

Manuel Chrysoloras’
Περὶ τοῦ Βασιλέως λόγος:
Genre, Aims, Content, and Sources

Erika Nuti

BETWEEN 1408 AND 1412 the Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus wrote a lengthy funeral oration for his younger brother Theodore, Despot of Morea, who had died in 1407.¹ In the oration he gave a precise account of Theodore’s political and military activity, showing that he acted as the perfect ruler and that his actions were always in accordance with Manuel’s bidding. The funeral oration is therefore not only an epitaph, but also a *basilikos logos*.² Clearly, the length and complexity of

¹ J. Chrysostomides, *Manuel II Palaeologus, Funeral Oration on his Brother Theodore* (Thessalonike 1985). An interesting analysis of this text is provided in F. Leonte, “A Brief ‘History of the Morea’ as Seen through the Eyes of an Emperor-Rhetorician: Manuel II Palaiologos’s *Funeral Oration for Theodore, Despot of the Morea*,” in S. Gerstel (ed.), *Viewing the Morea. Land and People in the Late Medieval Peloponnese* (Washington 2013) 397–417. For the debate on the date of composition see Chrysostomides 29; C. Patrinelis and D. Sofianos, *Manuel Chrysoloras and his Discourse addressed to the Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus* (Athens 2001) 44–46; A. Rollo, review of Patrinelis and Sofianos, *BZ* 96 (2003) 307–313, at 310, and “A proposito del *Vat. Gr. 2239: Manuele II e Guarino* (con osservazioni sulla scrittura di Isodoro di Kiev),” *Nea Rhome* 3 (2006) 373–388, at 373 n.2. For a brief profile of the lives and activities of Manuel and Theodore see Chrysostomides 5–25; for Manuel’s biography see the somewhat dated but still essential monograph of J. W. Barker, *Manuel II Palaeologus (1391–1425): A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship* (New Brunswick 1969). See also G. Dennis, *The Letters of Manuel II Palaeologus* (Washington 1977).

² Chrysostomides, *Oration* 27. On the Byzantine *basilikoi logoi* see D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204–1330* (Cambridge 2007); P. Odorico, “Les miroirs des princes à Byzance. Une lecture

this text (93 pages in the edition of Juliana Chrysostomides) reveal its intention to be a political speech to strengthen the Emperor's power and gain support for his intricate internal and foreign policies.³ Because of its political relevance, Manuel sought a perfect text, and he worked on it for an extended period with the assistance of the famous scholar Isidore, the future patriarch of Kiev, and other intellectuals unknown to us, subjecting it to multiple revisions.⁴ Moreover, he sent the text to one of his closest diplomatic collaborators and finest scholars, Manuel Chrysoloras,⁵ who was travelling around Italy

horizontale," in *L'Education au gouvernement et à la vie. La tradition des 'règles de vie' de l'Antiquité au Moyen Age* (Paris 2009) 223–246, esp. 245–246; A. Giannouli, "Coronation Speeches in the Palaiologan Period?" in A. Beihammer et al. (eds.), *Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean* (Leiden/Boston 2013) 203–223, at 203–204. The *basilikoi logoi*, whose tradition dates back to antiquity, were defined and classified by Menander Rhetor: see D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford 1981) 76–95.

³ See Chrysostomides, *Oration* 27–29; Rollo, *Nea Rhome* 3 (2006) 376 n.14; Leonte, in *Viewing the Morea* 398 and 412–416.

⁴ See Chrysostomides, *Oration* 32–53, P. Schreiner, "Ein seltsames Stemma. Isidor von Kiev, die Leichenrede Kaiser Manuels auf seinen Bruder Theodoros und eine moderne Ausgabe," in I. Vassis et al. (eds.), *Lesarten. Festschrift für Athanasios Kambylis* (Berlin/New York 1998) 211–222; Rollo, *Nea Rhome* 3 (2006) 373–388. On Isidore of Kiev see *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* no. 8300; P. Schreiner, "Ein byzantinischer Gelehrter zwischen Ost und West. Zur Biographie des Isidor von Kiev und seinem Besuch in Lviv (1436)," *Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata* SER. III 3 (2006) 215–228; J. Preiser-Kapeller, *Der Episkopat in späten Byzanz. Ein Verzeichnis der Metropolen und Bischöfe des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel in der Zeit von 1204 bis 1453* (Saarbrücken 2008) 495, 505; L. Silvano, "Per l'epistolario di Isidoro di Kiev: la lettera a papa Niccolò V del 6 luglio 1453," *Medioevo greco* 13 (2013) 223–240.

