippodrome to the Imperial Gate leading to the first courtyard of the Palace complex[14]. By following this route, the members of the Habsburg delegation experienced and became acquainted with important elements of the ceremonial topography of Ottoman Istanbul, as well as that of the old civic center of Byzantine Constantinople[15].

Some material remains of Byzantine Constantinople were still present and visible within the context of Ottoman Istanbul, occasionally preserving elements of the secular power of the former East Roman Empire, with which the Ottomans shared the same geographical space and identical claims; it seems that traces of the city's Roman heritage were among the most popular sights appreciated by travelers from the Holy Roman Empire. However, their perception of the urban image of Byzantine Constantinople as the capital of the East Roman Empire was inevitably based on an incomplete and fragmentary picture, since key focal points had been overwhelmingly transformed by the Ottomans[16]: the Topkapi Palace at the eastern tip of the peninsula was by then the center of power complemented by the Hagia Sophia mosque. The Hippodrome, well known as one of the main stages for Byzantine emperors' interaction with the people, was being used by the sultans for their own celebrations, with the obelisks and the serpent column in the background. To the east, the Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors lay in ruins, which were noticed by a few travelers. For example, they are visible in Pieter Coecke's woodcut based on drawings the artist made in 1533 (**fig. 2**)[17]. On the other hand, there are very few references to the south façade of the maritime wing known as the Bukoleon palace[18].

Apart from official business, the staff of the embassy did not enjoy complete freedom of movement within the city, but there were times when these special guests were allowed to wander around and explore the various neighborhoods[19]. Beyond the old civic center, other sites preserved memories of imperial Constantinople: in the middle of the urban area, the Fatih mosque complex had taken the place of the former

14 For the route and the procession, see for example the description in: Fürer, Reise 376; for the Divan Yolu avenue, see Cerasi, Urban.

15 For the ceremonial topography of Byzantine Constantinople, see for example, Berger, Imperial; Bauer, Urban; Manolopoulou, Processing.

16 For the city's transformation in the wake of the Conquest, see in general Kafescioğlu, Constantinopolis/Istanbul.

17 Born, Pieter Coecke van Aelst 113-124.

18 For example, in the travel account of Cornelius Schepper, dated 1533: Corneille Duplicius de Schepper, dit Scepperus, Missions diplomatiques 136.

19 See for example the account of Reinhold Lubenau 130-132, where the author describes his movement in the city upon his arrival.

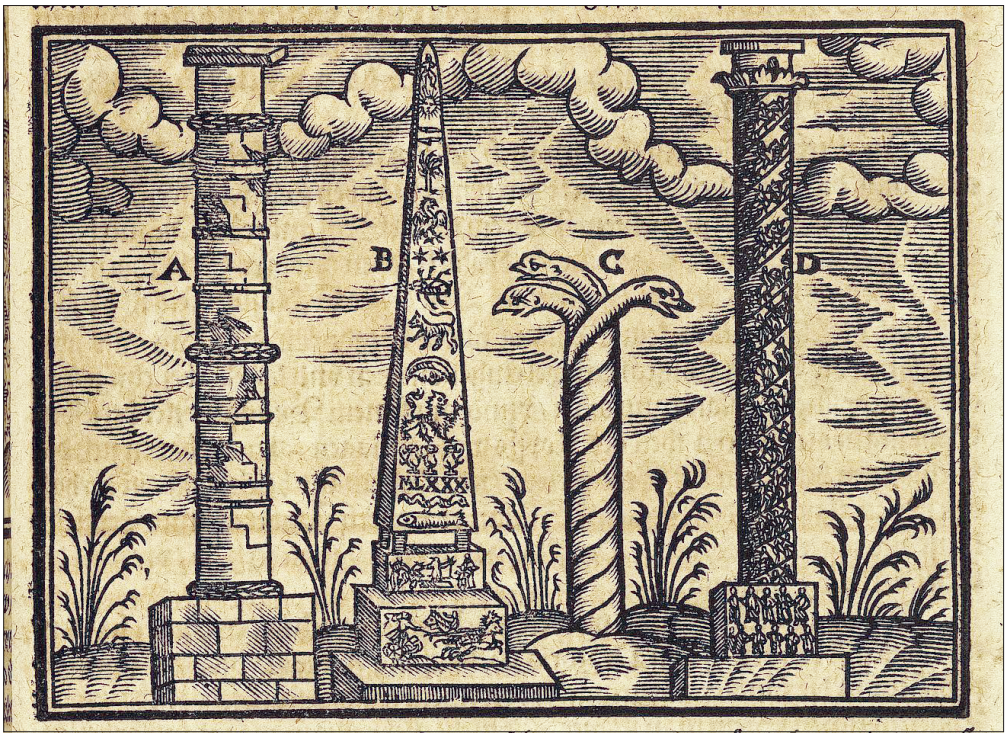



**Fig. 3** Woodcut depicting the »Antiquities of Constantinople«. – (After Schweigger, Reiss Beschreibung 123).

imperial mausoleum of the Holy Apostles, in the southwest the Yedikule fortress had incorporated the triumphal entrance once marked by the Golden Gate and the northwestern Blachernai district had declined dramatically. Only remnants of the southern wing of the Komnenian and Palaiologan Blachernai palace were still visible, namely the Tekfur Sarayı, drastically modified to house the sultan's menagerie. Thus, to the travelers' dismay, there was not much of the Byzantine imperial heritage to see.

What was left were some remnants of public spaces, mainly a handful of columns dispersed around the city, reminding locals and visitors of the locations of the late Roman imperial fora and connecting the Ottoman urban layout with its Byzantine past. This concept of the »Antiquities« of Constantinople, which basically refers to the 4th and 5th-century monuments, is recorded in Salomon Schweigger's selection of monuments that illustrates his account of the columns and obelisks in the city: the woodcut includes the columns of Constantine and Arcadius and the Obelisk of Theodosius and the Serpent Column from the Hippodrome (**fig. 3**)[20]. A similar assortment is found in the illustrated manuscript known as the »Löwenklau Album«, produced in 1586, whereby the monuments of the Hippodrome, together with the Column of Constantine and the Column of the Goths are spread over the two sides of folio 142[21]. The fascination with tall landmarks, columns, obelisks, and statues is matched by the curiosity about the domed mosques, mausolea, and baths of the Ottoman city, all of them commanding features of the skyline. The map illustrating Salomon Schweigger's general introduction to his section on Constantinople clearly conveys this perception: the urban area defined by the walls is dominated by patterns of domes and vertical elements, namely the antique columns and the minarets of the mosques[22]. The same holds true of contemporary panoramic views of the city created by artists employed by the Habsburg delegation in Istanbul, particularly the series of drawings by Melchior Lorck (dated 1559) and the foldout miniature in the illustrated manuscript Vienna, National Library 8626 (from c. 1595) (**fig. 4**)[23].

## Exploring the City, its Buildings, and Structures

Naturally, the Column of Constantine, across the street from the embassy, was the main focal point of the German travelers' topographical approach and the monument that received the most attention. From their windows, the delegates residing in the Elçi Hanı had a commanding view toward the column once bearing the statue of Constantine I. Humanist travelers were well aware of the column's connection with Constantine and were particularly drawn by the wreaths articulating the porphyry shaft at the joins between the drums and considered them signs of Roman victory, based on their presence on Roman coins, where they denote triumphant emperors (»wie man auff der altten romischen muntze die

20 Schweigger, Reiss Beschreibung 122-125.
21 Codex Vindob. 8615 in the Austrian National Library. On this manuscript, see Stichel, Nachtrag.
22 Schweigger, Reiss Beschreibung 102.
23 Westbrook/Dark/Van Meeuwen, Constructing; Babinger, Drei Stadtansichten.



**Fig. 4** Panoramic view of Istanbul (right part). – (After Vienna, Austrian National Library, Codex Vind. 8615, c. 1595, fol. 160r).

coronas«)[24]. Artists who accompanied the delegation drew the column in meticulous detail; a drawing by Lorck may in fact be the only visual record of the decoration of the base, which is nowadays hidden in a later masonry structure[25]. According to this rendering, the pedestal was decorated with a bust of the emperor crowned by personifications of victories. Indeed, the column dominates the cityscape in the panoramic view by the same artist, where its disproportionally tall silhouette is shown larger than life in relation to the surrounding landmarks. Images of the Column were systematically included in friendship albums and costume books illustrating scenes of life in the Ottoman capital, considering it an indispensable feature of the urban landscape[26]. Although visitors were informed about the later history of the monument and its Komnenian repairs, they blamed the Ottomans for the destruction of the statue (although it had already collapsed in 1106), which served as a pretext for a general condemnation of Ottoman mistreatment of the antiquities of Constantinople[27].

The most inspiring Roman imperial monument in the city proved to be the Column of Arcadius in the southwestern part of the city, in the middle of a bazaar, where the early 5th-century Forum of Arcadius once stood[28]. Of special importance were the reliefs adorning the pedestal and the spiral column with the characteristic Roman victories marked by the symbols of Roman power, military costumes, and official insignia, as well as the iconography celebrating Roman triumph over barbarians, including enemies from the east. Indeed, Hans Dernschwam who wrote down a detailed description of the monument consistently used vocabulary related to triumphs, war, and Roman-ness: regarding the figures of members of the court depicted in relief, he wrote: »die haben die remische tracht, so man togas nent, auff der achsel zugepunden lang und die rechte handt frej«, whereas the cross above the figure of the emperor is described as »Uber dem khayser ist ein runder zirkell, dorin ein Kreutz«. Dernschwam identified the subject of the decoration, unable to hide his fascination with Roman weaponry:

> »alle die krigswaffen, so vor zeitten die romer und ire eroberte lender praucht, ausgehawen und also gestalt, als wan man sy alle durch ein ander geworffen hett, von schwerttern, gros und klain handweren, handbogen, pfeyllen, kochern, huethen, hirnhauben, allerley leybs harnisch, vast wie man jetz praucht, auch armschin, fusharnisch, handschuch, spisse«[29].

The column of Arcadius with its elaborate pedestal was by far the most popular monument among draftsmen and artists accompanying the imperial delegations. The well-studied Freshfield Album from 1574 includes three foldout representations of the monument (i. e., of the east, north, and south sides) with detailed drawings of the reliefs of the pedestal and of the spiral column (**fig. 5**)[30].

Another site with imperial connotations easily accessible to the envoys was the Hippodrome with its Constantinian and Theodosian obelisks still in use by the Ottomans for tournaments and pageants[31]. This use is illustrated in the fanciful woodcut by Pieter Coecke van Aelst showing the sultan Süleyman marching through the late antique horse track with the ancient monuments in the background[32]. The Obelisk of Theodosius was one of the most popular subjects included in illustrations of travel accounts, as well as manuscripts, mainly friendship and costume albums. The image of the obelisk in the Freshfield Album includes a complete transcription of the Greek and Latin inscription on the pedestal, which mentions the emperor who gave his name to the monument by installing it in the Hippodrome. However, the imperial image of Theodosius and his court adorning the base, as well as the accompanying Greek and Latin inscriptions, received relatively

24 Dernschwam, Tagebuch 32-33.
25 Engemann Melchior Lorichs; Sodini, Images 45-46. The reliability of this drawing was questioned by Cyril Mango in: Mango, Constantinopolitana 306-313.
26 Stichel, Postament.
27 For example, Schweigger, Reiss Beschreibung 124-125.
28 Bauer, Stadt 209-211; Mayer, Rom 143-159; Konrad, Beobachtungen; Taddei, Colonna.
29 Dernschwam; Tagebuch 97-98.
30 Konrad, Beobachtungen 374-375. For the monument and its imperial iconography, see also Kelly, Column; Kiilerich, Late Fourth Century 56-62; Grigg, Symphōnian 469-482.
31 For the uses of the Hippodrome during the Ottoman period, see the various essays in Pitarakis, Hippodrom, vol. 2; Yelçe, Evaluating.
32 Born, Pieter Coecke van Aelst 116-120.



**Fig. 5** View of the east side of the Column of Arcadius. – (After Cambridge, Trinity College, »Freshfield Album« 1574, fol. 11r).

little attention; what attracted audiences at the time were the apocryphal stories orally circulating about the esoteric meanings of the glyphs on the pharaonic obelisk allegedly foretelling the downfall of the Ottomans[33].

Imperial presence was also detected in religious monuments. The Hagia Sophia, the greatest church of the East Roman Empire, was the subject of lengthy praises of its size, form, and marble decoration, but its use as a mosque was a major disappointment to foreign scholars[34]. The historical aspects of the building, primarily its construction under Justinian, were pointed out by several authors who claimed they saw portraits of Byzantine emperors, perhaps those in the south gallery depicting the families of Constantine IX Monomachos and John II Komnenos[35]. Analogous imperial overtones are encountered in descriptions of the monastery of the Virgin Pammakaristos, the seat of the post-Byzantine Patriarchate. Here too, the scholars recognized the imperial background of the Byzantine monument when they saw the portraits of Byzantine emperors (apparently Andronikos II Palaiologos) once adorning the gatehouse that marked the entrance to the patriarchal building complex and copied the Greek texts of the accompanying inscriptions that identify them as emperors of the Romans[36]. The account written by Salomon Schweigger was also illustrated with a woodcut reproducing the image of the crowned emperor with his insignia, joined by his ornately dressed wife[37].

## The Roman Heritage of Istanbul

Constantinople's roman-ness was an important component of the city's identity in the perception of the German scholars. Its role as New Rome is consistently emphasized in the texts and thanks to this role the city was deemed relevant to the Habsburgs' aspirations and their dealings in the Ottoman city amid the Byzantine ruins. The analogies between the two Roman capitals were duly stressed by writers such as Reinhold Lubenau who wrote that Constantinople is laid out on seven hills, just like Rome (»weil sie auch Sieben Berge hatt«)[38]. According to Salomon Schweigger, the antiquities of Constantinople were brought by »Constantino Magno« from Rome and other places when he made the city the imperial seat, echoing the belief that Constantinople was the reincarnation of Rome[39]. The transfer of power from Old Rome is a recurring theme in the descriptions of individual monuments as well: the travelers consistently relate that the column of Constantine was brought from Rome, as were most antiquities in the fourth century; thus, the column represented the idea of New Rome in the eyes of the Germans and this was accentuated by its form and iconography. However, there was widespread misconception about the no longer extant statue that used to surmount the column, which had been destroyed in Byzantine times. Some authors erroneously thought that it depicted the emperor on horseback, apparently based on the popular legends surrounding the equestrian statue of Justinian once in the Augusteion square, south of the Hagia Sophia, i. e., a few hundred meters to the east of the Column of Constantine[40]. Indeed, the image of Justinian had achieved legendary status on an international scale and was a familiar sight from woodcuts and drawings circulating in central and western Europe, including the widely read World Chronicle of Hartmann Schedel[41]. Regardless of the inaccurate identification and of the confusion

33 For example, in the long account written by Reinhold Lubenau 147-152.
34 For example, Dernschwam, Tagebuch 144, Reinhold Lubenau 142-146. For the Ottoman phase of the Hagia Sophia and its use as a mosque, see Necipoğlu, Hagia Sophia.
35 Mango, Materials 119-120; Reinhold Lubenau 142-146.
36 Reinhold Lubenau 172-176.
37 Schweigger, Reiss Beschreibung 121. These images are analyzed in Stichel, Vergessene.
38 Reinhold Lubenau 135.
39 Schweigger, Reiss Beschreibung 124-125: »Diese allezumal/wie zu erachten/seyn von Constantino magno dahin gebracht worden aus Italia/Rom vnd andern Orten/als er die Stadt zum Keyserlichen Sitz gewidmet«.
40 For the afterlife of Justinian's equestrian statue, see Boeck, Bronze Horseman 366-382.
41 Berger/Bardill, Representations 15-16.

between the two columns, which is also found in contemporary Ottoman sources[42], this belief was consistent with the general fascination with equestrian statues that dominated Habsburg political imagery of the time[43] and may have been triggered by contemporary historians' willingness to trace its roots back to the first Byzantine emperor.

Other landmarks also conjured connections between the two Romes. The Egyptian Obelisk in the Hippodrome reminded the embassy's pharmacist Reinhold Lubenau (writing in 1587-1588) of the granite Obelisk at S. Peter's in Rome[44]. The same view was shared by Marcantonio Pigafetta, a member of the delegation in 1567-1568[45]. A few years earlier, the erudite merchant Hans Dernschwam had carefully observed the Column of Arcadius and characterized it as a »Roman Antiquity« (»schone, wunderliche, kunstliche, allte romische antiquitet«), enthusiastically admitting that he hadn't seen anything like it in Rome itself[46]. Dernschwam even pointed out the similarities between the column of Arcadius and the spiral columns of Rome, apparently those of Marcus Aurelius and Trajan, thus drawing a direct link between the two capital cities[47]. Recognizing Roman victories on Byzantine monuments such as the Column of Arcadius must have served as an inspiration for the official delegates within the complex military and diplomatic dealings between the two empires. Among religious buildings, the Hagia Sophia also served as a reference point to Constantinople's late Roman past: Lubenau connected the sixth-century church with Rome by likening its domed silhouette to the Pantheon[48].

In general, the writers under discussion adhered to the standard narrative of the Holy Roman Empire regarding the divide between the Western and Eastern Roman Empire and their respective successor states[49]. Thus, the Byzantine emperors, especially those of the post-Justinianic era, were almost always referred to as »Griechische Kaiser«. Members of the Constantinian and Theodosian dynasties, and even Justinian, were more likely to be called simply »imperatores« or even »Römische kaiser« than their Macedonian, Komnenian, or Palaiologan successors. Indeed, the encounter with the imperial images of the Palaiologan emperors and what was regarded as the tomb of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) in the Pammakaristos (more likely to be identified with the sarcophagus housing the remains of Theodora Kantakouzene Komnene, died after 1390)[50], had a rather negative impact on authors from the Reich. Salomon Schweigger, for example expressed his dissatisfaction with the poor workmanship of the sarcophagus and its decoration, which he saw as a contrast to the mightiness of the Byzantine emperors: »verwundert daß die Griechischen Keyser in allen dingen mit iren Monumentis sehr prächtig gewesen unnd doch diß Begrebnus so gar schlecht ist«[51]. On the other hand, there was a special interest in identifying sites associated with the end of the Byzantine empire, perhaps concealing hopes for recovering the once Christian city: thus, the references to the fortifications, particularly the Theodosian Land Walls, were often supplemented by stories about the Ottoman siege[52], whereas Gerlach stated that he was shown the spot where the last Christian emperor, Constantine XI, was killed on the day of the Ottoman assault, allegedly close to the Chora monastery (the Middle Byzantine building complex with Palaiologan additions now known as the Kariye Camii)[53].

