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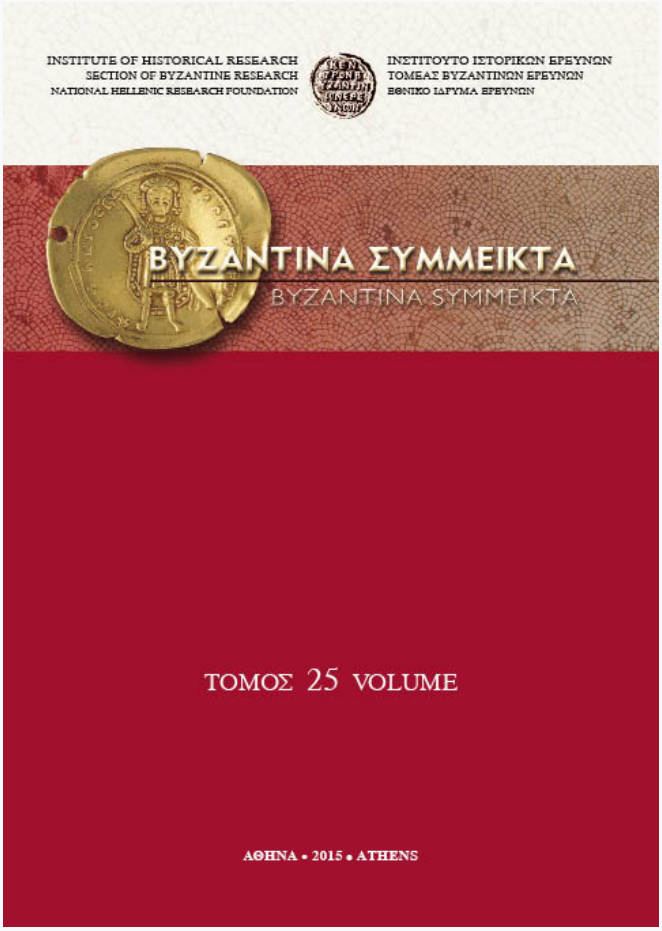

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ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΑ ΣΥΜΜΕΙΚΤΑ
BYZANTINA SYMMEIKTA

Ioannis Smarnakis

Rethinking Roman Identity after the Fall (1453): Perceptions of 'Romanitas' by Doukas and Sphrantzes

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Ioannis Smarnakis

Rethinking Roman Identity after the Fall (1453): Perceptions of 'Romanitas' by Doukas and Sphrantzes

During the last few years the question of Byzantine identities has attracted the attention of many scholars. Despite their methodological differences, the various approaches to the subject share, more or less, a common starting point: The older literature on the topic, by focusing mainly on the relationship between antiquity, Byzantium and modern Greece, ended up by confirming or denying the presumed continuity of a certain "Hellenism" through the centuries. This approach was not only static but it was also founded on an essentialist understanding of identities, which were treated as –almost- immutable entities that existed outside any historical context. For example, in the past some historians cited later Byzantine claims of a certain Hellenic identity as proof of the empire's underlying Hellenic "essence" throughout its history[1]. In response to these approaches, current research focuses on the historicity and the fluidity of the ways in which the Byzantines defined themselves and others. Byzantine identities were shaped not in a vacuum but in the context of the dominant imperial and Christian discourses, the perceptions of a 'classical' Greek and Roman past,

1. For an early critical overview of older literature on the topic see S. Vryonis, Recent scholarship on continuity and discontinuity of culture: Classical Greeks, Byzantines, Modern Greeks, in: *The 'Past' in Medieval and Modern Greek Culture*, ed. S. Vryonis, Malibu 1978, 237-256. Later Vryonis supported the quite different view that there was actually a "Greek" identity in Byzantium "... as witnessed by the identification with the Greek language and Greek education on the formal cultural level". Cf. Idem, Greek identity in the Middle Ages, *Études Balkaniques* 6 (1999) (*Byzance et l'hellénisme: L'identité grecque au Moyen-Âge*), 19-36, especially 36.

the relations between different elements within society and the interaction with foreign cultures and peoples. Special emphasis has also been placed on the multiplicity of identities. Concepts such as religion, culture, gender, sexuality, social status, ethnicity and political commitment are often used by modern scholars, who seek to reconstruct the conceptual framework of the various Byzantine identities[2].

However, recent research has rather neglected the transformations of *romanitas* during the lifespan of the Byzantine state since the debates about the complex relations between classical antiquity, Byzantium and modern Greece have dominated the academic field[3]. The traditional Byzantine concept of the term "Roman", which defined their own God-protected empire and emphasized the Roman and Christian roots of the imperial ideology[4],

2. See especially: A. Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium. The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition*, Cambridge 2007; G. Page, *Being Byzantine. Greek Identity before the Ottomans*, Cambridge 2008. Kaldellis argues that the Byzantines perceived themselves as members of a Roman national state without taking systematically into his consideration the historical context of modernity within which the nation-states were formed. However he thoroughly explores the meaning of 'hellenism' for the byzantine elite in the broader cultural and political context of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Page uses the concept of 'ethnic identity' to study her subject. Her book is an important contribution to the debate although sometimes she seems to project a certain 'Greek' identity into the Byzantine past. For an overview of the interaction between 'Hellenic', Roman and Christian identities in Byzantium with detailed references to older literature see C. Rapp, Hellenic identity, Romanitas, and Christianity in Byzantium, in: *Hellenisms. Culture, Identity and Ethnicity from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. K. Zacharia, Aldershot 2008, 127-147. For broad comparative approaches see *Identities and Allegiances in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, ed. J. Herrin – G. Saint-guillain, Farnham 2011. *Visions of Community in the post-Roman World. The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300-1100*, ed. W. Pohl - C. Gantner – R. Payne, Farnham 2012. For an essay where the author systematically criticizes essentialist views of Byzantine identity see I. Stouraitis, Roman Identity in Byzantium: a critical approach, *BZ* 107/1 (2014), 175-220. An overview of possible methodological approaches to Byzantine identities provides D. C. Smythe, Byzantine identity and labelling theory, in: *XIX International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Major Papers, Copenhagen 18-24 August 1996*, Copenhagen 1996, 26-36.

3. Cf. *Byzantium and the Modern Greek Identity*, ed. D. Ricks – P. Magdalino, Aldershot 1998.

4. For the Byzantine imperial identity and its close link with Roman political tradition and Christianity see G. Dagron, *Empereur et prêtre. Étude sur le 'césaropapisme' byzantine*,

underwent several changes through the centuries. Besides its strong political content, *romanitas* eventually came to encompass a vast body of different, changing and often overlapping meanings: it stressed the contrast between "civilized" Romans and "uncivilized" barbarians; it declared a political identification with the Roman state; and finally, it referred to an ethnic group of people who believed that they had a common origin, spoke the same Greek language and followed the Christian Orthodox religion[5].

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 marked the historical end of the Byzantine Empire[6] and the start of an "identity crisis", where the old ways of understanding "Romans" and "others" no longer corresponded to contemporary experience. The memory of that "crucial event" structured the flow of time by dividing it into "what was before" and "what came after". All certainties, categories and expectations of the Byzantine elite collapsed after 1453 and this radical change was experienced by some of its members as a traumatic situation, where reality was no longer perceived

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Paris 1996, 141 sq.; E. Chryssos, The Roman political identity in late antiquity and early Byzantium, in: *XIX International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Major Papers, Copenhagen 18-24 August 1996*, Copenhagen 1996, 7-16; Rapp, Hellenic Identity, 144-147. For the different view of Byzantium as the nation-state of the Romans see Kaldellis, *Hellenism*, 74-111. Recently A. Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic. People and Power in new Rome*, Cambridge Mass. – London 2015, has supported the intriguing view that the Byzantine political community was actually a republican monarchy, where only popular consent could authorize the allocation of power. For the roman republican roots of the Byzantine polity see Kaldellis, *Byzantine Republic*, 7 sq.