⁵ For a full account of Chrysoloras' life see G. Cammelli, *I dotti bizantini e le origini dell'Umanesimo I Manuele Crisolora* (Florence 1941); for a brief overview see Dennis, *Letters* XXXV–XXXVII. For further bibliography see E. V. Maltese and G. Cortassa, *Manuele Crisolora, Roma parte del cielo. Confronto tra l'Antica e la Nuova Roma* (Turin 2000) 45–48; R. Maisano and A. Rollo (eds.), *Manuele Crisolora e il ritorno del greco in Occidente* (Naples 2002), particularly the

at the time to seek military and financial aid for the Empire. In the letter accompanying the copy of the text, Manuel asked for revisions and suggestions.⁶ Chrysoloras answered with a very long letter, preserved in only one manuscript, an autograph discovered in 1972 by Patrinelis and Sofianos.⁷

Patrinelis' assessment of Chrysoloras' text is harsh: "its unreservedly laudatory tone from start to finish perhaps obliges us to place it in the literary genre of the encomium. Although it comments on a work that contains numerous references to historical people and events, Chrysoloras' discourse is of no great interest as a historical source. Even its autobiographical information is limited in both quantity and significance. [...] to a certain extent he extemporized [...] At all events, the original purpose of the discourse—the philological treatment and improvement of the Emperor's funeral oration at his own request—was left in abeyance. Well versed as he was in the ways of the court, Chrysoloras deemed the Emperor's oration to be excellent in both form and content. [...] Judged as a whole, Chrysoloras' discourse cannot be said to be infused with any particular inspiration or elegance." From Patrinelis' point of view, the only importance of this work is in its being "the

paper by A. Rollo, "Problemi e prospettive della ricerca su Manuele Crisolora," 31–85, at 34–54; L. Thorn-Wickert, *Manuel Chrysoloras (ca. 1350–1415): eine Biographie des byzantinischen Intellektuellen vor dem Hintergrund der Hellenistischen Studien in der Italienischen Renaissance* (Frankfurt am Main 2006).

⁶ Dennis, *Letters* 158, no. 56: "I am sending you the funeral oration on my brother, which I composed more by weeping than by writing. [...] This booklet comes to you not for mere display, as Apelles and Lysippus showed their works to each other [cf. Synesius *Ep.* 1], but in the spirit in which others brought their works to them for correction, paintings to Apelles and statues to Lysippus. [...] You, therefore—it is your duty to help me in every way—erase what is superfluous in the present composition; do not shrink from making changes in it and additions of your own as well; for I know that it stands in need of all these."

⁷ MS. *Meteorensis Metamorphoseos* 154: C. Patrinelis, "An Unknown Discourse of Chrysoloras addressed to Manuel II Palaeologus," *GRBS* 13 (1972) 497–502. The text is edited in Patrinelis and Sofianos, *Manuel Chrysoloras* 60–131.

longest and latest text by one of the most noted Greek scholars of the Renaissance,” and in the political consideration that Chrysoloras made “in the last part of his discourse, particularly in the paragraphs headed Παράκλησις ὑπὲρ τοῦ Γένους and Παιδεία.”⁸ Patrinelis’ views are certainly justified, but in my opinion they do not capture the true relevance of this text, viz. a document which broadens our knowledge of Chrysoloras’ scholarly and intellectual profile, given what little remains of his literary production despite his fame,⁹ and the strong evidence that such a document provides on his scholarly pursuits as a teacher, translator, philologist, and copyist at the service of his pupils and other Western humanists.

The aim of this article is thus to provide a re-evaluation of what the letter can tell us of Chrysoloras as an intellectual operating between the East and the West at a time marked by the eclipse of Byzantium and the onset of the Italian Renaissance. First, I will define the rhetorical status of this text by analyzing its structure. Second, I will assess its context and sources. Finally, I will reflect on the significance of its content and sources in relation to Chrysoloras’ career and cultural environment, in an attempt to ascertain whether they can tell us

⁸ Patrinelis and Sofianos, *Manuel Chrysoloras* 48–50. On the final part of Chrysoloras’ text see E. Nuti, “Salvezza delle lettere greche. Ideali e Real Politik negli scritti degli umanisti bizantini (Cidone, Crisolora, Gaza, Calcondila),” *Studi Umanistici Piceni* 32 (2012) 119–137, at 119–130.

