The Terms Ῥωμαῖος, Ἕλλην, Γραικὸς in the Byzantine Texts of the first half of the 13th century

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THE TERMS ῬΩΜΑΙΟΣ, ΕΛΛΗΝ, ΓΡΑΙΚΟΣ IN THE BYZANTINE TEXTS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 13TH CENTURY*

The Topic
One way to approach the past is by the analysis of words and terms in the texts written at the time, because they carry special semantic load and, thus, help us to understand the way of thinking, the perspective of various social groups. Collective nouns are a special category of such terms, because they are connected to self-definition, namely the identity of various social groups. In Byzantine texts the terms ῬΩΜΑΙΟΣ, ΕΛΛΗΝ and ΓΡΑΙΚΟΣ are conspicuous and therefore have attracted the attention and interest of modern researchers. Although found in Greek sources already before the Christian era, they are almost continually in use throughout the entire Byzantine period. Consequently, a question about their content and connotations arises as to whether their meaning has changed over time or remained stable.

Before proceeding to the analysis of the names mentioned above, it is necessary to make two comments. The first concerns the terms ΕΛΛΗΝ and ΓΡΑΙΚΟΣ. In the modern era, these words designate specific groups and denote their national identity. Therefore, the modern reader is tempted to

* This article is based on a paper presented in the XXIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Sofia, August 2011, where matters concerning Byzantine identity were the topic of other presentations, as well. See, for instance, J. KODER, Byzantium as seen by itself – images and mechanisms at work, Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia, 22-27 August 2011. v. I, Plenary Papers, Sofia 2011, 69-81. I am grateful to Professor J. Koder for his valuable advice regarding this presentation.
attribute a similar meaning to the terms as well within their Byzantine context. The issue becomes even trickier, because the term *nation* (ἔθνος) is also attested in Greek sources of pre-Christian as well as those of Christian era. Nevertheless, it would be anachronistic to perceive the meaning of ἔθνος in the Byzantine sources in the way it has been defined in the Modern era, an era marked by the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution\(^1\).

The term *ethnicity* could be suggested, collective as it is, to designate a social group denoted in the sources by the terms Ελλήνες and Γραικοί. According to anthropological literature, however, this term was introduced with well-founded argumentation a little after the 1970’s and is mainly associated with the industrial and post-colonial social contexts, despite the fact that pre-existing cultures have been taken into consideration\(^2\). Therefore, the term *collective identity*, as it is broader in terms of meaning, is considered more appropriate for use in the present work which describes pre-modern societies and perspectives.

The second comment concerns the origin of the sources. They are part of a literature created by scholars who had ties to the imperial court and quite often held an office, so they express the official line of the state. This is an additional factor that emphasizes the caution that is needed for the interpretation of these terms, as they may have multiple meanings depending on the context of the work in which they appear, the time to which they refer and the audience whom they address. In addition, the conditions of

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2. *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, eds. A. BARNARD – J. SPENCER, London - New York 1996/2003 (hereafter: ESCA), entry *ethnicity*, where further bibliography is referred. Three different approaches to understanding ethnicity have been formed, the premordialist, the instrumentalist and the constructivist. Although it is argued that all three theories could be integrated into one coherent theory of ethnicity, it is noted that the nucleus of such a synthesis would be the constructivist conceptualization that emphasizes the contingency and fluidity of the ethnic identity (ESCA, same entry).
the historical period in question can delineate a collective identity, both of the writers and their audience. In the present study, the authors are scholars and their audience is their immediate circle, the court of the rulers of the State of Nicaea and their environment.

The Time

The sources were written in the first half of the 13th century, a period that marked a turning point in the history of Byzantium. After the Fall of Constantinople in 1204, the empire disintegrated and new states were created among its territories. Some of these were states created by Crusaders who belonged to the nobility, the most significant being that which retained Constantinople as its capital. Three states were created by

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3. On higher education in Nicaea, see C. N. Constantinides, *Higher education in Byzantium in the 13th and early 14th centuries (1210 - ca. 1310)* [Texts and Studies of the History of Cyprus, XI], Nicosia 1982, 5-27; N. G. Wilson (Scholars of Byzantium, London 1983/1996, 218-228), makes reference to Nicaea and comments that their main task was to restore the educational system as it had been before 1204, a task in which they succeeded. Generally on literacy, books production and education, see Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium 1971: *Byzantine Books and Bookmen*, Washington DC 1975; R. Browning [Byzantine Scholarship, Past and Present 28 (1964), 3-20], presents the scholarly production in Byzantium, but makes no reference to the thirteenth century; cf. id., Literacy in the Byzantine World, *BMGS* 4 (1978), 39-54 [= History, Language and Literacy in the Byzantine World, Variorum Reprints, Northampton 1989, VII, 39-54], where he argues that literacy was more widespread in Byzantium than it is usually thought. See also, P. Schreiner, *Byzanz*, München 19943, 113, 152-154.

4. On the partition of Byzantium among the Crusaders before its Fall, see A. Carile, *Partitio terrarum imperii Romanie*, StVen 7 (1965), 125-305.