5. For a brief overview of the various political, ethnic and cultural meanings of Roman identity before 1204, see Page, *Being Byzantine*, 40-63. For the fluid context of the period after 1204 see T. Papadopoulou, The Terms Ῥωμαῖος, Ἕλλην, Ῥωμηὸς in the Byzantine Texts of the first Half of the 13th century, *ByzSym* 24 (2014), 157-176. For references to the terms "Βάρβαροι", "Ἕλληνες", "Ῥωμαῖοι" in late byzantine historiography see H. Ditten, Βάρβαροι, Ἕλληνες und Ῥωμαῖοι bei den letzten Byzantinischen Geschichtsscreibern, in: *Actes du XIIe Congrès International d'Études Byzantines, Ochride 10-16 Septembre 1961*, v. II, Belgrade 1964, 273-299.

6. J. Harris, *The End of Byzantium*, New Haven 2010 and M. Angold, *The Fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans. Context and Consequences*, London – New York 2012 provide two recent general accounts of the era. For the siege and the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople see now the detailed study by M. Philippides - W. K. Hanak, *The Siege and the Fall of Constantinople in 1453. Historiography, Topography and Military Studies*, Farnham 2011.

within the limits of the known and the familiar[7]. This rupture with the old conceptual framework created the need for new narratives that had to interpret the present situation and reconstruct a new sense of community for the Byzantine people after the loss of their capital.

The aim of this paper is to explore perceptions of Roman identity immediately after 1453 by focusing on the historical narratives of Doukas and Sphrantzes. The two authors deal with the memory of the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in order to understand and interpret their present and to develop a perspective for the future. I argue that their religious and political stances, as Doukas is a firm supporter of the unionist policy while Sphrantzes is a moderate anti-unionist, influence their conceptions of *romanitas*. The debate about the Union of the Churches had created deep ideological ruptures inside the Byzantine society and the study of a unionist and an anti-unionist historical narrative of the era reveals the totally different views of the two 'parties' regarding the future of the Byzantine people after 1453[8]. The two other Byzantine historians of the Fall will not be considered here since Chalkokondyles remains indifferent to the issue of the Union while his narrative is mainly addressed to circles of western renaissance humanists and Kritovoulos is a unique case in late Byzantine historiography as he projects all the traits of an "ideal" Byzantine emperor to the Turkish sultan[9]. However, their own perceptions of *romanitas* will be

7. The concepts of "crucial" or "limit event" and "trauma" which are perceived as deep ruptures and turning points in the life course of an individual or a community are often used in the rich literature on memory. See especially C. Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience. Trauma, Narrative and History*, Baltimore 1996, 4-5. D. Lacapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, Baltimore 2001, 43-85. A. Cavalli, Memory and Identity. How memory is reconstructed after catastrophic events, in: *Meaning and Representation in History*, ed. J. Rusen, New York – Oxford 2008, 169-182. For systematic critical overviews of trauma studies see W. Kansteiner, Finding meaning in memory: A methodological critique of collective memory studies, *History and Theory* 41 (2002), 179-197. D. D. Lacapra, *History in Transit: Experience, Identity, Critical Theory*, Ithaca – London 2004, 106-143.

8. For the Union of the Churches and the Council of Ferrara and Florence (1438/9) see J. Gill, *The Council of Florence*, Cambridge 1959. The social and political context of the conflict between unionists and anti-unionists will be discussed in detail infra.

9. On Chalkokondyles see especially N. Nicoloudis, *Laonikos Chalkokondyles. A Translation and Commentary of the "Demonstrations of Histories" (Books I-III)*, Athens 1996, 41-86. J. Harris, Laonikos Chalkokondyles and the Rise of the Ottoman Turks, *BMGS*

discussed in a broader study of the Byzantine historical narratives dealing with the memory of 1453.

Doukas, wrote a chronicle from the creation of the world until the Ottoman conquest of Mytilene in 1462[10]. His perception of Roman identity emphasizes the political aspect of *romanitas*. The author often refers to the Byzantine state with the traditional term, as the *βασιλεία* of the Romans, and he uses the title *βασιλεὺς* for the emperor[11]. However, the Byzantine king is not the only one who bears the royal title in his history. Besides Inachus, the ancient ruler of Argos, and Saul, the first king of Israel[12], the contemporary leaders of Trebizond and Serbia are also mentioned as *βασιλεῖς*[13]. Moreover, it seems that Doukas did not regard the king of Constantinople as the only heir to the Roman imperial legacy since he mentions the coronation in the west of the Hungarian ruler Sigismund as emperor of the Romans[14].

The author not only distances himself from central concepts of the imperial ideology but he also perceives the Byzantine state as a group of urban and rural settlements under the rule of Constantinople and its king. When he narrates the rise of Mohammed to the Ottoman throne, he observes that the new sultan made the false promise "to devote himself, all the days of his life, to the cause of amity and concord with the City and the despot

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27 (2003), 153-170. A. Kaldellis, *A New Herodotos: Laonikos Chalkokondyles on the Ottoman Empire, the Fall of Byzantium, and the Emergence of the West*, Washington D.C. 2014. On Kritovoulos see D. R. Reinsch, Kritoboulos of Imbros. Learned Historian, Ottoman Raya and Byzantine Patriot, *ZRVI* 40 (2003), 297-311 with references to older literature.

10. On Doukas see especially V. Grecu, Pour une meilleure connaissance de l'historien Doukas, in: *Memorial Louis Petit, Mélanges d'Histoire et d'Archéologie Byzantines*, Bucharest 1948, 128-141. C. J. G. Turner, Pages from late Byzantine philosophy of history, *BZ* 57 (1964), 346-373, especially 356-358 and the introduction of the English translation of this work by H. J. Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks, by Doukas. An annotated translation of 'Historia Turco-Byzantina'*, Detroit 1975, 22-41.

11. For the term "βασιλεία Ῥωμαίων", see Ducas Michael (?), *Istoria Turco-Byzantina (1341-1462)*, ed. V. Grecu, Bucharest 1958, 49, 55, 61, 83, 169, 195, 289 (hereafter: Ducas). The references to the term "βασιλεύς" are numerous. See, for example, Ducas, 41, 49, 55, 65, 67.

12. Ibid., 31.

13. On the Serbian king and his authority see ibid., 51, 169; on the king of Trebizond see ibid., 139, 165, 429, 431.

14. Ibid., 343. See also ibid., 79, where the author uses for Sigismund the slightly different term *βασιλεὺς τῶν Ῥωμάνων*.

Constantine, as well as with all the towns and their environs under this rule"[15]. This concept of the Palaiologan dominion as almost a city-state is also apparent in his narration of the punishment of a traitor, named Theologos, by the Cretan soldiers of Constantinople. The author stresses the importance of allegiance to the king and of a "sacred zeal" for the religious monuments, the cult of relics and the rituals performed in the city with the following words: "-the Cretans were always very faithful and had a sacred zeal for the temples of the saints and their relics and the kingdom of the City- so they told him: O king, it is unjust for us to prefer the City over our birthplace and yearn to shed our blood for the queen of cities while the native-born people and those who owe their fame to her are traitors to the divine mysteries and to your royal authority"[16].

