

Chapter 5 – A Matter of Style: Social and Ethnic Identity Construction among Nobles and Homines Novi

In the preceding chapters of this study, I have discussed the prosopographical development of the various Cypriot aristocratic groups as well as social mobility, in particular among Syrian families. I have analysed the interaction between members of the old nobility, the new Syrian and Greek aristocracy and Western newcomers. It has become evident that Syrians and Greeks indeed climbed into the highest echelons of society, especially in the middle of the fifteenth century. At the same time, the rate of intermarriage between new men and the old nobility proved to have been rather low. It is now time to ask how all these developments were related to questions of identity.

During the theoretical considerations concerning this study, I have pointed out that I will attempt to analyse identity narratives as a phenomenon connecting social structures to human consciousness, to the way people saw and constructed themselves within their symbolic universe. Moreover, I decided to discuss identities as a series of identifications with various discourses belonging to a specific symbolic universe, identifications which we can access through the narratives they generate and which may experience change in relation with social transformation. Social change and identity issues are directly related¹²⁵⁰.

Therefore, I will now inquire how members of Cypriot aristocratic groups saw themselves, and if and how these self-images underwent change together with the social changes we have analysed, maybe even provoking and influencing the latter. To which identity discourses did aristocrats relate? Which types of discourses can we discern, and did they change with time¹²⁵¹?

As may be expected, the sources do not offer material for a comprehensive answer to these questions. On the whole, we will have to make do with snippets of identity narratives found in the two important chroniclers of the period, Mach-

airas and Bustron, and other selected sources such as a letter from the *chef de conseil* Jacques de Fleury to Genoa in 1454, a hitherto unknown Haute Court protocol from the beginning of the fifteenth century, personal notes in a manuscript containing the *assizes* (a collection of law books from the Levant), and several documents concerning religious affiliations, from papal letters to testaments¹²⁵².

In spite of this rather dire source situation, I will think about identity discourses pertaining to different contexts. Since it is not possible to analyse identity on all levels of life, I will concentrate on three important aspects: social, ethnic and religious identities¹²⁵³. To begin with, I will focus on identity construction on the social level. How was social standing conceived and perceived? An important question in this section will be the concepts of honour found in the sources, since honour is directly connected to social standing (ch. 5.1.1). I will discuss if and how ideas of honour differed between aristocratic individuals and groups. A second subchapter (ch. 5.1.2) will concentrate on other aspects of social identity, such as family lineage. I will then ask how people reacted to social mobility and the identity changes it entailed (ch. 5.1.3). The second part of chapter five focuses on ethnic identities. I will analyse how members of the aristocracies related to ethnic discourse and whether these identifications changed in the course of the fifteenth century (ch. 5.2). Finally, I will complete the analysis of identity construction with a detailed examination of religious affiliations and identifications, which will occupy the whole of chapter six. The analysis of these three foci – social, ethnic and religious identity narratives – will at least allow us to discern a tendency in our picture of identity construction among the Cypriot aristocracies in the last century of Lusignan reign, if not a comprehensive overview.

1250 See pp. 16-18.

1251 I have touched on some of these questions during the discussion of contemporary perceptions of the upper classes in chapter one. However, we will now delve more deeply into the way members of the Cypriot élite constructed their identities.

1252 Machairas, *Exégésis* (Dawkins); Bustron, *Diégésis* (Kechagioglou); Brayer et al., *Vaticanus Latinus* 4789; Ganchou, *Rébellion* 143; Tucci, *Matrimonio* 87.

For the new Haute Court document, see below p. 137; for the documents concerning religious matters, see ch. 6.

1253 Language would have been another interesting aspect of identity construction, but its analysis would have transgressed the scope of this study. For a new study on the connection of language and identity in Medieval Cyprus, see Baglioni, *Language*.

5.1 Social Identities

5.1.1 Concepts of Honour in Fifteenth-Century Cypriot Chronicles

One way to assess social identity construction in the given period is to consider concepts of honour among the Cypriot élites. Honour is highly connected with social standing, and we shall therefore begin our analysis from this perspective. Anthropologists have shown a preference for researching honour in the context of so-called *honour-and-shame societies* in the Mediterranean, especially from the 1960s onwards¹²⁵⁴. Moreover, historians have discussed honour in the context of knightly societies in the middle ages¹²⁵⁵. These discussions have resulted in varying definitions of honour, some of which are valid only for the specific context of the modern Mediterranean¹²⁵⁶. However, in 1966, the well-known anthropologist Julian Pitt-Rivers offered a general definition of honour which is appropriate for our context. According to Pitt-Rivers,

honour is the value of a person in his own eyes, but also in the eyes of his society. It is his estimation of his own worth, his claim to pride, but it is also the acknowledgement of that claim, his excellence recognized by society, his right to pride¹²⁵⁷.

For Pitt-Rivers, honour is therefore both an internal, personal, and external, social, evaluation of an individual's standing within their society. In his considerations about honour in the early and high middle ages, the historian Gerd Althoff has specified that an individual's *social worth* is determined by a set of criteria which vary from one society to the next, such as offices, possessions (e.g. estates), personal abilities and the way in which an individual embodies the ideals of their society¹²⁵⁸. Hence, honour has the important function of structuring social order. The determination of personal honour integrates the individual into the hierarchy of their social group and influences how individuals conceive their social identity¹²⁵⁹. Consequently, I will analyse concepts and narratives of honour in the contemporary Cypriot chronicles as well as in other sources in order to understand how members of the various aristocratic groups understood themselves and their society.

The chronicles by Leontios Machairas and Georgios Bustron are highly interesting in this respect, since their authors were members of the new aristocracy who wrote about court society. The texts therefore may reflect values prevalent in the new aristocracy as well as in the old nobility. For Machairas, honour was clearly an important subject. He was convinced that God assigned a certain honour to every human being¹²⁶⁰. If someone tried to acquire more honour than was their share, they committed the sin of *superbia* (>hubris<) and God punished them accordingly. Peter I, according to Machairas, was convinced that his wife's affair was God's punishment for his attempt to exercise rule not only over Cyprus and Jerusalem, but also Alexandria¹²⁶¹.

Noble honour in particular was tied up with knighthood in Machairas' eyes¹²⁶². His ascription of social identity for nobles therefore depended greatly on their standing as knights. Significantly, a knight's social identity in Machairas' eyes was first of all tied to his integration into the group of royal vassals and his relationship with the king. A well-known story from the end of Peter I's reign reveals this very clearly¹²⁶³. Machairas tells us that Peter's wife Queen Eleanor had an affair with the count of Roucha, Jean de Morphou, while Peter I was on his second trip to Europe. Rumours spread, and Jean Visconte, whom Peter had left in charge of his household, wrote a letter to the king explaining the matter. When Peter returned home, he assembled the high court to hear their advice as to how he should react. The knights discussed the matter as follows:

some said that they should slay the count, then some were saying: 'If we slay him, the affair is made manifest, and it will be a great disgrace to us. [...] [and] the story will spread and all the world will know of it. And our king is one body with ourselves; he is an eagle and we are his wings [...] so the king can do nothing by himself without us, nor can we do anything without him. So therefore they will speak against our good name, and the story will be confirmed. [...] Let us all say that he is a liar, and that we shall deprive him of the freedom which he has as a liege [...] It is a lesser evil that a knight should die, than that [they] will hold us as traitors, because we did not guard our queen. But even if we neglected to guard her, why, becoming aware of such unseemly doings, did we not avenge our lord [on] his enemy and a traitor against his honour?'¹²⁶⁴.

1254 See e.g. the collected volumes Peristiany, *Honour and Shame*; Gilmore, *Honor and Unity*.

1255 See the collected volume Schreiner/Schwerhoff, *Verletzte Ehre* and cf. n. 1542 for a more detailed enumeration of the literature on honour in Medieval Western Europe.

1256 See e.g. Peristiany, *Introduction* 9-10; Gilmore, *Introduction* esp. 2-5.

1257 Pitt-Rivers, *Honour and Social Status* 21.

1258 Althoff, *Compositio* 63.

1259 Dinges, *Ehre* 30.

1260 Cf. Grivaud, *Entrelacs* 193-195.

1261 Machairas, *Exegésis* (Dawkins) § 251. Cf. also §§ 153. 219. 473. 520.

1262 We have already seen that a noble was equivalent to a Latin knight in Machairas' eyes, see ch. 1.2, p. 37.

1263 I have shortly spoken about this episode, which is in Machairas, *Exegésis* (Dawkins) §§ 239-258, also in ch. 1.2, see p. 37.

1264 Machairas, *Exegésis* (Dawkins) § 255, translation by Dawkins: Μερτικὸν ἐλαλοῦσαν νὰ σκοτώσουν τὸν κούνην· καὶ ἐλαλοῦσαν: 'Ἄν τὸ πρῶσιμω φανερωῦνται τὸ πρᾶμω, καὶ θέλει εἶσται πολλὴ ἀντροπὴ εἰς αὐτόν μας.' [...] καὶ ὁ λόγος θέλει ἐβγῆν εἰς ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην· καὶ ὁ ρήγας μας ὅπου εἶνε ἕνα κορμὶν δικόν μας, ὁ ποῖος εἶνε ἕνα ὄρνεον, καὶ ἔμεις τὰ πτερά του [...] καὶ ὁ ρήγας μοναχὸς του δὲν φελά χωρὶς μας, οὐδ' ἔμεις φελοῦμεν χωρὶς του· τὸ λοιπονὶν θέλου μᾶς κατηγορήσει, καὶ ὁ λόγος θέλει στερεωθεῖν. [...] ἄς ποῦμεν ὅλοι πᾶς εἶνε ψεματάρης, καὶ νὰ τὸν εβγάλωμεν ἀπὸ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τοῦ λιζάτου [...] παρκάτω κακὸν εἶνε ν' ἀπεθάνει ἕνας καρβαλλάρης, παρὰ νὰ μᾶς κρατήσουν ἐφίρκους, διατὶ δὲν ἐβλεπίσαμεν τὴν ρήγαιάν μας· εἰ δὲ καὶ οὐδὲν τὴν ἐβλεπίσαμεν, ἄνταν ἐγροικήσαμε τὰ ἀπρεπα μαντάτα, διατὶ δὲν ἐποίκαμεν βεντέτταν τοῦ ἀφέντη μας ἀπὸ τὸν ἐχθρόν του καὶ παραβούλον τῆς τιμῆς του. The text corresponds to Machairas, *Exegésis* (Konnaré/Pierès) MS V 91-93', p. 202-203.