As a rule, the scholars were not interested in the medieval monuments of Constantinople; their primary aim was to learn and relate about life in the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the lengthiest passages in their travelogues are the ones describing in detail the order and discipline that characterized the sultan's court, especially when reporting on the delivery of the tribute by the delegates[54]. The perception of the center of power in the Ottoman capital revolved around the area that encompassed the Saray, the Hagia Sophia, and the Hippodrome, the latter two appropriated sites from the Byzantine emperors. This concept is also reflected in the drawing of the Hagia Sophia – Hippodrome ensemble in the Freshfield Album[55]. Indeed, the Topkapi Saray, the Ayasofya mosque, and the Atmeydanı (as the Hippodrome was known in Ottoman times) were consistently the most popular subjects of drawings and watercolors illustrating life in the Ottoman capital. It was within this triangle that the travelers witnessed the grandiose processions, led by sultans and viziers usurping the places where glorious Roman emperors used to tread; indeed, foreign viewers were able to visualize the presence of the Byzantine emperors in the Hagia Sophia, as well as the games once held in the Hippodrome, even if they had a vague idea of where the Byzantine Palace used to stand. In any case, the travelers were able to actually catch glimpses of the Byzantine court by witnessing the imperial iconography available in the remnants of the Byzantine public spaces, particularly the pedestals of the Obelisk of Theodosius and of the Column of Arcadius: the crowned emperors in military attire and courtiers clad in togas and chlamyses surely had a strong impact on viewers representing the Holy Roman Emperor[56].

42 Niyazioğlu, Into the Deep Past.
43 Polleroß, Romanitas 208-211; Kohler, Kaiserikonographie 161-162.
44 Reinhold Lubenau 147-152.
45 Pigafetta, Itinerario 44.
46 Dernschwam, Tagebuch 97.
47 See the general survey of these historiated spiral columns in Becatti, Colonna; Krierer, Konzept 161-173; Arioli, Trajan's Column.
48 Reinhold Lubenau 143. For the impact of the Pantheon on Renaissance art and thought, see Nesselrath, Impressions.
49 See for example, Goez, Translatio; Aschenbrenner, Contesting 202-208.
50 On this tomb, see Melvani, Donors 84; Effenberger Zu den Gräbern 191-195.
51 Schweigger, Reiss Beschreibung 120.
52 For example, Schweigger, Reiss Beschreibung 133-134; Pigafetta, Itinerario 36-37.
53 Gerlach, Tage-buch 456; Ousterhout, Sixteenth-Century 123-124. For a discussion of the various locations identified as the place where the last emperor ended his life, see Philippides/Hanak, Siege 236-288.
54 For example, the long description by Reinhold Lubenau of the delivery of the tribute to Murad III in 1587: Reinhold Lubenau 9-13. See also Necipoğlu, Architecture 91-110.
55 For this image and the relevant topographical evidence, see the discussion in Westbrook, Freshfield.
56 For an assessment of the imperial iconography of these monuments, see Safran, Points of view 409-435; Mayer, Rom 115-127. 143-159.

As is most often the case with sixteenth-century humanism, it is unclear whether this interest in the early monuments of Constantinople was motivated by the desire to study antiquity or by a purposeful attempt to establish ideological connections with the East Roman Empire, or even by the active interest in early Christianity, namely the Greek fathers and the image of Constantine the Great as the first Christian Emperor. Indeed, the name and memory of Constantine I, founder of Constantinople, resonated differently with the members of the Habsburg delegations. The fact that they were stationed opposite the monumental column bearing the first Byzantine emperor's name struck them and served as an opportunity for long descriptions of Constantine's actions and his religious policy[57]. This approach can be traced back to Maximilian I's Roman idea, which applied mainly to his Italian policy, but apparently had repercussions in the sphere of the East Roman Empire as well[58]. The emphasis on Constantinople as New Rome and the concept of the transfer of Roman imperial power to the Bosporus under Constantine are recurrent themes in the travel accounts. The authors were so obsessed with Constantine's name and attributes, that they recognized his presence in places not actually connected with him: thus, Reinhold Lubenau thought that the so-called Palace of Constantine (possibly named after Constantine Palaiologos, the son of emperor Michael VIII), as the Palaiologan building now known as the Tekfur Sarayı was consistently referred to in sixteenth-century travel accounts, was the residence of Constantine I. He also assumed that the mosaic portrait of Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-1055) in the Hagia Sophia depicted the founder of Constantinople[59].

## The Impact of Experiencing Byzantine Constantinople

Diplomats, scholars, and artists had a truly intense experience in the city that was once the heart of the former Byzantine Empire. The impact of these travels and of the tangible and intangible things that the travelers brought home with them is however difficult to assess. Manuscripts purchased in Istanbul and shipped to central European cities contained mostly works of classical literature and patristic texts, which were the genres that attracted the attention of contemporary humanists who generally had little interest in Byzantium[60]. Yet, books from Istanbul did play a key role in expanding knowledge on Byzantium as well: two of the manuscripts used for the edition of Zonaras in the corpus of sources published by Hieronymus Wolf, the first reference work on the East Roman Empire, were brought to Augsburg by Hans Dernschwamm from Istanbul in 1555[61]. The title of this collection of printed texts »Corpus Historiae Byzantinae« was the first modern use of the term Byzantine to denote the East Roman Empire. Both Wolf and Dernschwam were employed by the Fugger family enterprise of Augsburg and connected with the imperial circles of Habsburg Vienna.

However, Dieter Reinsch and Rudolf Stichel have shown that the growing interest in Byzantine history and imagery discernible among sixteenth-century travelers and scholars mainly served the purpose of learning about the Ottomans: for example, copies of the imperial portraits in the Pammakaristos were used to decorate Theodor de Bry's book on Islamic History[62]. Rediscovering Roman elements in Byzantium was certainly important, but most of them were already available in Rome itself; nevertheless, the most appealing aspect of the eastern capital was its status as New Rome, which was used as an additional argument in favor of claiming the geographical space of Eastern Europe against the Ottomans.

Moreover, orally transmitted stories reproducing locals' memories about the city considerably enhanced the experience of witnessing Constantinople and were contextualized against the backdrop of public discourse regarding the ongoing Türkenkrieg. This was expressed in the prophecies and apocryphal tales about the hieroglyphs on the Obelisk of Theodosius and about the magical properties of the serpent column[63]. Reporting on the destruction and ruination of Roman and Christian monuments lent a further emotional tone which struck a chord in the West. The role of the visual material produced during these trips was crucial in this process: it is no coincidence that two of the artists who designed ephemeral triumphal monuments to stage ceremonial triumphal entries of Holy Roman Emperors, Pieter Coecke van Aelst and Melchior Lorck, had spent time in Istanbul with the Habsburg delegations[64]. Perhaps the idea to juxtapose red and green columns in the arch of Maximilian II in Vienna in 1563 came from the colorful marbles of the Hagia Sophia, although similar arrangements were also practiced by the Ottomans, for example in the Süleymaniye mosque[65]. Apparently, the Byzantine legacy of Constantinople was an aesthetic experience shared by both rival empires claiming the thrones of Rome and New Rome.

57 For example, in Lubenau's account: Reinhold Lubenau 158-159.
58 Schnettger, Saint-Empire.
59 Reinhold Lubenau 143 (see also Mango, Materials 119-120 for the mosaics).
60 Gastgeber, Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq.
61 Reinsch, Hieronymus Wolf 203-204.
62 Stichel, Vergessene 91. See also Ilg, Reisebericht 190-191.
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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé

### Byzantine Constantinople and Habsburg Global Aspirations: The Reception of the Roman Imperial Heritage in Ottoman Istanbul by Scholars from the Holy Roman Empire

The sixteenth century is known as the golden age of the Ottoman Empire, marking the peak of its international power and cultural development. The imperial capital of Constantinople/Istanbul was at the epicentre of this growth: since the Ottoman conquest of the city in 1453, the sultans of the ruling dynasty had begun to revive the glorious capital and restore it to its former splendour. At the same time, relations with the Habsburgs led to the regular presence of Habsburg ambassadors in Istanbul. Despite the decades that had passed since the end of the Byzantine Empire, the material remains of Byzantine Constantinople were still present and visible in the context of Islamic Istanbul.

The paper focuses on travel accounts written by representatives of the Holy Roman Empire who visited Ottoman Istanbul in the sixteenth century and described the Late Roman/Byzantine imperial monuments they experienced in the city, as well as images produced by artists who accompanied the delegations. It examines: a. how the physical space and topography of the Byzantine imperial capital, its imperial buildings and imagery resonated with visitors and viewers from Vienna, b. how the encounter with the city contributed to the knowledge and reception of Byzantium in the German-speaking world, and c. how this knowledge influenced relations with the Ottoman Empire.

## Das byzantinische Konstantinopel und die globalen Ambitionen der Habsburger: Die Rezeption des römischen imperialen Erbes im osmanischen Istanbul durch Gelehrte aus dem Heiligen Römischen Reich

Das 16. Jahrhundert gilt als das goldene Zeitalter des Osmanischen Reiches und markiert den Höhepunkt seiner internationalen Macht und kulturellen Entwicklung. Die Reichshauptstadt Konstantinopel/Istanbul stand im Zentrum dieses Wachstums: Seit der Eroberung der Stadt durch die Osmanen im Jahr 1453 hatten die Sultane der Herrscherdynastie begonnen, die glorreiche Hauptstadt wieder zu beleben und ihren früheren Glanz wieder herzustellen. Gleichzeitig führten die Beziehungen zu den Habsburgern dazu, dass regelmäßig habsburgische Botschafter in Istanbul präsent waren. Trotz der Jahrzehnte, die seit dem Ende des Byzantinischen Reiches vergangen waren, waren die materiellen Überreste des byzantinischen Konstantinopels im islamischen Istanbul noch immer präsent und sichtbar.

Der Beitrag konzentriert sich auf Reiseberichte von Vertretern des Heiligen Römischen Reiches, die im 16. Jahrhundert das osmanische Istanbul besuchten und die spätrömischen/byzantinischen imperialen Denkmäler beschrieben, die sie in der Stadt vorfanden, sowie auf Bilder, die von Künstlern angefertigt wurden, die die Delegationen begleiteten. Es wird untersucht: a. wie der physische Raum und die Topografie der byzantinischen Reichshauptstadt, ihre kaiserlichen Bauten und Bildwelten bei Besuchern und Betrachtern aus Wien wirkten, b. wie die Begegnung mit der Stadt zum Wissen über Byzanz und zu seiner Rezeption im deutschsprachigen Raum beitrug, und c. wie dieses Wissen die Beziehungen zum Osmanischen Reich beeinflusste.

## Constantinople byzantine et les aspirations universelles des Habsbourg: la réception de l'héritage impérial romain dans l'Istanbul ottomane par les érudits du Saint-Empire romain germanique

Le XVI^e^ siècle est considéré comme l'âge d'or de l'Empire ottoman, marquant l'apogée de sa puissance internationale et de son développement culturel. La capitale impériale Constantinople/Istanbul était au cœur de cette croissance: depuis la conquête ottomane de la ville en 1453, les sultans de la dynastie régnante avaient commencé à faire revivre la glorieuse capitale et à lui redonner son ancienne splendeur. Parallèlement, les relations avec les Habsbourg ont conduit à la présence régulière d'ambassadeurs habsbourgeois à Istanbul. Malgré les décennies qui s'étaient écoulées depuis la fin de l'Empire byzantin, les vestiges matériels de la Constantinople byzantine étaient encore présents et visibles dans le contexte de l'Istanbul islamique.

Cet article se concentre sur les récits de voyage rédigés par des représentants du Saint-Empire romain germanique qui ont visité l'Istanbul ottomane au XVI^e^ siècle et décrit les monuments impériaux romains tardifs/byzantins qu'ils ont découverts dans la ville, ainsi que les images produites par les artistes qui accompagnaient les délégations. L'article examine: a. comment l'espace physique et la topographie de la capitale impériale byzantine, ses bâtiments impériaux et son imagerie ont résonné chez les visiteurs et les spectateurs venus de Vienne, b. comment la rencontre avec la ville a contribué à la connaissance et à la réception de Byzance dans le monde germanophone, et c. comment cette connaissance a influencé les relations avec l'Empire ottoman.

Ivan Parvev

# Constantinople in Habsburg Foreign Policy, 1453-1739. Dynastic, Strategic, and Geopolitical Aspects

Although the rulers of the Habsburg Monarchy, through the imperial crown of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, had the right to be considered the »supreme potentates of Christendom«, until 1453 they had to share this honor with the »Basileus« of the Byzantine Empire, who also claimed the »Roman heritage« for himself. The monarchs in Constantinople had the better cards: their imperial crown was hereditary and did not depend on the good will of the electors, as in the case of the Habsburgs. Moreover, the Byzantine emperors ruled in an imperial city that had been declared the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire since ancient times. The Habsburgs, on the other hand, were merely »elected Roman Emperors (of the German Nation)« and, moreover, did not reside in Rome – in other words, their Empire didn't have even an »imperial capital«[1].

The Byzantine rulers internalized Orthodox Christianity since 1054 as one of the main pillars of their state ideology, which, coupled with the Greek-Byzantine cultural heritage, could only reinforce the civilizational dichotomy between »the Catholic West and the Orthodox East.« The Byzantine emperors, who called and understood themselves as »Romaioi« (i. e., »Romans«), however, never forgot that they were the actual heirs of the »Roman Empire«, which had possessed territories not only in Italy, but also in North Africa, as well as in Palestine and Jerusalem, the symbolic center of Christianity and of the ancient world.

When on May 29, 1453, the Ottomans, led by the young and very ambitious Sultan Mehmed II, conquered Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine empire, this abruptly changed the understanding of the epoch and history of the contemporaries of that time – this was true for Christians as well as for Muslims. For the former, a world collapsed, as both the Orthodox and the Catholics were convinced that the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Holy Mother of God, the patron saint of Constantinople, would not allow the enemies of Christianity (i. e., the Muslims) to rule in that imperial city. For the faithful Muslims, on the other hand, a centuries-long dream came true, which had already been longed for in the times of the Prophet Mohammed – for the still young religious community, the Christian Byzantine empire (with its capital!) was the target of their »Holy War« par excellence. The mighty Empire of the Christian infidels, from which Palestine had been wrested in the 7th century, was indeed able to withstand the pressure of the Arab Caliphate. But the dream lived on – that one day the Muslims themselves would conquer Constantinople.

The Muslim Arabs had repeatedly tried to attack Constantinople since the 8th century, but the Byzantine empire was too powerful for them and so the Caliphs had to come to terms with it as a neighbor. On the other hand, this allowed the Arabs to build their own empire in North Africa and the western Mediterranean – Spain, for example, was conquered in 711. It was not until the Ottoman expansion in the Balkans, which began in the mid-fourteenth century, that the Byzantine empire and its capital Constantinople again became the target of the resurgent Muslim wave of conquest – in the understanding of Islam it was a »Jihad« against the infidels. It took nearly a hundred years, however, for the Ottomans to succeed in taking Constantinople by storm – the first two attempts (at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and that of 1422) famously failed.

From the point of view of the Christian West, the loss of Constantinople was undoubtedly an event that could not (or perhaps did not want to) be foreseen. The Byzantine emperors' requests for help were heard in principle, and after the Christian Church Union of Florence (1439), there were no ideological-religious divisions between Catholics and Orthodox Christians anymore, at least in theory. So, the West could well provide military aid against the expansive world of the Muslims. However, it was secretly hoped that the fortress walls of Constantinople would be strong enough to withstand once again the storm of the infidels even in 1453. For so many centuries the Byzantine capital, despite many dangers, remained in the hands of Christians – why should it be different in 1453?!

The news of the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 by Mehmed II spread rapidly in the Christian world. In Rome,

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people were horrified – they suspected the raging of the Antichrist in the great Turkish victory. Fear was further fueled by the fact that the Ottoman sultan was publicly proclaiming his next great goal – it was the conquest of Rome. The namesake of the Prophet Mohammed was only 21 at the time, which meant he would have enough time to storm the Roman walls with his army as well.

The Habsburg emperor Frederick III, who will wear the imperial crown for more than half a century (a world record, by the way, as far as elected imperial rule in the Holy Roman Empire is concerned), is said to have, upon hearing the news of the conquest of Constantinople, retreated to his chambers in tears for three days. I believe that this was by no means a mere actor's play, but that in fact Frederick III was very much affected emotionally by this event. However, after the emotions had settled down to some extent, Frederick III had to face the new reality, where from now on there will be only one emperor – the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Byzantium with its imperial crown no longer existed[2].

The Papacy, led by Nicholas V and later by Pius II, called for a war against the Ottomans – a perfectly understandable reaction in view of the events of 1453. One might think that Emperor Frederick III would seize the opportunity to prove himself worthy of his high office and possibly follow in the footsteps of his namesake, Emperor Frederick II Barbarossa. One should expect this from an emperor of the West, besides he was even crowned as emperor by the Pope in Rome[3].

Should anyone of the contemporaries of the fifteenth century expect this from Frederick III, this someone would have to have been very disappointed by the political inactivity of the emperor. After the failed Ottoman attempt to conquer Belgrade in 1456, the immediate Ottoman danger to the hereditary lands of the Habsburgs was averted. Geopolitically, Hungary could be counted on as a buffer zone against the Ottomans, so that nothing more had to be done – only a few people seriously thought about driving the Turks out of Europe in the 1450s and 1460s, and Emperor Frederick III was certainly not one of these few[4].

The Ottoman policy of the Habsburgs after 1453 was conceived in a very sober and rational manner, despite the high position of the emperors within the »Christian Family of Rulers«. If the Turks merely dominated the Balkans and only directly threatened Hungary, there was no need, from the Habsburg point of view, to do anything particular against the Sublime Porte. As emperor of the Holy Empire, one could not officially oppose the initiatives of the popes if appeals for a crusade against the Turks were publicly declared. However, Frederick III, as well as his imperial successors at the beginning of the sixteenth century, left it to the immediate neighbors of the Ottoman Empire (i. e., Hungary, Poland and Venice, or Albania or the Danubian principalities) to shoulder the »Turkish defense of Europe«. When in 1517 Emperor Maximilian I supported Pope Leo X's idea of organizing a joint European military campaign against the Ottomans, the Habsburgs were indeed prepared to participate in the planned enterprise, albeit not as a leading power, but rather according to the principle of »si omnes« – in other words, if everyone cooperates, we also participate[5].