The close association between urban space and the material signs of royal authority and the Christian cult is also emphasized in his lamentation for the Fall. The author calls Constantinople "head of all cities", "the centre of the four corners of the earth", "new paradise planted in the West". He wonders what will happen to the remains of the emperors and the saints in the city as "the streets, the courtyards, the crossroads, the fields, the enclosures of vineyards were all full of the remains of saints, noble and ordinary people, monks and nuns"[17]. He recalls the beauty of the churches, the sacred books and "the gospels spoken by the mouth of God" in this "terrestrial heaven" and "celestial altar". Finally he refers to several secular elements of its past power that complement the image of a Christian and Roman city par excellence. The author mourns for its polity, its people, and its military forces and for the material signs of its past glory such as the mansions, the palaces and the "sacred" walls[18].

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15. Ibid., 289: *...τοῦ στέργειν καὶ ἐμμένειν ἐφ' ὅρου ζωῆς αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ καὶ ὁμονοίᾳ μετὰ τῆς Πόλεως καὶ τοῦ δεσπότου Κωνσταντίνου σὺν πᾶσι τοῖς περιχώροις καὶ πόλεσιν ὑπὸ τὴν αὐτὴν δεσποτείαν.*

16. Ibid., 233: *—ἦσαν γὰρ οἱ Κρῆται ἀεὶ πιστότατοι καὶ ζῆλον θεῖον ἔχοντες πρὸς τὰ τεμένη τῶν ἁγίων καὶ εἰς τὰ σφῶν λείψανα καὶ εἰς τὸ βασίλειον τῆς Πόλεως· —εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ· Ὦ βασιλεῦ, ἄδικόν ἐστιν ἡμᾶς προτιμᾶν τὴν Πόλιν ὑπὲρ τὴν ἐνεγκαμένην καὶ ποθεῖν τοῦ ἐκχεῖσθαι τὸ αἷμα ἡμῶν ὑπὲρ τῆς βασιλευούσης, οἱ δ' αὐτόχθονες καὶ οἱ τὸ εὐδοξεῖν ἐκ ταύτης ἔχοντες εἶναι προδόται τῶν θείων μυστηρίων καὶ τῆς βασιλείας σου.*

17. Ibid., 385.

18. Ibid., 387.

The political life of Constantinople is often described as a field of interaction between the plans of the emperor and the wills of its people. Doukas frequently uses the term "πολῖται" to define the citizens, as in his view they are not simply the inhabitants of Constantinople but mainly an active civic political body. In several cases the emperor is presented as a ruler who has to convince the citizens of the necessity of his policy or even to persuade them to accept his authority. For example, Doukas presents John Kantakouzenos addressing a speech to the people of Constantinople in 1347. Kantakouzenos mentions his appointment as regent of the emperor, his noble origin and military skills in order to persuade them to open the city gates and welcome him as their ruler. He also promises to forgive those who are at fault, restore to their former state those who suffered unjust losses and finally bring a state of peace into the state of the Romans[19]. The Constantinopolitans, however, gave no answer while the vulgar populace gathered upon the walls unleashed several insults against him and his family. Finally Kantakouzenos abandoned the negotiations and succeeded in entering the city with the aid of his followers who were situated inside the capital[20]. The episode is surely linked with the special socio-political conditions of the so-called second civil war (1341-1347) but in Doukas' account it also acquires a strong symbolic meaning. The citizens have been gathered on the city walls, the real and symbolic boundaries of the civic space, while Kantakouzenos remains outside since he has to gain the public consent before entering the city and establishing his power.

The narration of the conflict between Andronikos IV and his father John V (1376) also emphasizes the political identification of the Constantinopolitans with their own city. Doukas recounts the escape of Andronikos and his family from the tower where they had been imprisoned, with the assistance of the Latins of Galata. After that event "the Genoese welcomed Andronikos and using him as a pretext began to wage war against the citizens of Constantinople"[21]. Thus the struggle for the throne between

19. Ibid., 61.

20. Ibid., 63.

21. Ibid., 73: *καὶ οἱ Γενουῖται τοῦτον δεξάμενοι ἤρξαντο ἀντιμάχεσθαι τοῖς πολίταις, προσωπεῖον κεκτήμενοι τὸν Ἀνδρόνικον.* The author sharply criticizes from a typical Christian point of view both rivals and he regards this war between father and son as "the consequence of the inhumanity of the Romans and their hatred of God as they violated the

different members of the imperial family is presented as a war between the citizens of two cities, the Constantinopolitans and the Genoese of Galata.

The blockade of the capital by the troops of Bayazid (1394-1402) also offers the author an opportunity to highlight the active role played by the citizens at that time. According to Doukas, while the emperor gave no answer to the Turkish ambassadors demanding the surrender of Constantinople, "the majority of the City, suffering from famine and deeply distressed, would have chosen to surrender the city. When the Constantinopolitans recalled, however, the acts committed by the Turks in Asia Minor, the destruction of cities, the devastation of temples, the temptations and the extortions compelling them to renounce their faith they changed their minds..."[22]. The city is perceived here as a political entity with a strong memory of Turkish aggression. The majority of its citizens, recalling the Turkish "atrocities" against the Christian faith, decided to continue the fight against Bayazid, while the emperor had no involvement in their final decision. The reaction of the sultan is also revealing of the author's perception of the Byzantine state: "the more the tyrant (Bayazid) saw the Constantinopolitans resisting and not yielding to his wishes, the more he raged and became furious with the city"[23].

The same view of the citizens as representatives of a civic political body is apparent in several other passages of the work. The author presents the citizens praying with the emperor for the salvation of Constantinople[24], confronting the Turkish troops outside the walls[25], mourning for the death of their empress[26], suspecting the role of a Byzantine ambassador and calling

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most terrifying oaths ever made". Ibid., 73: *τοῦτο τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἀπανθρωπίας καὶ τῆς πρὸς Θεὸν ἔχθρας διὰ τῶν φρικωδεστάτων ὅρκων γενομένης παραβάσεώς ποτε.*

22. Ibid., 81: *Οἱ δὲ πλεῖστοι τῆς Πόλεως βιαζόμενοι ὑπὸ τοῦ λιμοῦ, συνεθλίβοντο μὲν καὶ δώσειν προαιροῦντο τὴν πόλιν. Ἀλλ' ὑπομιμνήσκοντες τὰ πραχθέντα ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ παρὰ τῶν Τούρκων, τὴν φθορὰν τῶν πόλεων, τὴν ἐρήμωσιν τῶν ἱερῶν τεμενῶν, τοὺς καθ' ἑκάστην ὥραν πειρασμοὺς καὶ συκοφαντίας τοῦ ἐξομόσασθαι τὴν εὐσέβειαν, ὀπισθόρμως τὸν νοῦν ἤλαυνον.*

23. Ibid., 83: *Ὁ δὲ τύραννος ὅσον ἔβλεπε τοὺς Πολίτας ἀνθισταμένους καὶ μὴ ἐνδόντας τοῖς αὐτοῦ θελήμασιν, τοσοῦτον ἠγρίαινε καὶ ἐθυμοῦτο κατὰ τῆς πόλεως.*

24. Ibid., 91.

25. Ibid., 127.

26. Ibid., 135.

upon the emperor to act accordingly[27], begging God for his mercy before the final siege[28]. Furthermore, the uses of the term "πολῖται" are not limited to the activities of the Constantinopolitans. Citizens of other cities are often presented as active political agents[29], thus stressing the importance of civic political life in Doukas' view.