5. Nicetae Choniatae, *Historia* rec. I. A. Van Dieten [CFHB 9], Berlin 1975 (hereafter: Choniates, *Historia*), 638.52-53: *Εἰς τοσαύτας δὲ τυραννίδας διαιρεθείσης τῆς ἑσπέρας τί μὲν τῶν καλῶν οὐχ ἀπῆν, τί δὲ τῶν κακῶν οὐ παρῆν; cf. his comment about the situation in the eastern byzantine regions and generally about the dissents of the Byzantines among themselves, ibidem, 639.77-83: *Καὶ δέον ὡμονοηκότας προβουλεύσασθαι τι καὶ καταπράξεσθαι προφυλακτικῶν μὲν τῶν μήπω κακῶς πεπονθῶν τῆς πατρίδος μηρῶν, ἀνακλητικῶν δὲ τῶν Ἧλικων πόλεων, οἱ δὲ εἰς δοξομανίαν ἑπταρχηθέντες καὶ καλεῖσθαι τύραννοι θέλοντες καθ᾽ ἑαυτῶν ἐκτραχηλισθέντες καὶ κατασκήνωσαν τῆς ἡταλλμένης τῆς χειρός, βασιλείαν καὶ νήσιν, εἰπή δ᾽ ἡ τοῖς καὶ πανοπλίαν καὶ τρόπαιον ἑξ ἐφόδου τοῖς τῶν Ῥωμαίων πολεμίοις τὸ διχονοεῖν ἀλλήλοις καὶ διεστάναι βραβεύοντες.
Byzantine noblemen, with Nicaea, Arta and Trebizond as their capitals,


respectively, whereas at the same time the Bulgarian state with Turnovo as its capital began to emerge as a dynamic power\(^9\). These rulers, in terms of foreign policy, aspired to either retain Constantinople or make Constantinople their capital city\(^10\).

In the mid-13th century, Byzantine Nicaea fulfilled this ambition. For this reason, the sources on which this study is based derive from the scholarly circle of Nicaea. The conditions during the period delineated by the first Fall of Constantinople and the enthronement of Michael Palaiologos as its ruler constitute a new historical setting. Within this framework, we will examine the Byzantines’ self-concepts and self-definitions, in other words, their collective identity.

Collective Identity: the modern theories

First of all, it should be noted that the issue of collective identity is part of theoretical debate concerning the modern period. Therefore, the question of the collective identity of the Byzantines is, of course, expressed through the perspective of contemporary researchers, thus, making it necessary to clarify the meaning of the term.

According to Sociology\(^11\), the definition of the term *collective identity*


\(^10\) On the rivalry between Nicaea and Arta in particular, see Σταυρίδου-Ζαφράκα, Νίκαια και Ήπειρος; A. D. Καρποζίλος, The Ecclesiastical Controversy between the kingdom of Nicaea and the Principality of Epiros (1217-1233) [Βυζαντινά Κρήμνα και Μελέται 7], Thessaloniki 1973.

\(^11\) For a brief and cohesive presentation of identity see ESCA, entry identity, where also
is the awareness of any individual belonging to a particular social group, from which he derives his values and worth\textsuperscript{12}. In addition, the members of this group are bound together in a complex environment of common beliefs and values, seeing themselves as sharing ideals and, simultaneously, differentiating themselves from other groups and their members\textsuperscript{13}.

At this point, it would be only natural for some reservations to be expressed concerning the validity of a modern theory being used to interpret historical phenomena from a pre-modern era. However, this theoretical pattern of interpretation can also be applied to pre-modern societies, because it has a broader scope, and, as already mentioned, takes into account the common beliefs and values of any social group, characteristics which are not restricted to modern societies. It is these beliefs and values that constitute the self-image of the Byzantines during the first half of the 13th century that are the subject of this paper; more specifically, it is the self-concept of the Byzantines as delineated by the names Ῥωμαῖος - Ἕλλην - Γραικός\textsuperscript{14}.

\footnotesize{\bibliography{bibliography}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{13}. Abrams - Hogg, Social identity, 9.
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{14}. See the discussion of the same subject by P. Gounaridis, ‘Greeks’, ‘Hellenes’ et ‘Romains’ dans l’état de Nicée, Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν Νίκο Σβορῶνο, v. I, Rethymno 1986, 248-257. The author asserts that the identity of the Byzantines in Nicaea consisted of two contradictory elements, the ethnic Hellenic element and its rejection, the Roman element, this last referring to the Greek-speaking Orthodox. The name Γραικός, according to Gounaridis, was imposed by the Latins, so it could not be identified with Ἕλλην. He concludes that Nicaea was aiming at the restoration of the empire, which naturally was the opposite of a national idea, a conclusion which is correct since nationalism and the idea of the nation-state belong to the modern era.}}
The Terms in the Sources

Ῥωμαῖος

It is commonplace to note that the Byzantines called themselves Romans (Ῥωμαῖοι) and their state the Roman State (Ῥωμαίων πολιτεία). Their laws and institutions derived from ancient Rome, although there were occasional reforms, according to the needs of the times. Similarly, the ecumenical ideology of the state was also of Roman origin, but in the Byzantine period it had the additional feature of being Christian. Thus, the political connotation of the term Ῥωμαῖος was inextricably connected with the religious element.