This passage shows how Machairas perceived the feelings of honour in the knightly society in which he lived. In Machairas' eyes, a knight's honour is bound to the honour of his king. The mutual dependence is expressed in the image of the bird, the king, who would not be able to fly without his wings, who are the knights. Since the knights are connected to the king by their oath of allegiance, it is their duty to protect the king's honour, which becomes their own. To neglect this duty is a perjury and brings great shame on the whole group. A knight therefore firstly receives his honour, i.e. his social standing and prestige, through his relationship with the king. However, this relationship of mutual honour is also true for the group of vassals itself. In the context of the discussions about Peter's libels, Machairas makes the knights say: »we [...] are bound by oath to the king and the king to us, and we one to the other¹²⁶⁵«. Therefore, one vassal had to protect another's honour just as his own. This crucial connection integrated the individual knight into the group of royal vassals. The group is tightly knit. Its honour is so important that it is considered better to let a man die than to admit to libel and perjury.

However, this mutual dependence also means that the king must respect his liegemen's honour. For Machairas, one of the most important reasons for Peter's murder in 1369 were his frequent offences against his vassals' honour. Apart from shaming a number of knights by offending their wives¹²⁶⁶, he also insulted his brothers just before his death, and this incident decided the knights to choose a new king: »we give thanks to God that your brother has treated you as of no more value than peasants, and if you will not put him from his place, God will do judgement¹²⁶⁷«. By treating his brothers like peasants instead of knights, Peter had committed a libel that was regarded as a perjury of the personal contract between the king and his vassals.

Apart from the group of vassals, the noble family also emerges as a unit of honour and therefore as an identity group in Machairas' text: a knight had to protect his family's honour, and revenge could be taken on the whole family for a libel committed by one family member. In a well-known episode just before Peter I's murder, a certain Jacques de Giblet did not want to give up his cherished hunting hounds to Peter I's son, later Peter II, who had taken a liking to them. Peter I became so angry about this that he imprisoned not only Jacques de Giblet, but also Jacques' father Henri and his

sister, whom he even tried to marry off beneath her social standing to a tailor. This exaggerated revenge is seen as proof of Peter's insanity, but it nevertheless shows that the family as a whole was a unit of honour liable for offences committed by one family member¹²⁶⁸. Another aspect of family honour is incorporated in the first episode analysed above: when Eleanor was unfaithful to her husband, she not only offended her own honour, but also King Peter's¹²⁶⁹.

However, in Machairas' eyes honour had many aspects. Similar to Althoff's concepts of honour in Western Europe, adhering to certain social ideals was also an important part of a knight's honour. Braveness and talent in combat seem to be the most important knightly ideals for Machairas. He writes about Jean Visconte, who had written to Peter I about the affair of his wife Eleanor: »of this knight I wish I could tell you how manly he was, and at jousting and in the use of all weapons he was indeed very valiant and manly¹²⁷⁰«. *Courtoisie*, which implies polite and eloquent conduct at court, also seems to have counted to the knightly ideals, although Machairas attributes these first of all to the French: when the constable James of Lusignan sends a French knight in his service as an envoy to the Genoese in 1372, Machairas has the Genoese admiral say to the ambassador: »since you are French, you will surely be courteous, and where there is courtesy, there is no rudeness of speech¹²⁷¹«.

Following these ideals enhanced an individual's honour and was in its turn expected to be rewarded by an enhancement of material honours. Thus, in one episode, a noble complains that in spite of being one of the strongest and most good-looking knights of his community, the king only gave him a small monthly wage instead of a real estate as fief¹²⁷². The size of the fief was, therefore, a crucial sign of social standing. The importance of office in Machairas' chronicle suggests that offices were also a component of an individual's honour, and enhanced social standing¹²⁷³. This is also illustrated by Machairas' categorization into normal knights and *parounēdes* (»barons«). As we have seen in chapter one, the latter were clearly the top nucleus of the nobility¹²⁷⁴. Thus, in Machairas' eyes, a knight's honour and therefore his social identity revolved around his position within the group of royal vassals, his own conduct and that of his family, his estate or fief and his office.

As for Machairas' own social group, it is more difficult to discover what the honour of the *Rhomaioi* or *Syrianoi* was in

1265 Machairas, Exēgēsis (Dawkins) § 269: εἴμεσταν κρατούμενοι μὲ ὄρκον τοῦ ρηγῶς καὶ κείνος ἡμᾶς, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἑνὸς πρὸς τὸν ἄλλον. The text corresponds to Machairas, Exēgēsis (Konnarē/Pierēs) MS V 99', p. 211.

1266 Machairas, Exēgēsis (Dawkins) §§ 259, 267.

1267 Machairas, Exēgēsis (Dawkins) § 271: Εὐχαριστοῦμεν τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι ἤτζου σᾶς ἐστιμίασεν ὁ ἀδελφός σας ὡς γοῖδον χωργιάτες, καὶ ἄνισῶς καὶ δὲν θέλετε νὰ τὸν ἀλλάξετε, ὁ θεός νὰ ποίση κρίσιν. The text corresponds to Machairas, Exēgēsis (Konnarē/Pierēs) MS V 100', p. 212-213.

1268 Machairas, Exēgēsis (Dawkins) §§ 261-265.

1269 Interestingly, the family honour was not damaged if a man had an affair. See Machairas, Exēgēsis (Dawkins) § 242. Cf. Grivaud, Entrelacs 195.

1270 Machairas, Exēgēsis (Dawkins) § 258: Ὁ αὐτὸς καβαλλάρης ἂν ἦτο νὰ σᾶς εἶπουν ποτάπος ἀντρειωμένος ἦτον, καὶ εἰς τζούστες καὶ πᾶσα ἄρματον ἦτον πολλὰ βαλέντε ἀντρειωμένος. The text corresponds to Machairas, Exēgēsis (Konnarē/Pierēs) MS V 94', p. 204-205.

1271 Machairas, Exēgēsis (Dawkins) § 488: ἐπειδὴ εἶσαι Φράγγος, θέλεις εἶσται κουρτέσης, καὶ ὅπου εὐρίσκεται κουρτεχία, οὐλα τὰ λόγια εἶνε παιδεμένα. The text corresponds to Machairas, Exēgēsis (Konnarē/Pierēs) MS V 208', p. 342. Grivaud interprets this episode to show that Machairas was generally impressed by Lusignan court culture, see Grivaud, Entrelacs 196.

1272 Machairas, Exēgēsis (Dawkins) § 79.

1273 See ch. 1.2, p. 40.

1274 See ch. 1.2, p. 38.

his eyes. As we have seen in chapter one, he calls the richest among these men *archontes*, assigning them the designation reserved for powerful men of the upper class¹²⁷⁵. In one episode, the O and R manuscripts of the Machairas chronicle narrate how the Nestorian merchant Lachas defended the honour of Cypriot society. The story is that a certain Catalan merchant had come to Cyprus to sell a jewel, but since he could not find any buyers he started to defame the island. Lachas heard of this and bought the stone from him, which he then ground into thin dust and used as spice for their joint meal, in order to show the Catalan how rich the Cypriot merchants really were. Allegedly, Lachas concluded by saying: »know this: you must know that I am the poorest man in Cyprus and it was my will to do this, that you should not go away and speak against the fame of the island¹²⁷⁶«. Although Lachas speaks about the whole island, it clearly stands for his own group of merchants, whose honour was based on their wealth. Since the episode is included only in the O and R manuscripts, it may not have been present in Machairas' own version of the chronicle, but in any case, it may give a hint to honour concepts among the richer members of the new aristocracy.

Moreover, Machairas makes at least one highly interesting statement that may show us his own opinion on knightly honour. While talking about the Genoese-Cypriot war from 1372 to 1374, Machairas attributes the Cypriot losses to the sins committed by the Cypriot population. Among these sins, he names the knights' decision to sacrifice the life of Jean Visconte to uphold their story that Queen Eleanor did not in fact cheat on her husband (see above)¹²⁷⁷. Machairas was convinced that the decision to sacrifice one knight for the honour of all the others was a sin, and thus distanced himself from what he represented as the vassals' general opinion. Machairas explicitly criticized the precedence of (collective) honour above everything else. Although honour was important to him, he set Christian values (i. a. not to lie or commit murder) higher¹²⁷⁸. However, we do not know how men like Hugo Podocataro or Giacomo Urri, who rose into highest positions and were dubbed knights, conceived their honour and social position. I imagine that they would have been supportive of knightly honour concepts.

Georgios Bustron seems not to raise any objection to these honour concepts, although his style lacks the sort of explicit comments we know from Machairas, so that we cannot really tell how far he identified with the knightly values he wrote about. Like Machairas, a noble's honour consists in Bustron's *Diēgēsis* of membership in the group of liegemen, office and a fief and, in part, also of his wife's honour¹²⁷⁹. Thus, in 1471, a group of nobles conspires against James II, partly because they accuse him of offending their kinswomen¹²⁸⁰. Peter I's story seems to be repeated here. However, in contrast to Machairas, the honour of the family in its wider sense – the household with its followers – rather than that of the community of liegemen has to be protected. For instance, when James breaks into the house of the viscount of Nicosia Giacomo Urri, the latter at first believes a certain Don Pedro to be attacking him, on account of one of his servants:

The said Sir James entertained a great fear over a Catalan valet of Dom Pedro, for a certain valet of the above-mentioned sir James, called Gaves, had killed a valet of Dom Pedro, and on account of this he was in great fear. On hearing the commotion, moreover, he surmised that it was Dom Pedro and that he had come with his men to apprehend the murderer, and he did not realise that it was the postulant (i. e. James II)¹²⁸¹.

Urri fears to be attacked because of a conflict between two lesser members of both households. It seems that the head of a household assumed responsibility in cases of honour affecting any member of his household. They also felt responsible for members of the family in its narrower sense. When Charlotte of Lusignan's first husband, John of Coimbra, died under uncertain circumstances, Bustron relates that she complained to her brother James. The latter, on hearing that Thomas of Morea, the chamberlain of Cyprus, was supposed to be involved in the matter, set out without hesitating to kill Thomas¹²⁸².