The dominion of the Palaiologoi in the 15th century not only resembled to a city-state as it consisted of little more than Constantinople and its surroundings, some Aegean islands and Peloponnese, but it seems that it was also conceived as such by a few intellectuals and some members of the byzantine elite. As has already been noted in recent literature on the topic, the two main features of the Palaiologan political program in Constantinople were the detachment from the policy of the Orthodox Church and a new perception of royal authority. The king was mainly viewed as a steward of public affairs who had to take into account the will of his city. The political context of the era was characterized by fluidity but many of the lords and the intellectuals who actively supported the ruling dynasty seem that they identified themselves with the city of Constantinople[30]. Their wealth was the

27. Ibid., 231.

28. Ibid., 327.

29. Ibid., 117, 157, 195, 407, 417.

30. T. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ἤ Οικονόμος; Πολιτική εξουσία και ιδεολογία πριν την Άλωση*, Athens 2007, 181-189, 204 sq. Cf. Eadem, Identités byzantines, *Historein* 2 (2000), 135-142. J. Harris, Constantinople as City-State, c.1360-1453, in: *Byzantines Latins and Franks in the Eastern Mediterranean World after 1150*, ed. J. Harris – C. Holmes – E. Russell, Oxford 2012, 119-140. Kaldellis, *Byzantine Republic*, especially 89-164, convincingly argues that the sovereignty of the people both in theory and practice was a diachronic feature of the Byzantine polity. In my opinion the new dominant element in the political life of the era is the civic context of the relationships between the ruler and its people. A major subject which only recently has attracted the attention of some scholars is the politicization of broader civic social groups during the late Byzantine era. Cf. K. P. Matschke – F. Tinnefeld, *Die Gesellschaft im späten Byzanz. Gruppen, Strukturen und Lebensformen*, Cologne – Weimar - Vienna 2001, 62-82. A. Kontogiannopoulou, The Notion of *ΔΗΜΟΣ* and its Role in Byzantium during the Last Centuries (13th – 15th c.), *ByzSym* 22 (2012), 101-124, T. Shawcross, Mediterranean Encounters before the Renaissance: Byzantine and Italian Political Thought Concerning the Rise of Cities, in: *Renaissance Encounters. Greek East and Latin West*, ed. M. S. Brownlee - D. H. Gondicas, Leiden – Boston 2013, 57-93, especially 66-79.

outcome of a close economic cooperation with the western merchants in Constantinople, while their social status was assured by their high position in the court of the emperor. The Union of the Churches strengthened the royal power over the Orthodox Patriarchate and also served the economic interests of Venice and Genoa in the Eastern Mediterranean[31]. Doukas' view is similar to the one held by many Byzantine *ἄρχοντες* in 15th-century Constantinople. Although he probably spent most of his life in Latin regions of the Aegean, it seems that he considered the city-state of Constantinople as his own "homeland"[32].

Besides political allegiance, ethnic criteria are sometimes used by Doukas in his chronicle to define *romanitas*. Ethnicity was usually expressed by Byzantine authors with the terms *γένος* and *ἔθνος*. *Γένος* was frequently used in the sense of family, but it could also denote a group of people who the author believed that they shared a common origin. On the other hand, the members of an *ἔθνος* did not need to be biologically related as the term was not usually associated with kinship but with common cultural traits such as language or religion[33]. Of course, the connotations of these terms were fluid and sometimes even the same author attributed different meanings to them according to the context. Doukas often refers

31. The literature on the economic activities of late Byzantine businessmen and their interaction with westerners in the Eastern Mediterranean is very rich. See especially N. Oikonomides, *Hommes d'affaires Grecs et Latins à Constantinople (XIIIe – XVe siècles)*, Montreal-Paris 1979. A. E. Laiou, The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System; 13th–15th centuries, *DOP* 34-35 (1980-1981), 177-222. K. P. Matschke, Commerce, Trade, Markets and Money: Thirteenth – Fifteenth Centuries, in: *Economic History of Byzantium from the 7th through the 15th Century*, vol. II, ed. A. E. Laiou, Washington D.C. 2008, 771-806; D. Jacoby, *Commercial Exchange across the Mediterranean: Byzantium the Crusader Levant, Egypt and Italy*, Aldershot 2005. A. E. Laiou – C.Morrisson, *The Byzantine Economy*, Cambridge 2007, 195 sq. On the stances of the 15th-century Byzantine elite regarding the Union of the Churches and its political meaning see especially N. Oikonomides, Byzantium between East and West (XIII – XV cent.), *BF* 13 (1988), 319–332. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ἢ Οἰκονόμος;*, 81-116; N. Necipoglu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, Cambridge 2009, 184-232.

32. There's almost no reference in Doukas' historical account to Lesvos where he lived for many years at the service of the Gattiluzio family. His silence probably indicates that he didn't identify himself with either the island or its ruling family.

33. Page, *Being Byzantine*, 41-42.

to the Roman descent of a person or a group with the term *γένος*[34]; he also twice mentions an *ἔθνος* of the Romans, once in the context of religious juxtaposition with the Ottomans and Islam[35] and on another occasion in associating the political misfortunes of Constantinople with those of the Romans[36]. However, Doukas has no particular interest in the historical roots of the Roman people or in the cultural features of *romanitas*. There is only one reference in his work to the (Greek) language of the Romans[37] and another one to the Roman (Greek) script[38]. It seems that even the term *γένος* sometimes has political connotations in his narrative. In the case of the Turks, the allegiance to their ruling dynasty is considered by the author as the key factor in their definition[39]. The minor importance of ethnic origin in relation to political allegiance is also apparent from his mention of the Genovese Giovanni Giustiniani, the commander of the Byzantine forces during the siege of 1453, as a general of the Romans[40].

Neither does the author link Roman identity to any "Hellenic" one. There are very few references to the ancient Greeks in the work and it is obvious that they were considered a foreign people, separated from the Byzantines by a gulf of time and religious difference[41]. Greek learning, however, is mentioned twice in the chronicle in a positive sense[42]. Two more references to "Greeks" are probably rhetorical topoi. The first one juxtaposes "Greek" and barbarian in the narration of the fate of the Byzantines held captive by the Turkish allies of John Kantakouzenos during the second civil war[43]. The second one refers to the anti-unionists, who are characterized as the "dregs of the race of the Greeks"[44]. Doukas even uses the term "Hellenic"

34. Ducas, 157, 235, 239, 315.

35. Ibid., 187.

36. Ibid., 85.

37. Ibid., 179.

38. Ibid., 235.

39. Ibid., 177: *καὶ γὰρ ὅσον τὸ κατ' ἐμέ, πολὺ πλέον τυγχάνει τὸ γένος τοῦτο τὴν σήμερον ἀπὸ πορθμοῦ Καλλιουπόλεως ἄχρι τοῦ Ἴστρου παρ' ὅσον ἐν τοῖς τῆς Ἀνατολῆς μέρεσι τὸ κατοικοῦν, λέγω τὸ ὑπήκοον τοῦ ἀρχηγοῦ τοῦ ἐκ τῶν Ὀθμάν.*

40. Ibid., 357.

41. Ibid., 31, 95.

42. Ibid., 135, 267.

43. Ibid., 57.

44. Ibid., 319: *ἡ τρυγία τοῦ γένους τῶν Ἑλλήνων.*

as synonymous with "pagan" when he mentions the stance of the anti-unionists towards the church of Hagia Sophia, on the eve of the fall. He critically observes that "the great church was viewed by them as a shelter of demons and as a Hellenic (pagan) altar"[45]. Finally there is one use of the term "Ἑλληνίδα" which rather refers to the language or to the place of origin of the woman[46].