Looking into the meaning of the term in the sources of the period under study, we note that it is primarily linked to the state and the government. Initially, we shall mention two characteristic excerpts that mark the beginning and the end of the Nicaean state. The first comes from the early years of the Nicaean state, on a document dated June 1207, and refers to the title of the ruler of Nicaea: Ὅ ἐν Χριστῷ τῷ Θεῷ πιστὸς Βασιλεὺς καὶ Αὐτοκράτωρ Ῥωμαίων (Faithful in Christ Basileus and Emperor of the Romans). This is the earliest example of the signature of Theodore I Laskaris, addressed to the πράκτωρ of the theme of Thrakesion Blatteros. Laskaris and his successors use the same title as did the rulers of Byzantium, and in fact in Greek, since the time of Heraclius, Πιστὸς ἐν...
Χριστῷ βασιλεὺς (faithful in Christ Basileus). They also continue to use the term αὐτοκράτωρ (emperor) which was formally adopted as a title at the second half of the 9th century.

The second excerpt marks the transfer of Constantinople to the emperor of Nicaea. More specifically, George Akropolites notes that ἡ Κωνσταντίνου προνοία τοῦ βασιλέως τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐγένετο κατὰ λόγον δίκαιον τοῦ βασιλέως τῶν Ῥωμαίων εὐτυχος. The historian ascertains that it was justifiable that Constantinople should come into the hands of the king of the Romans, meaning the emperor of Nicaea, with the help of God and be freed from their enemies, the Latins.

19. JGR, I, Nov. XXV (year 629); P. A. YANNOPoulos, La société profane dans l’empire byzantin des VIIe, VIIIe et IXe siècles, Louvain 1975, 97-100; W. E. KAEGi, Heraclius, Emperor of Byzantium, Cambridge 2003, 186, 194.

20. OSTROGORsKy, Geschichte, 89-91, A. CHRISTOPHiLOPOULOU, Περὶ τὸ πρόβλημα τῆς ἀναδείξεως τοῦ βυζαντινοῦ αὐτοκράτορος, ΕΕΦΣΠΑ 12 (1961-1962), 458-497, particularly 472ff; EAD., Βυζαντινὴ ἱστορία, v. II/1 (610-867), Athens 1981, 250-252; YANNOPoulos, Société profane, 98; BECK, Jahrtausend, 60-70, 78-80; R. - J. LiLiE, Byzanz. Kaiser und Reich, Köln - Weimar - Wien 1994, 31-44. Regarding the continuation and revival of the imperial tradition and imagery during the last centuries of Byzantium, as traced through orations, see R. MACRiDEs, From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologi: imperial models in decline and exile, in: New Constantines: Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th centuries. Papers from the Twenty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St Andrews, March 1992, ed. P. MAgDALiNO, Variorum 1994, 269-282 [mainly 280-282], where it is argued that in Nicaea only Theodore I Laskaris followed the type of the imperial image of renewal, introduced by the Comnenian dynasty, whereas John III and his son Theodore II, forced by the dire reality of their times, strived for the survival of the state rather than its revival.


22. Akropolites I, 85.68-73: καὶ ἡ Κωνσταντίνου προνοία τοῦ βασιλέως τῶν Ῥωμαίων εὐτυχος. About the πρόνοια of God intervening in the enthronement of the new emperor, see the acclamations for Justin I, in: Constantini Porphyrogeniti, De cerimoniis aulae byzantinae, ed. J. J. RIEKsE, v. 1, Bonn 1829, 429.18-20: τῇ τοῦ παντοδυνάμου Θεοῦ κρίσει, τῇ τοῦ παντοδυνάμου Θεοῦ κρίσει, τῇ τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ κοινῇ ἐκλογῇ πρὸς τὴν βασιλείαν ὑπὸ τῶν ἐχθρῶν κρατουμένην. About the rejoicing of the common people due...
quotation, the state terminology (βασιλεύς Ρωμαίων), the religious faith (προνοίᾳ Θεοῦ) and the significance of this event (κατὰ λόγον δίκαιον καὶ προσήκοντα) are intertwined.

If we focus on the scholarly works, such as historiography, orations, letters and court poetry, rather than on official documents, we observe that the term Ρωμαῖος is primarily linked to the emperor and refers to administrative matters. Needless to say, that the formal title of the ruler of Nicaea is emperor of the Romans (βασιλεύς Ρωμαίων), 23 even if his reign was only over the eastern parts of the former Roman Empire 24. He is also addressed as the protector of the Romans, as Akropolites writes in his funeral oration for John III Vatatzes 25.

Ῥωμαῖος can also refer to the people of ancient Rome. Thus, Blemmydes in his work on the ideal sovereign writes about Cato who was a Roman general. Blemmydes makes no distinction between the pre-Christian Romans and the Romans of his time, as if he considers them to belong to the same people, just in different eras 26.

to the return of the Byzantines to Constantinople, see how it is presented by Akropolites I, 88.35-39: ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ γοῦν καὶ θυμηδίᾳ πολλῇ καὶ ἀπλέτῳ χαρᾷ τὸ Ρωμαικὸν τῷ τότε γεγένηται πλήρωμα · οὐδὲὶ γὰρ ἔχει ὁ μὴ σκιρτῶν τε καὶ ἀγαλλόμενος καὶ μικροῦ δεῖν τῷ πράγματι ἀπιστῶν διὰ τὸ ἀπροσδόκητον τοῦ ἐργοῦ καὶ τὸ ἐπεξόλλην τῆς ἴδινῆς.