In contrast to the family, the community of knights, although visible in the text, is not explicitly a community of honour. Bustron no longer constructs a noble's social identity as membership in a tightly-knit vassal community. He thus loosens a crucial aspect of collective identity construction

1275 Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Dawkins) § 91 and cf. ch. 1.2, p. 38.

1276 Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Dawkins) § 95: "Ἐξευρε νὰ ξεύρης πῶς ἐγὼ εἶμαι ὁ πέρτοιο πτωχὸς εἰς τὴν Κύπρον, καὶ ἐθέλησα νὰ ποίσω τούτην τὴν πρέξαν διὰ νὰ μὲν πάγης νὰ δισφαιμάσης τὸ νησίον. The text corresponds to Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Konnarē/Pierēs) MS O 41', R 27', p. 115.

1277 Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Dawkins) § 482.

1278 Machairas may therefore himself have stood more in the Byzantine Orthodox tradition, which we find also in Georgios Lapiithēs' writings a century earlier. Lapiithēs was an Orthodox scholar who lived in Cyprus in the middle of the fourteenth century and was in contact with some well-known Byzantine scholars of his time, such as Nikephoros Grēgoras and Gregorios Akindynos. However, he also participated in theological and philosophical discussions at the court of the Lusignan King Hugh IV (see Grivaud, *Entrelacs* 168). In one of Lapiithēs' works, his moral poem, he disapproves of the notion of *eugeneia* (Gr., 'being proud of being well-born') and strongly advises the hearer to regard *aristeies* (Gr., 'heroic deeds') and other worldly matters as nothing. Instead, one should always follow God's will and thus attain eternal life. See Lapiithēs, *Versus Politici* (Boissonnade) 1013. 1025.

1279 The fief as a basis of this honour is visible to a greater extent than in Machairas. As we have seen in chapter one, the chronicle often introduces non-Cypriots who are admitted into the Cypriot noble community by a short curriculum vitae which almost always follows the same pattern, enumerating a knightly dubbing, an enfeoffment and eventually offices, see ch. 1.2, p. 39. These elements of integration show us where the honour criteria for nobles lay.

1280 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 142.

1281 Translation in Boustronios, *Narrative* (Courears) § 9; Greek text in Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 16: Ο ποίος μισέρ Γιακουμος εἶχεν ἕναν φόβον μέγαν διὰ ἕναν βαχλιώτην καταλάνον του τοιμ Πέτρου, ὅτι ἕνας βαχλιώτης του ἀνωθεν μισέρ Γιακουμου, ονόματι Γάβες, εσκότωσέν τον, καὶ διὰ κείνην τὴν ἀφορμὴν εἶχεν μέγαν φόβον. Καὶ γρικῶντα τὴν ἀναλογίην, εθάρρην καὶ ἦτον ὁ τοιμ Πέτρος καὶ ἦρτεν με τοὺς ἀνθρωπούς του, διὰ (sic!) νὰ πιάσουν τον φονίαν, καὶ δὲν ἤξευρεν πῶς ἦτον ὁ ἀπιστολές.

1282 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 8.

in the Machairas chronicle. This may be connected with the period in which the chronicle was written: it postdates the two great periods of strife in the 1460s and 1470s. The missing sense of mutual knightly loyalty may, therefore, have its roots in the civil war between James II and Charlotte as well as in the situation of civil strife after James II's death. These power struggles gave rise to mistrust between the nobles and disintegrated society. It is plausible that protecting one's own family became more important in this period.

Unfortunately, as in the Machairas chronicle, we do not find much information about honour concepts within the new aristocracy. However, from the way Bustron describes himself and his role as James II's servant, it seems clear that he was proud of serving the king as a secretary and later as the *bailli* of Larnaca¹²⁸³. Again, he obviously did not conceive himself as a noble or a knight, but as belonging to a different social group of civil servants.

The important role of honour for both chronicles is also evident from their descriptions of conflict. Almost every conflict begins with a libel of honour, to which the injured party has to react. Gilles Grivaud already noticed this in Machairas' chronicle¹²⁸⁴, but the same structures pervade the *Diēgēsis*. The reactions to libels varied. One possibility was to apply to the public authorities for punishment¹²⁸⁵. Other insults were so grave that they demanded personal revenge. Both chronicles use the Italian term *vendetta* for this process¹²⁸⁶.

Vendetta was practiced first and foremost as revenge for the murder of a family member (as we have seen in the episode about Charlotte of Lusignan's husband John of Coimbra), but it could also be the consequence of a serious insult. Georgios Bustron for example relates a story about a conflict between two nobles, Tristan de Giblest and a certain Guido, which took place in 1485 at the court of Caterina Cornaro. In the course of the argument, Guido punched Tristan, then they were separated by onlookers. Afterwards they were reconciled and swore not to break their peace. But Tristan felt

the insult of the blow so deeply that he could not forget this injury of his honour. The chronicler writes: »besides, the insult that Guido had inflicted on him always rankled in Tristan's heart. [...] And Tristan went to the hairdresser's and encouraged Guido having his hair done, and he straightaway drew his short sword, [and] cut Guido's head off¹²⁸⁷«.

Vendetta is also the word Machairas puts into the vassals' mouths when they discuss that they could be accused of not having defended king Peter I's honour when his wife cheated on him: »why, becoming aware of such unseemly doings, did we not *avenge* our lord (on) his enemy and a traitor against his honour¹²⁸⁸?« (my emphasis, the Greek is *epoikamen vendetta*, 'we made revenge').

In both chronicles, injured persons feel a great need to take revenge. In the story from the *Diēgēsis*, Tristan even breaks an oath, since he cannot endure the shame. And according to Machairas, Peter I was so set on taking revenge on his knights that he only feared to die or to be deposed before he could avenge himself adequately: »He was much troubled, thinking that he might die without getting satisfaction from his enemies, or they might drive him out, as they had done to King Henry¹²⁸⁹«.

Both authors therefore moved in a world where honour possessed immense importance, especially where knightly society was concerned. While Bustron seems to have embraced this ideology, Machairas had his own opinion on extreme interpretations of this honour codex. However, both authors constructed noble identities strictly within the honour code framed by the system of vassalage. This was clearly similar to Western concepts of honour¹²⁹⁰.

However, we should not forget that ideas about honour for example in Byzantium were very similar. In Late Byzantium just as in Cyprus and Western Europe, honour was very important. For the élite, being well-born and occupying certain offices was part of honour, as well as protecting one's family and following certain ideals¹²⁹¹. The Byzantine general and

1283 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 30. 46. 60. 64. 98. 250-251*.

1284 Grivaud, *Entrelacs* 194, with many references to the Machairas chronicle.

1285 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 232-234. 242-244. In general, the term *vendetta* could also refer to justice done by institutions. In Machairas, the king of Aragon promises the king of Cyprus to avenge him on certain pirates who had pillaged the coast of Cyprus: »He (the king of Aragon) promised them (the emissaries) that if he should get them into his hands, he would avenge the king on their bodies«. Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Dawkins) § 103: ἐπρουμουσιᾶσέν τους, ὅτι ἂν τοὺς βάλῃ ἴς τὸ χέριν του νὰ ποίση τοῦ ρηγὸς βεντέτταν ἀπὲ τὰ κριάτὰ τους.

1286 See Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Dawkins) §§ 255. 260 and Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 312. For the Italian term *vendetta*, see below.

1287 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 312: Καὶ ὁ Τριστάς πάντα εἶχεν τὸν πόνον εἰς τὴν καρδίαν του διὰ τὴν ἐτζουριαν οὐποῦ του ἐποίκεν ὁ Κουέττος. [...] Καὶ ὁ Τριστάς ἐπῆγεν εἰς τὸ παρτερίον καὶ ἤρπεν τὸν Κουέττον πῶς ἐπαρπερεύεγον καὶ μόναιτα σύρνει τὴν σκαρτσίναν καὶ ἔκοψεν τὴν κεφαλὴν του Κουέττου.

1288 Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Dawkins) § 255: Διατὶ δὲν ἐποίκαμεν βεντέτταν τοῦ ἀφένη μας ἀπὸ τὸν ἐχθρόν του καὶ παράβουλον τῆς τιμῆς του. The text corresponds to Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Konnarē/Pierēs) MS V, 91-93^r, 202-203.

1289 Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Dawkins) § 260: ἦτον πολλὰ ἐνοιασμένος μήπως καὶ ἀποθάνῃ καὶ δὲν πληρωθῇ ἀπὸ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς του, ἢ πὰς καὶ ἀπογβάλουν του, ὡς γοιὸν ἐποίκαν τοῦ ρε Χαρρή.

1290 For concepts of honour in Western Europe, see e.g. Schreiner/Schwerhoff, *Verletzte Ehre*; Burkhardt, *Geschichte der Ehre*; Büchert, *Feud*; Zunkel, *Ehre*,

Reputation esp. 6-10. The similarity of concepts can also be seen from a comparison with the work of Philippe de Navarre. Philippe was an Italian knight who served the Lusignan crown in the thirteenth century. According to Grivaud, he was the writer of chivalric culture in Cyprus par excellence and showed no Byzantine-Orthodox influence whatsoever (Grivaud, *Entrelacs* 160). On the contrary, his writings were typical for Western European (honour) concepts, which according to Jacoby and Grivaud were highly dispersed among the Cypriot nobility in the thirteenth century (see Jacoby, *Knightly Values*; Grivaud, *Entrelacs* 159). This is especially evident from Philippe's moral treatise *Les quatre ages de l'homme*. For example, he writes about the ideals in knightly society: *Fame ont grant avantage d'une chose: legiere-ment pueent garder lor honours, se eles vuelent estre tenues a bones, por une seule chose; mes a l'ome en covient plusors, se il vuet estre por bon tenuz, besoig est que il soit cortois et larges et hardiz et sages. Et la fame, se ele et prode fame de son cors, toutes ses autres taches sont couvertes et puet aller partot teste levee.* ('Women have a great advantage in one thing: They can easily guard their honour by one fact, if they want to be considered as good [women]; but a man has to consider more [aspects] – if he wants to be regarded as a good person, he has to be cortois and generous and brave and wise. But if a woman is demure as regards her body, all her other faults are covered, and she can go anywhere with her head held high.' [my own translation]). De Navarre, *Les quatre âges* (Fréville) § 31. Philippe's ideals are almost identical with Machairas' expectations as to a knight's behavior.