The Habsburgs' geopolitical distancing from the Ottoman Empire after 1453 is not difficult to explain. In the period between 1453 and 1520, that is, from the conquest of Constantinople to the beginning of the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent (1520-1566), the political map of the Balkans and East-Central Europe changed little. Hungary had managed somehow to resist Turkish pressure, Venice blocked Ottoman expansion in the eastern Mediterranean and the Adriatic with its fleet, which also benefited the Habsburg hereditary lands, since they very rarely became the target of Turkish raids. Neither dynastically nor confessional (emotionally even less!) did the Habsburgs consider it their duty to constantly take initiatives to expel the Ottomans from Europe. In terms of security policy, this was not necessary for the Austrian monarchy, there is also no evidence that the Habsburg were striving to get the vacant Byzantine imperial crown. By the way, this is quite surprising keeping in mind that a »fundamental component of the prophetic tradition held that the messianic emperor would assume control of Constantinople, thus joining the empires of East and West«[6].

In the 1520s, however, considerable geopolitical changes occurred – both in the Balkans, East-Central Europe, and in the Mediterranean. Since 1518, the Ottomans had controlled Algiers (today's Algeria), which symbolically proved that the sultan was willing to follow in the expansionist footsteps of the Arab Caliphate. Speaking of geostrategy, this could be interpreted as an extension of Ottoman rule toward the western Mediterranean, which in turn should have set alarm bells ringing in Spain. Madrid believed that the Reconquista of 1492 had brought about the end of Muslim rule in the Pyrenees – whether they might have been mistaken[7]?

2 The studies on the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453 are numerous though their quality differs considerable. Two books from the second half of the 20th c. can be regarded as »classical works« – Franz Babinger's biography on Mehmed II and Steven Runcimans study: Babinger, Mehmed II; Runciman, Fall. Among the recent publications, who are dedicated to this important turning point in Balkan, Mediterranean and European history, one can list the following studies: Bisaha, Christians; Eimer, Mehmet the Conqueror; Vaiou, Byzantine Churches; Pilat/Cristea, Ottoman threat; Angold, Fall of Constantinople; Philippides/Hanak, Siege; Crowley, 1453; Stacton, World (German edition: Der schwarze Dienstag).

3 On the political reaction in the Holy Roman empire after the fall of Constantinople see Bacsóka/Blank/Woelki, Europa. Cf. also the interesting article DeVries, Lack

4 On the European rulers' policy vis-à-vis the Ottomans after 1453 see the general study of Dorothy M. Vaughan (Vaughan, Europe). Cf. also the comprehensive work on the topic by Kenneth M. Setton (Setton, Papacy).

5 cf. Zinkeisen, Denkschriften; Djuvara, Cent projets.

6 Freiberg, Bramante's Tempietto 152.

7 A special problem for Spain were the moriscos, who could join forces with the Turks, should the Ottomans pursue their expansion north of Algier. Cf. Hess. Moriscos.

In 1519 Charles V was elected emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, but he was also king of Spain – and this union of the two crowns created an entirely new geopolitical situation for the Habsburg dynasty. Until 1519, the Habsburg power structure had been concentrated in Central Europe – an area relatively safe from Ottoman incursions. With Spain now part of the global Habsburg geostrategy, Ottoman expansion in the western Mediterranean was no longer a theoretical but a real threat to the dynasty. The situation worsened visibly when the Ottomans captured the Hungarian fortress of Belgrade in 1521 and, after the Battle of Mohácz (1526)[8], when the Hungarian army was annihilated, Suleyman's troops entered the Hungarian capital of Buda in the fall of the same year[9]. Thus, the Kingdom of Hungary, which since 1453 had acted as a protective wall for the Habsburgs against the Ottoman expansionist drive towards Central Europe, quite unexpectedly ceased to exist as a security buffer. Very quickly, the Habsburgs had to realize that the Ottomans were threatening them from two sides in an unexpected pincer movement – via East-Central Europe, i. e., Hungary, and via the maritime vector in the western Mediterranean, which was oriented toward Spain.

It got worse when in 1529 the Ottomans besieged Vienna. This military action of the Sultan was not very well planned, also had rather the purpose to show the Habsburgs who was the real »master of Hungary« (namely the Turks and not Ferdinand, the Emperor's brother)[10]. Nevertheless – the very fact that the Turks wanted to conquer the capital of the Archduchy of Austria and for the first time invaded the lands of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation with a regular army showed more than clearly how powerful the Ottoman Empire had become in the meantime. For the Habsburgs, the Turkish threat had thus become a double geopolitical reality that Charles V had to deal with, willy-nilly.

In summary, the emperor was able to act relatively successfully against the Ottoman Empire until the voluntary end of his reign in 1555-56. He also had no qualms about leading an army against the Turks in North Africa himself in the 1530s – compared to his war-shy grandfather, Emperor Frederick III, this was quite a feat worthy of the most powerful Christian prince. Charles V failed in defeating the Ottomans, let alone ousting them from their possessions in the Balkans or in the Mediterranean, but he did succeed in geopolitically containing the expansion of Suleiman the Magnificent. The Habsburgs were being doing this both in east-central Europe and in the western Mediterranean.

Of course, it can be argued that Charles V was not able to form a pan-European alliance against the Ottomans in order to put an end to the Sultan's empire, as was often demanded by the Papacy – not to mention the many projects for the expulsion of the Turks from Europe in that era[11]. This is also true as a statement, but it is important to ask whether this was even possible in the sixteenth century and whether Emperor Charles V had set such a geostrategic goal in principle[12]. I would answer both in the negative – because of France's special position vis-à-vis the Ottoman expansion of that time, on the one hand, and because of the emperor's fundamental misgivings, on the other, about taking radical geopolitical steps that involved an uncertain outcome for his own rule and for the position of the Habsburgs in the political world[13].

With the separation of the dynasty into a Spanish and an Austrian branch in the mid-sixteenth century, Habsburg-Ottoman relations returned to their traditional geopolitical space in Central Europe. Madrid and Vienna continued to coordinate their Turkish policies, but the military conflict against the Ottomans was primarily fought on land[14]. Dynastically and territorially, the military clash was really about the rule in Hungary, whose crown was claimed by the Viennese monarchs. Of course, this Ottoman policy of the Habsburgs had no expansive geostrategic connection to the Balkans, let alone Constantinople – all these territories were seen as an integral part of the Turkish Empire and no one in the Habsburg monarchy seriously questioned that to the end of the seventeenth century. So powerful and invincible did the Sublime Porte appear in the eyes of its Christian neighbors.

The above-mentioned geopolitical hard facts, however, were not an obstacle for Orthodox Russia, for example, to seek and find an ideological-confessional reference to the destroyed Byzantine empire already in the fifteenth century. As early as 1472, Tsar Ivan III married Zoe Palaiologos (Sophia Palaiologina), a niece of the last Byzantine emperor – strangely enough, a marriage project inspired by Pope Pius II. Since the 1520s, the Russian tsars increasingly saw themselves as the legitimate successors of Orthodox Byzantium, and Moscow was proclaimed the »Third Rome« – the »Last Rome«, since, as the people of that time firmly believed, there could be no fourth Rome[15].

8 cf. Recently Forod/Varga/Szöts, Mohàcs. See the classical study of Fraknói, Ungarn.
9 cf. Mordtmann, Kapitulation. On the expansion of the Ottomans in Central Europe during the 16th c. see Baramova, Evropa.
10 On the siege cf. Hummelberger, Belagerung; Mattl-Wurm, Berichte.
11 cf. Djuvara, Cent projets 46-79.
12 cf. recently Pellegrini, Guerra.
13 The attitude of France towards the Turks in the 16th c. is discussed quite controversial in historiography. The actual problem is whether the French kings of that time were allies of the Sultan against the Habsburgs, something which was condemned as a betrayal of the Christian cause according to the moral standards of the period. Recent studies clearly show that this was not the case and that the supposed »unholy alliance« was actually part of the Habsburg anti-French propaganda, but some scholars still support the opposite view – see for example Garnier, L'alliance impie; Isom-Verhaaren, Allies.
14 The relations between the two branches of the Habsburg dynasty vis-à-vis the Turks was one of the topics, to which Leopold von Ranke paid attention in his early and later studies. Cf. Ranke, Fürsten und Völker; Ranke, Osmanen.
15 cf. Poe, Moscow; N. Sinitsyna, Tretij Rim; Majeska, Coronation; Hellmann, Moskau und Byzanz; Lee Wolff, Three Romes; Toumanoff, Moscow the Third Rome.

Interestingly, even the French kings had no qualms about making dynastic claims to the vacant Byzantine crown at a time when Ottoman power was looming large. In Paris, however, they chose a simpler path than the Russians – instead of marrying a Byzantine princess or establishing an ideological reference point to, say, the Latin Empire at the Bosporus, in 1494 the French king Charles VIII simply bought this right and could henceforth bear the title »Emperor of Constantinople«. In this way, Paris apparently believed that it could claim certain rights to the »Ottoman inheritance« in the event of the collapse of Ottoman power. Whether the French kings simply wanted to live up to their reputation as the »roi très chrétien« (»rex christianissimus«) or whether they were in fact aiming at Constantinople with the straits of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles as a French sphere of power and influence, as some sixteenth-century plans for the expulsion of the Turks from Europe envisaged, remains a topic for academic debate[16].

As already mentioned, the Habsburgs as emperors had made neither dynastic nor power-political claims to the Byzantine legacy since the mid-fifteenth century. In geopolitical or geostrategic terms, too, the Straits between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, with Constantinople as a focal point, were not considered a foreign policy goal to be pursued by the rulers in Vienna or Madrid. That Russia and France, on their part, could – at least theoretically – claim the crown of the Eastern Roman Empire was known to the Habsburgs. The emperors of the seventeenth century were, however, quite content with the heraldic-dynastic honor of titling themselves »Kings of Jerusalem«. Whether this imaginary crown, with which the Habsburgs adorned themselves, would be sufficient in the event of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire to be able to dynastically justify territorial claims beyond Hungary along the Roman *Via Diagonalis* or along the Danube is a matter of debate. Perhaps the Habsburgs were also aware that even the best dynastic arguments for expansion would be useless if no powerful army would stand behind them. From the Habsburgs' point of view, relations with the Ottoman Empire were always decided on the military and not on the dynastic battlefield.

It was not until the Lega Sacra war of 1683-1699 that Constantinople clearly moved into the political sights of the Austrian Habsburgs. The Ottoman siege of Vienna (1683) had shown that the Turks' expansive drive toward Central Europe had not abated. After much hesitation, Emperor Leopold I had finally decided to wage a full-scale war against the Ottomans, and the Papacy could only welcome this initiative. Finally, Austria, Poland, Venice and Russia agreed to join forces against the Turks. The war ended with an Ottoman defeat, which set back the realm of the Sublime Court in the Balkans territorially by about 180 years[17].

At first, it did not seem that the Habsburg monarchy could achieve an easy victory against the Turks. Military coordination between the allies also left much to be desired, but slowly the imperial troops gained the upper hand – in 1686 Buda, the old capital of Hungary, was taken, and in 1687 the Austrians moved into Transylvania. In the fall of 1687, when the military objectives for the next year's campaign were discussed in Vienna, the logical decision was made to attack Belgrade, conquer this strategically important fortress, and then advance along the *Via Diagonalis* deep into the Balkans. A great geostrategic and geopolitical goal was also envisaged – the imperial army was to defeat the weakened Ottoman troops, expel the Turks from Europe, and after that all the Ottoman provinces south of the Danube would become Austrian crown lands. The symbolic »reward of the enterprise« was the conquest of Constantinople itself, since this famous imperial city deserved to be ruled by a Christian emperor – a concise, but nevertheless logical argumentation.

It can be assumed that the intelligence services of the French king Louis XIV were aware of these far-reaching Austrian geostrategic visions. That the imperial troops could conquer the Ottoman capital was by no means considered a pipe dream at the end of the 1680s, but something quite feasible. After all, there was no Ottoman fortress behind Belgrade that could hold off an invading Christian army. Moreover, the Ottoman troops were already showing signs of disintegration by 1688. From this point of view, the imperials would have a relatively easy game, for they merely needed to conquer Belgrade (which they did in September 1688) to continue their swift triumphal march toward Constantinople.

The history of the Lega Sacra's war against the Ottomans in 1688-90 is well known. After the imperial troops captured Belgrade, France deemed it opportune to abandon its benevolent neutrality and instead attack the Habsburgs from the west. Officially, the French were not allies of the Ottomans, but the Sun King's intrusion offered clear though indirect military support for the sultan, who was in a real difficult situation. Eventually, the Turks managed to withstand Austrian pressure; moreover, they recaptured Belgrade in 1690, which put the great imperial visions regarding Constantinople on hold for the time being.

Whether the French had reacted in this way because the Habsburgs suddenly laid claim to Constantinople and indirectly to the Byzantine crown, which had belonged to France since the end of the fifteenth century to the 1560s, at least in theory, is rather unlikely. Rather, it was the fear that the Habsburg monarchy could become too powerful due to the

16 According to a study of Liviu Pilat and Ovidiu Cristea the ruler Charles VIII has crowned himself as emperor of Constantinople and King of Jerusalem (cf. Pilat/Cristea, Ottoman Threat 242). The French king Charles IX dropped the title »Emperor of Constantinople« in 1566 at the end. On the topic of the »Imperial idea« as a phenomenon in European history see the PhD-thesis defended in 2013 by Russel Foster (Tabulae Imperii Europaei. Mapping European Empire) at the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology at Newcastle University, which was later published as a book. Cf. Foster, Mapping.

17 On the war against the Ottoman empire and its outcome at the end of the 17th c. see recently Heywood/Parvev, Treaties.

considerable land gains in the Balkans, which, coupled with (still) Habsburg Spain, which could threaten France from the south, was considered a »worst case scenario« in Paris. And this had to be thwarted, whatever the cost[18].

It may sound strange, but even after the French entry into the war, the Habsburgs held on to their expansion plans in the direction of Constantinople. Count Quintin Jörger, who wrote an expert opinion for the emperor in November 1689, was convinced that Austria could very well win a two-front war and did not need to abandon the conquest of the Ottoman capital as a strategic goal. After all, Emperor Leopold I deserved the honor of driving the Turks out of Constantinople in order to go down in history as »Leopold the Great«. This opinion was apparently shared by the emperor and the war against the Ottomans and the French continued[19]. The end of the Lega Sacra war showed, however, that the Austrian Habsburgs have overestimated their capacity in fighting a victorious war both against the French and the Turks. According to the Peace of Carlowitz of 26 January 1699 the former Ottoman dependencies or territories in Southeastern Europe that came under Austrian rule constituted surely an impressive gain. However, the demarcation line between imperial and Ottoman troops in 1689 was quite more impressive for Vienna – with Belgrade, Walachia, parts of Serbia and Bulgaria under imperial control, encircling even Bosnia through a military intrusion in the direction of the Adriatic coast.

The military successes of the Habsburgs against the Ottomans continued well into the eighteenth century. Austria was able to annex Serbia with Belgrade, Temesvar and Little Wallachia according to the Peace of Passarowitz (1718). In Paris, meanwhile, there were fewer reservations about Habsburg expansion toward the Balkans, since Spain, as a result of the War of Spanish succession, was now ruled by the Bourbons. Therefore, the Habsburgs could continue to pursue their visions for future geopolitical power regarding Constantinople, at least in theory, without encountering serious French resistance.

Emperor Charles VI (1711-1739) had never been much enthusiastic about a powerful expansion of his monarchy in the Balkans, especially since this would in no way solve the acute problem of Austrian succession in Vienna. Vienna's involvement in a Turkish war in the 1730s was due to its alliance with Russia, signed in 1726, which provided for assistance in the event of an Ottoman attack[20]. Instead of creating facts in Southeastern Europe itself, as the Habsburgs had been able to do since the 1680s, Vienna was now running after political events.

When in the spring of 1737 the Aulic War Council (*Hofkriegsrat*) in Vienna discussed what war aims Austria should pursue as a Russian ally in the Balkans, the emperor and his advisers did not know what Anna Ioannovna, the ruler in St Petersburg, wanted to claim for herself. Moreover, Charles VI was quite uncertain about how long the monarchy should fight against the Sublime Porte. In principle, the decision was made that new land gains could be sought west of the line running from Rousse on the Danube to Kavalla on the Aegean. But if circumstances demanded, one could be content with a more modest expansion along the *Via Diagonalis* (such as with Nish, Vidin or, perhaps, Sofia). Constantinople was no longer mentioned as a strategic objective, which was also difficult to argue militarily[21].

It seems, however, that in the 1730s the Habsburgs did not want to completely rule out the possibility that the imperials might one day conquer Constantinople. After all, the end of the seventeenth century was not very far back in history. However, this was not a topic that could have been seriously discussed in diplomatic circles – given the existing Austrian alliance with Russia, this was surely not appropriate, since it could bring problems with St Peterburg. Instead, another way was chosen, namely the detour via the periodical press.

At the beginning of the 1730s the readers of German newspapers and political journals could discover something very exciting. A fifteenth century Byzantine scribe had made a prediction that 285 years after the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, the ancient capital of Christendom would again be ruled by a Christian prince. The end of the Ottoman power in Europe would therefore take place in 1738. The big question, however, who this prince could be, remained unanswered. On the other hand, the readers of the German periodicals could ponder about it themselves – Austria and Russia were allies in the war against the Turks; but Anna Ioannovna was a woman, so only Emperor Charles VI could come into question[22]. Moreover, the Austrians wanted to conquer Constantinople already at the end of the seventeenth century – and now this prophecy! Perhaps the good God really wanted to give the old imperial city to the Habsburgs, why not?

Of course, a public discussion about the geopolitical future of Constantinople during an Austro-Russian-Ottoman war could also be a mere coincidence. After all, the publishers wanted not only to inform their readers, but also to make profits. But the very fact that the information about said prophecy was published several times – the last time with the pessimistic comment that the imperial troops would probably not be able to achieve this goal, at least in this war – is a proof that the imperial censorship authorities did not intervene. In other words, the emperor and his political advisers had considered it politically opportune not to drop the idea of a Habsburg conquest of Constantinople completely, at least as a theoretical construct.