26. H. HUNGER - I. SEVČENKO, Des Nikephoros Blemmydes Basilićus Άνδριας und
In theological or ecclesiastical context, however, the term Ῥωμαῖος acquires yet another meaning, defining a person who comes from Old Rome in Italy or is connected to it in some way, such as the Pope himself. It can also obtain a more specific connotation, that being a member of the Western Christian Church, a meaning which is attested primarily when referring to dialogues and disputes between the two Churches. Mesarites' quotation about the old and the new Rome is enlightening on this matter, as it explains the reason by which Constantinople was named New Rome; the City was lavished with the same ecclesiastical honours as ancient Rome.

It should be taken into account that during the negotiations between the two Churches, and despite disputes, the Byzantine authors emphasize that the common name, Rome, underlines the common descent of both peoples, which in turn should lead to concord and unity.


27. Mesarites II, 49.5-8:


30. Akropolites II, Contra Latinos A, 1, 4-6: Ἀνδρέας Ρωμαίοι, οἱ τῆς πρεσβυτέρας
Nevertheless, the name Ῥωμαῖος retains its primary explication, denoting the Byzantine Empire, the emperor and his subjects, as is attested in various sources such as state documents and scholarly literature. In order to define its various meanings, the term should be examined within its own context.

The second term to be examined is the name Ἕλλην and its derivatives. The study of the sources of the period under consideration leads to the Ῥώμης ὁρμώμενοι, ἐβουλόμην μὲν καλεῖν ὑμᾶς ἀδελφοὺς ὡς ὀμογνώμονας καὶ ὀμόφρονας [...]

31. See, for instance, Akropolites I, 14.1-2: Ὁ δὲ Μιχαήλ, ὃν ἱστορήσας ὁ λόγος πέφθακε τῆς Ἑπείρου κατάρξαι καί τινος μέρους τῆς χώρας Ῥωμαίων [...]; cf. also ibidem, 14.4-6: τῷ βασιλεῖ Ῥωμαίων συνήν Θεοδώρῳ τῷ Λάσκαρι, ὑπηρετῶν αὐτῷ ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων.


For an analytical presentation of the modern literature on the matter, see Th. PAPADOPOULOS, Συλλογικὴ ταυτότητα καὶ αὐτογνωσία στὸ Βυζάντιο. Συμβολή στὸν προοδομισμό τῆς αὐτοοντολόγησις τῶν Βυζαντίνων μέσα ἀπό τὴν λόγια γραμματεία τους (1ος ἐχθές 13ον αἰ.), (diss. in press: Σύλλογος πρὸς Διάδοσιν Ὠφελίμων Βιβλίων, Athens), 45-55.
conclusion that the meaning of the term varies depending on the context of the text. Niketas Choniates refers by it to the ancient Greeks, a connotation which is already known from the sources of the previous centuries. In Choniates’ work, however, the term also refers, quite often, to the author’s contemporaries, whom he usually designates by the name Ῥωμαῖοι. A passage from his “History” is quite illuminating on the matter: the author narrates the march of the Crusaders and laments the collapse of Byzantium. In poetic style, he personifies the river Alpheus, who is Greek (or rather, Ἕλλην) and flows into Sicily. Choniates then implores him not to tell the inhabitants of the island the misfortunes of the Greeks (Ἑλλήνες); nor the sufferings that the Hellenes have inflicted upon other Hellenes.

Using the phrase “sufferings of the Hellenes” the Byzantine scholar refers to the conflicts between the Angeloi emperor brothers, who led the Crusaders into Constantinople. Elsewhere in his narrative, Choniates states that he has no intention of wasting History, “the most beautiful invention of the ancient Hellenes” (τὸ κάλλιστον εὕρημα τῶν Ἑλλήνων), recounting deeds in which barbarians were victorious instead of the Hellenes. Through the locus communis “Hellenes-barbarians”, Choniates’ contemporary Romans are identified with the Hellenes.

Choniates uses the expression ἑλληνὶς φωνὴ (Hellenic voice), known from other sources, as well, to denote the Greek language. For instance, he

33. Choniates, Historia, 144.83: ὁποῖα πάλαι τοῦ Περσέως λογοποιοῦντες κατηγόρευον Ἕλληνες.

34. Choniates, Historia, 610.16-611.21: Ἀλλ᾽ ὦ Ἕλλην ποταμὲ Ἀλφείε, ῥεῦμα ῥέον δι᾽ ἅλμης πότιμον, ἥπιεν ἑπάρκειαν ἐμπύρευμα ἔρωτος, μὴ δὴ τὰ Ἑλλήνικα δυσπραγήματα τοῖς ἐν Σικελίᾳ βαρβάροις διατρανώσεις, μηδὲ ἐκπυστὰ θεῖς δοὺς οἱ ἐκ σφῶν ἐπιστρατεύσαντες Ἐλληνικὴ καθ᾽ Ἑλλήνων ἑμεγαλούργησαν, ἵνα μὴ χοροὶ στῶσι καὶ παιάνες ἁσθῶσι καὶ πλείους κατάρωσιν οἱ διάφοροι.

35. Choniates, Historia, 580.94-95.

36. Choniates, Historia, 580.94-1: πῶς ἄν ἔγωγε εἰς τὸν καλλίστον χρῆμα, τῆν ἱστορίαν, καὶ καλλίστον εὕρημα τῶν Ἑλλήνων βαρβαρικαῖς καθ᾽ Ἑλλήνων πράξεις χαριζόμενος.

accuses Andronikos I that his personal guard consisted of barbarians who barely spoke Greek\textsuperscript{38}.