The term "Graikoi" is often used in the narration of the events in Italy during the council for the Union of the Churches[47]. In this context the author uses the traditional name that Westerners attributed to the Byzantines or to Greek-speaking people more generally. At this time the term referred not only to the language but also to the Orthodox religion of hellenophone Christians[48]. A different meaning is attributed by Doukas to "Graikoi" in the context of the debates that took place in Constantinople after the Union of the Churches. Here the author refers to the unionist priests of the city by the term "priests of the Graikoi"[49].

Doukas designates a Roman political identity that is not grounded in any connection with a Greek past, culture or origin. Furthermore, his conception of *romanitas* is defined in opposition to a stereotypical image of the Turks, which represent in his narrative the contrasting Other of the Romans. As has often been noted in the recent literature, identities are representations of the "self" which are constructed through and not outside difference. This means that it is only through the relation to the Other, to what has been called its 'constitutive outside', that the 'positive' meaning of any term –and thus its identity- can be constructed[50]. Doukas' discourse about Turkish otherness aims to emphasize and strengthen certain features

45. Ibid., 323: *Καὶ ἡ Μεγάλη Ἐκκλησία ὡς καταφύγιον δαιμόνων καὶ βωμὸς ἑλληνικὸς αὐτοῖς ἐλογίζετο.*

46. Ibid., 59. Cf. infra note 56.

47. Ibid., 267, 269, 317, 319.

48. S. McKee, Sailing from Byzantium: Byzantines and Greeks in the Venetian World, in: *Identities and Allegiances*, ed. Herrin - Saint Guillain, 291-300, especially 293.

49. Ducas, 319.

50. Cf. J. W. Scott, Multiculturalism and the politics of identity, in: *The Identity in Question*, ed. J. Rajchmann, New York 1995, 3-14. S. Hall, Introduction: Who needs 'Identity'?, in: *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. S. Hall – P. Du Gay, London 1996, 1-17, especially 4-5.

of the Roman identity. The Turks and their rulers are often characterized as barbarians[51] and believers in an impure and barbaric religion[52]. The author, recounting the early days of the Turks, observes that their success was due to their love of rapine and injustice both against their own people and even more so against the Christians[53]. He also provides a colourful image of the Turkish raids with the following words: "If they hear the herald's voice summoning them to the attack – which in their language is called aqin – they descend like a flooding river, unorganised and uninvited, without money and food pouches and most of them without spears and swords. Countless others come running, increasing to tens of thousands the number of the troops, with the majority of them carrying nothing but a club in their hands. They rush against the Christians and seize them like sheep..."[54]. The author seems to contrast this way of life with the civilized manners of the Constantinopolitans by using an old distinction between the "civilized" Romans and the "uncivilized" barbarians. This contrast between civic life and the barbarian customs of a rural world is also apparent in Doukas' negative characterization of the elite Turkish troops, the janissaries, which are described as a group of former goatherds, shepherds, cowherds and swineherds, farmers' children and horse-keepers[55].

The Turks are equally presented as an immoral and lecherous people. The author highlights this stereotypical image with a colorful description of their sexual practices: "These people are unrestrained and lustful as no other people, incontinent beyond all races and insatiate in licentiousness. They are so inflamed by passion that they never cease unscrupulously and dissolutely from having intercourse by both natural and unnatural means

51. See, for example, Ducas, 47, 57, 177, 217, 285, 307, 309 and 319.

52. Ibid., 283, 289, 319 and 375, where the author characterizes the Church of Saint Sophia after its conversion into a mosque as "altar of the barbarians and Mohamed's home".

53. Ibid., 175-177.

54. Ibid., 177: *Καὶ εἰ μόνον τὴν τοῦ κήρυκος φωνὴν ἀκούσωσι ὡς πρὸς ἐπιδρομήν, ὃ καλεῖται κατὰ τὴν αὐτῶν γλῶτταν ἀκκήν, τότε πάντες χύδην καὶ ὡς ποταμὸς ῥέων αὐτόκλητοι, ἄνευ βαλαντίου καὶ πήρας, οἱ πλεῖστοι καὶ αἰχμῶν καὶ ἀκινακῶν, ἕτεροι πεξοὶ τὴν πορείαν μυριαρίθμους παρεμβολὰς στοιχήσαντες θέουσιν, οὐκ ἄλλο οἱ πλέονες ἀλλ' ἢ ῥόπαλον ταῖς ἑκάστου χερσί. Καὶ κατὰ τῶν χριστιανῶν ὁρμῶντες ὡς πρόβατα τούτους ἐξώγρων ...*

55. Ibid., 179.

with females, males and dumb animals. The people of this shameless and inhuman race, moreover, do the following: If they seize a Greek or an Italian woman or a woman of another race or a captive or a deserter, they embrace her as an Aphrodite or Semele, but they detest a woman of the same descent and of their own language as though she were a bear or a hyena"[56].

Doukas uses the same stereotypical image of the "lustful Turk" to depict the activities of the Ottoman rulers. The sultans are not only designated as corrupted tyrants, as they finally managed to usurp the imperial power, but they are also presented engaging in lascivious sexual practices. According to the author, Bayazid had gathered in his palace, against their will, many young boys and girls from several Christian states, "living idly and wantonly; he never ceased from lascivious sexual acts, indulging in licentious behaviour with men and women"[57]. It seems that these manners are considered characteristic of the Turkish rulers as there are several references to similar activities of other sultans or Ottoman princes in the work[58]. On the other hand, the author contrasts with this behaviour the habits of a typical Roman emperor such as Manuel II Palaiologos, who preferred to study the "divine words", when he rested in Constantinople unperturbed by the affairs of state, after his resignation from the throne[59].

The stereotypical image of the barbarian, infidel, uncivilized, lustful Turk strengthens the distinction between them and the Romans. The construction of identity always involves a symbolic marking of borders separating one particular group from the rest. This reference to the external "other" is essential for the construction of discourses about the superiority or the "normal" behaviour of a particular group in juxtaposition to the

56. Ibid., 59: ... *καὶ γὰρ ἀκράτητον τὸ ἔθνος αὐτὸ καὶ οἰστρομανὲς ὡς οὐδὲ ἓν τῶν πάντων γενῶν, ἀκόλαστον ὑπὲρ πάσας φυλὰς καὶ ἀκόρεστον ἀσωτίαις, τοσοῦτον γὰρ πυροῦται, ὅτι καὶ κατὰ φύσιν καὶ παρὰ φύσιν ἐν θηλείαις, ἐν ἄρρεσιν, ἐν ἀλόγοις ζῴοις ἀδεῶς καὶ ἀκρατῶς μιγνύμενον οὐ παύεται· καὶ ταῦτα τὸ ἀναιδὲς καὶ ἀπάνθρωπον ἔθνος, εἰ Ἑλληνίδα ἢ Ἰταλὴν ἢ ἄλλην τινὰ ἑτερογενῆ προσλάβηται ἢ αἰχμάλωτον ἢ αὐτόμολον, ὡς Ἀφροδίτην τινὰ ἢ Σεμέλην ἀσπάζονται, τὴν ὁμογενῆ δὲ καὶ αὐτόγλωτον ὡς ἄρκτον ἢ ὕαινα βδελύττοντες.*

57. Ibid., 87: *αὐτὸς δὲ καθήμενος καὶ κατασπαταλῶν οὐκ ἐπαύετο ἀφροδισιάζων, ἐν ἀῤῥένοις ἀσελγαίνων καὶ θήλεσιν.*

58. Ibid., 201, 212, 249.

59. Ibid., 229.

inferiority or the "abnormal" activities of others[60]. The negative features attributed to the Turks contrast with several implied positive qualities that, according to the author, should characterize Roman people. Doukas implies that the Romans should be loyal to their own "pious kings", their own religion and the city of Constantinople and not to "lustful tyrants". The author emphasizes the ethnic and cultural boundaries between the two groups in order to strengthen the political identification of the Byzantine Romans with their city[61]. He designates an ideal utopic image of a *romanitas* closely linked with a civic way of life and a set of political and religious values which are also perceived in an urban context and in juxtaposition to the "abnormal" behaviour of the Turks. His discourse is also inherently defensive since it rises and gains its strength through the contrast with another group which is perceived as a threat to the survival of the Romans.