⁹ On Chrysoloras’ literary production see A. Rollo, “La lettera consolatoria di Manuele Crisolora a Palla Strozzi,” *Studi Umanistici* 4–5 (1993–1994) 7–85, esp. 14 n.1; C. Billò, “Manuele Crisolora. Confronto tra l’Antica e la Nuova Roma,” *Medioevo Greco* 0 (2000) 1–26; Maltese and Cortassa, *Roma*; A. Rollo, “Le due Rome. Studi recenti su una fortunata lettera di Manuele Crisolora,” *Roma nel Rinascimento* 2001 [2002] 21–37; L. Thorn, “Das Briefcorpus des Manuel Chrysoloras: eine Blütenlese,” in E. Konstantinou (ed.), *Der Beitrag der byzantinischen Gelehrten zur abendländischen Renaissance des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main 2006) 17–28. On Chrysoloras’ famous grammar, the so-called *Erotemata*, see A. Rollo, *Gli Erotemata tra Crisolora e Guarino* (Messina 2012); E. Nuti, *Longa est via. Forme e contenuti dello studio grammaticale dalla Bisanzio paleologa al tardo Rinascimento veneziano* (Alessandria 2014) 76–90.

more about Chrysoloras' historical and intellectual role as a mediator between East and West.

As stated, the Emperor had asked for a careful revision of the funeral oration dedicated to his brother (henceforth FO), but Chrysoloras did not make annotations to the copy of FO that the Emperor had sent him. Instead, he wrote this very long letter (henceforth CL). It is only in the final pages of CL, at the beginning of a section entitled "Apologia," justification, that Chrysoloras explains his choice. Not lacking in flattery, he argues that he feared he might destroy the perfect unity of the whole by changing, adding, or eliminating any of the Emperor's words.¹⁰ Therefore, he had instead decided to write a commentary, which was to be considered Chrysoloras' tribute to Theodore. He imagined that some passages of this commentary would be inserted into the epitaphs pronounced for Theodore by intellectuals and friends during a memorial ceremony in Mistra and that others might be incorporated into FO

¹⁰ CL 125.17–24 (page and line numbers of Patrinelis and Sofianos' edition; translations mine): "I say that you have drawn a better picture of the laudandus than the one which Apelles or Lysippus could have for Alexander. But, as I would have been worthy of ridicule if I had touched their works, adding, removing, or changing anything of them—or, better, as I would have been rightly punished for damaging and outraging such great works—so too if I touched your speech, which can be admired as worthily as their works"; 125.27–28: "Could one remove without removing something beautiful and convenient, damaging also its entire symmetry?"; 126.4–12: "Which part could be improved if changed or altered? I do not see, since even changing means first removing, then inserting something else in its place. But the elements are so properly and naturally connected that the removal of the part would damage the entire natural structure, while the substitute, dissolving the cohesion of the whole, would seem to be attached differently or even grafted on it, as a cancer or a corn in the flesh, but if you like, in accordance with the ancient myth, as the shoulder of ivory for the Peloponnesian people's ancestor, which was beautiful, yes, but entirely falling short of the original and spoiling the cohesion of the entire body"; 126.14–19: "You say that I should add some of my own words to yours. But I would prefer not to do so, since the same thing would happen as in the other case just discussed [...]: it would seem that my words push their way into a place unsuited for them and above them."

by the Emperor himself.¹¹ Moreover, it would serve as an invitation to read FO for those who would not have the opportunity to hear it.¹² Nevertheless, Chrysoloras did not clearly explain what his text actually was, for he knew it would be evident in reading it. Therefore, in order to fully grasp the essence of CL and its value, it is necessary to look at its structure and to comment on some passages.

As indicated by Chrysoloras' subtitles, the letter is divided into the following sections:

- Introduction (missing the title since the manuscript is acephalous), which contains a summary of the guidelines of the speech. Here Chrysoloras briefly discusses the fortunate choice of speaker to write FO (i.e. the Emperor, for he was not only the laudandus' brother, but also an Emperor and a reputable orator), his own good fortune at receiving FO for correction, and the opportuneness of writing FO, which would be a monument to the virtues of both the laudator and the laudandus. Then Chrysoloras proceeds to speak about his relationship with the laudandus, Theodore, who had been a munificent lord to him and his brother and who had always worked for the benefit of his community, displaying wisdom (φρόνησις), humanity (φιλανθρωπία), and goodness (χρηστότης and καλοκαγαθία). Therefore, Chrysoloras argues, he must take part in the mourning for Theodore, in order to show his love and gratitude. Finally, Chrysoloras meditates on the very fact that FO not only renewed his weeping, but also consoled him, thereby accomplishing one of the main functions of a funeral oration. This was possible, he argues, because the orator is a virtuous Emperor

¹¹ CL 123.16–21: “let what has been said on behalf of the laudandus be added to those speeches that you have granted others to pronounce for him, [...] in order that I too seem to be present at the funeral ceremony, taking part in the due tribute”; 124.5–11: “if anything in my words resembles mourning, let it be inserted among those others that you yourself have granted to beat themselves and mourn along with your own speech. If something belongs to praise, let it be inserted amid the praise, so that I accomplish the due tribute...”