Nicholaos Mesarites was also an eyewitness of the first Fall of Constantinople, like Choniates. However, he does not use the term "Ἕλλην" as often as Choniates; and when he does, it is primarily to denote the ancient Greeks and moreover their non-Christian faith\textsuperscript{39}. The emphasis on the religious connotation of the term is not surprising, as Mesarites was a clergyman, bishop of Ephesus and head of the delegation that conducted the theological discussions with the Latins. As far as dogma is concerned, his disagreement with them emerges in his work, as does his opinion about them, that they were barbarians and frauds\textsuperscript{40}. Moreover, he witnessed the Latin Capture of 1204, which he very eloquently describes in the funeral oration for his brother John\textsuperscript{41}. Nevertheless, despite his being a cleric, when commenting on the Greek language (ἑλληνίδα γλῶτταν)\textsuperscript{42}, he emphasizes that this is inspired by the Holy Spirit. So, he concludes, it is appropriate to express the Christian doctrines; and for this comment, he quotes Gregory of Nazianzos\textsuperscript{43}. In the same context, referring to language, Mesarites uses the

\textsuperscript{38} Choniates, Historia, 322.42-45: Κατὰ δὲ τὰ ἀρχεῖα γινόμενος ἀπὸ τῶν ἐξωθεν διατριβῶν τε καὶ διαχύσεων οὐκ ὀλίγον μὲν καὶ τὸ περὶ αὐτὸν εἶχε δορυφορικόν, καὶ τοῦτο ἐκ βαρβάρων ἱλῶν καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἱερών ὑποκείμενον ἀπαιδευσία καὶ τὰ πλεῖστα μηδ᾽ ἑπαϊόντων Ἑλληνίδος φωνῆς.

\textsuperscript{39} Mesarites I, 42.3-4: ὁποία παῖδες Ἑλλήνων τερθρεύονται; Mesarites II, 22.27-28: ἱστόρηται γάρ ὡς Γαλιήνου τοῦ καὶ Αὐρηλίου τὰ Ἑλλήνων θρησκεύοντο.


\textsuperscript{41} Nikolaos Mesarites I, 46.5ff.

\textsuperscript{42} See above, footnotes 37 and 38.

\textsuperscript{43} Nikolaos Mesarites, ed. A. HEISENBERG, Neue Quellen ... [as in n. 23] III. Der Bericht des Nikolaos Mesarites über die politischen und kirchlichen Ereignisse des Jahres 1214 (hereafter: Mesarites III), 33.1-6: ὁ δὲ μὴ πρὸς τᾶτα ἀντιφερίσας, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀκροαματισθέντα μόνον καὶ ἑκθειάσας καὶ τὴν Ἑλληνίδα γλῶτταν ὡς καταρερητορευμένην κατάκρως, ἅτε ὑπὸ τοῦ θείου πνεύματος ἐμπνεομένην, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ πεπλατυσμένην πλατεῖ στόματι μακρόβια, εὐλογήσας ἑμᾶς ἀπολέλυκεν ἀνακωχὴν δοῦναι τῷ σώματι ὡς κεκοπιακότας ἐφ᾽ ἱκανον ἀρίστου γὰρ ἐκάλει καιρὸς. Mesarites alludes to Gregory’s of Nazianzos strong conviction that the Greek language should be studied by the Christians. Gregory makes a clear distinction between the Greek language and the Greek religion, whereas he accuses the emperor Julian of identifying the two on purpose. See, for instance, Κατὰ Ἰουλιανοῦ βασιλέως οὐσιαστικῶς ὀστελέτων πρώτος, PG 35, col. 536 A: Πρῶτον μὲν, ὃτι κακοῦχος τὴν προσηγορίαν

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verb *hellenize* when referring to πρωτοασηκρῆτις, the Greek equivalent of an office of Latin origin\(^44\).

In the work of George Akropolites the term “Ἡλληνες” denotes either the ancient Greeks\(^45\) or emphasizes their non-Christian religion, depending on the context in which the term is used\(^46\). In this way, he seems to make a distinction between Hellenes and Romans, as stated in the introductory lines of his historiographical work\(^47\). The derivative *Hellenic* (ἕλληνικῶς) refers to the Greek language\(^48\) and the expression *Hellenic land* (ἕλληνὶς γῆ) delineates the Byzantine land\(^49\), as a synonym for the expression *Roman land* (Ῥωμαϊζής)\(^50\). Thus, although Akropolites avoids calling his contemporary Romans “Ἑλληνες”, he names their Roman land Hellenic, with a subtle touch of emotionality, caused by the use of the possessive pronoun “our”, “our

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\(^44\). Mesarites ΙΙΙ, 12.13-14: οὐτω γὰρ ἐξελληνιζόμενον ἐφερμήνευται φυλακὴν ἐνθεῖναι τῷ στόματι; about the translation of this office into Greek, see also the commentary of the editor, ibidem 74-75.

\(^45\). Akropolites Ι, 1.12-17: οἱ μὲν οὖν τὰ καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς ἱστορικῶς συγγραψάμενοι ἄλλος ἄλλος πεποίησαν τὴν ἀρχήν, ὥσπερ τῆς θρησκείας ὄντα τὸν Ἕλληνα λόγον, ἀλλ᾽ οὐ τῆς γλώσσης.