But how does Doukas interpret the Turkish victories over the Byzantines and their conquest of Constantinople, which marked the end of the Roman state? The author argues that Turkish aggression was a punishment from Divine Providence for the sins of the Christians. According to him, other conquered Christian peoples were punished for their continuous insurrections against the Romans, while the latter had to be chastened for their sinful behaviour when Michael VIII Palaiologos ascended the throne. At first they took oaths to defend John IV Laskaris and never to join Palaiologos in rebellion, but later they completely reversed their oaths by embracing Michael VIII as their king after blinding the former young emperor[62]. This traditional Christian view of history as the work of Divine Providence is a recurrent theme in Doukas' chronicle. Several events are interpreted through

60. Cf. Scott, Multiculturalism, 6.

61. The strong political framework of ethnic distinctions has been emphasized in the rich literature about medieval identities. Political discourses often project an ideal cultural and linguistic homogeneity, invent myths about the common origin of the members of the community and designate the geographical and ethnic boundaries of the royal authority. See for example W. Pohl, Introduction. Strategies of Distinction, in: *Strategies of Distinction. The Construction of Ethnic Communities, 300-800*, ed. W. Pohl – H. Reimitz, Leiden – Boston – Köln 1998, 1-15. H. W. Goetz, "Introduction", in: *Regna and Gentes. The Relationship between Late Antique and Early Medieval Peoples and Kingdoms in the Transformation of the Roman World*, ed. H. W. Goetz – J. Jarnut – W. Pohl, Leiden – Boston 2003, 1-11.

62. Ducas, 49.

the intervention of a governing or chastening Providence[63] or even as a manifestation of God's wrath for human sins[64]. The way in which the Turks, according to Doukas, eventually managed to enter Constantinople through a small unguarded gate is also interpreted within the same conceptual framework. The author recounts the fierce Byzantine resistance on the city walls during the final Turkish assault and he comments that "(the Romans) were at fault, as God willed that the Turks would be brought in by another way"[65].

The role played by Divine Providence in the narrative stresses the didactic character of his chronicle. However, there is no reference in his work to the traditional medieval conception of human history as a sequence of four empires or earthly kingdoms. Doukas seems to keep a distance from this linear and eschatological perception of history, which identified the fall of Constantinople with the end of the fourth empire and thus with the Apocalypse and the expected end of the world[66]. His scant interest in prophecies is evident from the very few references to portents in the work. The author recounts in detail a dream of Murad II foretelling his own death[67] and he also refers to the appearance of a comet before the battle of Ankara (1402) – although he does not explicitly correlate it with the defeat of Bayazid[68]. Moreover, it has already been noted that his long lamentation on the fall of Constantinople forms a commentary on the event rather than an exposition of prophetic utterances[69]. On the other hand, Doukas sometimes criticizes the superstitions of the people of Constantinople and their beliefs

63. See, for example, ibid., 47, 87, 177, 283, 359.

64. Ibid., 271, 363, 365.

65. Ibid., 359: *ἔλαθον, δι' ἄλλης ὁδοῦ τούτους εἰσάξας ὁ θελήσας Θεός.*

66. For the eschatological thought in late Byzantium see *Les traditions apocalyptiques au tournant de la chute de Constantinople*, ed. B. Lellouch – S. Yerasimos, Paris 2000. P. Guran, Eschatology and political theology in the last centuries of Byzantium, *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes* 45 (2007), 73-85. For the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition see, in general, P. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, Berkeley 1985. P. Magdalino, The history of the future and its uses: Prophecy, policy and propaganda, in: *The Making of Byzantine History*, ed. R. Beaton – Ch. Roueche, London 1993, 3-34.

67. Ducas, 285-287.

68. Ibid., 93-95.

69. Ibid., 385-391. Cf. Turner, Pages, 358.

in prophecies about the expected end of their kingdom[70]. It seems that in his view the end of human history is not predictable and that God's plans for the future of the Roman people remain unknown.

Historical works reconstruct experiences through their narrative representation, elaborating in the process a relationship between the narrator, the past and a community of readers. Thus they become means of identifying a person or a group within a broader context, not only providing answers to questions of identity but also outlining plans for future actions[71]. Doukas' historical narrative deals with the memory of 1453 by insisting on a particular political identity which is closely associated with a perception of Constantinople as a Roman and Christian city-state. This discourse gains its strength through the contrast it makes with a stereotypical image of the Turks. Moreover, Doukas' conception of history as the work of Divine Providence is not directly linked to an apocalyptic discourse that identified the fall of Constantinople with the expected end of the earthly world. His view is very close to that held by Thomas Palaiologos, the cardinals Isidore of Kiev and especially Bessarion who sought a Western crusade against the Turks in order to restore the Byzantine state. The fall of Constantinople was interpreted by them as a loss to the "infidels" of a Christian European city that had to be recaptured. This political program for the 'Hellenic rescue' remained alive for at least two decades after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople and circles of unionist intellectuals in Italy and in Latin Greece actively promoted it. Pope Pius II even declared an anti-Turkish crusade in 1458 but he eventually found no support from the Western monarchs, who were all divided by various disputes[72]. It seems that Doukas' historical narrative, which associated a version of *romanitas* with the Christian city-state of Constantinople, was addressed mainly to this circle of readers.

On the other hand, the historical work of George Sphrantzes was written

70. Ducas, 299, 365.

71. On the interaction between a text and the world of its readers see, in general, P. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, v. III, trans. by K. Blamley – D. Pellauer, Chicago 1988, 157-179. R. Chartier, Le monde comme representation, *Annales E.S.C.* 44/6 (1989), 1505-1520.

72. S. Ronchey, Orthodoxy on Sale: the Last Byzantine, and the Lost Crusade, in: *XXI International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Plenary Papers, London 21-26 August 2006*, vol. I, Aldershot 2006, 313-342. For the term "Hellenic rescue" see ibid. 322.

by a moderate anti-unionist, who opposed the Union of the Churches mainly for political reasons as he believed that it had led to the Turkish reaction and finally to the conquest of Constantinople[73]. His chronicle, which covers the period between 1413 and 1477, has been characterized as "memoirs" since it is basically a record of his own experiences. The author narrates his personal life and gives an account of his actions as a high-ranking official in the service of Manuel and Constantine Palaiologos. After the fall of Constantinople he served Thomas Palaiologos in the Peloponnese and ended up in Corfu where in 1468 he became monk. In the 16th century, the metropolitan of Monemvasia, Makarios Melissenos, compiled an extended version of the work which is known as the *Maius* Chronicle[74].