With the signing of the Peace of Belgrade of 1739, which was by no means very praiseworthy for Austria, and which was

18 cf. for more details Parvev, War.
19 cf. Parvev, Pax Austriaca.
20 On the Austrian-Russian relations during the reign of Tsar Peter the Great see Parvev, Südosteuropa.
21 cf. on the stand of the Hofkriegsrat cf. Roider, Eastern question 66.
22 cf. Parvev, Land in Sicht 105-106.

bought with the return of the strategically important Danube fortress of Belgrade and Little Wallachia to the Ottomans, Constantinople was finally removed from the list of foreign policy goals of the Habsburgs[23]. In the meantime, the old capital of the Byzantine empire had become too remote for Austria in geopolitical terms. Dynastically and ideologically, Byzantium had never been an important pillar for the imperial self-awareness of the Habsburgs. Sure, the Austrians would have gladly conquered Constantinople by force of arms, if the situation permitted it, as the end of the seventeenth century had shown very clearly. However, there was never any emotional or ideological-confessional attitude towards the Byzantine heritage among the Habsburgs – that was and remained the domain of the Orthodox Russian Empire[24].

Some final remarks at the end, which I would like to quote as a conclusion:

Following the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Austrian Habsburgs did indeed entertain various plans and aspirations regarding the city and its surrounding region. The Habsburg rulers, particularly those who held the title of Holy Roman Emperors, saw themselves as the defenders of Christendom and expressed a desire to challenge Ottoman control over Constantinople.

One notable instance of Austrian involvement in the region occurred during the Great Turkish War (1683-1699), when the Ottoman Empire was pushed back from the gates of Vienna by a coalition of European powers, including the Habsburgs. The Austrian Habsburgs, under Emperor Leopold I, played a significant role in this conflict, which aimed to roll back Ottoman expansion in Europe and potentially regain control of territories lost to the Ottomans, including Constantinople.

However, while there were strategic and political discussions regarding the potential conquest of Constantinople, these plans were often overshadowed by other priorities and challenges facing the Habsburg Empire. The Ottoman Empire remained a formidable military power, and the Habsburgs had to contend with other European rivals, such as France and the various German states, as well as internal tensions within their own realm.

Ultimately, the Habsburgs were unable to realize their ambitions of conquering Constantinople. The city remained under Ottoman control until the early twentieth century, when it was captured by the Allies during World War I and later became part of the modern Republic of Turkey after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

I am not the author of these four paragraphs, but this was the answer, which I received from ChatGPT[25] when I asked recently, »Are there Austrian plans for conquering Constantinople after 1453?». On my other question »Do the Habsburgs have had any political ambitions towards Constantinople since 1453?», the answer sounded like this:

> The Habsburgs, a prominent European royal family, did indeed harbor political ambitions towards Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) following the fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453 to the Ottoman Turks. Constantinople had been the capital of the Byzantine Empire and held significant symbolic and strategic importance as the gateway between Europe and Asia.
>
> After the fall of Constantinople, the Habsburgs, particularly the Holy Roman Emperors who were often members of the Habsburg dynasty, saw themselves as the natural successors to the Byzantine Empire's legacy in the Eastern Mediterranean. They viewed themselves as the defenders of Christendom against the expanding Ottoman Empire and saw the recapture of Constantinople as a way to assert their power and influence in the region.
>
> Throughout the centuries, various Habsburg rulers, including Charles V and his successors, expressed interest in challenging Ottoman control over Constantinople. However, their efforts were often hindered by political and military realities, including conflicts with other European powers, internal struggles within the Habsburg territories, and the strength of the Ottoman Empire.
>
> Despite these ambitions, the Habsburgs were unable to realize their goal of recapturing Constantinople. The city remained under Ottoman control until the early 20th century when it was captured by the Allies during World War I and later became part of the modern Republic of Turkey following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

The neural network that generated the above paragraphs had made a really good job, some may say. At first glance, even professional historians, and elderly university teachers, can really be impressed. However, if these professional academics would read these sentences several times, they should easy discover that they are communicating with a chatbot. If they don't, then maybe they have chosen the wrong profession.

I don't know how technology would develop in the next decades, but for the moment in *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) digital systems like Open AI only one halve of the »magic word« AI is real – and this is surely not *Intelligence*.

23 On the Habsburg-Ottoman treaties and their reflections in ideology and propaganda cf. Baramova, Translaciya; Baramova, Waffenstillstand.

24 cf. Baehr, History.

25 https://openai.com/gpt-4.

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé

### Constantinople and Habsburg Ottoman Policy, 1453-1739. Ideological, Geostrategic, and Military Aspects

In the era between the fall of Constantinople to Mehmed II in 1453 and the signing of the Peace of Belgrade in 1739, the development of Habsburg-Ottoman relations underwent a remarkable metamorphosis. With few exceptions, until the end of the seventeenth century the Habsburgs preferred not to challenge their powerful Muslim neighbour – rather they tried to pursue a »policy of containment« towards the Turks. After the Second Siege of Vienna (1683), however, Emperor Leopold I and his advisers did not hesitate to radically change their Ottoman policy. The »policy of containment« was replaced by a »policy of expulsion« of the Turks from the Balkans.

During the period under consideration, Constantinople was certainly not a vital cornerstone in the Ottoman policy of the Habsburgs. At the same time, from the point of view of state ideology, dynastic authority, and also considerations of geopolitics and military necessity, Vienna never neglected the former Byzantine capital. It was this ambiguity that allowed the Habsburgs to easily name the conquest of Constantinople as important strategic goal of the monarchy in the late seventeenth century. In fact, the idea that the emperors in Vienna were the true heirs of the »Roman Empire« and that they were also entitled to be the legitimate successors of Byzantium persisted until the 1730s.

Ironically, Constantinople did not become an Austrian possession because of the »Byzantine claims« of two other powerful European powers. In the first place it was France, whose monarchs regarded themselves as legitimate heirs to the »Byzantine crown«. In 1688 it was the French who by military force prevented Austria from conquering the Ottoman capital. In the eighteenth century, Orthodox Russia, which from the second half of the fifteenth century onwards was aware of its connection with old Byzantium at the level of »state ideology«, increased its influence in the Balkan and Black Sea area. Naturally, with such serious competition, the idea of a »Habsburg Constantinople« had little chance to become reality.

### Die osmanische Politik von Konstantinopel und Habsburg, 1453-1739. Ideologische, geostrategische und militärische Aspekte

In der Zeit zwischen der Eroberung Konstantinopels durch Mehmed II. im Jahr 1453 und der Unterzeichnung des Friedens von Belgrad im Jahr 1739 erlebte die Entwicklung der habsburgisch-osmanischen Beziehungen eine bemerkenswerte Metamorphose. Bis zum Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts zogen es die Habsburger mit wenigen Ausnahmen vor, ihren mächtigen muslimischen Nachbarn nicht herauszufordern – vielmehr versuchten sie, eine »Politik der Eindämmung« gegenüber den Türken zu verfolgen.

Nach der Zweiten Türkenbelagerung Wiens (1683) zögerten Kaiser Leopold I. und seine Berater jedoch nicht, ihre Osmanenpolitik radikal zu ändern. Die »Politik der Eindämmung« wurde durch eine »Politik der Vertreibung« der Türken vom Balkan ersetzt. Konstantinopel war im betrachteten Zeitraum sicherlich kein wesentlicher Eckpfeiler der osmanischen Politik der Habsburger. Gleichzeitig vernachlässigte Wien aus staatsideologischer, dynastischer, aber auch geopolitischer und militärischer Notwendigkeit die ehemalige byzantinische Hauptstadt nie. Diese Ambiguität ermöglichte es den Habsburgern, die Eroberung Konstantinopels im späten 17. Jahrhundert als wichtiges strategisches Ziel der Monarchie zu bezeichnen. Tatsächlich hielt sich die Vorstellung, dass die Kaiser in Wien die wahren Erben des »Römischen Reiches« und auch die legitimen Nachfolger von Byzanz seien, bis in die 1730er Jahre.

Ironischerweise gelangte Konstantinopel aufgrund der »byzantinischen Ansprüche« zweier anderer mächtiger europäischer Mächte nicht in österreichischen Besitz. An erster Stelle stand Frankreich, dessen Monarchen sich als legitime Erben der »byzantinischen Krone« betrachteten. Im Jahr 1688 waren es die Franzosen, die Österreich mit militärischer Gewalt daran hinderten, die osmanische Hauptstadt zu erobern. Im 18. Jahrhundert verstärkte das orthodoxe Russland, das sich seit der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts auf der Ebene der »Staatsideologie« seiner Verbindung mit dem

alten Byzanz bewusst war, seinen Einfluss im Balkan- und Schwarzmeerraum. Bei einer so starken Konkurrenz hatte die Idee eines »habsburgischen Konstantinopels« natürlich wenig Chancen, Wirklichkeit zu werden.

## Constantinople et la politique ottomane des Habsbourg, 1453-1739. Aspects idéologiques, géostratégiques et militaires

Entre la chute de Constantinople aux mains de Mehmed II en 1453 et la signature de la paix de Belgrade en 1739, les relations entre les Habsbourg et les Ottomans ont connu une métamorphose remarquable. À quelques exceptions près, jusqu'à la fin du XVII$^{e}$ siècle, les Habsbourg ont préféré ne pas défier leur puissant voisin musulman, préférant plutôt mener une »politique d'endiguement« à l'égard des Turcs. Après le deuxième siège de Vienne (1683), cependant, l'empereur Léopold I$^{er}$ et ses conseillers n'ont pas hésité à changer radicalement leur politique ottomane. La »politique d'endiguement« a été remplacée par une »politique d'expulsion« des Turcs des Balkans.

Pendant la période considérée, Constantinople n'était certainement pas une pierre angulaire de la politique ottomane des Habsbourg. Dans le même temps, du point de vue de l'idéologie d'État, de l'autorité dynastique, ainsi que des considérations géopolitiques et militaires, Vienne n'a jamais négligé l'ancienne capitale byzantine. C'est cette ambiguïté qui a permis aux Habsbourg de désigner facilement la conquête de Constantinople comme un objectif stratégique important de la monarchie à la fin du XVII$^{e}$ siècle. En fait, l'idée que les empereurs de Vienne étaient les véritables héritiers de l'»Empire romain« et qu'ils avaient également le droit d'être les successeurs légitimes de Byzance a persisté jusque dans les années 1730.

Ironiquement, ce sont les »revendications byzantines« de deux autres puissances européennes qui ont empêché Constantinople de devenir une possession autrichienne. En premier lieu, il y a eu la France, dont les monarques se considéraient comme les héritiers légitimes de la »couronne byzantine«. En 1688, ce sont les Français qui ont empêché l'Autriche de conquérir la capitale ottomane par la force militaire. Au XVIII$^{e}$ siècle, la Russie orthodoxe, qui, à partir de la seconde moitié du XV$^{e}$ siècle, était consciente de son lien avec l'ancienne Byzance au niveau de »l'idéologie d'État«, a accru son influence dans la région des Balkans et de la mer Noire. Naturellement, avec une concurrence aussi sérieuse, l'idée d'une »Constantinople des Habsbourg« avait peu de chances de se concrétiser.

Matthias Schnettger

# Under the Sign of the Cross. References to Byzantium in the Representation of Rulership at the Viennese Court in the Seventeenth Century

On 8 October 1678, the one-act *Festa musicale* »La Monarchia latina trionfante« was performed at the Viennese imperial court to mark the birth of the long-awaited heir to the throne, Archduke Joseph. In this opera, the four world empires of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans – the latter was called »Monarchia latina« here – fight over primacy. In the end, unsurprisingly, the »Monarchia latina« is victorious, and so is Emperor Leopold I, at the time the head of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, which was, according to the theory of the *Translatio Imperii*, regarded as the successor to the ancient *Imperium Romanum* – or, more precisely: it *was* the Roman Empire[1]. In the opera, the victory of the Roman Empire is accompanied by a certain devaluation of the competing world empires, including the Greek Empire. According to the traditional doctrine of the four so-called World Empires, the Greek Empire means the Alexandrian Empire. At one point, however, there is a decidedly mocking allusion to the Byzantine Empire, which is thus obviously not classified as the Roman Empire but instead devalued as the degenerated Greek Empire. In the thirteenth scene, the personification of the »Monarchia Latina« sneeringly asks where faithless Greece would rule now, having itself fallen under the domination of the Ottomans or the Republic of Venice[2].

This episode from a Viennese court opera shows that against the background of the theory of the *Translatio Imperii* and its implications, the late Byzantine Empire and its rulers could hardly be positive points of reference for the Viennese imperial court regarding its own representation of power. The situation was different for the period before the alleged *Translatio Imperii*, i. e., for the late Roman/early Byzantine era: as far as the early modern emperors from the House of Habsburg were concerned, the emperors who ruled during this period were without a doubt their predecessors in office and could be considered exemplary in their capacity as Christian rulers.

The following chapter will show that the veneration of the True Cross of Christ in particular provided a point of reference for the representation of rulership at the Viennese Court. This applied to Constantine I and his victory under the sign of the cross as well as to his mother Helena, who, according to legend, had discovered the True Cross of Christ and thus made it accessible for veneration by the faithful. Against this background, Helena offered herself as an almost ideal role model for an empress, namely an empress motheOne particular empress mother, Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers, who placed herself in the tradition of Saint Helena in a specific way, will be at the center of this chapter.

Therefore, we will first introduce Empress Eleonora and explain why an *Imitatio Sanctae Helenae* was particularly appealing to her. This introduction will be followed by a number of examples to illustrate how the Holy Cross and Saint Helena were used in the representation of the empress dowager's rulership. Concluding the chapter, the final summary will discuss in particular whether and to which extent the references to the Holy Cross can indeed be regarded as references to Byzantium.

## Contexts and Backgrounds

Empress Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers or Eleonora the Younger (1628-1686) was the third wife of Emperor Ferdinand III. Like her great-aunt, Eleonora Gonzaga or Eleonora the Elder (1598-1655), the second wife of Emperor Ferdinand II, she came from the Gonzaga family, which had ruled Mantua since the fourteenth century and had been able to adorn

1 cf. Schnettger, Romanum Imperium.

2 Monarchia Latina:
»Mà la Grecia, senza Fede,
Ou' hor regna, oue risiede?
O Soggiace:
Al fiero Trace:
O in seruaggio, à sé penoso,
Lambe al Leon de l'Adria il piè famoso«.
Draghi/Schmelzer, Monarchia Latina, s. p.

German Translation: Id., Römische Monarchey 24:
»Aber sagt / wo das untreye
Griechenland nun hersch / und seye?
Theils / O Schande!
Ins Türcken Hande /
Theils / weil es müsse /
Küsst es in Adria dem Löw die Füsse«.

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itself with a dukedom since 1530[3]. While the elder Eleonora had grown up in a Mantua that was one of the most brilliant residence cities of Italy, the Gonzaga capital was severely scarred during the youth of Eleonora the Younger due to the consequences of the War of the Mantuan Succession (1628-1631) and especially the *Sacco di Mantova*, the sacking of Mantua by imperial troops in July 1630. Like her great-aunt, Eleonora the Younger was a well-educated, learned woman who actively promoted various transalpine transfer processes and substantially contributed to the Italianisation of the imperial court. Her promotion of music and musical drama was particularly momentous. She cultivated the various forms of court opera that the elder Eleonora had brought to the Viennese court and introduced the oratorio as a new genre of sacred music[4].

Like her great-aunt, the younger Eleonora remained in Vienna after her own husband's death. For both women, their widowhood actually made up the longer part of the time they spent north of the Alps[5]. The empress dowager usually was the second woman of the court. She had to take a back seat in rank and influence to the reigning empress consort, usually her daughter-in-law. However, due to the postponed first marriage of her stepson Leopold I, Eleonora the Younger maintained her top position during the first decade of her widowhood all the way until the arrival of the new empress consort Margarita Teresa of Spain in Vienna in 1666. Unlike her childless great-aunt, the younger Eleonora had four biological children; two of her daughters reached adulthood[6].

In our context, it is of particular interest that the two Gonzaga empresses had a Byzantine dynastic background, so to speak. For in the female line, they were descendants of the last Byzantine imperial house, the Palaeologos dynasty. Theodore I, a son of Emperor Andronikos II and his second wife Jolanthe/Irene of Monferrato, had founded the line of the Palaeologi, which had ruled over the northern Italian margraviate of Monferrato since 1338. Through the marriage of Margherita, the last princess of this Palaeologos line, to Federico II of Mantua in 1531, Monferrato (a duchy since 1574) came under the rule of the Gonzaga. This explains why the Byzantine double-headed eagle has since also adorned the Gonzaga coat of arms. For the Gonzaga princesses, Monferrato was also important, because unlike Mantua, it could also be inherited in the female line. In the early modern period, even the most dubious dynastic claims were cultivated as pretensions – which could possibly be turned into reality under favorable political constellations. Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Gonzaga also cultivated and emphasized their descent from the last imperial dynasty of Byzantium in their own dynastic *memoria* and sought to make it politically fruitful[7]. The imperial ancestors were an argument that could be utilized in the disputes of rank with the other Italian dynasties. The great involvement of Vincenzo I of Mantua, the father of the elder Eleonora, in the so-called Long Turkish War (1593-1605 during which the duke himself went to Hungary, heading his troops, can also be seen in this context[8]. The Gonzagas' claims to the Byzantine throne are even more clearly connected with the crusade plans of Charles of the Gonzaga-Nevers line, who succeeded the extinct main line of Mantua in 1627 and who was the grandfather of Eleonora the Younger[9].

For the imperial marriages of the two Eleonoras, their Byzantine backgrounds played no discernible role. When, in the context of Eleonora the Elder's marriage to Ferdinand II in 1622, panegyric poems alluded to the bride's imperial origins, they referred to her grandmothers, both of whom had been daughters of the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I[10]. Their vague claims to the Byzantine emperorship also do not seem to have been addressed in the context of the representation of the two Gonzaga empresses. There is much to suggest that this omission was made deliberately and was connected to the fact that the Habsburgs saw themselves as Roman emperors whose top position among Christian monarchs was based on the *Translatio Imperii*, i. e. the transfer of the Roman emperorship to Charlemagne and his successors in the year 800. At a time when the Habsburgs' leading position amongst the Christian monarchs was being massively challenged by Louis XIV of France, the Roman emperorship and the *Translatio Imperii* became even more important for the Habsburg representation of rulership[11].