¹² CL 124.28–30: “Perhaps somebody will read this speech [CL] and not the other [FO] and will see most of that one in this; perhaps, after reading this first, he will desire to read the original and will look for it.”

- who, knowing the *laudandus* better than anybody else, wrote a *basilikos* and *politikos logos* offering the model of the perfect ruler, he himself being that model (64.11–65.5). Therefore, FO gives pleasure to the audience, but also instills fear, because it enables people to reflect on death and on the possibility of losing the orator, i.e. their lord, the Emperor Manuel II.
- “Funeral Orations,” a section containing a precise series of general rules for a funeral oration (65.25–72) and the FO’s fulfillment of them (73–83.12).
 - “God” (83.14–84.17), “Providence” (84.18–24), “Christian Faith” (85.1–15), “Devotion” (85.16–86.6), “Virtue” (86.7–91.3), “Justice” (91.4–92.23), “Laws” (92.24–93.12), “Philosophy” (93.13–94.3), “Human Nature” (94.4–26), “Homeland and Parents” (95.1–96.27), “People” (96.28–97.19), and “Relatives” (97.20–99.9). These paragraphs serve to demonstrate that FO depicts Theodore as a virtuous man who perfectly adhered to all the correct moral, political, and religious principles and acted in the best way possible towards his family and his nation.
 - “Laudator” (99.10–105.7) and “Laudandus” (105.8–112.21), sections aimed at demonstrating that in FO such figures are perfectly in accord with the rules governing funeral orations, thus restating much of what is mentioned in the previous sections.
 - “Audience” (112.22–115.30), in which Chrysoloras shows that FO adheres perfectly to the rules of funeral orations in terms of utility and pleasure.
 - Three appendices. The first, “Exhortation to the Nation” (116.1–117.25), explains why FO represents the best imaginable tribute to Theodore, for if he devoted his life to saving the nation, the best tribute and the only way by which his life should be remembered is as savior of the nation; and FO inspires the audience to emulate the *laudandus*’ life. The second, “Education” (117.26–123.8), contains an exhortation to the Emperor to safeguard culture and educated men, so that the nation can flourish and FO can be preserved. The third, “Justification” (123.9–131.15), contains not only an explanation of the contents of the letter and instructions on how to use it, but also Chrysoloras’ expression of gratitude to the Emperor for assisting and loving Chrysoloras’ nephew, as well as his declaration of loyalty and service to the Emperor.

Therefore, Chrysoloras responds to his Emperor’s request by demonstrating that FO is a model (*typos*) and an exemplar (*idea*)

of a funeral oration, as he persistently states throughout the commentary.¹³ To do so, he first wrote a treatise on how to compose a funeral oration and then explained how FO had accomplished this to perfection. Table 1 shows the correspondences between the general rules, stated primarily in the first part of the section entitled “Funeral Orations,” and examples of such drawn from FO, which Chrysoloras lists one by one in the second part of the same section. The reader may note that the contents of Chrysoloras’ treatise are very conventional; indeed, they reflect Chrysoloras’ biographical profile as both a Byzantine scholar and a competent teacher, demonstrating on the one hand the flawless knowledge of the rules of rhetoric acquired through his studies and on the other his well-honed skill as a teacher at explaining familiar subjects.¹⁴

¹³ E.g. CL 77.18–19: “It would be better to refer other funeral orations to this one as a model and exemplar, than to compare it with other canons”; 80.6–16: “All these features which I have already mentioned must be present in funeral orations are abundantly present in this one, and it has many others, which one cannot see in other funeral orations. Now I will omit the rest, but the fact that the laudator is an Emperor, and that the laudandus occupied the first position after the Emperor, and that they are both an Emperor’s sons, an Emperor’s brothers, an Emperor’s uncles and fathers, Emperors’ grandchildren [...] in what other speech ever composed before or after this could one find all this?”; 80.18–19: “even if not (all of the arguments of FO) existed in previous funeral orations, far more will necessarily derive and follow from your speech.”; 73.11–14: “people who will be celebrated after Theodore will aspire to obtain not only praise but the praise which Theodore received and which he himself was happy to have.”