\(^46\). Akropolites ΙΙ, Contra Latinos Β, 1.14-20: ἦκουσα καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τοὺς θεολόγους μὴ πάντα τὰ τῶν θεῶν αὐτῶν παριστῶντας ταῖς ἀποδείξεσι, καίτοι γε πλάσματα ὅταν τούτοις τῶν θεῶν, ὧν τῆς διανοίας ἀναποχὴ ἡ οὐσία καὶ οἷς ἡ λήθη φθορά, ἀλλὰ καὶ θέσεις προάγουσιν ἀμέσους καὶ ἀναποδείκτους καὶ θεσπίζουσιν αὐτὰς ὡς ἀληθεῖς παραδέχεσθαι.

\(^47\). See above, note 45.

\(^48\). Akropolites I, 76.46-49: ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ τὸ Σκυθικὸν ἦρρον γένος, οὐ βαρβαρικῶς ἀπεκρίνοντο ἀλλὰ καὶ Ὁλληνικῶς ταῦτα εἰς λεγομένα τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ Μιχαήλ.

\(^49\). Akropolites Ι, 80.19-21: συνεστάλησαν οὖν μέχρι τῶν οἰκείων ὀρῶν, ἐπεὶ τῶν Πυρρηναίων ὀρῶν, ἃ δὴ διορίζει τὴν παλαιὰν καὶ νέαν Ἑλληνίδος καὶ ἡμετέρας γῆς.

\(^50\). Akropolites Ι, 21.3-4: ἂν Θεόδωρος Ἀγγελος Κομνηνος τῆς Ἡπείρου ἐπειδῆ τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης γέγονεν ἐγκαταστάσεις πολλήν τε ὄροι τῆς Ῥωμαϊδος ...
Hellenic land”\textsuperscript{51}. It should be noted that the \textit{Hellenic land} functions as a symbol in the thought and works of the Byzantine scholars, as they were educated in ancient Greek literature. This Hellenic land, however, is not only a locus literatus, an imaginary homeland, but it is described as an actual land designated by the Pyrenees, the Pindos mountain chain in Epiros\textsuperscript{52}.

The term \textit{"Ελληνική} appears in the work of Theodore II Laskaris much more often as compared with those of the aforementioned scholars. The term denotes, again, either the ancient Greeks\textsuperscript{53} or particularly their non-Christian faith\textsuperscript{54}. It refers to the education of the Byzantines that was based on ancient Greek literature\textsuperscript{55}, and to the Greek language, which Laskaris loved more than “breathing”, as he clearly states in one of his letters\textsuperscript{56}. Furthermore, he very clearly links the name \textit{"Ελλην} with his Byzantine contemporaries, as well. Thus, he speaks of the “Hellenic troops”\textsuperscript{57} and the “Hellenic spear” which liberated the Roman towns and castles\textsuperscript{58}. In one of his letters, he narrates a

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{51} Akropolites I, 80.21: τῆς Ἑλληνίδος καὶ ἡμετέρας γῆς.
\textsuperscript{52} ODB (Oxford 1991), entry Pindos.
\textsuperscript{54} Theodori Ducae Lascaris \textit{Epistulae} CCXVII, ed. N. Festa, Firenze 1898, (hereafter: Lascaris, \textit{Epistulae}) epist. CXLV, 26-32: τὰς ἀρὰ διὰ ταῦτα τὸ γλαφυρὸν τῆς θεολογίας κοινότητι ἱππός καὶ θάλασσας τὰς ἀνεφέτους ἀρχαῖς εἰς τῷ ἱδρύματι καὶ θεολογήσεις κοινάς; εἰτερ ἐπιστήμης ἐστὶν, τοστὸ γὰρ τῷ ἀρχαίῳ ἐπιστήμων ἑγγίζει εἰ μὲν γὰρ Ἐλληνικὰς, οὐθὲν πεπαιδευμένος, οὐθὲν πολλοίς ἐστὶ, ἐνθέως, μὴ πειράζῃ θεολόγων θέος γὰρ ἀπείραστος κατὰ φύσιν καὶ τὸ ἐξέτασις, ἀρίχθη τοῖς τὸ λέγειν πεῖρες θεοῦ τὸ ἀπείραστον, καὶ τὸ μὴ οὐν ἀρχή.
\textsuperscript{56} Lascaris, \textit{Epistulae} epist. CXXVI, 4-5: τῇ Εὐαγγελικῇ διαλέξομαι οὐκ ὀνείρεσιν, ἡν καὶ μᾶλλον ἠγαπασμένη τὸ ἀναπνεῖν.
\textsuperscript{58} Lascaris, \textit{Opuscula}, 34.225-228: ὁμοίοι πάντων ἔθνων κατεκράτησαν, καὶ τούτων πρῶτον τὸ δόγμα τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν οὐσίασιν ἀνθρώποι στήθος πολυκάκη πυνθοόις καὶ ὡς ἄνθρώποι ἐδείξαμεν, καὶ ἐν τοῖς καὶ Ἐἐραίοις πόλεων καὶ ποταμοῖς ὁκομιθαίς τῶν διατριβῶν τῶν τε καὶ τῶν πυκνομάτων τετελεσίς ὑπηρέτες τοὺς πρῖν καρτεροῖς
\end{quote}
philosophical debate that took place between him and a noble scholar from the West in which he emerged victorious, an event that was a cause for rejoicing and glory not only for those who witnessed it, but for all the Hellenes in general. As far as concerns the land where his contemporary Hellenes live, he uses the phrases “Roman land” (Ῥωμαίς γῆ), “Hellas” (Ἑλλάς) and “Hellenikon” (τὸ Ἑλληνικόν), alternately.