In contrast to Doukas' narrative, Sphrantzes makes no reference to civic political life or to Constantinople as a Roman and Christian city-state. A passage where the author mentions that the Palaiologos family ruled over Constantinople for one hundred ninety-four years, ten months and four days is perhaps the only exception[75]. However with this wording Sphrantzes could simply refer to the reign of the dynasty over the Byzantines since the beginning of this period coincides with the coronation of Michael VIII in 1258, three years before the recapture of Constantinople in 1261. There's also no negative image of the Turks in the chronicle and simply the typical phrase "lord of the impious" is often used for the Ottoman sultan[76]. Moreover Sphrantzes avoids almost any use of the term "Roman" or its derivatives, with the exception of two references in the context of

73. Georgii Sphrantzae, *Chronicon*, ed. R. Maisano, Rome 1990, 80 (hereafter: Sphrantzes): ... *ἡ τῆς συνόδου δουλεία αἰτία μία καὶ πρώτη καὶ μεγάλη εἰς τὸ νὰ γένηται ἡ κατὰ τῆς Πόλεως τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἔφοδος καὶ ἀπὸ ταύτην πάλιν ἡ πολιορκία καὶ ἡ αἰχμαλωσία καὶ τοιαύτη καὶ τοσαύτη συμφορὰ ἡμῶν*. The author also uses a metaphor to highlight his own view on the Union of the Churches. He declares his preference for the old central street of Constantinople (Μέση ὁδὸς) which ends at the church of Hagia Sophia instead of a new street discovered by others. Cf. Sphrantzes, 80.

74. On Sphrantzes see especially Maisano, *Chronicon*, 1*-51*. M. Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz* (WBS XXII), Vienna 1999, 331-43 and Philippides - Hanak, *The Siege*, 139-152 with detailed references to older literature.

75. Sphrantzes, 134: *Ἦρχον δὲ καὶ ἐβασίλευον ταύτην δὴ τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν τὸ τούτων γένος τῶν Παλαιολόγων χρόνους ἑκατὸν ἐνενήκοντα τέσσαρας καὶ μῆνας δέκα καὶ ἡμέρας δ΄*.

76. Ibid., 170, 176: *ὁ τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἐξάρχων*. Cf. ibid., 188, 192: *ὁ τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἄρχων*.

conflicts in the Peloponnese. Here the author juxtaposes the "miserable" Romans to the "most evil and naïve race of the Albanians"[77], recounting the ambiguous stance of the latter during the confrontation between Thomas and Demetrios Palaiologos, and he also mentions the cooperation of some Romans in Patras with the Venetians against the Turks in 1464[78]. There's also no reference to *Ἕλληνες* or *Γραικοὶ* in the chronicle or to any event of the ancient Greek or Roman past.

Furthermore, Sphrantzes does not narrate the events of the siege of Constantinople or the last fierce battle on the walls before the final Turkish victory. He simply records the date and the hour of the fall of the city and the death of Constantine Palaiologos, remarking that at that time he was not himself present as the emperor had sent him to another area of Constantinople[79]. This silence is striking, especially if we take into account his role as an elder statesman and member of the Byzantine ruling elite.

His own high social status and his close links with the imperial family are often stressed in the chronicle. Sphrantzes emphasizes his personal connection with Constantine Palaiologos by using the typical phrase "my despot/king and my master" for the last emperor[80]. Besides his own king, the rulers of Trebizond also bear the royal title in his historical narrative, thus probably indicating the byzantine origin of their power[81]. The author often uses the first person plural (ἡμεῖς) when he mentions his own activities as an official implying that he acted as an agent of a ruling elite around

77. Ibid., 154.

78. Ibid., 178.

79. Ibid., 134: *Καὶ τῇ κθ-η μαΐου, ἡμέρᾳ γ-η, ὥρᾳ τῆς ἡμέρας ἀρχῇ, ἀπῆρε τὴν Πόλιν ὁ ἀμηρᾶς. ἐν ᾗ ὥρᾳ καὶ ἁλώσει τῆς Πόλεως καὶ ὁ μακαρίτης αὐθέντης μου κῦρ Κωνσταντῖνος βασιλεὺς ὁ Παλαιολόγος σκοτωθεὶς ἀπέθανεν, ἐμοῦ πλησίον αὐτοῦ οὐχ εὑρεθέντος τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐκείνῃ, ἀλλὰ προστάξει ἐκείνου εἰς ἐπίσκεψιν δῆθεν ἄλλου μέρους τῆς Πόλεως.* This absence of any reference to the military operations has led some scholars to the assumption that there may actually have been a separate lost diary written by Sphrantzes which was later used by Makarios Melissenos for the lengthy narration of the siege in the *Maius* chronicle. However, it now seems certain that the main source of Melissenos' account was the letter sent to Pope Nicholas V by the bishop of Chios Leonardo Giustiniani. See on the subject Philippides - Hanak, *The Siege*, 144, 148-149 with references to older literature.

80. See, for example, Sphrantzes, 40, 42, 60, 62, 76, 106, 112, 132, 134, 138.

81. Ibid., 30, 108, 172.

the emperor[82]. The lengthy narration of a debate between some lords and Constantine Palaiologos about court hierarchy is also revealing of his interest in occupying a higher position very close to the ruler[83]. Sphrantzes presents himself to disagree with the appointment of two of Lucas Notaras' sons in high offices as he was worried about his own status[84]. This attitude was typical of the members of the Byzantine elite, who always sought ways to climb up in the court hierarchy and gain the imperial favour.

It seems that the Fall was experienced by him as a dramatic event that also caused the collapse of his own world. The big rupture between the present and the past was a traumatic situation that he could not easily handle. The events of the siege of Constantinople were the turning point in this transition and the absence of any reference to them in the chronicle could be interpreted as a conscious choice, wishing as he did to forget them. The Fall left an indelible mark on his life and made the years that he had spent as an elder statesman a lost "golden" age which was ended violently by the Turkish conquest of the Byzantine capital.

Sphrantzes deals with this traumatic situation by relying mainly on his strong Christian faith. He views himself as a faithful Christian who had to suffer patiently in his life and be chastened by God for his sins. The author begins his chronicle by stating that it would have been well for him if he had not been born or if he had died in his childhood[85] and this statement is further clarified thereafter. Sphrantzes narrates several tragic incidents in his personal life, such as the loss of his five children, his capture by the Turks during the fall of Constantinople[86] and the suffering from a serious illness in his last days[87]. All these events are interpreted by him as divine punishments for his own sins. A strong interest in religious matters is further revealed by several scriptural references in the work and by a lengthy report of the life and miracles of his godmother, Saint Thomais[88]. Sphrantzes also cites his own formal expression of faith when he became monk and retired to a

82. For example, ibid., 40, 170, 176.
83. Ibid., 124-130.
84. Ibid., 128.
85. Ibid., 4.
86. Ibid., 134.
87. Ibid., 182, 194.
88. Ibid., 46-52.

monastery in Corfu, where he finally ended his life[89]. Finally the concluding remark of the work indicates the typical Christian mental horizons of the author: Sphrantzes wishes that he will not be deprived of God's compassion in the Final Judgement since he has used all available means to purify his soul[90].

The absence of almost any reference to a *romanitas* also implies that the authority of the Romans was regarded as a temporary and earthly state of affairs and that Orthodox Christians should continue their lives until the expected end of the world and the coming of the heavenly kingdom. The older surviving manuscript of the work dates from the late sixteenth century but it seems that it already had a wide circulation at that time as it constituted the core of a Peloponnesian brief chronicle written in 1512[91]. The compilation and the circulation of the so-called *Maius* Chronicle (1573-1576) further widened the influence of the narrative. Makarios Melissenos, the compiler of this long version, explicitly familiarized his audience with the succession of kingdoms in human history: "As the kingdom of the Assyrians was overthrown by the Babylonians and theirs by the Persians and the Persian kingdom by the Macedonians, and theirs by the Romans so the Roman kingdom was overthrown by the Ottomans. The end of the Ottomans or otherwise of the Muslims will come at an appropriate and predefined time as they will be overthrown by the blonde race"[92].