1291 See e.g. Magdalino, *Honour among Romaioli* passim.

later emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, who lived in the middle of the fourteenth century, in his memoirs for example reports emperor Andronikos III (1328-1341) to have said to his friends in the face of danger: »now it is time for us to show manliness and zeal and sagacity and endurance in danger [...] so that we either live honourably or die gloriously [...] you should show yourselves worthy of high birth and manliness¹²⁹²«. Similar to Lusignan concepts, loyalty to the emperor was extremely important, and his followers had to protect the emperor's honour with their lives. They even swore an oath to do so¹²⁹³. However, the oath and the relationship between emperor and nobles was not integrated into a feudal system as in Lusignan Cyprus. Instead, the family, the *genos* (>lineage<) and the *oikos* (>household<), was the most important unit of honour¹²⁹⁴. The similarities of both honour systems could be assigned to the Western influences which seeped into Byzantine society especially after 1204, and surely, some of them can. However, many of the structures found in Kantakouzenos' memoirs are already evident in the eleventh century *Stratēgikon* by Kekaumenos, which according to Paul Magdalino does not reveal any Western influences at all¹²⁹⁵.

We should therefore beware of interpreting the concepts in the Cypriot chronicles as proof of the authors' breaking with Eastern Roman traditions and espousal of Western European traditions, especially since the Machairas chronicle has its own system of cultural references that differs from Western texts¹²⁹⁶. Rather, traditions could have converged.

Finally, the use of the term *vendetta* in both chronicles suggests contact with the Italian *vendetta* tradition. In Italy, the term *vendetta* appears in the sources from about 1300 on¹²⁹⁷. It designated conflicts which took the form of feuds, chains of revenge acts, which could exist between various factions, from antagonizing families to other interest groups¹²⁹⁸. According to Andrea Zorzi, in many Italian cities, parties formed around two big antagonizing families, turning most political conflicts into *vendettas*. In some cases, *vendetta* even became explicitly legalized¹²⁹⁹. The Cypriots were aware of the term's origin: Machairas quoted a Genoese saying in connection with *vendetta*, explicitly relating the

term to Italian tradition¹³⁰⁰. However, a specific concept of *vendetta* like in Italy did not exist in fifteenth century Cyprus. The conflicts between bigger factions are not coded in this system. Revenge rather seems to have been a personal concept of justice. Thus, the function of *vendetta* in the specific social structure was different. Moreover, *vengeance* is a term already found in the thirteenth century Cypriot writer Philippe de Navarre, who mentions that some people wait for years until they can execute their personal revenge¹³⁰¹. The Cypriots therefore probably espoused the Italian term while maintaining their own concept.

The concepts of honour present in the chronicles therefore reveal influences from various regions, in particular from Western Europe, but they had their own mixture of these concepts, which valued knightly honour very highly. The honour system was a crucial lens through which social identities were viewed.

5.1.2 Tombstones, First Names, and Family Lineage

The preceding analysis has shown that honour was a crucial way of coding social standing and social identities in the period under analysis. However, other perspectives also offer clues to the construction of social identity. Tombstones from the period, for example, offer valuable information about the Cypriots' mental map¹³⁰²: noble tombstones from Cyprus are without exception typically Western European in style, as found mainly in France and England at the time¹³⁰³. They generally depict the defunct as a knight (or squire) in armour (or as lady) in a standing position, sometimes under an arch, with the inscription engraved in French around the image¹³⁰⁴. Only a few men, among them men who explicitly did not move in military contexts, chose to be depicted as civilians¹³⁰⁵. Women, in turn, are usually depicted in garments which were fashionable in the whole of Western Europe. According to Françoise Pignonier and Pari Kalamara, who have analysed the style of garments on the Cypriot medieval tombstones, only some sorts of garments, such as a long veil and a certain

1292 My own translation. See Kantakouzenos, *Historiae* I 13 (Schopen p. 65-66): νῦν καιρὸς [...] ἀνδρίαν ἄμα καὶ σπουδὴν καὶ σύνεσιν καὶ καρτερίαν ἐν τοῖς δεινοῖς ἐπιδείξασθαι ἡμᾶς [...] ὡς ἡ καλῶς ζῆν ἢ ἀποθανεῖν εὐκλεῶς [...] ὑμεῖς δ' ἄξιοι φάνητε καὶ τῆς εὐγενείας καὶ τῆς ἀνδρίας. Cf. Kantakouzenos, *Geschichte* (Phatouros) 53.

1293 Kantakouzenos, *Historiae* I 1-2 (Schopen p. 16-17).

1294 Magdalino, *Honour among Romaioi* passim.

1295 Magdalino, *Honour among Romaioi* 188-190. 199-200.

1296 The system of cultural references Machairas used is very different from the system for example Philippe de Navarre used in his moral treatise in the thirteenth ct. While Machairas used first of all Lusignan administrative documents and Cypriot hagiography, as well as oral witnesses (cf. Nicolau-Konnari, *Diplomatics* esp. 297), Philippe referred to French romances and other chivalric literature (cf. Jacoby, *La littérature française* 625).

1297 S. v. *vendetta*/vendicare, in: Cortelazzo/Zolli, *Dizionario etimologico* 1796.

1298 Dean, *Vendetta* 136.

1299 Zorzi, *Conflicts* 20. 23-25. Cf. also Muir, *Mad Blood*.

1300 Machairas, *Exēgēsis* (Dawkins) § 259.

1301 De Navarre, *Les quatre âges* (Fréville) § 40. For differing concepts of vengeance in different medieval societies, cf. Throop, *The Study of Vengeance*.

1302 We have already seen in ch. 1.2 that tombstones helped to discern contemporary social classifications between knights, squires and non-nobles, see p. 40.

1303 Carbonell-Lamothe, *Étude stylistique* 177-178. 180.

1304 See e.g. Imhaus, *Lacrimae* 6. 88. 93. 139. 148. 152. 157. 160. 162. 186. 191. 193.

1305 A certain Thomas de Milmars was buried in 1390 together with his wife (Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* no. 363). As a member of the Milmars family, he was most certainly noble, but he is not depicted as a knight (nor called noble, as a matter of fact). Rather, he features the typical garment worn in the whole of Europe in this period, a so-called houppelande, and an equally typical chaperon on his head (Kalamara, *Le vêtement Byzantin* 112-113). Similarly, a sir Grasiens de Grasles, otherwise unknown to the sources, who was buried sometime in the fourteenth century, also wears a houppelande, although the tombstone designates him as *noble esquier* (Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* no. 304). The third exception is Antonio de Bergamo's tombstone. Antonio had come from Italy and was first a cleric and later a chamberlain for the crown. He therefore was a financial expert. On his tombstone, Antonio is depicted standing and clad in a houppelande (Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* no. 147). In his case, his representation as a civil person rather than as a knight is explained by his profession. He probably was not knighted at all.

sub-type of dress (developed from other European styles) are unique to Cyprus¹³⁰⁶. Nobles therefore depicted themselves in highly fashionable Western European clothes, and in the mens' case mostly as knights.

Most Greek and Syrian tombstones dating from the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century follow exactly the same style as nobles as far as technique and iconography are concerned. They, too, are depicted standing (sometimes under an arch), with the inscriptions engraved around the image. Just as with noble tombstones, the image is incised into the stone¹³⁰⁷. They depict men almost always with a *houppelande*, a typical garment worn in the whole of Europe in this period, marking them as civil servants or merchants. Only in a few cases, the defuncts seem to wear garments that suggest a Byzantine style¹³⁰⁸. However, most of these tombstones, which date to the end of the fourteenth or the beginning of the fifteenth century, are engraved in Greek instead of French.

Those Greeks and Syrians who climbed especially high in society seem to have adapted to noble customs even more. Pericoun de Ras, for example, a member of an important ascending Syrian family, is depicted as a knight (although he is not designated as such) and his inscription is engraved in French¹³⁰⁹. An otherwise unknown individual, Joseph Bizas, who died in 1402 is shown in armour, holding a banner and a sword. The Greek text around the image reads »God's servant went to sleep [...] the king's standard bearer¹³¹⁰«. The text itself follows the usual Greek formula for the description of death (*ekoimēthē ho doulos tou theou* – »God's servant went to sleep«). It is unclear if Joseph was a knight, but he certainly aspired to be seen as such, proudly referring to his position as royal standard bearer. Two other examples are again interesting linguistically. Alice Chimi from a well-known ascending Syrian family as well as a female relative of the famous Hugh Soudain both died sometime in the fifteenth century. Like Pericoun de Ras' tombstone, theirs are also in French, Alice's using the typical French formula *ici git...*¹³¹¹.

It seems therefore that members of Syrian and Greek families who could afford a tombstone (and who therefore automatically belonged to the wealthy section of the population¹³¹²) quite naturally erected tombstones in accordance with noble fashion, although most of them used the language native to them. However, those families or individuals who were involved in high social ascension, especially into

the knightly class, actually chose to represent themselves as similar as possible to nobles, using knightly images as well as the French language to mark the fact that they belonged to the highest echelons of society.

One group of tombstones seems to contradict this interpretation, in Brunhilde Imhaus' opinion. These tombstones have an incised relief and those that can be identified are all engraved in Greek. Imhaus therefore concludes that all relief tombstones belonged to the Greek community¹³¹³, which would give this group their own style, distinct from the nobility. However, I doubt that the Greek language is the crucial criterion here. Rather, all the known datable tombstones in this technique are from the second half or the end of the fifteenth or even the sixteenth century, and no Latin tombstones are preserved from this period at all¹³¹⁴. Therefore, this style must be connected with a Renaissance fashion of tombstones, which probably reached Cyprus at the end of the fifteenth century. Comparable aristocratic tombstones can be found in the first half of the fifteenth century e.g. in Renaissance Florence¹³¹⁵.

One special tombstone, that of Giacomo Urri, supports this hypothesis. When Urri was murdered by James II's men, the chapter of the cathedral of Nicosia erected a tombstone for him in relief technique, showing an open book with a Latin inscription and beneath a wreath with the defunct's coat of arms¹³¹⁶. The chapter of Nicosia cathedral clearly chose to honour this exceptional man by erecting a tombstone in the new fashion coming from Western Europe. Urri's Syrian identity does not play any role here. On the contrary, it is again the Western fashion which Cypriot high society consciously followed¹³¹⁷. Urri is called a knight¹³¹⁸, and he clearly received a tombstone just as any other important statesman of his time would have had, attesting to his integration into the nobility. Other, later tombstones show very similar techniques and iconography¹³¹⁹. Therefore, the fact that this style of tombstones is usually only connected with Greek and Syrian individuals must be a coincidence of transmission.