In contrast, references to the late Roman/Early Byzantine Empire, i. e., the Christian Roman emperors before the *Translatio Imperii*, were quite attractive to the Habsburgs. Constantine the Great and his successors could be ideal role models for the early modern emperors (especially if they were recognized as promoters of the orthodox Christian faith). Especially Constantine was repeatedly used by the Habsburgs as a role model or presented to them as an ideal emperor. For example, on the occasion of the coronation of Ferdinand II as King of Bohemia on 4 July 1617, the feast of St Prokop, the Prague Jesuit students performed the play

3 For short biographies of the two empresses, cf. Bues, Eleonora Gonzaga; Schnitzer-Becker, Eleonora Gonzaga Nevers; Frigo, Les deux impératrices; Schnettger, Kaiserinnen.

4 cf. Sommer-Mathis, Ballett.

5 Eleonora the Elder was married to Ferdinand II from 1622 to 1637 and lived at the imperial court as a widow until 1655. Eleonora the Younger was widowed in 1657 after six years of marriage and then spent almost three decades as empress dowager in Vienna.

6 Eleonore (1653-1697) was the wife of the King of Poland Michael Korybut Wiśniowiecki in her first marriage and the wife of Duke Charles V of Lorraine in her second marriage. Maria Anna (1654-1689) was the wife of Johann Wilhelm of Palatinate-Neuburg, the hereditary prince of the Electoral Palatinate.

7 Schweder, Theatrum 663.

8 cf. Niederkorn, Mächte 425-435. However, Duke Vincenzo was not very successful as a commander in Hungary.

9 For the crusade plans of Charles of Nevers and Père Joseph, cf. Humbert, Charles de Nevers; Pierre, Le père Joseph.

10 Eleonora of Austria (1534-1594), the wife of Duke Guglielmo of Mantua (1538-1587), and Johanna (1547-1578), the wife of Grand Duke Francesco I of Tuscany (1541-1587).

11 The fact that the Habsburgs themselves had vague dynastic claims to the Byzantine throne is unlikely to have been of much consequence. Cf. Schweder, Theatrum 161.

»Constantinus magnus«[12]. Ten years later, on the visit of the now Emperor Ferdinand II, »Constantinus victor« was given, a five-act »hilaris tragoedia« attributed to Giulio Solimano, an Italian Jesuit working in Prague[13]. Such references to Constantine can also be traced for Emperor Leopold I, who was already compared to Constantine in 1659, at the very beginning of his reign, by the Jesuit Niccolò Avancini in his poem »Pietas Victrix sive Constantinus Flavius Magnus«[14]. Indeed, Leopold, like Constantine I, performed as *Advocatus Ecclesiae* in several respects, especially in his efforts for a reunion of the German and Hungarian Protestants into the Roman Church[15]. Parallels between the reigning emperor and his predecessor Constantine were often drawn in relation to the veneration of the Holy Cross, a flourishing post-Tridentine devotional practice. It was also adopted by the Habsburgs and grew in importance in the seventeenth century under Emperor Ferdinand II[16].

For the mothers or stepmothers of the emperors, Saint Helena offered a model for their self-portrayal as a Christian, pious empress dowager that could not have been more fitting. The model was – this should be emphasized – not the historical personality Helena, about whom comparatively little is known to this day, but the Saint Helena of legend[17]. According to this legend, Helena was of noble birth and not a concubine, but the first wife of Constantius Chlorus, who was forced to divorce her though. In 312, the year of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, she was baptized. The core element of the legend, however, is the finding of the Cross of Christ, the most distinguished relic of Christianity, by the empress mother. The first person to link Helena with the finding of the cross was Ambrose of Milan in 395. The legend goes as follows: Helena's journey to Jerusalem takes place after Constantine experiences another vision of the cross in 333, which moves him to be baptised and to send his mother to Palestine to find the Cross of Christ. Helena – the legend continues – forces a Jew to reveal the site of the crucifixion. Here, the legend clearly has anti-Judaic overtones, for according to its account, the Jews of Jerusalem know the place where the True Cross is buried very well, but they maliciously keep it hidden from the Christians. When Helena digs at the revealed location, three crosses are found, the one of Christ and the two crosses of the criminals executed with him. Through a miracle, the raising of a dead man over whom the crosses are held, the True Cross is revealed. Helena divides the True Cross into three parts, one of which she takes to Rome while the other two remain in Jerusalem and Constantinople, respectively. So much for the Helena legend.

Empress Eleonora the Younger was not the first empress to show extraordinary devotion to the Cross of Christ, as Eleonora the Elder already had had a relic of the cross in her possession. In her will, she left this relic, which had been sent to the imperial court by Wallenstein, to her stepson Emperor Ferdinand III[18]. There are also hints that imply she felt close to Empress Helena or was associated with her. In the Palazzo Ducale in Mantua, there is a portrait of her as Empress Helena with the cross (**fig. 1**). However, Helena's role model does not seem to have had any real, formative significance for her. In his biography of Eleonora the Elder published in 1656, which to a certain extent replaced the funeral sermon the empress had forbidden to be held in her will, the Jesuit Herman van der Horst names various saints to whom the deceased had felt particularly attached or with whom he compared her. Helena does not appear in this tableau, while Saint Pulcheria, the sister of Emperor Theodosius II, who was famous for her education and wisdom, does. Van der Horst praises the piety and education that prevailed at Eleonora's court. In fact, he claims that her court was »not other called than the court of Saint Pulcheria«[19]. In fact, Pulcheria was another woman from the late Roman/Early Byzantine imperial court who could serve as a model for early modern princesses[20].

12 cf. Seifert, Feste 293/468; Seifert, Theateraufführungen 854/964; Kemper, Hof 248-272. This performance may be understood as an attempt to provoke the Protestant Bohemian estates. Cf. Mat'a, Phasma Dionysiacum Pragense 73-75.

13 cf. Seifert, Metrik 832/156; Seifert, Theateraufführungen 855/965; Kemper, Hof 273-313; Kemper, Konstantindramen.

14 Kemper, Konstantindramen. – Allusions to Constantine can also be found in the fine arts, for example in a Roman cabinet of splendour which Emperor Leopold I received as a gift in 1677. Cf. Telesko, Kreuzreliquie 199 n. 23. Later emperors, too, referred to the example of Constantine. For instance, the *dramma per musica* »Costantino« was performed in 1716 on the occasion of the name day of Empress Elisabeth Christine, the wife of Emperor Charles VI. Cf. Seifert, Aufführungen 497/21.

15 cf. Schnettger, Kirchenadvokatie.

16 For the post-Tridentine veneration of the Holy Cross in general, cf. Heussler, De cruce Christi; for the devotional practice of the Habsburgs, Telesko, Kreuzreliquie 208-216. Several publications may be named in this respect, e. g. Vernulaeus, Virtutes; Crux Victrix; Caussinus, Magnus Constantinus. The latter two writings were Jesuit dramas performed at the Gymnasium Landsberg and the Vienna Jesuit Professed House, respectively. Cf. Schumann, Sonne 308; Klecker, Konstantin; Telesko, Kreuzreliquie 199 f.

17 On Empress Helena cf. Pohlsander, Helena; Hillner: Helena Augusta, for the early reception 247-348. For the legend of Saint Helena, cf. Drijvers, Helena Augusta. For a concise overview on the life of Helena as well as the legend of Saint Helena, cf. Clauss, Frauen 355-357. 364 f. 368 f.

18 »Alla Maestà dell'imperatore, signor figlio nostro amatissimo, lasciamo anche la croce di legno della santissima croce di Nostro Signore ligata in oro con lettere et quattro zaffiri all'antica, et questa croce fu mandata dal duca di Fridlandt, quando si trovava in guerra alla Maestà dell'imperatore, nostro signore et consorte di gloriosa memoria«. Bues, Testament 349. Cf. ibid. 327.

19 »nicht anderst als der H. Pulcheriae Hoff genennet«. Horst, Tugendten 31.

20 cf. Angelidi, Pulcheria; Busch, Frauen 110-135. – Interestingly, in a biographical homage to the Duchess Mary of Mantua, commissioned by her daughter, Empress Eleonora the Younger, the court of Theodosius II is also used as a point of comparison: »Io souente hò sentite persone molto sauie dire, che nella Corte di Madama di Mantoua si poteua mettere à seruire vna Donzella nobile, come se si collocasse in serbo vna fanciulla entro vn'osseruante Monasterio: potendosi con verità il suo Pallagio rassomigliare nella disciplina del Gineceo ad vn Chiostro ben regolato, come della Corte di Teodosio il minore scrisse già Socrate l'Istorico Cristiano«. Manni, Ristretto 19. Another parallel is not mentioned here: Just as Pulcheria opened the way to the imperial throne for Markian through her marriage, Maria facilitated the Gonzaga-Nevers' accession to power in Mantua through her matrimony with the hereditary prince of Nevers.



**Fig. 1** Lucrina Fetti (c. 1590 - c. 1673), Portrait of Eleonora Gonzaga as Saint Helena, Palazzo Ducale Mantua. – (Photo Sailko, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons).

## Empress Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers and Saint Helena

However, the significance of Saint Helena for Empress Eleonora the Younger was extraordinary. For the first fifteen years of her presence at the Viennese court, no specific bond between Eleonora and the mother of Constantine can be discerned. However, in 1663 Girolamo Ercolani dedicated the work »La reggia delle vedove sacre« (»The Palace of the Saint Widows«) to Eleonora. Ercolani seems to have orientated his work clearly towards the empress dowager, considering he opened the circle of widowed princely saints with Helena and ended it with Eleonora's own great-aunt, Empress Eleonora the Elder[21]. These two empresses thus formed the framework, as it were, for the other saint princesses, among whom ancestors of Eleonora from the House of Gonzaga can also be found.

The starting point for what could be called an *Imitatio Sanctae Helenae*, however, was an accident: in the night from 2 to 3 February 1668, a fire broke out in the new building of the Leopoldine Wing of the Vienna Hofburg, which was almost completed at that point. Empress Eleonora, her daughters and her ladies-in-waiting, who were already living on the third floor of the new palace wing, were saved. The material damage, however, was immense[22].

In 1669, the Jesuit Giovanni Battista Mann[23i] published an official report, so to speak, on the foundation of the Order of the Star Cross, an order of Catholic noblewomen that still exists today. It was called into being by Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers following the Hofburg fire[24]. According to Manni's report, the empress dowager knew of no greater concern following the disastrous fire than to find a relic of the cross that had been lost in it. Thus – according to Manni – she joined a long line of noble women who distinguished themselves by their devotion to the Cross of Christ. Among these, the holy Empress Helena could claim the most excellent rank as the great mother of an even greater son, who, with considerable effort and expense, excavated the Saviour's cross and erected a church worthy of imperial splendor in its honor[25]. Helena's example was now followed by another who resembled her not only in her veneration for the cross but also in her name. This similarity of name is much clearer in Italian – Ele[o]n[or]a – than in German or English[26]. Manni thus equates, so to speak, the miracle of the discovery of the True Cross in Jerusalem by Helena with the rediscovery of the relic of the Cross in the burnt ruins of the Viennese Hofburg by Eleonora[27]. Furthermore, he also establishes a connection between the rediscov-

21 cf. Ercolani, Reggia.

22 cf. Jeitler, Brände; Karner, Der Leopoldinische Trakt 392 f. In the literature, the exact dates for the Hofburg fire differ slightly.

23 Giovanni Battista Manni (1606-1682), a gifted preacher and author who was widely read until the 19th c., came from Modena. He was called to Vienna by the Empress Dowager Eleonora the Younger. Cf. Al Kalak, Un gesuita 1087 f.

24 Manni, Radunanza. The writing of Manni was soon translated into German. The German version was reprinted several times. Al Kalak regards this publication, which was dedicated to the Queen of Poland Eleonora, the elder daughter of Empress Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers, as a »passaggio decisivo nel consolidamento del rapporto« between the Jesuit and the empress dowager. Cf. Al Kalak, Un gesuita 1090. In the dedication, Manni paid tribute to Queen Eleonore as the daughter of Ferdinand III, an »altro Constantino« (unpaginated). In an address to the Ladies of the Star Cross, Manni recalled that, according to the testimony of Saint Paulinus de Nola, veneration for the Cross had been exceedingly great among the Christian nobility »ne' migliori secoli antichi« (unpaginated). Shortly after the publication of the writing on the Order of the Star Cross, Manni strengthened his relationship with the Empress Dowager Eleonora through the aforementioned writing commissioned by her on the life of her mother, Duchess Mary of Mantua (cf. note 20). Later, he published several sermons that he had delivered before Empress Eleonora the Younger. Cf. Al Kalak, Un gesuita 1090 f. For the Order of the Star Cross in general, cf. Wiesflecker, Sternkreuz-Orden.

25 »[…] la Imperatrice Santa Elena gran Madre di maggior Figliuolo, che con tante fatiche, e con tante spese dissotterrò la Croce del Salvatore, & a' suoi onori fabbricò un superbo Tempio degno della Imperiale Magnificenza«. Manni, Radunanza 22.

26 Manni, Radunanza 22.

27 Manni, Radunanza 22 f. 26.

ery of the relic of the cross and the recovery of the True Cross from the Sassanids by Emperor Heraclius in 629[28].

After various reports on earlier miracles of the cross, Manni turns to the (then) present day by explaining that the House of Habsburg has also possessed a great treasure in the form of a cross since time immemorial, created from two fragments of the True Cross, which was held in great honour by Maximilian I and the subsequent emperors, but especially by Ferdinand III, who always carried it with him[29]. In order to ease the pain of his stepmother Eleonora over the loss of her husband Ferdinand's son and successor, Leopold I entrusted her with this relic, which he himself held in the highest esteem[30].

Manni then describes the fire at the Hofburg and places particular emphasis on how intensively and persistently Eleonora had searched for the relic of the Cross in the ruins while she was indifferent to all the other lost treasures. According to Manni's report, it was only thanks to the empress dowager that the relic of the Cross was found again after five days, miraculously unharmed by the flames. Eleonora immediately had the Bishop of Vienna state that this was indeed a miracle[31]. Following this, Manni gives a detailed account of the founding of the Order of the Star Cross in memory of this miracle and thus turns to the actual subject of his writing, again emphasising the role of the Empress Dowager Eleonora, who successfully lobbied the Pope and the Emperor for confirmation of her founding[32].

The feasts of the Order of the Star Cross show a clear reference to Byzantium. Evidently, the first feast of the Order had to be the Feast of the Finding of the Cross. The statutes of the Order issued by Empress Eleonora make extensive reference to Empress Helena or, more precisely, the legend of Saint Helena. The recovery of the True Cross by Constantine's mother, who was already in her eighth decade, is dated to the time after the conclusion of the Council of Nicaea. The Feast of the Finding of the Cross is celebrated by the Order of the Star Cross on 4 May according to the calendar of the Latin Church; the statutes of the Order, however, refer to the fact that the Greek Church celebrates this feast on 14 September[33]. The second feast of the Order takes place on this date, namely the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross in memory of the recovery of the True Cross from the Persians by Emperor Heraclius in 629, of the miraculous victories over the »infidels« and of the fact that the emperor himself carried the cross on his shoulders as if in triumph[34]. The third feast of the Order was a movable one: Good Friday. Here, Manni again makes a reference to Byzantium: at that time, a celebration was held in Constantinople around the middle of Lent to venerate the part of the True Cross that Helena had given to Constantine. According to the testimony of John Chrysostom, however, a veneration of the cross also took place on Good Friday – and it was precisely this model that the third feast of the Order took up[35]. Finally, every year on 6 February, the commemoration of the miraculous rescue of the relic of the Cross from the fire of the Vienna Hofburg and its recovery was celebrated[36]. Another reference to the late Roman/early Byzantine period can be found in the motto of the Order of the Star Cross: »Salus et Gloria«, which quotes a famous gold solidus of Emperor Justin.

The Order of the Star Cross was clearly placed in the tradition of the Habsburgs' veneration of the Holy Cross by its founder and also in Manni's writing. But Mantuan references are also unmistakable. Thus, the Order's emblem was heraldically designed as a combination of the Mantuan bar cross and the single-headed Mantuan eagle[37].

With the Order of the Star Cross, whose protectorate and presidency she took over with papal and imperial approval, Empress Eleonora created a new instrument of spiritual representation and patronage exclusively at her disposal, precisely at the time when, as a result of the first marriage of her stepson Emperor Leopold I, she lost her rank as the first woman of the court and had to take a back seat to the Empress Consort Margarita Teresa[38]. The festivities of the Order were integrated into the festive calendar of the imperial court and developed into highlights of the representation of the empress mother's devotion as well as into focus points for remembering the late antique/early Byzantine Christian emperorship and empressship, which was understood as part of the empress's own history.

However, the *Imitatio Sanctae Helenae* by Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers was not finished with the foundation of the Order of the Star Cross. The context of the founding of the order also includes the fact that around 1668, the empress dowager commissioned Carpoforo Tencalla to redesign the chapel of St Peter Canisius in the Jesuit church at the imperial court, the actual church of the Order of the Star Cross.

28 cf. ibid. 26f. Manni then reports, citing Euagrios Scholastikos' account of the Persian Wars, that the inhabitants of Apamea, after Antioch had already been taken by the barbarians, had averted danger by processions of the Cross. For the historical background of the 7th c., cf. Drijvers, Heraclius; Borgehammar, Heraclius.

29 cf. Manni, Radunanza 30-32.

30 »… la Maestà dell'Imperator LEOPOLDO degno Figliulo di sì gran Padre bene mostrò quanta stima facesse della Imperatrice ELEONORA, poiche per mitigare in parte l'acerbezza della di lei Vedouità, fece forza à se medesimo, privandosi di questa Reliquia da lui tenuta in somma veneratione, e in sua mano depositolla«. Manni, Radunanza 32.

31 cf. Manni, Radunanza 33-36.

32 cf. Manni, Radunanza 37-53.

33 cf. Manni, Radunanza 66-68. The anti-Judaic components of the legend of Saint Helena are also reproduced, such as the concealment of the cross and the conversion of the Jew Judas, the later Saint Quiriacus. Overall, the reader is assumed to be familiar with the legend.

34 cf. Manni, Radunanza 69f. Following the recovery of the True Cross, Heraclius is said to have brought it to Constantinople. In a triumphal procession on 14 September 629, he had it carried before him.