During the 15th century the Patriarchate clearly followed its own policy seeking ways to coexist with the Ottoman power thus ensuring its own influence over the Balkans and the eastern Europe[93]. Several anti-unionist intellectuals expressed views similar to Sphrantzes' outlook, dissociating the

89. Ibid., 184.

90. Ibid., 194.

91. Maisano, *Chronicon*, 65*-67*.

92. Georgios Sphrantzes, *Memorii 1401-1477. In annexă Pseudo-Phrantzes. Macarie Melissenos Cronica, 1258-1481*, ed. V. Grecu, Bucharest 1966, 462: ... *ὥσπερ τοίνυν ἡ τῶν Ἀσσυρίων βασιλεία κατελύθη ὑπὸ τῶν Βαβυλωνίων, τῶν δὲ Βαβυλωνίων ὑπὸ τῶν Περσῶν, ἡ δὲ Περσῶν ὑπὸ τῶν Μακεδόνων, ἡ δὲ Μακεδόνων ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων, οὕτως καὶ ἡ τῶν Ῥωμαίων κατελύθη ὑπὸ τῶν Ὀτθουμαλίδων. Τῶν δὲ Ὀσμανλιδῶν, ἤτοι Ὀτθουμαλίδων τῶν καὶ Ἀγαρηνῶν τέλος ἕξει ἐν τῷ προσήκοντι καὶ ὡρισμένῳ καιρῷ καὶ καταλυθήσεται ὑπὸ τοῦ ξανθοῦ γένους.*

93. Cf. Kioussopoulou, *Βασιλεύς ἡ Οικονόμος*, 58-77.

future of the Orthodox Church from the fortunes of the Byzantine state. Joseph Bryennios, for example, distanced himself from the Roman imperial legacy and considered Constantinople as mainly a religious centre of the Orthodox world. Moreover, he perceived his contemporary city as almost a large complex of monasteries and churches with strict hierarchies under the rule of the patriarch, who cared for the souls of the faithful[94].

The same view was held by the first patriarch of Constantinople after the Ottoman conquest. George Gennadios-Scholarios avoided any reference to Romans in his writings after 1453 thus disconnecting the present of the Orthodox community from the Byzantine imperial past. His main political goal was to designate a religious *Oikoumene* with Constantinople at the centre that unified the scattered Orthodox Greek-speaking communities. In this way the patriarchate could be incorporated in the Ottoman system of governance as the overseer of the Orthodox subjects of the sultan[95]. Scholarios in a lament for the fall of Constantinople familiarizes his flock with the new political context by stating that the paradise should be considered as the "true" homeland of the Orthodox Christians while the sufferings of the earthly life should be viewed as just a temporary condition[96].

Sphrantzes' silence about *romanitas* is another example of the same Orthodox view that deviated from the Roman political tradition. It seems that the author of the so-called *Minus* chronicle relied on his strong Christian

94. P. Gounarides, Ιωσήφ Βρυέννιος, προφήτης της καταστροφής, in: *Πρακτικά του Διεθνούς Συμποσίου «1453: Η άλωση της Κωνσταντινούπολης και η μετάβαση από τους μεσαιωνικούς στους νεώτερους χρόνους»*, ed. T. Kioussopoulou, Herakleion 2005, 133-145. Cf. Ἰωσὴφ Βρυεννίου, 'Περὶ τοῦ τῆς πόλεως ἀνακτίσματος', ed. N. Tomadakes, *EEBΣ* 36 (1968), 1-15.

95. For Scholarios' view on the future of the Orthodox community after 1453 see M. H. Blanchet, *George Gennadios Scholarios (vers 1400-vers 1472): un intellectuel orthodoxe face à la disparition de l'Empire byzantin*, Paris 2008. Cf. A. D. Angelou, 'Who am I?' Scholarios' answers and the Hellenic Identity', in: *Φιλέλλην. Studies in Honour of Robert Browning*, ed. C. N. Constantinides – N. M. Panagiotakes – E. Jeffreys – A. D. Angelou, Venice 1996, 1-19, E. A. Zachariadou, The Great Church in Captivity 1453–1586, in: *Eastern Christianity* , ed. M. Angold (Cambridge History of Christianity V), Cambridge 2006, 169-186.

96. Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios, *Oeuvres complètes*, v. 4, ed. M. Jugie – L. Petit – X. A. Sidéridès, Paris 1935, 223: *... εἰ μέλλοιμεν τῆς ἀληθοῦς πατρίδος ἐπιτυγχάνειν, οὐδὲν ἡμᾶς λυπήσει τὰ πάθη τῆς παροικίας ...* .

faith in order to face the new situation that emerged after the Fall and the collapse of his own world. The comparison with the chronicle of Doukas reveals the deep rupture between the unionists and the anti-unionists regarding not only religious issues but also the future of the Byzantine people. While some of the former continued even after 1453 to view Constantinople as a Roman and Christian city that had to be recaptured, the latter disregarded the Roman political legacy and relied mainly on their Orthodox world view.

Ανασημασιοδοτωντας την Ρωμαϊκη Ταυτοτητα μετα την Αλωση: Προσληψεις της Ρωμαϊκοτητας απο τον Δουκα και τον Σφραντζη

Το άρθρο πραγματεύεται βυζαντινές προσλήψεις της ρωμαϊκότητας αμέσως μετά το 1453, εστιάζοντας στις ιστορικές αφηγήσεις του Δούκα και του Σφραντζή. Ο Δούκας προβάλλει συστηματικά μια πολιτική ρωμαϊκή ταυτότητα που συνδέεται με την Κωνσταντινούπολη και ορίζεται σε αντιπαράθεση προς μια στερεότυπη εικόνα των Τούρκων, οι οποίοι αποτελούν τον κατεξοχήν «Άλλο» στην αφήγησή του. Οι απόψεις του είναι παρόμοιες με εκείνες πολλών ενωτικών διανοούμενων που προωθούσαν μετά το 1453 ένα σταυροφορικό πολιτικό πρόγραμμα ανάκτησης της Κωνσταντινούπολης και επανίδρυσης του Βυζαντινού κράτους. Αντίθετα ο Σφραντζής αποφεύγει τις αναφορές στον όρο «Ρωμαίος» και στα παράγωγά του. Η άλωση της Κωνσταντινούπολης βιώθηκε από τον ίδιο ως μια τραυματική κατάσταση, ένα οριακό γεγονός που σηματοδότησε το ιστορικό τέλος του Ρωμαϊκού κράτους και σημάδεψε την πορεία της δικής του ζωής. Ο Σφραντζής αντιμετωπίζει τον εαυτό του ως ένα πιστό ορθόδοξο χριστιανό που τιμωρήθηκε από τον Θεό για τις αμαρτίες του. Οι αντιλήψεις του είναι τυπικά ορθόδοξες, καθώς ανθενωτικοί διανοούμενοι του 15ου αιώνα συχνά αποστασιοποιούνται από την ρωμαϊκή πολιτική κληρονομιά και αποσυνδέουν το μέλλον της κοινότητας των ορθοδόξων από τις τύχες του Βυζαντινού κράτους.