However, not only the human depictions and the texts on the tombstones are of interest. The coats of arms depicted in the upper corners of tombstones are also significant. According to de Méringol, the coat of arms on the right side usually belongs to the husband, and the one on the left to the wife¹³²⁰. Not only families of the old nobility, but also Greeks and Syrians used this code to identify their families¹³²¹.

1306 Piponnier, *Le vêtement Occidental* 94; Kalamara, *Le vêtement Byzantin* 109. 119.

1307 See e.g. Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* nos 524. 532. 538-541. 543-546.

1308 See e.g. Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* nos 504. 514. Cf. Kalamara, *Le vêtement Byzantin* 107. 112. 118.

1309 Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* no. 331. For Pericoun, cf. also ch. 2.2, p. 71.

1310 Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* no. 531. Greek text: Εκοιμήθη ο δούλος του θεού [...] μάστορος της πανιέρας του ριγός.

1311 Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* nos 76. 361.

1312 Cf. Piponnier, *Le vêtement Occidental* 89.

1313 See e.g. Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* nos 521. 536.

1314 See Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* nos 514. 521. 522. 526-528. 537. 542. 694. 696. 699. 708.

1315 See Butterfield, *Monument and Memory* 141-142. 145-146; Poeschke, *Skulptur der Renaissance* figs 72. 78. 102.

1316 Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* no. 291.

1317 For this style of tombstone, see Butterfield, *Monument and Memory* 140.

1318 Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* no. 291.

1319 See Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* nos 263. 264. 527. 528. 529. 533. 708. No. 527 and 528 are the most similar to the tombstones Imhaus identifies as Greek tombstones of the fifteenth century, as they depict a standing individual in relief.

1320 Méringol, *L'héraldique de Chypre* 160.

1321 See e.g. Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* nos 514. 524. 534. 547.

Although very few of these coats of arms are still legible, this illustrates how the new aristocracy and the old nobility used the same Western European language of lineage identification. Sometimes, the coat of arms also rendered information on the origins of the family¹³²². The coat of arms of the Milmars family for example displays a big crusading cross, tracing them to the time of the Crusades and their origin as a Crusader family¹³²³. Therefore, as might be expected, the coats of arms emphasize the importance of family history and lineage in social identity construction.

The crucial role of family and names to which a certain history was connected is also apparent from the given names which noble families and ascending Greeks and Syrians used¹³²⁴. Old noble families sometimes followed the tradition of giving their children the mother's family name as first name¹³²⁵. The mother's lineage was important to them, and they expressed the union of two families through this practice, proudly referring to the old families of which they were the heirs. Generally, noble families most often used traditional French first names such as Jean, Hugh, Guy, Philippe, Isabelle, Alice, Agnes, or Marie until the end of the fifteenth century, following the traditions which are already apparent in the earlier *Lignages d'Outremer*¹³²⁶. Only one individual with a Frankish family name, but a Greek first name is known to me: among Charlotte of Lusignan's followers in 1467, there was a Trachanotissa Langlais¹³²⁷. Noble families therefore placed importance on their lineage and gave their children names that identified them as members of the noble families who had come from the West.

A less traditional and very intriguing development is apparent among the ascending Syrian and Greek families: many

members of the new aristocracy gave their children Latin names which they used in their French or Italian version at least in official contexts. Angel Nicolaou-Konnari has traced first tentative signs of this development already in the beginning of the fourteenth century¹³²⁸. However, the phenomenon takes on a very different quality in the fifteenth century, where the cases of Syrians and Greeks with Latin first names are exceedingly numerous and certainly not only connected to the fact that they appeared in Latin or French sources, since many of these names did not even have a Greek or Arab equivalent¹³²⁹. The Greek Podocataro family not only featured names like Georgios, which could be used in either language, but also Hugo, Carlo or Ludovico, which were certainly Western European. In Hugo Podocataro's testament, these names are used in their Italian form (which is only consequent, since the whole testament is written in Italian)¹³³⁰. However, they could surely also have employed the French form in other contexts.

Syrian families in particular seem to have used mostly French first names. The witnesses in Hugo's testament almost all signed with French first names, although most of them stemmed from Syrian families. We not only find a Nicole Salah, Perrin Urri and Perrin Bustron, but even a Babyn Salah, who must have got his first name from the Frankish family name Babin, again a reference to the alliance between two families. However, there is also a Piero de Rames in the list of witnesses, who used the Italian form of Peter¹³³¹. And while most members of the Urri family are known by the French version of their first names, the later viscount of Nicosia is called Giakoumo by Machairas as well as by Bustron, suggesting that he was probably known under this name rather

1322 Mérimond, *L'héraldique de Chypre* 160. 162.

1323 Imhaus, *Lacrimae Cypriae* nos 347. 393.

1324 Cf. Ortega, *Réflexions* 349 who emphasizes the importance of given names as identity markers within family traditions.

1325 A certain Montolive de Verny is attested between the 1370s and 1390s (Mas Latrie [ed.], *Histoire* II 421; Machairas, *Exégésis* [Dawkins] § 396. 405. 444; Sperone [ed.], *Real Grandezza* 105) as well as a Sasson de Nores in 1468 (*Livre des remembrances* [Richard] nos 69. 87). For other examples, see Brayer et al., *Vaticanus Latinus* 4789, 72: Catacouziny de Fluris is Jacques de Fleury's and Zoi Catacouziny's granddaughter; Morphou de Grenier was the last count of Rouchas in Lusignan times, see *Livre des remembrances* (Richard) no. 178 and n. 1, no. 179; in 1468, the widow of a certain Lusignan de Giblet features in the royal administrative documents, see *Livre des remembrances* (Richard) no. 200; a certain Yblin de Provane is mentioned in 1468, although the memory of the Ibelin family was older, because the marriage connection between the two families had taken place at the end of the fourteenth century (Hodrade Provane married an Ibelin) and the Ibelins had died out at the end of the fourteenth century. See *Livre des remembrances* (Richard) no. 174.

1326 *Documents chypriotes* (Richard) passim; *Livre des remembrances* (Richard) passim; Machairas, *Exégésis* (Dawkins) passim; Bustron, *Diégésis* (Kechagioglou) passim. Many of these names, such as Jehan (Jean), Pier, Maria or Elena were compatible with Greek names, but the transliterations in the Greek chronicles (such as Pier, see Machairas, *Exégésis* [Dawkins], §§ 90. 619-620. 331 [Tzouan for Jean]. 620. 629 [Gi for Guy]) suggest that they were used in their French forms. Other names such as Eschive, Hugh, Loys, Guy or Boulogne were only French and did not have a Greek equivalent. For the names in the *Lignages d'Outremer*, see Ortega, *Réflexions* 355-356.

1327 Rudt de Collenberg, *Études de prosopographie* no. 209. For the period before the end of the fourteenth century, Nicolaou-Konnari, *Encounter* 289 has not found any conclusive examples of Latins with Greek Christian names, either. – Additionally to traditional French first names, Jean Richard has ob-

served that Jacques de Fleury gave all the sons born from his second marriage to the Greek Zoi Catacouziny names referring to antiquity, such as Hercules and Jason. Richard concluded that the Cypriot nobility began following this Western European fashion in the second half of the fifteenth century (*Documents chypriotes* [Richard] 129-130). And indeed, the names Phoebus and Cleopa appear in the royal family at that time (Cleopa being called after her Italian grandmother Cleopa Malatesta), while a certain Hector de Chivides and an Amadeus de Nores are known in the 1460s, and a Hector Langlais in Italy at the end of the century (for Phoebus of Lusignan, see Rudt de Collenberg, *Études de prosopographie* nos 144. 185; Cleopa of Lusignan, daughter of John II and Helena Palaiologina, died in infancy, see Bustron, *Historia* (Mas Latrie) 373. For her Italian grandmother Cleopa Malatesta, cf. Kaoulla, *Queen Elena* 112. 116. For Amadeus de Nores, see Rudt de Collenberg, *Études de prosopographie* nos 146. 163. 171. For Hector de Chivides, see *Documents nouveaux* [Mas Latrie] 392-393; Bustron, *Diégésis* [Kechagioglou] 36. 40-42. For Hector Langlais, see Brayer et al., *Vaticanus Latinus* 4789, 73). However, if we consider the whole ensemble of noble families, these names are an exception, while all other nobles bore traditional French names. Apart from a few families in the highest echelons of noble society, nobles in Cyprus mostly ignored the new antiquity fashion.

1328 Nicolaou-Konnari, *Encounter* 288-289; cf. Nikolaou-Konnari, *Onomatologia* 347, where she describes the same phenomenon for the chronicle of Machairas.

1329 See Rudt de Collenberg, *Études de prosopographie* passim; Rudt de Collenberg, *Les premiers Podocataro* passim; MCC PDC 2669.2 passim; *Documents chypriotes* (Richard) 139-157; *Livre des remembrances* (Richard) passim.

1330 Rudt de Collenberg, *Les premiers Podocataro* passim.

1331 See ASVen, *Notarile, Testamenti* 14. Rudt de Collenberg, who has edited Podocataro's testament, has Nicolo Salacha and Pier de Rames instead of Nicole Salah and Piero de Rames (see Rudt de Collenberg, *Les premiers Podocataro* 142), but I read the latter versions.

than its French version, which was used for him in the Haute Court documents¹³³². Semitic names such as Salomon and Moyses¹³³³ are rather an exception amid the Syrian families who had ascended into the higher ranks of Cypriot society. In contrast, Greeks who were not involved in social mobility, e. g. serfs appearing in the French Haute Court documents, feature traditional Greek first and last names, such as Staurinos tou Yorgui or Janis tou papa Nycola, though Machairas did sometimes use the French versions of their first names¹³³⁴. However, they seem to have been less affected by the Latin name fashion.

Consequently, only those Greek and Syrian families who aspired to become part of the old nobility regularly gave their children Latin names. Not only last names, but also first names could thus be used to construct social identities, and many Greeks and Syrians forged their social identities as similarly as possible to the nobles, presenting their children with Latin names. Since the nobility still followed Western European fashion, this process was also connected with the adoption of Western cultural characteristics¹³³⁵.