It should be emphasized, though, that Laskaris makes derogatory comments about the ancient Greeks and rejects their philosophy, which he studied and admired, when this does not abide with Christian doctrines.

Γραικὸς

The name Γραικὸς does not appear for the first time in the Byzantine sources of the 13th century. Although the relevant quotations are limited, they are quite clear in their content; they refer to the Greek language and culture as well as to the people of Greek (Hellenic) origin. In the sources of this

aἵμητας ἀπετέλεσας cf. the quotation by his teacher Blemmydes, where he is referring to the Byzantine rule over the valley of Skamandros in Northwestern Asia Minor by the term ‘Hellenic sceptres’, Nicephori Blemmydae Autobiographia [...as in n. 28]. 6.11-12: οὐ γὰρ ὑπὸ τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τωτὸτε σχῆμα ἢ Σχάμανδρος. The name Ἑλλήν referring to the government is used in a scholarly text that does not address directly to the ruler of the state, as an oration would, or a state document.

59. Lascaris, Epistulae epist. CXXV, 49-51: ἐχείς τοίνυν οἶδα χαράν, ἐπειδὴ καλῶς ξυνίης τὸν οὕτως φιλοσοφήσαντα καὶ τὸ τῆς νίκης κῦρος τοῖς Ἑλλήσι χορηγήσαντα.

60. Lascaris, Epistulae epist. CXXV, 38: μέγα ὅραμα τοῖς ὁρῶσι καὶ δόξα πολλὴ τοῖς Ἑλλήσιν.


62. Lascaris, Epistulae epist. CXXV, 52-54: Σὺ δὲ ποτ’ ἂν ἐκ τῆς Ἑυρώπης ἀνέλθῃς ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα; ποτ’ ἂν δὲ καὶ τὴν Θρᾴκην διελθὼν τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον διαπεράσῃς καὶ τὴν ἔσω Ἀσίαν κατίδῃς;...

63. Lascaris, Epistulae, epist. XLIV, 83-84: μόνον δὲ τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν αὐτὸ βοηθεῖ ἑαυτῷ οἰκοθεν λαμβάνον τὰς ἀφορμὰς.

64. Θεοδώρου Λασκάρου, Κοιμική δήλωσις, Λόγοι Λ’, ed. N. Festa, Giornale della società asiatica italiana, Firenze 1898 (hereafter: Lascaris, Κοιμική δήλωσις), 112-25. πῶς δὲ καὶ τὸ αἰχμητὰς ἀπετέλεσας; cf. the quotation by his teacher Blemmydes, where he is referring to the Byzantine rule over the valley of Skamandros in Northwestern Asia Minor by the term ‘Hellenic sceptres’, Nicephori Blemmydae Autobiographia [...as in n. 28]. 6.11-12: οὐ γὰρ ὑπὸ τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων τωτὸτε σχῆμα ἢ Σχάμανδρος. The name Ἑλλήν referring to the government is used in a scholarly text that does not address directly to the ruler of the state, as an oration would, or a state document.

period, the term is used within the context of conflicts between ‘Latin’ and ‘Greek’, mainly concerning their religious conflicts, but sometimes also referring to their character or moral matters. Moreover, in some passages, the term refers to the Greek language, as in older texts.

It should be noted that the term is more often found in texts written at a time when the Byzantines came into closer contact, or even conflict, with the Westerners than in previous centuries. As has been documented, the western sources use the term Graecus to refer to the Byzantine emperor instead of the term Roman; so, the term Πρεσβυτέρος in Byzantine texts shows

aιτίαν πολεμισμούς εἶναι μοι τὴν Ἑλλήνων φωνήν. τότε δὴ γελάσας ἔλεγε Γραικὸς μὲν εἶναι τὸ γένος [...]; Const. Porph. Πρὸς τὸν ἤδιον οἰνὸν Ρωμαίων, ed. G. MORAVSKI, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Administrando Imperio (translation-commentary R. H. JENKINS) [CFHB 1], Washington D.C. 1967, 49.4-7: οὕτω καὶ Λιβύη Ἑπενεχθείσης, καὶ οὐκ Ἀσία τῆς τῶν Γραικῶν διαλέκτου πεπλήρωται;

It should be noted that the term is used within the context of conflicts between ‘Latin’ and ‘Greek’, mainly concerning their religious conflicts, but sometimes also referring to their character or moral matters. Moreover, in some passages, the term refers to the Greek language, as in older texts.