35 cf. Manni, Radunanza 75f.

36 cf. Manni, Radunanza 100.

37 cf. Manni, Radunanza 198.

38 In order to secure his claims to the Spanish inheritance, Leopold I postponed his (first) marriage until his cousin and niece, the Infanta Margarita Teresa, had reached a marriageable age of 15. The procuration wedding took place in Madrid at Easter 1666. The new empress did not arrive in Vienna until December 1666.

Tencalla's frescoes show Saint Helena actively and personally caring for slaves and the poor. A special reference to the founder, as well as to the ruling dynasty as a whole, is established by the fact that Helena wears the so-called Rudolfine house crown of the Habsburgs[39].

Like her great-aunt, Empress Eleonora the Younger was a dedicated patron of court music and musical theatre. She staged numerous operas in honour of the emperor and various family members. During Lent, she regularly performed sacred oratorios, a new genre whose establishment in Vienna was largely due to her influence[40]. Remarkably, a Helena oratorio, composed on a libretto of Pietro Guadagni dedicated to the empress dowager, was performed as early as Lent 1668, a few weeks after the Hofburg fire and the 'miracle' of the recovery of the relic of the Holy Cross[41]. Apart from the narrator (»Testo«), an angel and the choir of angels, only two people appear in the short oratorio: Helena (»S. Elena«) and Emperor Constantine (»Costantino«). The libretto presupposes knowledge of the legend of Saint Helena, which it reproduces and interprets in extremely concise form. In the first part, Helena as the »beautiful Amazon of Christ« (»Bell'Amazone di Christo«) decides to set off for the Orient to snatch the true cross from the ignominious (»empi«). Constantine gives his blessing to this plan and encourages his mother to wrest the cross from the barbarians (»barbari«)[42]. The second part of the oratorio is dedicated to the actual finding of the cross and the reactions to it. Two elements are remarkable here: First of all, Constantine admits to his mother that she outshines him in glory. For while he had indeed defeated Maxentius in the sign of the cross, she had renewed the torment of the underworld – meaning that by finding the True Cross and thus opening the way to the right veneration of the Holy Cross for the faithful, Helena had, so to speak, renewed the redemptive work of Christ[43]. The second remarkable element is that at the very end of the oratorio, it says that the cross must illuminate every place and always remain intact, on earth, in water, in air and in fire – an easily understandable allusion to the »miracle« of the relic of the cross that had survived the Hofburg fire unscathed[44]. This makes it clear that the praise formulated earlier is not only directed at Saint Helena, but also at her successor Eleonora, who also made a significant contribution to the proper veneration of the Cross.

During the 1683 Lent, the empress dowager again performed an oratorio of Helena, this time composed by Giovanni Battista Pederzuoli[45]. This second oratorio of Saint Helena was thus performed in the year of the second siege of Vienna by the Turks, at a time when the outbreak of a major war against the Ottoman Empire was already foreseeable[46]. Once again, the focus is on Helena's discovery of the True Cross, and once again the Helena legend is assumed to be well-known. However, the theme is realised quite differently than in 1668. The focus is less on the empress's physical departure for Jerusalem and more so on her spiritual struggle. Accordingly, apart from Helena herself, no historical figures appear – not even Constantine – but rather allegorical figures symbolising the good and evil powers: divine love (»Amor Divino«), faith (»la Fede«) and the choir of angels (»Coro d'Angioli«) on the one hand, the devil (»Plutone«), the mortal sin of fear (»il Timore, Vitio infernale«) and the choir of demons (»Coro di Demonii«) on the other[47]. In the first part, Helena, strengthened by divine love and faith, struggles to set out in search of the Cross of the Saviour without letting fear dissuade her from this decision. The first part of the oratorio ends with the following cry: »My steadfastness will conquer the fear of terrible danger«[48]. This can certainly be understood as a call for courage in the face of the acute danger of war.

In the second part, the announced victory over the infernal powers takes place through the discovery of the True Cross. But the victory has two other levels: Firstly, it is about the victory of the believing soul over sin. Secondly, the victory over the very earthly threat of the infernal power (»potenza infernal«) of the Ottomans is implied. The oratorio ends with Helena and the good powers singing »He who serves heaven knows how to rule hell[49]«.

39 cf. Telesko, Kreuzreliquie 203f. (with further references). It should also be noted that in the Kirche am Hof there was also a chapel of St Aloysius, the family saint of the Gonzaga dynasty. On a pillar of this chapel hung a Baroque copy of the image of Our Lady of Old Brno, which was considered to be the work of St Luke and whose finding was also attributed to St Helena. Cf. Kaufmann, Wandbespannungen 21.

40 cf. Deisinger, Oratorien; Deisinger, Tricarico; Deisinger, Aufführungen.

41 cf. Guadagni, S. Elena. On the title page, the single-headed Mantuan eagle is depicted twice. Pietro Guadagni wrote several opera and oratorio libretti for the Imperial court, where he also served as deputy resident of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Cf. Seifert 1619-1792, 602. The composer of the oratorio »S. Elena« is unknown. Perhaps it is Pietro Andrea Ziani, at the time the chapel master of the empress dowager.

42 cf. Guadagni, S. Elena, Parte prima, unpaginated.

43 »Ben son' io quàggiù felice;
Per la nobil mia Vittoria:
Ma di gloria
Tù mi auvanzi ò Genitrice.
Aprir fei con questo segno
A' Massentio il precipitio:
Ma supplitio
Tù rinovi al cupo Regno«.
Guadagni, S. Elena, Parte seconda, unpaginated.

44 »Illustrar deui ogni loco,
Erestar[ sic!] mai sempre illeso
In Terra, in Acqua. in Aria, è in mezzo alFoco[sic!]«.
Guadagni, S. Elena, Parte seconda, unpaginated.

45 cf. Federhöfer-König, Pederzuoli; Deisinger, Pederzuoli. The librettist of this oratorio is unknown.

46 cf. Eickhoff, Venedig 366-368.

47 Pederzuoli, S. Elena.

48 »Vincerà la mia costanza il timor di reo periglio«. Pederzuoli, S. Elena, unpaginated.

49 »Chi serve al Ciel
sa dominar l'inferno«. Pederzuoli, S. Elena, unpaginated.
Ibid., Parte seconda, unpaginated. – The theme of the finding of the Holy Cross by Empress Eleonora is also used in other oratorios, e. g. in Savini / Draghi, Potenza della Croce, where in the second part the personification of fire laments that the relic of the cross escaped destruction in the fire of the Hofburg.
»Mà che vedo? Oh me misero!
Della Gran LEONORA un picciol legno
Prefigge alle mie furie e fine e segno« (unpaginated).

Emperor Heraclius was not referred to in a sacred oratorio, but in the opera »L'Eraclio«, which was performed at the Munich court in 1690 in honour of Leopold I. The emperor was on his way back from Augsburg then, where his eldest son, Archduke Joseph, had been elected and crowned King of the Romans – and thus established as his father's successor as Roman Emperor. The libretto – one of the stories of mistaken identity common to Baroque court opera, in which historical figures interact in a completely fictitious plot – has as its subject the deposition of the usurper Phokas by Heraclius, who in the opera is the son of the legitimate Emperor Maurikios deposed by Phokas[50]. The subject – succession of the legitimate heir to the throne – fits the context of Archduke Joseph's election as King of the Romans. Even though the war against the Persian Empire is not addressed directly in the opera, the educated audience was undoubtedly aware that Heraclius had won victory over the Sassanids following his accession to the throne. The dedication to Emperor Leopold establishes the connection with the Great Turkish War, which had already been going on for seven years in 1690, when it expresses in full confidence that just as Heraclius had regained the throne of the Eastern Roman Empire, Leopold was destined to win back the kingdoms and Empires hitherto oppressed by tyranny[51]. This theme is taken up in the *Licenza* following the conclusion of the proper opera plot. In it, we can find not only praise being heaped on Leopold and Joseph, but a statement of confidence that even the »shameful peoples« would be forced to praise his name after their subjugatio[52] – a wish for further victories over the Ottoman Empire that is not difficult to decipher[53].

When the opera »L'Eraclio« was performed, Empress Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers had already died and her daughter-in-law Eleonore of Palatinate-Neuburg had taken over the patronage of the Order of the Star Cross[54]. The fact that the foundation of the Order of the Star Cross and, in this context, the *Imitatio Sanctae Helenae* were of extraordinary importance to Empress Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers is still evident in the funeral sermons held in her honour in Vienna and Mantua following her death on 6 December 1686.

In his funeral sermon held on 9 January 1687 in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Vienna, the Jesuit Antonius Waggin gives a detailed account of the founding of the Order of the Star Cross. In this context, he praises the deceased empress as the »other Helena«. A little later, he calls her the »Cross-loving Helena« and at the same time emphasises in which respect the new Helena, in his opinion, equals the old Helena[55]. In the care of the poor, she had even surpassed Helena: According to the testimony of Rufinus and Eusebius, Helena donated clothes to poor »spiritual virgins«. Eleonora, however, personally washed the feet of twelve poor women on Holy Thursday and provided them with plenty of household goods, alms and clothes, which she even had made herself[56].

On 16 January 1687, Mantua, too, saw a Jesuit hold a funeral sermon in honour of Eleonora. Like Waggin, Nicolò Forti glorifies the deceased empress as the new Helena. He also especially praises her for her veneration of the Holy Cross and goes into detail about the founding of the Order of the Star Cross. Like Waggin, Forti compares the two empresses in favour of Eleonora: The one had found the cross in the earth, the other in the fire; the one had raised it to her diadem, the other to the stars[57].

In addition to such parallels, however, there are also clear differences between the sermons. In Forti's funeral sermon, there are two references to Byzantium that do not appear in Waggin's sermon: Firstly, he places Eleonora's death in the context of the Great Turkish War, regretting that she had died just at the time when Buda was conquered, Belgrade was about to fall and Byzantium was threatened[58]. Moreover, he names the symbolic Byzantine »capital« of the Gonzaga as a major reason for the marriages of the emperors of the West to Gonzaga princesses, for he claims that they had absorbed the precious last spirits of life of the Eastern Empire through Margherita Paleologa's marriage to Federico Gonzaga[59]. Forti thus explicitly places the deceased empress in a dynastic relationship to the Byzantine Empire, which was essential for her family of origin but was not allowed to play any role for the House of Habsburg, into which she had married. This reference to Byzantium, which remained unconsidered in the context of the empress's representation of power in Vienna, of course, could be duly appreciated in the Mantuan funeral sermon, over which, to a certain extent, the Gonzaga held the sovereignty of interpretation.

50 cf. Bernabei, L'Eraclio, Argomento (unpaginated).

51 »Ella è destinata a riacquistarsi i Regni e gl'Imperi infin'ad hora dall'atrui tirannide oppressi«. Bernabei, L'Eraclio, Dedication (unpaginated).

52 »L'empie Genti
Vinte e dome
Son costrette ne lamenti
Il suo Nome à celebrar«. Bernabei, L'Eraclio 84.

53 Incidentally, this hope united the emperor and his son-in-law, the Bavarian Elector Max II Emanuel, who for a time held the supreme command in the war against the Ottomans.

54 cf. Schmid, Eleonore Magdalena 173 f.

55 Waggin, Ehren-Krantz, unpaginated.

56 cf. Waggin, Ehren-Krantz, unpaginated.

57 »Oh' mancaua anche questo, che LEONORA Imperadrice d'Occidente mouesse lite ad Elena Imperadrice d'Oriente sopra l'inuention della Croce; vna la trouò sotterra, l'altra nel fuoco; vna l'esaltò sul diadema della sua fronte, l'altra l'innalzò fino alle stelle«. Forti, Nelle pompe fvnerali, unpaginated.

58 »[…] quando vide la Cattolica Fede assisa sulle rovine di Buda espugnata, intimarle cadute à Belgrado, e minnaciar le stragi à Bisantio«. Ibid.

59 »Per me credo, che il prouedere di Spose all'Imperio d'Occidente sia vn censo d'Honore a' Gonzaghi; fondato su'l capitale d'hauere in se riceuuti gli vltimi pretiosi spiriti dell'Imperio d'Oriente, in Margherita Paleologa moglie del Duca Federico il fedele«. Ibid. The Gonzagas' claim to the eastern imperial crown (admittedly hardly realisable) was still known in the 18th c. Schweder, Theatrum 663.

## Conclusion

It was above all the common ground of Christian emperorship that made references to Byzantium possible and attractive within the framework of the representation of rulership by the Habsburg emperors in the early modern period. In view of the idea of the *Translatio Imperii*, which was essential for the Habsburg emperors' self-image, such references were only conceivable for the Late Roman/Early Byzantine period. For from 800 onwards, according to the theory of translation, the only legitimate Roman emperor was in the West. Like Constantine for the emperors, his legendarily exalted mother Helen played an important role as a role model for the women of the imperial family, and especially for the empress dowager Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers, who virtually portrayed herself as the new Helen. Such references to Constantine and Helen were significantly facilitated by the flourishing veneration of the Holy Cross in post-Tridentine Catholicism in general, and in the Habsburg Empire in particular. Emperor Heraclius was also honored for recovering the True Cross, although he did not achieve a status comparable to that of Constantine or Helen. This is also true for other personalities such as Emperor Theodosius II or his sister Pulcheria.

The theory of translation also explains why the genealogical connection between the Gonzaga empresses and the last Byzantine imperial dynasty does not seem to have played any role in the representation of the Viennese court, indeed it does not seem to have been discussed at all. In this case, it can be assumed that the silence was deliberate. For these dynastic connections were undoubtedly known, and in Mantua they were certainly used as an argument for the special dynastic dignity of the Gonzaga. In Vienna, however, such considerations had to take a back seat to the overriding motive of the *Translatio Imperii* and the exclusivity of the Habsburgs' own Western Roman Empire.

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé

### Under the Sign of the Cross. References to Byzantium in the Representation of Rulership at the Viennese Court in the Seventeenth Century

It was above all the common ground of Christian emperorship which made references to Byzantium possible and attractive for the early modern Habsburg emperors within the framework of their representation of imperial rulership. In view of the idea of the *Translatio Imperii*, which was essential for the self-perception of the Habsburg emperors, such references were, however, only conceivable for the early Byzantine period. Because according to the theory of the *Translatio Imperii*, from the year 800 onwards, there was only one legitimate Roman emperor: Charlemagne and his Frankish and respectively German successors while the later Byzantine emperors were diminished as »unfaithful« Greeks. By contrast, some members of the imperial dynasties of the fourth, fifth, sixth and the seventh century played a certain role in the Habsburg representation of imperial rulership. Whereas Constantine served as a model for a Christian emperor, his legendarily exalted mother Helen was an important point of reference for the women of the imperial dynasty. Emperor Heraclius, the recuperator of the True Cross from the Sassanids, was honoured, too, although he did not attain a status comparable to Constantine and Helen.

The paper draws special attention to the empress dowager Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers (1628-1686), an important personality at the Viennese court in the second half of the seventeenth century. She virtually staged herself as the new Helena by founding the Order of the Star Cross in 1668, after a »miracle« connected with a relic of the Holy Cross.

## Unter dem Zeichen des Kreuzes. Bezüge zu Byzanz in der Herrschaftsrepräsentation am Wiener Hof im 17. Jahrhundert

Vor allem die gemeinsame Grundlage des christlichen Kaisertums machte Bezüge zu Byzanz für die frühneuzeitlichen Habsburger Kaiser im Rahmen ihrer Darstellung der kaiserlichen Herrschaft möglich und attraktiv. Angesichts der für das Selbstverständnis der Habsburger Kaiser wesentlichen Idee der *Translatio Imperii* waren solche Bezüge jedoch nur für die frühbyzantinische Zeit denkbar. Denn nach der Theorie der *Translatio Imperii* gab es seit dem Jahr 800 nur noch einen legitimen römischen Kaiser: Karl den Großen und seine fränkischen bzw. deutschen Nachfolger, während die späteren byzantinischen Kaiser zu »untreuen« Griechen degradiert wurden. Demgegenüber spielten einige Mitglieder der Kaiserfamilien des 4., 5., 6. und 7. Jahrhunderts eine gewisse Rolle in der habsburgischen Darstellung der kaiserlichen Herrschaft. Während Konstantin als Vorbild für einen christlichen Kaiser diente, war seine legendär verehrte Mutter Helena ein wichtiger Bezugspunkt für die Frauen der Kaiserdynastie. Auch Kaiser Herakleius, der das Heilige Kreuz von den Sassaniden zurückeroberte, wurde verehrt, obwohl er keinen mit Konstantin und Helena vergleichbaren Status erlangte.

Besondere Aufmerksamkeit widmet der Beitrag der Kaiserinwitwe Eleonora Gonzaga-Nevers (1628-1686), einer wichtigen Persönlichkeit am Wiener Hof in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts. Sie inszenierte sich selbst als neue Helena, indem sie 1668 nach einem »Wunder« im Zusammenhang mit einer Reliquie des Heiligen Kreuzes den Sternkreuzorden gründete.

## Sous le signe de la croix. Références à Byzance dans la représentation du pouvoir à la cour de Vienne au XVII$^{e}$ siècle

C'est avant tout le fondement commun de l'empire chrétien qui rendait les références à Byzance possibles et attrayantes pour les empereurs Habsbourg du début de l'époque moderne dans le cadre de leur représentation du pouvoir impérial. Cependant, compte tenu de l'idée de *translatio imperi*ii, essentielle à l'identité des empereurs Habsbourg, de telles références n'étaient concevables que pour la période byzantine primitive. En effet, selon la théorie de la *translatio imperii*, il n'y avait plus qu'un seul empereur romain légitime depuis l'an 800: Charlemagne et ses successeurs francs respectivement allemands, tandis que les empereurs byzantins ultérieurs étaient relégués au rang de Grecs »infidèles«. En revanche, certains membres des familles impériales des IV$^{e}$, V$^{e}$, VI$^{e}$ et VII$^{e}$ siècles jouèrent un certain rôle dans la représentation habsbourgeoise de la souveraineté impériale. Alors que Constantin servait de modèle pour un empereur chrétien, sa mère Hélène, vénérée comme une légende, était une référence importante pour les femmes de la dynastie impériale. L'empereur Héraclius, qui a reconquis la Sainte Croix des Sassanides, était également vénéré, même s'il n'a pas atteint un statut comparable à celui de Constantin et Hélène.