The importance of family and its representation is also apparent from a later source, written by a Cypriot in Italian exile. Although this text was written in a different context, it illustrates the importance of family and lineage for social identity and the interaction with society very clearly. The Vaticanus Latinus 4789 is a copy of the assizes which belonged to Hugh Bousat¹³³⁶. Hugh had married Carola, the only daughter of count Jacques de Fleury and his second wife Zoi Catacouziny, who came from the important Byzantine imperial family of that name¹³³⁷. Both Hugh and Carola went into exile with Charlotte of Lusignan and passed the rest of their life in Italy. Having inherited the volume of the assizes from his father-in-law Jacques, Hugh used the volume to note down the family history, probably for the benefit of his children who were growing up in the new context of Italy. Hugh wrote in the Greek Cypriot dialect of his time, although he used Latin letters¹³³⁸.

The notes contain a number of valuable details. The longest coherent text is a genealogy of the Byzantine Imperial Kantakouzenos family, which was spread between Constantinople, the Peloponnese and Italy, and in which Hugh situates his wife and children¹³³⁹. Hugh took care to preserve the Kantakouzenos family memories along with the memories of the Cypriot estates he and the de Fleury family had possessed, and to which in his eyes his children had a right¹³⁴⁰. His own family, the Bousat, as well as the de Fleury family,

appear only marginally. Hugh only mentions his own name and that of his father when he asserts that his children should all bear the family name *Cantacoziny de Fluris*¹³⁴¹. The text is accompanied by four coats of arms, one of which is Hugh's. The second is his wife Carola's, the third belongs to Queen Charlotte of Lusignan, and the fourth to a cardinal named Ascanio-Maria Sforza, probably the family's new patron after Charlotte's death¹³⁴². Thus, Hugh Bousat took care to construct his social identity in the circle provided by the family connections. Since his wife's family was of a much higher social standing than his own, they took pride of place in his narrative, the Kantakouzenoi even much more than the de Fleury, since they were of imperial descent. Moreover, with Charlotte of Lusignan and Ascanio-Maria Sforza, the family's patrons, be they Cypriot royals or Italian nobles, were an important point of reference. They provided the outer circle or entourage to which the family numbered themselves and which identified them in a wider social context.

This moment of identity construction took place well after the loss of Cyprus and in a new Italian milieu. The source of social pride had clearly passed from the Cypriot Latin nobility to the Byzantine family with the higher social standing. It is also possible that the family's Byzantine heritage took a more prominent role in a context where many Byzantine refugee families established new livelihoods and Byzantine scholars such as cardinal Bessarion were well-known and influential¹³⁴³. This is of course not representative of the social situation on Cyprus, but it shows clearly that Cypriot aristocrats constructed their social identity in reference to family lineage, and how it could be constructed consciously to show children their place in the world and in the social hierarchy.

To conclude, the analysis has shown how members of Cypriot aristocratic circles constructed their social identities. Lineage played a great role in these constructions. Nobles represented their lineage on tombstones as well as through the given names of their children. Ascending families adapted to the nobility by naming their children after Western fashion and by using the same style as noble families on their tombstones. However, the tombstones also reveal shades of adaptation according to the social situation. Many Syrians and Greeks chose to be depicted in Western style as civilians, but in their own native language. They aspired to be close to noble society while retaining their own traditions. In contrast, those men who climbed the social ladder higher in order to become knights consciously represented themselves just as all the other knights, adapting to noble knightly style as well

1332 Machairas, *Exëgësis* (Dawkins) § 704; Bustron, *Diëgësis* (Kechagioglou) 10.

1333 Rudt de Collenberg, *Études de prosopographie* nos 173. 184.

1334 Documents chypriotes (Richard) 154; Nikolaou-Konnarë, *Onomatologia* 348.

1335 Cf. also Nikolaou-Konnari, *Encounter* 312, who confirms that »social status change and cultural boundary permeability often go together«. Cf. also Nikolaou-Konnarë, *Onomatologia* 347.

1336 V. Laurent has edited and commented on these marginal notes, see Brayer et al., *Vaticanus Latinus 4789*.

1337 We have already talked about her in ch. 3.3, see p. 96.

1338 Brayer et al., *Vaticanus Latinus 4789*, 47. 70-105.

1339 Brayer et al., *Vaticanus Latinus 4789*, 70-73.

1340 Brayer et al., *Vaticanus Latinus 4789*, 73: *tapia me diquion ene ton pedion mas*. ('which rightly belong to our children', my own translation).

1341 Brayer et al., *Vaticanus Latinus 4789*, 72: *telo que etzi tous orizo na crazunde*. ('and like this I wish and order them to be called', my own translation).

1342 Brayer et al., *Vaticanus Latinus 4789*, 50-54.

1343 For Byzantine scholars in the West, see e.g. Konstantinou, *Der Beitrag der byzantinischen Gelehrten*. For Bessarion in particular, see Talbot, *Bessarion*; PLP 2707; Labowsky, *Bessarion's Library*; Mürtl, *Inter Graecos Latinissimus*.

as language. In combination with the findings on concepts of honour, this draws a picture of a society in which traditional Western European values played an important role for social standing. Knighthood and the honour attached to it as well as family lineage were important for the nobility, and many families among the new aristocracy adopted these social markers.

5.1.3 Reactions to Social Mobility

The importance of social standing in the Cypriot élite is also visible from the way contemporaries reacted to social mobility. Unfortunately, not many sources reveal these emotions. Machairas usually paints a very peaceful picture of Cypriot multi-cultural society in his chronicle¹³⁴⁴. However, there are a few, consistently negative, comments on those men who rose within the Cypriot court and occupied high state offices that deny Machairas' overly peaceful image.

The most well-known source concerns Jacques de Fleury, John II's *chef de conseil*. The story of his coup d'état which we have discussed in chapter four¹³⁴⁵ offers intriguing information on Jacques' view of his society and on processes of social mobility. In the 1450s, Jacques had been the most powerful man of his time for about two decades. When the new Queen Helena Palaiologina tried to curb his power, he reacted by trying to seize the kingdom in the summer of 1455. However, his coup d'état was unsuccessful, and he had to flee to Genoese Famagusta, where he tried to whip up Genoese support for further plans¹³⁴⁶.

During his exile, Jacques de Fleury complained in a letter to the Genoese that »this kingdom [...] has totally fallen into the hands of Greeks and paupers, so that day and night they do not think about anything else than how to destroy it¹³⁴⁷«. At a first glance, this seems to be a clearly derogatory remark concerning members of the new aristocracy in the government, who had partly taken sides with Helena. However, Thierry Ganchou argues that this complaint was connected with Jacques' conflict with Helena Palaiologina and her milk brother, Thomas of Morea, who was of low descent and a foreigner in Cyprus, and therefore does not refer to the ascending Greek families in general¹³⁴⁸. This is a good point. Most newcomers in the Cypriot government, including Hel-

ena's most influential supporter Giacomo Urri, were wealthy men of Syrian descent. It is therefore possible that Jacques was referring to Thomas of Morea, who was not only Greek, but also of low descent. Moreover, the group around Helena consisted not only of members of the new aristocracy, but also of members of the old nobility, such as Thomas de Verny and his family. Jacques de Fleury himself was married to Zoi Catacouziny, an Orthodox Greek from the Morea, so it is difficult to imagine that he took a stance against all Greeks in general¹³⁴⁹. Nevertheless, the affair illustrates that social and ethnic differences could still easily be used for defamation.

Two other incidents, both of which have already figured in this study, illustrate negative reactions to social mobility. The first is the incident between George Billy and Simon de Morphou related by Florio Bustron that stands at the very beginning of this book: according to Florio's narrative, the burgess George Billy was made responsible for an attempt to recapture Famagusta from the Genoese, together with the noble Simon de Morphou. But Simon was offended, because he had to work together with a burgess, and thwarted the undertaking¹³⁵⁰. Florio wrote in the sixteenth century, and we do not exactly know what his source was. However, the incident indicates that the noble Simon saw George's social ascension with critical eyes. The third incident to be mentioned is not altogether very clear: the Syrian Giacomo Urri had to leave the Lusignan court for a year in 1436, because the court had conspired against him¹³⁵¹. We do not know if this was connected with his social ascent, but it is at least a good guess.

It seems that social ascension was certainly recognized and commented on by Cypriot society, even if few of the reactions have survived. While cooperation seems to have been the order of the day, social and ethnic differences could still be used for discrimination and led to comments on social mobility.

5.2 Ethnic Identities

The complex situation of the Cypriot élite, which consisted of people from many different backgrounds, poses the question of ethnic identity construction. How did members of the old nobility and the new aristocracy construct their ethnic

1344 Nikolaou-Konnarē, *Onomatologia* 357, has pointed out that it is unclear if Machairas' idyllic picture of the multi-cultural Cypriot society really mirrored social truth.

1345 See ch. 4.2.2, from p. 119.

1346 Thierry Ganchou has interpreted Fleury's coup d'état as the old Frankish aristocracy's last attempt to regain its old power, a reaction therefore to social mobility. Ganchou calls the coup an anachronistic endeavour on an island ridden with factions fighting for conflicting interests, including foreign powers. He concludes that this must be the reason why the chronicles do not report this incident at all (Ganchou, *Rébellion* 187). It is true that the episode is conspicuously absent from the contemporary chronicles, but in my opinion the reason is not its anachronistic nature. Instead, we see a gap in contemporary history writing: Machairas stopped writing about 1432, whereas the appendix to his chronicle continuing until 1458 is very short and was perhaps written in the sixteenth century, as has been discussed earlier (cf. p. 26 and

n. 176). Thus, it omitted the coup d'état which was perhaps forgotten by the sixteenth century, given its failure and its non-violent nature. Later chronicles, such as Florio Bustron, draw solely on Machairas for this period. Therefore, the easiest explanation for the absence of the episode from the narratives is a lapse in the chronic tradition.

1347 Tucci, *Matrimonio* 87: *questo reame [...] in tutto è pervenuto in mano de greci et homeni de poco per modo che de di e de nocte non pensano in altro che a la destruction de quello*. The English translation is my own.