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66. Choniates, Historia, 575.68-70: καὶ τῶν Γραικῶν ἡμῶν εὐσφιδέστεροι τε καὶ δικαιότεροι καὶ τῶν Χρυστὸν διαταγμάτων φύλαξες ἀκριβέστεροι; see also Akropolites, who uses the term as an alternative to Έλλην and a differentiation to Italian, whereas (as he writes) they both have a common name, i.e. Roman, Akropolites II, Contra Latinos B, 27.16-22: οὐκ ἄλλα ἄττα τῶν ἠδίου εἰς τοιαύτην προβήλην τὴν ὀνόμαν καὶ τὴν σύμπνοιαν ὡς Γραικοί τε καὶ Ιταλοί, καὶ εἰκότως ἐκ Γραικῶν γὰρ τοῖς Ιταλῶς καὶ αἱ λογικά ἐπιστήμην καὶ τὰ μαθήματα, καίντεθην ἵνα μὴ τοῖς ἐθνικοῖς τούτοις ὀνόματι περιγραφόμενα, τὴ πρεσβύτερα Τούμη ἐτέρα νέα ἀντωνομάσηται, ἵνα εἶ ὁ στερρότερος πολέμος κοινῶν ἑξονυχίων τοῦνομα Ρωμαίοι πάντες κατανομάζων.

67. Boniface of Montferrat considers Baldwin to be deceitful, unreliable and fickle, even more than the Greeks (Γραικοί), writes Choniates, Historia, 599.14-15: Ἑλληνῶν ἀπατηλότερον καὶ τὸ ἴδιον ἀπίσκοπον παλιβολοῦν ὑπὲρ ιστορικόν καὶ κίβον τῶν Βαλνδονίνων ἀποκαλόν; cf. Choniates' comment that Germans believed they would easily defeat Romans, because Greeks (Γραικοί, as alternative to Romans) were inexperienced in war matters and indulged into luxuries, Choniates, Historia, 477.9-20: οἱ δ’ Ἀλαμανοὶ τοσοῦτον ἀπέχειν ἐστερρῆσαν τοῖς ὀρομένοις τούτοις φανέρα, ὡστε καὶ ἀνέθαλπον μᾶλλον τὸν ἔρωτα, ὃν ὡπετύφην ταῖς λαμπρειμονίαις τῶν Ρωμαίων ἐνανάμφετον, καὶ ἐς τὸν τάχυν τραχίνως χρατήσει Γραικῶν ὡς ἀγεννῶν τὰ ἐς πόλεμον καὶ περισπουδαζόντων τὰς ἀνδραποδώδες χλιδές; Nikolaos Mesarites, I, 47.27-30: καταμεμήνυσαν γὰρ ὡς ἐστὶ τῶν μονοτρόπων ἐντάξεις χρείττον τὴν ἐπενέχθειν τῶν Γραικοῖς συμφοράς, φράνση μαθημάτων ἀλλινῶς καὶ τρίς περιαγομένος ἀδαμαντίνῳ λόγῳ στεφάνῳ.

68. Mesarites III, 47.14-15: καὶ οὐ Λιβύη Εὐρώπη τε καὶ Ασία τῆς τῶν Γραικῶν διαλέκτων πεπλήρωται;
either an allusion or direct reference to the Latins. Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that the Byzantine scholars were unaware of the Greek, not Latin (at least, not necessarily Latin) origin of the word Γραικός, since it is mentioned for the first time in Aristotle’s Meteorology as a synonym for Ἑλλην. Besides, the words γραικὸς and γραικώω were already in use in certain sources of the 9th and 10th centuries (in Theophanes and in Leo VI), in which they are connected to the Greek language and are not used either in contexts of controversy or to allude to the Latins.

However, it should be noted that in all the above-mentioned texts the name Roman is used when referring to the Byzantines. Furthermore, this is the name which carries political weight and is linked to the State.

Conclusions

In the first half of the 13th century, the meaning of each of the three terms - Ῥωμαῖος, Ἑλλην, Γραικὸς - is susceptible to different interpretations,
depending on the context in which they are used. The term which particularly presents semantic diversity is the term "Ἑλλην." 

1. All three collective nouns signify specific convictions and values of the social group that authored the texts, in which the terms appear. These convictions and values can be classified into three categories, namely political, educational and that of faith. A. Politically, the members of this social group are Romans. B. As far as the language, the education, the ethos and the culture are concerned, they are Hellenes. C. As far as their faith is concerned, they are Greek-speaking Christians, i.e. ‘Graikoi’.

2. These three terms compose a unified set. A set with distinct but strong and integral components, each implying and defining one another, without, however, altering their individual connotations. These are the elements that constitute the self-image of the scholar and nobleman in Nicaea.
ΟΙ ΟΡΟΙ ΡΩΜΑΙΟΣ, ΕΛΛΗΝ, ΓΡΑΙΚΟΣ ΣΤΑ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΑ ΚΕΙΜΕΝΑ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΩΤΟΥ ΜΙΣΟΥ ΤΟΥ 13ΟΥ ΑΙ.

Στο άρθρο εξετάζονται οι σημασίες και οι συνυποδηλώσεις των συλλογικών ονομάτων Ρωμαίος, Ἕλλην και Γραικὸς κατά την περίοδο της αυτοκρατορίας της Νικαίας, οι οποίες ποικίλουν ανάλογα με τα συμφραζόμενα εντός των οποίων αντάπαυτούν. Καθένα από τα ονόματα συνδέεται με συγκεκριμένες αξίες της πολιτικής, της παιδείας και της θρησκείας. Αποτελούν ένα ενιαίο σύνολο με διαχωριστικά, αλλά συνεχόμενα αναπόσπαστα συστατικά μέρη, και δηλώνουν την συλλογική ταυτότητα του ευγενούς και του λογίου στη Νίκαια.