Cet article accorde une attention particulière à l'impératrice douairière Éléonore Gonzague-Nevers (1628-1686), personnalité importante de la cour de Vienne dans la seconde moitié du XVII$^{e}$ siècle. Elle se mit en scène comme une nouvelle Hélène en fondant l'Ordre de la Croix Étoile en 1668, après un »miracle« lié à une relique de la Sainte Croix.

Gwendolyn Döring

# Byzantium on Stage. Heraclius as an Opera Character in the Context of Early Modern Power Representation

When exploring potential case studies for this paper[1], which is also dedicated to the reception of late antique or early Byzantine rulers, one is confronted with the fundamental and somewhat provocative question: How far does the courtly sphere actually extend? For the Viennese context, Matthias Schnettger has already shown that such references to Byzantium were made in court opera. Particularly the Christian emperors including Constantine the Great and the cross symbol were frequently taken up in the context of the Ottoman wars[2].

This article – quite deliberately – focuses on a German-language piece that appears to be quite different at first glance, one might almost say it forms a counter example to court opera. It is Reinhard Keiser's singspiel *Die wiederhergestellte Ruh/ oder Die gecrönte Tapferkeit des Heraclius*, which was performed at the Gänsemarktoper in Hamburg in 1712[3].

Previous research has shed light on Heraclius' role in drama and music theatre from different perspectives: On the one hand, there are the observations made by Bernhard Jahn and Irmgard Scheitler in the field of German studies[4]. On the other hand, Dorothea Schröder has specifically dealt with Keiser's *Heraclius* in the context of the festive culture in Hamburg in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries[5].

It is an extraordinary example for the following reason: Preface and epilogue are establishing connections between the courtly sphere and Byzantine history. This exemplifies that such attributions were used in the service of imperial homage, representation, and legitimation – even beyond the narrower framework of operas actually performed at court. Especially Venice and Hamburg are often described as opera centres with a strong public tendency. Undoubtedly, due to economic requirements, the Venetian opera business did dispose of a significant public orientation, however, it was not devoid of courtly elements. As, for example, dedications to nobles show, the public and courtly spheres were not completely distinct. For the Oper am Gänsemarkt, generally considered the first exclusively public opera house, there is evidence, too, that it was a cultural institution not capable of escaping the influence of current day politics, thus not entirely independent of imperial contexts[6].

Since the reception of Byzantine history in the music theatre of the Early Modern Period was not an isolated phenomenon, the following considerations start with some general remarks. Starting from Venice, Byzantine topics were subsequently represented in other Italian opera centres and also taken up in German-speaking countries.

According to the three-part division of Byzantine history, particularly topics from the early and middle Byzantine period, less so from the late Byzantine period were taken up frequently. And yet: Even though references to Early Byzantium were exceptionally attractive for representative purposes in the sense of an extended reception of Antiquity, the reception of such topics was by no means limited to Late Antiquity or Early Byzantium respectively. In fact, the entire range of Byzantine history was covered to the ends of Byzantium functioning as a nexus between Antiquity and the Early Modern Period. Thus, the synthesis Rome – Byzantium – Holy Roman Empire suggested a continuous line originating in Antiquity. How was this accomplished in the field of music theatre?

Neither the German-speaking world could evade the fascinating potential of functionalizing Byzantine history in sociopolitical interpretative contexts, as for example pieces

1 Although this was not an isolated case, apart from primarily work-related studies and libretto-based surveys (cf. for example Bossard, Giovanni Legrenzi. Il Giustino; Della Valle, Bisanzio all'opera; Seebald, Libretti vom »Mittelalter«; Smythe, Byzantium: A Night at the Opéra) there has so far been no detailed, extensive discourse on the reception of subjects from Byzantine history in the Italian-language music theatre.

2 For further information on the use of the cross symbol at the court of Charles VI cf. Matsche, Die Kunst im Dienst der Staatsidee 125. 126-128. 133.

3 Libretto: Johann Ulrich König / Reinhard Keiser, Heraclius (Hamburg 1712); score: Reinhard Keiser, Heraclius (Hamburg 1712).

4 Jahn, L'Adelaide und L'Heraclio; Scheitler, Metamorphosen.

5 Schröder, Zeitgeschichte.

6 For example cf. Schröder, Zeitgeschichte 2-3.

In: Matthias Schnettger · Jan Kusber · Klaus Pietschmann · Stefan Albrecht (eds), Byzantium at Early Modern Courts. Reception, Confrontation and Projects. Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident 34 (Mainz 2025). DOI: 10.11588/propylaeum.1617.c23256

on – best known and most prevalent – Otto II and Theophanu, Constantine the Great, Theodosius II, Justin I, Heraclius, and Irene Doukaina attest[7].

Similarly to Constantine the Great, Heraclius is inseparably connected with the cross symbol – he is connected with the return of the True Cross to Jerusalem[8], which is at least reverberating in the metaphorical layers surrounding these performances.

Together with *L'Heraclio* (Venice 1671)[9], *L'Eraclio* (Naples 1673)[10], *L'Eraclio* (Munich 1690)[11], *Phocas* (Leipzig 1696)[12], *L'Eraclio* (Rome 1712)[13], the Hamburg homage to the East Roman emperor is part of a larger reception tradition.

The libretto written by Johann Ulrich König is based on the Venetian piece from 1671, i. e. the text by Nicolò Beregan, which is patterned on Pierre Corneille's tragedy *Héraclius, empereur d'Orient* (Paris 1647).

The occasion of the performance was Charles' VI coronation as King of Hungary following the the Peace of Szatmár (1711) brought about by Joseph I. Furthermore, Anton Ulrich, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel was honoured with the performance. In fact, Charles' VI wife, Elisabeth Christine, was his granddaughter. Thus, the long and descriptive title of the singspiel can be read as a short summary referring to these current political events at the same time. While the celebrations of the Hungarian coronation are directly mentioned in the title, Schröder uncovers a further intention behind the homage to Charles VI in Hamburg, namely: The conflicts ignited between the Hamburg Council and Citizenry following the reopening of the imperial commission were making it necessary to appease Charles VI[14].

What is Keiser's singspiel about? Its title already provides information on the plot – peace brought about by the title hero Heraclius after times of trouble – and the *dramatis personae* names the following imperial protagonists:

> »Heraclius, Nachfolger des Phocas,
> Mauritius, der überwundene Kayser.
> Phocas, der Tyrannische Kayser in Constantinopel«[15].

Thus, three emperors and the succession of rulership connected with Mauritius' death are in the centre of attention. References to Charles VI, as can be seen in the further course of the preface, are differentiated and directly connected with the plot, i. e. they do not remain on a metaphorical level, but are openly phrased as a comparison. On top of that, a genealogical reference is included:

> »und hat man den Inhalt dieses Sing=Spiels um so viel lieber aus den Geschichten der alten Griechischen Kayser entlehnen wollen/weil nach der Genealogischen Deduction des Herrn Professor Eckhardts in Helmstätt/die Aller=Durchlauchtigste Gemahlin/unsers Allergnädigsten Kaysers/von einem Griechischen Regenten/nemlich dem Ruhmwürdigsten Kayser Constantino Porphyrogenito abstammet«[16].

Viewed separately, these relations between the political context and the piece itself are already interesting enough. However, with a closer look to the libretto and score, this article means to go beyond these merely context-related aspects. It does not conclude with the analysis of the paratexts included in the libretto, but first also takes a deeper look at the work itself: How do these references to the contemporary political sphere work in the inner architecture of the singspiel itself? As the research question revolves around an homage to the emperor, the analysis focuses on the rulers in the piece.

The preface describes the transformation of Phocas towards a presumptuous and hybrid tyrant:

7 The following overview gives an insight into the reception of Byzantium in German-language opera centres. It is, however, just a selection of pieces – especially the large number of Ottone adaptations cannot be fully represented in this framework.

**Brunswick**
Carlo Francesco Pollarolo, Ottone (1697); Johann Joseph Fux / Francesco Gasparini / Antonio Caldara, Teodosio ed Eudossa (1716); Carlo Francesco Gasparini / Antonio Lotti, Costantino (1718); George Frideric Handel, Ottone, Rè di Germania (1723, 1725); George Frideric Handel / Georg Caspar Schürmann, Justinus (1725, 1726, 1741).

**Dresden**
Antonio Lotti, Teofane (1719); Johann Adolph Hasse, Irene (1738).

**Hamburg**
Johann Philipp Förtsch, Bajazeth und Tamerlan (1690, 1695); Reinhard Keiser, Mahumeth II. (1696); Johann Christian Schiefferdecker, Justinus (1706); Reinhard Keiser, Die wiederhergestellte Ruh oder Die gecrönte Tapferkeit des Heraclius (1712); Johann Joseph Fux, Francesco Gasparini, Antonio Caldara, Teodosio (1718, 1719, 1721); George Frideric Handel, Tamerlan (1725, 1726);
Georg Friedrich Händel, Georg Philipp Telemann, Otto (1726, 1727, 1729); Anon., Bajazet (1748).

**Leipzig**
Nicolaus Adam Strungk, Phocas (1696); Johann Christian Schiefferdecker, Justinus (1700).

**Munich**
Giuseppe Antonio Bernabei, L'Eraclio (1690).

**Vienna**
Marc' Antonio Ziani / Antonio Negri / Antonio Caldara, L'Atenaide (Vienna 1714); Antonio Lotti, Costantino (Vienna 1716); Giuseppe Bonno, L'Atenaide, ovvero Gli affetti generosi (1762).

8 cf. Viermann, Herakleios, der schwitzende Kaiser 344.
9 Beregan/Ziani, L'Heraclio.
10 Beregan/Ciccinello/Ziani, L'Eraclio.
11 Bernardoni [?] / Bernabei, L'Eraclio.
12 Boxberg/Strungk, Phocas.
13 Bernardoni/Anon./Gasparini/Pollarolo, L'Eraclio.
14 cf. Schröder, Zeitgeschichte 145-148.
15 König/Keiser, Heraclius [2].
16 König/Keiser, Heraclius [7]. While Dorothea Schröder categorizes this reference to Anton Ulrich, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, who was in Hamburg, as a fortunate coincidence (cf. Schröder, Zeitgeschichte 149) but not the reason for the choice of this subject matter, it has to be noted that the specific mention of this genealogical relationship creates closeness to Byzantium and the imperial contexts in which its reception was functionalized.

»Phocas, ein Tyrann/welchem am Stoltz/Wollust und Grausamkeit keiner zu vergleichen/nachdem ihn sein Glück aus einem Stall-Knechte zu einem Haubtmann/die rebellirende Soldaten aber gar auff den Kayserl. Thron erhoben/wurde so hochmüthig/daß Er sich nach der erbärmlichsten Hinrichtung des von ihm verstossenen Mauritii, und der gantzen Kayserl. Familie gleichsam als einen irdischen Gott wollte verehrt wissen«[17].

Accordingly, in scene I,9, Phocas attracts attention with an extremely pompous appearance expressed both on a musical level and by the scenic presentation. In this light, the setting is creating an entity isolating the figure of Phocas from his surroundings:

»Der Himmel öffnet sich unter Donner und Blitzen/Phocas erscheinet auff einem Adler/in Gestalt des Jupiters/in einer helleuchtenden Wolcke/umgeben mit vielen erdichteten Göttern und Göttinnen [usw.]«[18].

With the following *aria à tutti*, sung by the choir, maximum efforts are achieved not only visually throughout the scenery of the thunderstorm with lightning, but also acoustically:

»Man hört den Schall von Phocas Ruhm
Schon durch die zwölff=gestirnten Häuser;
Der Himmel wird sein Eigenthum/
Und Fama windet Lorbeer=Reiser
Zum Ruhm des Kaysers aller Kayser«[19].

No power related symbol is missing, the exuberance of attributes is overstraining and resulting in an artificial self-promotion given that Phocas may be claiming all of this but is in fact not the legitimate ruler. As is well known, the eagle was the field emblem with the highest rank in the Roman legions. According to its mythological meaning, the symbol of the eagle was associated with Jupiter, being his messenger. Thus, Phocas is depicted in a loud and dazzling manner, however, leaving the impression of a vicious tyrant. The text of this *aria à tutti*, set in *da capo* form, should be kept in mind for later because it will reoccur in another place. As the conversation in the following recitative reveals, this tribute is indeed merely a superficial homage. Communication is carried out on two layers: On the surface, there is an impressive tribute to the self-proclaimed ruler, everything the tyrant himself wants to hear, whereas behind his back blasphemous words are spreading, i. e. he is by no means openly accepted as a sincere sovereign. About himself, he speaks as if he were a god:

»Nun solstu/Schönste/wissen/
Wie Jupiter pflegt sein Gemahl zu küssen«[20].

All in all, this scene confirms the unapproachable, hybrid self-elevation already hinted at in the preface.

In contrast, Heraclius and Theodosia's aria »Verzweiflung und Rachgier«[21] in II,6, a heartfelt and also musical argument between the jealous Heraclius and Theodosia further extending to the following recitative, portrays him as a human being not devoid of weaknesses. Despite being a virtuous and heroic saviour, hit by jealousy he gets detached and is not himself here. All of Theodosia's attempts for appeasing him – musically rendered as short and frequent interjections – are failing, his passion and temper are stronger. This scene strongly differs from the (self-)depiction of the cold-hearted Phocas. Seen in the context of representative endeavours, it gets clear that it contributes to the image of a ruler one can identify with.

Similarly, Phocas is again characterized not only by simple attributes, but throughout the entire scenic context, in IV,4 and IV,5. Conspicuously set as a dream scene departing from Phocas awaiting a romantic meeting, it yields a contrast with maximum impact[22]. It is located in the

»Kayserliche[n] Lust Garten mit Statuen, Vases, Orangerien, Wasser-Künsten/und Bienen-Körben/hinten ein Lust-Hauss/welches den Berg Parnass mit dem Apollo und den 9. Musen abbildet«[23].

It is starting in an idyllic atmosphere, but then slips out of Phocas' control as soon as he falls asleep[24]. Then both scenery and music are undergoing a major spectacular transformation:

»Die sanffte Music unter welcher er einschlummert/verwandelt sich in eine Symphonie Infernale, worauff das vorder Theatrum eine feurige Wohnung derer greßlichen Gespenster und Ungeheur: Der hinter Teil des Schauplatzes aber den Tempel der Ehren vorstellet/woselbst man ein prächtiges Mausoleè von verschiedenen Statuen in Lebens-Grösse/als: Der Gerechtigkeit/deß Verhängnisses / und der Göttlichen Rache ersiehet/unter welchem der Geist des Mauritius in einen verklärten Wolcken/und über demselben 2. Genien mit Lorbeer-Cräntzen schweben«[25].

17 König/Keiser, Heraclius [5].
18 König/Keiser, Heraclius [22].
19 König/Keiser, Heraclius [22]; Keiser, Heraclius 38-42.
20 König/Keiser, Heraclius [23]. Here, he is addressing Theodosia.
21 König/Keiser, Heraclius [28]; Keiser, Heraclius 60-62. This *aria à due* with the couple's heated dialogue stands out, as such dramatic conversations in this musical form were quite rare until well after the middle of the 18th c. (cf. Schläder, Das Opernduett 241).
22 Given that in the French tradition of the 17th c., either good or bad dreams appeared as the protagonists of ballets with an allegorical character (cf. Gier, »Ein Traum, was sonst?« 42), the spirit of Mauritius seems to take this place here.
23 König/Keiser, Heraclius [42].
24 Being asleep, Phoca is shown in a weak state as he is exposed to his surroundings without being able to react, defend himself or flee. Cf. Rosand, Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice 338: »a sleeping character is vulnerable – to assassination, to rape, to penetration of disguise, and to involuntary disclosures via dreams«.
25 König/Keiser, Heraclius [42].

Nightmarishly, Phocas' romantic expectations, his dream, turn into a threatening situation while his misdeeds are haunting him and are impersonated by the appearance of Mauritius' spirit. From a dramaturgical point-of-view this construction is very well calculated, as this phenomenon adds another dimension. On the one hand, it incorporates the past and on the other hand, the dream scene as a whole almost seems to be a continuum where traces of time and place are dissolved. Whereas Phocas' words are set as a plain *recitativo secco*, Mauritius' entry is highlighted by orchestra accompaniment. His *recitativo accompagnato* allows for a dynamic response to the action. While directly addressing Phocas, Mauritius' ghost is evoked by the thunderstorm:

> »Schläft stu [sic]/ Blutdürstiger Tyrann?
> Da die Gerechtigkeit des Himmels wachet /
> Und über dir mit Blitz und Straffe krachet /
> Der Abgrund hat sich/mich zu rächen/auffgethan;
> Auf/Mörder/auf! Kennstu Mauritius?
> Der dich auch aus der Grufft verfolgen muß.
> Schau Wüterich! Wie das Verhägniß dich verdammet /
> Indem der Unschuld Glantz um meine Schläffe
> flammet«[26].

His recitative resembles a live account of the events – a very powerful dramatic tool in conjunction with the flexible musical structure. For instance, the semiquaver movements following Mauritius' fourth verse of the recitative visualizes the opening of the abyss and Mauritius' powerful appearance from above. This scene then culminates in the »Entreè [sic] furies«[27] – an instrumental passage providing the basis for the entry of the furies. This ballet is starting with dance movements of the statues and the three furies' ascent from the abyss accompanied by fire and steam. Not only is it the climax of the scene, but with the disappearance of the dancers it also brings about its solution[28]. Given the special character of this sleep scene, this closing effect suits the dissolving of Phocas' dream. In the following scene he is furiously waking up, the echo of his misdeeds and uneasiness are feeding his anger and leading him to a downward spiral (**figs 1-3**).

So much can generally be said about the portrayal of the two main characters of the singspiel. Moreover, the depiction of the rulers within the piece interacts with the paratexts. Thus, the epilogue[29] presents a riddle to connect to the current surroundings culminating in the question »Soll ich euch den Helden nennen?/Wolt [sic] ihr diesen Kayser kennen?«[30] The correct answer is of course Charles. For greater emphasis, this revelation is followed by the *aria à tutti* »Man hört den Schall von Carols Ruhm« using the exact same words as the piece in the singspiel – the only difference being the exchanged name of the honoured ruler. Finally the epilogue concludes with a tribute to all dedicatees.

In the examples shown it has become clear that Phocas and Heraclius are both extremely overdrawn characters based on the baroque principle of contrast. Unlike Phocas' maliciousness, Heraclius' weaknesses are explicable and thus accepted as excusable.