1348 Ganchou, *Rébellion* 104-105.

1349 Cf. Ganchou, *Rébellion* 110-111.

1350 Bustron, *Historia* (Mas Latrie) 354. I have already mentioned this episode in the context of the grey zone of social mobility between aristocracy and nobility, see p. 48.

1351 Tafur, *Cyprus* (Nepaulsingh) 19. 38.

identities? Considering the social upheavals of the time, it will be crucial to ask if the construction of ethnic identities changed in any way during this period. Before embarking on this analysis, however, I will first discuss the concept of ethnic groups and the way I will use this term briefly.

The definition of what constitutes an ethnic group provoked discussion among anthropologists and historians especially in the middle of the twentieth century. For a long time, scholars had tried to define ethnicity by objective markers such as language, culture, common territory and a common ancestry of the group in question¹³⁵². The scholarly debate, however, quickly revealed that none of these markers proved valid for all ethnic groups¹³⁵³. Therefore, scholars came to agree that an ethnic group could only be defined by a subjective criterion: the members' belief that they belonged to a group with a common origin¹³⁵⁴. This belief may or may not be accompanied by external factors such as a common language, territory or cultural traits. It is highly related to the differentiation between the in-group, the *We*, and the out-group, the *Others*. It is possible to investigate in- and out-groups by analysing ethnic group names¹³⁵⁵. One of the first scholars to put forward this opinion was Fredrik Barth in his introduction to the collective volume of a conference on ethnic groups which took place in 1967¹³⁵⁶. Other scholars followed suit, and this understanding of ethnicity is now widely accepted¹³⁵⁷. I shall therefore use this concept for the following study and will ask which ethnic groups members of the élite consciously related to.

Let us begin with the members of the old nobility. The analysis of the élite groups in chapter one has shown that Machairas distinguished between noble knights, whom he occasionally designated as Latins, and burgesses, many of whom he designated as Syrians or Greeks¹³⁵⁸. A more detailed analysis of these terms from an ethnic perspective reveals some interesting aspects. Machairas most often uses the term *Latin* or *Frank* in a religious sense, contrasting it to *Rhomaïos*, Orthodox¹³⁵⁹. When he uses *Latin/Frank* in a purely ethnic sense, the terms designate Westerners in general as opposed to indigenous populations of the East¹³⁶⁰. *Franks* can additionally mean Frenchmen in particular¹³⁶¹. When Machairas, in contrast, talks about nobles from Cyprus,

he always uses the name *Kypriotēs*, differentiating them from the Franks in the West. Angel Nicolaou-Konnari has recently indicated this in various essays¹³⁶². Nicolaou-Konnari mentions that the French equivalent to *Kypriotēs*, *Chiprois*, already existed in the *Gestes des Chiprois*, a chronicle from the early fourteenth century attributed to Gerard of Monréal. This designation was used to contrast the nobles in Cyprus from the *Pouleins* in the Holy Land¹³⁶³. Nobles in Cyprus therefore designated themselves as Cypriots long before the fifteenth century.

However, the Cypriot was not the nobles' only ethnic affiliation. The recently discovered protocol concerning King Janus' divorce trial from the year 1407, when the king wished to annul his marriage with Anglesia Visconti, illustrates this (cf. ch. 4, p. 102, where I introduce this new source). Two points are of particular interest here. First, the witnesses who testified to the proceedings of the negotiations for Janus' marriage stated that there were some discussions between members of the court, because the bride-to-be was Milanese and not French. Some knights allegedly went to the king and his mother to complain about the choice and said that the king should take a bride from France to renew the old friendship with the French, who were his ancestors¹³⁶⁴. This may well be a fake fact fabricated later in order to support Janus in his trial for divorce, and Queen Helvis is actually said to have pointed out that King Peter II also had a bride from Milan¹³⁶⁵. However, the argument was obviously considered as more or less convincing, hinting that a special connection to France was at least a commonplace which could still be used at the time.

The second point is even more crucial. After being interrogated, each witness was asked who they were and where they came from. The witnesses from unknown families and one Syrian who was involved just answered that they were *Cyprienses*, Cypriots¹³⁶⁶. However, the members of old noble families stated that they were born Cypriots, but that their families originally came from the West. Hugh de la Baume even specified that his family had come from Savoy¹³⁶⁷. The old memory of their ancestors was still kept alive, and some nobles at least saw themselves as belonging to two ethnic communities: they were Cypriots, but they were

1352 See e.g. Bromlej, *The Term Ethnos*; Smith, *Ethnic Origins* esp. 22-30; Hutchinson/Smith, *Ethnicity* (collective volume); Heinz, *Ethnizität*.

1353 See e.g. Pohl, *Telling the Difference* 20; Hall, *Ethnic Identity* 21-24.

1354 See e.g. Hall, *Ethnic Identity* esp. 19-26; Shirokogoroff, *Grundzüge* 258; Wenskus, *Stammesbildung* 12; Pohl, *Telling the Difference* esp. 20-21; Page, *Being Byzantine* 11-14; Barth, *Introduction* (passim).

1355 For the external features, see Pohl, *Telling the Difference* 21; Hall, *Ethnic Identity* 25; Page, *Being Byzantine* 17-18. For the Us-Them boundaries, see Barth, *Introduction* 13-16; Page, *Being Byzantine* 18-21; Konnari, *Ethnic Names* 259.

1356 Barth, *Introduction* esp. 13-15. For the collective volume itself, see Barth, *Ethnic Groups*.

1357 See above n. 1354.

1358 See ch. 1.2, p. 37.

1359 Machairas, *Exëgësis* (Dawkins) §§ 27-29. 101. 383. 566. 579.

1360 Machairas, *Exëgësis* (Dawkins) §§ 22. 27. 99. 113. 203. 346. 348; cf. Nikolaou-Konnarë, *Onomatologia* 332.

1361 Machairas, *Exëgësis* (Dawkins) §§ 488. 559; Nikolaou-Konnarë, *Onomatologia* 333.

1362 Machairas, *Exëgësis* (Dawkins) §§ 167. 310. 500. 553; Nicolaou-Konnari, *Ethnic Names* 263 and n. 11; Nikolaou-Konnarë, *Onomatologia* 333.

1363 Nicolaou-Konnari, *Ethnic Names* 262; Nikolaou-Konnarë, *Holos ho topos* 156; Nikolaou-Konnarë, *Onomatologia* 334. For the *Gestes des Chiprois*, see Monréal, *Gestes*, esp. 27. 96-97. 141. 143.

1364 Kaoulla, *Quest for a Royal Bride* § 8: *renovare amicitiam antiquam Francigenorum ex quibus ortus est*.

1365 Kaoulla, *Quest for a Royal Bride* § 8.

1366 Kaoulla, *Quest for a Royal Bride* §§ 349. 465. 501. 654. Cf. Kaoulla's interpretation on page 103.

1367 Kaoulla, *Quest for a Royal Bride* §§ 128. 244. 434. The text of Hugh de la Baume's statement is as follows (§ 128): *Interrogatus unde sit et cuius generis, respondit quod a nativitate cypriensis est, sed antecessores sui fuerunt de Sabaudia, de domo illorum de la Bama*. Cf. Kaoulla, *Quest for a Royal Bride* 95-96.

Cypriots with French or other Western European origins. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, this inheritance was still prevalent enough to be mentioned in formal presentations¹³⁶⁸.

It was still possible to draw on the ethnic differences between Latins and Greeks within the aristocracy in the 1450s. We have already mentioned the discussion about Jacques de Fleury's statement that Greeks had taken over the government in this period¹³⁶⁹. This complaint probably referred to Thomas of Morea and the Queen rather than to members of the Cypriot aristocracy. However, a letter from the Genoese captain of Famagusta to the Genoese central government also hints at the perception of ethnic affiliations, even if this is a statement from within another ethnic group. The captain states that all the Latin noblemen (*gentilomi latini*) were expelled from the Cypriot court because of Helena Palaiologina, the terrible Greek (*a pisma grecha*¹³⁷⁰), who was trying to seize power and to harm the Lusignan kingdom. This is highly interesting: the Genoese classified the power élite as *Latins*, and therefore as members of his own broad ethnic group, who were threatened by a *Greek* femme fatale.

We may therefore conclude that members of the old Cypriot nobility in the first half of the fifteenth century related both to their Cypriot community as well as to the broader Latin context, and to France in particular. How strong this second affiliation was in everyday life is impossible to tell but it could easily be used to project ethnic differences between these members of the old nobility and the *Greeks*.

Members of the new aristocracy seem to have related to two groups, too. Machairas reveals a double affiliation for his own ethnic group, the *Rhomaioi*, just as for the nobles. They are *Kypriotes*, Cypriots, together with the rest of the population, but they also belong to the Byzantine *oikoumenē*, the Byzantine community¹³⁷¹. Machairas keeps allegiance with the Byzantine emperor and the remembrance of the Byzantine past as well as with the Lusignan kings¹³⁷². Moreover, the discussion concerning religious identities will reveal that Machairas was conservative, intent on retaining the Orthodox heritage¹³⁷³. Considering that ethnic identities overlap to a great extent with religious identities in his chronicle, Machairas clearly saw himself as a *Rhomaios*, both religiously and ethnically. He placed this ethnic identity within the broader identity of *Kypriotēs*¹³⁷⁴.

Other sources confirm the Cypriot affiliation of new aristocrats. When Pierre de Caffran created the foundation for studies in Padua in 1393, he stated that he wanted to create a possibility for Cypriot students, *Cyprienses*, to study in Italy¹³⁷⁵. In the following years, most of the students were Greeks or Syrians. They, too, were included in the Cypriot identity even in noble eyes, since the documents explicitly call them *Cyprienses*¹³⁷⁶. However, double ethnic affiliation is unfortunately not expressed in any statements by members of the new aristocracy other than Machairas' chronicle. We do not know, for example, if Oriental Christians related to a Syrian identity in addition to their Cypriot identity, or if they only identified with their respective religious communities, as can be seen from the testaments of the Audeth family, who identified with the Jacobite (Syrian Orthodox) community¹³⁷⁷. It is clear, however, that they were seen as Syrians by others. A Venetian source from 1448, for example, explicitly calls them *Sirici* and connects this term to the country of Syria, which includes all Mamluk territory¹³⁷⁸.

It is possible that members of the new aristocracy more and more emphasised the inclusive Cypriot identity in order to further their own integration with the old nobility, although there are no sources to support this hypothesis before the 1460s. In Georgios Bustron's chronicle, however, the strategy of emphasising the inclusive Cypriot identity certainly won the field. This text is the only relevant source for ethnic identity construction from the second half of the fifteenth century, and it was written after the end of Lusignan reign. We therefore have to be careful and should not assume that Bustron's opinion was representative for the whole aristocracy. However, his chronicle reveals some intriguing aspects.

Angel Nicolaou-Konnari asserted in her essay on the ethnic name *Kypriotēs* that Bustron used the designation in the same way as Machairas¹³⁷⁹. This is true – *Kypriotes* are all the inhabitants of Cyprus, including the nobility as well as the rest of the population¹³⁸⁰. However, other ethnic designations have significantly changed in this younger chronicle. While Machairas took care to distinguish between *Rhomaioi*, *Syrianoi* and *Latins* within Cypriot society, this differentiation is completely lost in Bustron's chronicle. Nobles as well as all other people living in Cyprus are just Cypriots, without any further variation. Bustron, for example, designates the important Syrian statesman Giacomo Urri simply as *kaballarēs*

1368 Cf. Grivaud, Introduction 330-331. The double affiliation surely made the integration of Westerners into the Cypriot nobility relatively easy. Those Westerners who integrated into Cypriot society by marriage, such as Bertolina de Bergamo (see ASVen, Cancelleria inferiore. Notai b. 56/3 and cf. ch. 2.3.1, p. 76) for example, could adopt the perspective of being Cypriot and at the same time remaining Venetian or French.

1369 See above, ch. 5.1.3, p. 136.

1370 The letter is in ASG, SG, Primi Cancellieri, busta 88, doc. 285. The quote is from Gancho, La Rébellion 143.

1371 See Machairas, Exégésis (Dawkins) §§ 22. 27. 99. 346. 348. 411.

1372 Grivaud, Entrelacs 192-193.

1373 See ch. 6.3, p. 154.

1374 Nicolaou-Konnari, Ethnic Names 264; Nikolaou-Konnarē, Holos ho topos 154. 156; cf. Nikolaou-Konnarē, Onomatologia 335. 353.

1375 Blizn'uk, Gumanitarnyj fond 127.

1376 Blizn'uk, Gumanitarnyj fond 127. 134-135; Tselikas, Diathēkē nos 2. 3. 4. 5.

1377 See ch. 6.3, p. 155.

1378 Mas Latrie (ed.), Nouvelles preuves II 140; cf. Nikolaou-Konnarē, Onomatologia 351, who also mentions that Machairas connected Syria to the whole Mamluk territory. I have mentioned this also in the basic discussion of the groups, cf. ch. 1.2, p. 46.

1379 Nicolaou-Konnari, Ethnic Names 264. Kaoulla, Quest for a Royal Bride 102 follows Nicolaou-Konnari in this respect.

1380 Bustron, Diégésis (Kechagioglou) 10. 18. 70. 140. 182. 226. 278. 282. 306. 308.

*kypriotēs*¹³⁸¹ (᾽Cypriot knight᾽). The name *Syrian* does not figure in his chronicle at all¹³⁸². Moreover, Bustron's enumeration of Queen Charlotte's knightly followers during the siege of Keryneia castle clearly only differentiates between Cypriot knights on the one hand, which include members of the Syrian de Ras family, and foreign knights on the other hand, such as Andrea Cornaro, whom he calls a *kaballarēs benetsianos*, a Venetian knight¹³⁸³.

Similar to *Syrian*, the designation *Rhomaïos* is almost non-existent in the chronicle. The author uses it only in three cases: in a religious sense, when he talks about the Orthodox bishop¹³⁸⁴; concerning two ship captains from the *Romania*, the former Byzantine empire; and twice to refer to soldiers whom he contrasts to Armenian and Frankish mercenaries¹³⁸⁵. It is unclear whether he means Cypriot soldiers here or if these soldiers actually came from the former Byzantine empire. Even if the former was true, this ethnic designation clearly does not play a great role for Bustron.

The term *Franks*, on the other hand, appears more frequently in the chronicle, and Nicolaou-Konnari has rightly stated that Bustron used it generally for foreign Westerners, in particular for foreign mercenaries¹³⁸⁶. This term therefore shifted from a general designation for all Western Europeans including the Cypriot nobility in the Machairas chronicle to an exclusive term which draws a distinctive line between the Cypriots and foreigners from the West.

This distinction raises the question where the boundary between Cypriots and foreigners was. Why would a man such as Andrea Cornaro be called a Venetian knight, while Bustron numbered his fellow Venetians from the Bragadin family among the Cypriots¹³⁸⁷? From which point on would someone be numbered among the Cypriots? Bustron had an explicit answer to this question. He states that after the Catalan *coup d'état* in 1473, the short-lived Catalan government wanted to install a new captain in the castle of Keryneia. But the captain in office refused to surrender to the candidate in question, a Catalan, reasoning that he did »not wish to give Keryneia to a foreigner who has neither a wife nor children nor a fief on Cyprus¹³⁸⁸«. For Bustron, the criteria for belonging to Cypriot society were to live on the island with the whole family and have a fief there. The Bragadin fulfilled these criteria and were consequently Cypriots in Bustron's eyes, while Andrea Corner did not fulfil them and therefore was a foreigner¹³⁸⁹.

This perspective may be confirmed by the case of Étienne Pignol. We have seen in chapter two that Pignol probably came from France and pursued an important career in Cyprus between the 1410s and the 1440s. In later years and on his tombstone, however, Pignol was designated as a Cypriot knight¹³⁹⁰. If he was indeed a Frenchman by birth, then this would be an exceptional example for integration and the identity construction which accompanied it: having lived and worked on Cyprus (and perhaps had a family there?) for decades, Pignol was perceived as a Cypriot. It is unfortunately impossible to say if he shared this identification himself.

In any case, it is striking that the sources on Étienne Pignol from the 1450s, like Bustron's chronicle, identify individuals only as Cypriot instead of using the double ethnic affiliation prominent at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Bustron's chronicle in particular went a considerable step further than the sources before him in integrating the varying ethnic affiliations within Cypriot (high) society into one identity of *Kypriotēs*. We may therefore tentatively suggest that the inclusive Cypriot identity came into use as the sole identification for populations on the island during the second half of the fifteenth century, although it is impossible to say how widespread this phenomenon was in the years before the civil war. However, the emphasis on Cypriot identity in Bustron's chronicle may suggest that the civil war between James II and Charlotte of Lusignan in the 1460s and the shift in the power balance between members of the old nobility and James II's (both foreign and Cypriot) followers mentioned in chapter four¹³⁹¹ played an important role in the further development of this new way of constructing identities.

5.3 Conclusion

Social and ethnic identity constructions reveal some intriguing aspects of aristocratic life in fifteenth century Cyprus. Nobles expressed their social standing through a knightly honour code which was strongly intertwined with their relationship to the ruler and their role within the knightly community. The importance of knighthood is also apparent from the tombstones, which usually depict the defunct in knightly armour. Another aspect of noble social identity was lineage – ancestry and family connections played an important role for social standing. Since many Cypriot noble families originated

1381 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 10.

1382 Cf. also the indices of Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou), which do not have the lemma.

1383 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 86.

1384 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 60. 154.

1385 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 180. 252. Nikolaou-Konnarē, *Holos ho topos* 154 states that Bustron, just like Machairas, uses *Rhomaïos* for the Greek-speaking Cypriots. However, she does not take into account the low frequency of the term in this chronicle.

1386 Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 130. 136. 180. 226. 234. 238. 272. 282. 284-286. 288. 298-304. 306. 308. Bustron designates a Latin bishop as Frankish in one case, see Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 88. Cf. Nico-

laou-Konnari, *Ethnic Names* 263-264; Nikolaou-Konnarē, *Holos ho topos* 155.

1387 See Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 86.

1388 Boustronios, *Narrative* (Coureas) § 158; Bustron, *Diēgēsis* (Kechagioglou) 194: *δεν θέλει να την δώσει την Κερύνειαν ανθρώπου ξένου, απού δεν έχει εις την Κύπρον ουδέ γυναίκαν ουδέ παιδιά ουδέ καμίαν ρένταν.*

1389 Genoese authorities seem to have taken a similar stance. According to Balletto, *Tra Cipro, Genova e Venezia* 85, Genoese official documents designate all those people as Cypriots who had lived on the island for a certain amount of time, even if they may have been Genoese before.

1390 See ch. 2.3.5, from p. 84.

1391 See ch. 4.2.2, p. 124.

in Western Europe, their lineages were connected with the memory of their origins in the West. This is also expressed in their choice of children's names, which were generally Latin. Family identity was therefore connected to social standing as well as to ethnic identity, which nobles still constructed on two levels at the beginning of the fifteenth century: their Western origins as well as their Cypriot identity, which they were born into, both played a role.

This double ethnic identity was mirrored in the Greek and Syrian aristocratic families. The chronicle of Machairas shows that Greeks could perceive themselves as Cypriots and *Rhomaioi* at the same time, while Oriental Christians were designated as Syrians and Cypriots. It is unclear, however, if Syrians actually saw themselves as one group or if their religious identities were stronger than the group designation that people from outside their group used for them. Socially, Syrians and Greeks seem to have adapted to the nobility to varying degrees. Many of the ascending families gave their children Latin names, thus adapting to noble fashion. They also adapted to the Western European style of tombstones,

although adaptation here is visible to varying degrees: many Syrians and Greeks used the Latin style but their own language for the inscriptions, while it seems that those men who had experienced an exceptionally high social rise also adapted linguistically and proudly presented their knightly status in French. With their adoption of noble styles, the new aristocrats also took over to varying degrees traits of noble culture, which was Western European in its origin.

Identities were not static. The manifold events of the fifteenth century and perhaps also the social mobility of Greeks and Syrians in this period, but certainly the crisis provoked through the usurpation of James II and the civil war, resulted in changes in ethnic identity construction, at least in Bustron's chronicle. The strengthening of the inclusive ethnic affiliation of *Kypriotēs* in this text suggests that the high social mobility in the 1460s at the latest was accompanied by a blurring of ethnic distinction between Latins, Syrians and Greeks, substituting the former double affiliations (*Latin* and *Cypriot*, *Rhomaios* and *Cypriot*, *Oriental Christian/Syrian* and *Cypriot*) with the Cypriot identity alone.