Within the plot, the imperial symbols are wrongfully taken by Phocas. In the epilogue, they are granted to the rightful sovereign Charles VI and Heraclius respectively.

Asking once again for the relationship between the courtly or public character of opera and the reception of Byzantium, the example of Keiser's singspiel *Heraclius* proves that references to Byzantium fulfilled a court-related function even in centres with predominantly public tendencies, and in fact not only in paratexts, but also within the works themselves.

26 König/Keiser, Heraclius [42-43]; Keiser, Heraclius 108, 111-112.

27 The French term alludes to the French tradition of the tableau-like dream vision occurring from the end of the 17th c. to the beginning of the 19th c. A prominent example connecting music, dance, and setting can be found in Jean-Baptiste Lully's Atys (Saint-Germain-en-Laye 1676) (cf. Henze-Döhring, Traumvisionen 315). Typically, it presents good and bad dreams and can have a prophetic function predicting the outcome of the dramatic events (cf. ibid. 316). While the dream vision had allegorical connotations in the 17th c., the singers and dancers were directly affecting the dreamer. Thus, they would for instance foretell a hero's triumph (cf. ibid. 318-319). At the same time, this new tendency also opened up the sphere of the subconscious – turning the dreamer's inside out and confronting them with their inner self (cf. ibid. 326).

28 cf. König/Keiser, Heraclius [43].

29 König/Keiser, Heraclius [57-59]; Keiser, Heraclius, last pages unpaginated, [151-154]. According to Krämer, Text und Paratext 73, the paratexts guided the perception of a performance and could record ceremonial events, thus creating memories of special occurrences.

30 König/Keiser, Heraclius [57].

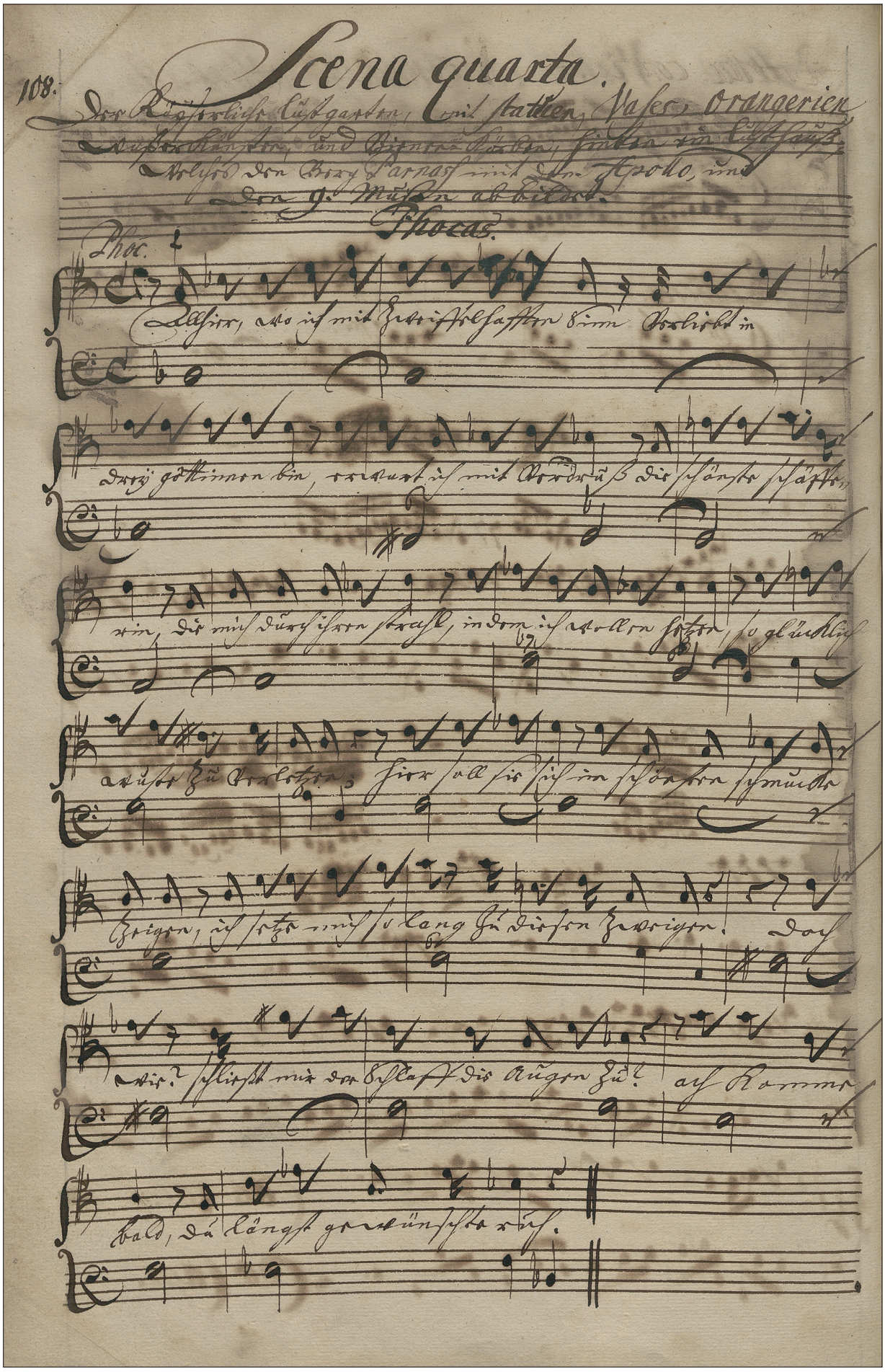



**Fig. 1** Phocas' recitative opening the dream scene (IV,4). – (Digital reproduction of the score autograph in PL-Kj, Berol. Mus. ms. autogr. Keiser, Heraclius 108 by courtesy of Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Kraków).

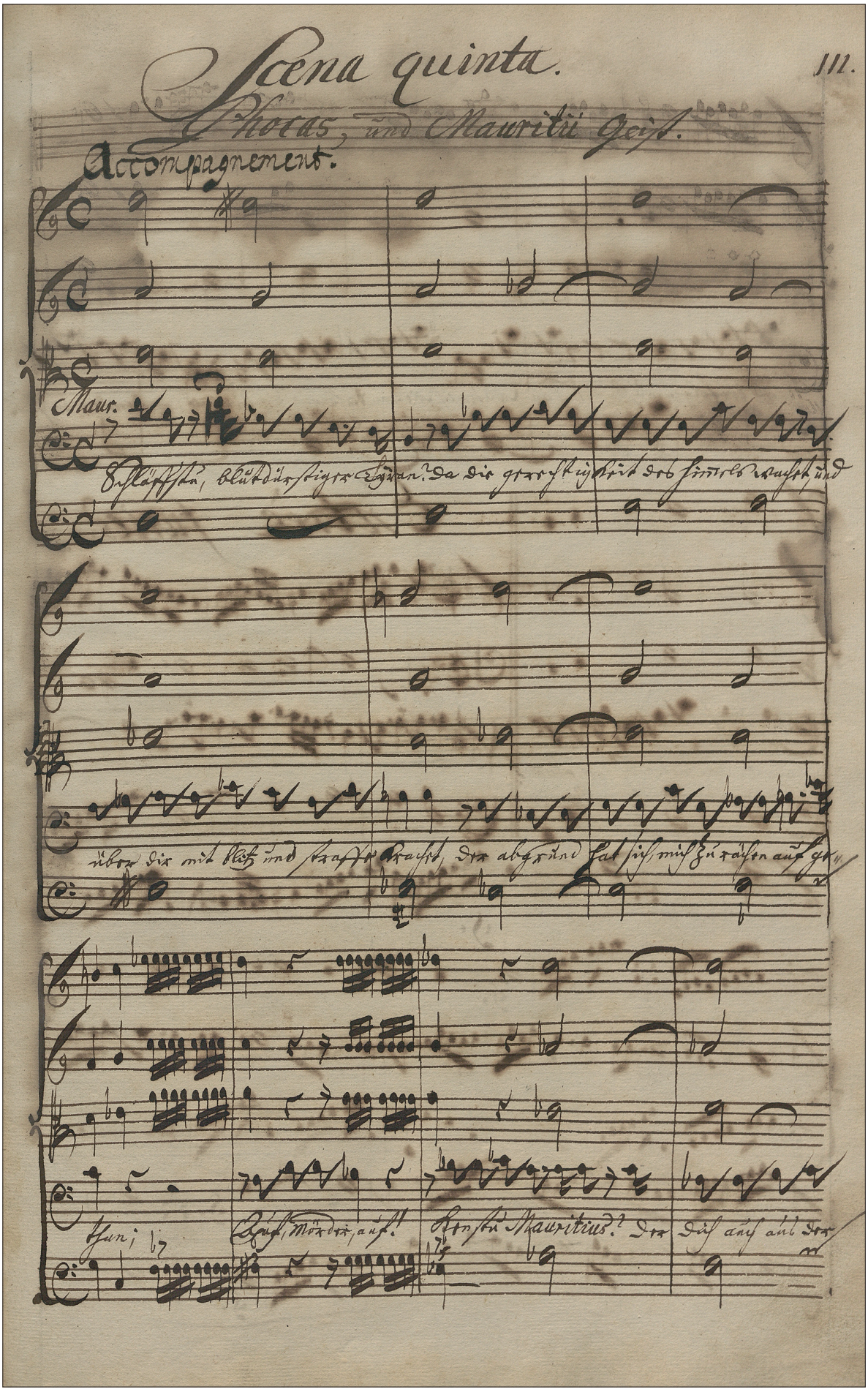



**Fig. 2** The appearance of Mauritius' spirit (IV,5). – (Digital reproduction of the score autograph in PL-Kj, Berol. Mus. ms. autogr. Keiser, Heraclius 111, by courtesy of Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Kraków).

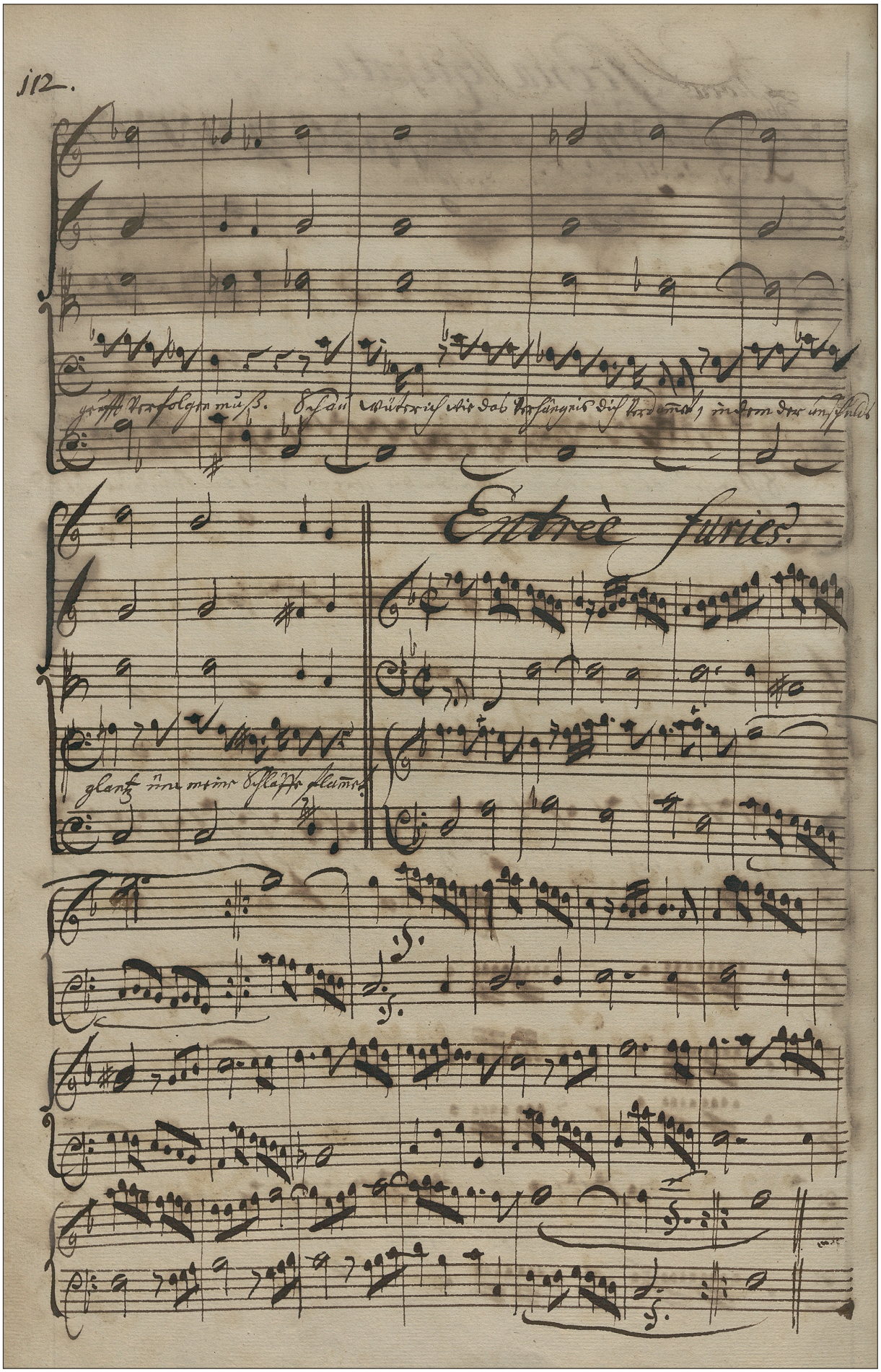



**Fig. 3** Continuation of the dream scene with entry of the furies (IV,5). – (Digital reproduction of the score autograph in PL-Kj, Berol. Mus. ms. autogr. Keiser, Heraclius 112, by courtesy of Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Kraków).

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## Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé


### Byzantium on Stage. Heraclius as an Opera Character in the Context of Early Modern Power Representation

References to Byzantine history appeared frequently in early modern music theatre – not only in Italy, but also in German-speaking countries. For example, Justin I, Heraclius, Otto II and Theophanu were often the focus of attention. This paper focuses on Reinhard Keiser's Singspiel »Die wiederhergestellte Ruh oder Die gecrönte Tapferkeit des Heraclius« (Hamburg 1712), which was performed at the Oper am Gänsemarkt on the occasion of the Hungarian coronation festival. It contains very explicit references to Charles VI and his wife Elisabeth Christine of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, here mentioned as a descendant of Constantine VII. This example shows that such attributions in the service of representation and legitimation also took place outside the narrower framework of court opera.

### Byzanz auf der Bühne. Herakleios als Opernfigur im Kontext frühneuzeitlicher Herrschaftsrepräsentation

Im frühneuzeitlichen Musiktheater tauchten immer wieder Bezüge zur byzantinischen Geschichte auf – nicht nur in Italien, sondern auch im deutschsprachigen Raum. Justin I., Herakleios, Otto II. und Theophanu standen dabei häufig im Mittelpunkt. Der vorliegende Beitrag konzentriert sich auf Reinhard Keisers Singspiel »Die wiederhergestellte Ruh oder Die gecrönte Tapferkeit des Heraclius« (Hamburg 1712), das anlässlich des ungarischen Krönungsfestes an der Oper am Gänsemarkt aufgeführt wurde. Es enthält sehr explizite Hinweise auf Karl VI. und seine Gemahlin Elisabeth Christine von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, die hier als Nachfahrin Konstantins VII. erwähnt wird. Dieses Beispiel zeigt, dass solche Zuschreibungen im Dienste der Repräsentation und Legitimation auch außerhalb des engeren Rahmens der höfischen Oper stattfanden.

### Byzance sur scène. Héraclius en tant que personnage d'opéra dans le contexte de la représentation du pouvoir au début de l'époque moderne

Les références à l'histoire byzantine étaient fréquentes dans le théâtre musical du début de l'époque moderne, non seulement en Italie, mais aussi dans les pays germanophones. Par exemple, Justin I[er], Héraclius, Otton II et Théophano étaient souvent au centre de l'attention. Cet article se concentre sur le Singspiel »Die wiederhergestellte Ruh oder Die gecrönte Tapferkeit des Heraclius« (Hambourg 1712) de Reinhard Keiser, qui a été joué à l'Oper am Gänsemarkt à l'occasion du festival du couronnement hongrois. Il contient des références très explicites à Charles VI et à son épouse Élisabeth Christine de Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, mentionnée ici comme descendante de Constantin VII. Cet exemple montre que de telles attributions au service de la représentation et de la légitimation ont également eu lieu en dehors du cadre plus étroit de l'opéra de cour.

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# Sigles Used

| | |
|---|---|
| BAR | British Archaeological Reports |
| BMGS | Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies |
| BOO | Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident |
| BZ | Byzantinische Zeitschrift |
| CFHB | Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae |
| DA | Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters |
| DOP | Dumbarton Oaks Papers |
| EO | Échos d'Orient |
| GRBS | Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies |
| IstMitt | Istanbuler Mitteilungen |
| JNES | Journal of Near Eastern Studies |
| JRA | Journal of Roman Archaeology |
| ODB | The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium |
| PL | Patrologiae cursus completus, Series latina |
| PO | Patrologia Orientalis |
| ROL | Revue de l'Orient Latin |
| SI | Studia Islamica |
| SIG | Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum |

This volume is a collection of papers from a conference held in Mainz in November 2022. Its objective is to examine the various dimensions of Byzantium's presence at early modern courts. Consequently, the scope of the publication extends to the treatment of Byzantine artefacts, the reception of Byzantium in the context of power and extant knowledge of Byzantium within the courtly milieu. The papers aim to explore the competition for Byzantine heritage and assess the extent to which it was revived and utilised.

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Die Reihe dient als Publikationsorgan für das Forschungsprogramm des Leibniz-WissenschaftsCampus, das Byzanz, seine Brückenfunktion zwischen Ost und West sowie kulturelle Transfer- und Rezeptionsprozesse von der Antike bis in die Neuzeit in den Blick nimmt. Die Methoden und Untersuchungsgegenstände der verschiedenen Disziplinen, die sich mit Byzanz beschäftigen, werden dabei jenseits traditioneller Fächergrenzen zusammengeführt, um mit einem historisch-kulturwissenschaftlichen Zugang Byzanz und seine materielle und immaterielle Kultur umfassend zu erforschen.