¹⁴ The Byzantine secondary school consisted of two levels, grammar and rhetoric, by which one acquired the skills in composition and speech that were necessary to undertake any career. In the second level, the pupils learned to compose every kind of speech, following rules deriving from the Hellenistic and Late-Antique tradition of manuals of rhetoric, e.g. Aphthonius, Hermogenes, and Menander Rhetor, the latter probably being the authority on the epideictic: see Russell and Wilson, *Menander* XXXVI, and R. Cribiore, “Menander the Poet or Menander the Rhetor? An Encomium on Dioscoros Again,” *GRBS* 48 (2008) 95–109, at 103–104. On the Byzantine scholastic system and education see C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries* (Nicosia 1982); R.

Table 1

<i>Rules for epitaphs as per CL 65.25-72</i>	<i>Their perfect application in FO</i>
1. CL 65.29-30 The laudandus must be praised for his virtues.	CL 91.5-24; 92.8-22; 93.28-32. 107.9-109.21.
2. 65.30-66.5 The laudator should illustrate the laudandus' virtues from less-known and unworthy facts.	80.21-81.20 What Manuel leaves unsaid reveals much more than an overly detailed and lengthy description of facts. 108.17-109.10 FO illustrates virtues through facts without explaining or describing them.
3. 66.5-20 The laudator must know the actions described because he behaves in the same way (CL quoting Arist. <i>Eth.Nic.</i> 1105b12-18 and <i>Mag.Mor.</i> 1183b15-16).	89.30-90.6 Manuel knows perfectly well how to describe Theodore's virtuous disposition and virtues because he is familiar with the theory on virtues. 94.10-11 Manuel shows himself to be a great man because otherwise he could not describe Theodore's noble character. 103.1-32 Manuel must be aware of the pleasure that his speech provokes in the audience. 100.24-101.29 Manuel avoids speaking of himself (as dictated by the rules of encomia), but many times he is forced to do so because he was an active participant in Theodore's actions or counseled him on them.
4. 66.20-27 The laudator must use an appropriate style and lexicon.	74.17-75.17 A propriety of language and a remarkable force emerge in Manuel's speech.

Browning, "L'insegnante," in G. Cavallo (ed.), *L'uomo bizantino* (Bari 1992) 128-164, at 138-142; S. Mergiali, *L'enseignement et les lettres pendant l'époque de Paléologues (1261-1453)* (Athens 1996); A. Markopoulos, "De la structure de l'école byzantine. Le maître, les livres et le processus éducatif," in B. Mondrain (ed.), *Lire et écrire à Byzance* (Paris 2006) 85-96; E. V. Maltese, "Atene e Bisanzio. Appunti su scuola e cultura letteraria nel Medioevo greco," in *Dimensioni bizantine. Tra autori, testi e lettori* (Alessandria 2007) 145-178, at 148-157; A. Markopoulos, "Education," in E. Jeffreys et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford 2008) 785-795; D. Bianconi, "Erudizione e didattica nella tarda Bisanzio," in O. Pecere and L. Del Corso (eds.), *Libri e pratiche didattiche dall'Antichità al Rinascimento* (Cassino 2010) 475-512.

	75.28-77.6 There is moderation and decorum in his speech.
5. 66.27-32 The laudator must touch yet console the audience's soul.	75.18-27 Manuel achieves this through the propriety of his speech. 104.1-16.
6. 66.33-67.6 The laudator must be wholly familiar with the laudandus' life, so that he can illustrate the latter's virtues with concrete facts and generate admiration in the audience.	73.26-32 Manuel was his brother's teacher and father. 77.24-78.7 Manuel and Theodore were one soul binding two bodies. 94.12-24 provides a concrete example of CL 77.24-78.7.
7. 67.6-15 The laudator must exude trust because of the life he has led, which must become another element of praise for the laudandus.	74.6-16. 78.17-79.17 All the world knows of Manuel's love for the truth. 101.30-102.26 Manuel avoids insulting or denying his enemies, instead showing compassion and moderation, as did Theodore.
8. 67.10-15 The laudator must himself be suffering for the laudandus' loss.	79.25-29.
9. 67.16-32 The choice of topics and their organization is essential.	75.5-6.
10. 67.33-68.10 Epitaphs must show that wisdom and good reputation do not perish with the body, but instead that death brings happiness and beatitude through praise and a good reputation.	91.25-92.7. 106.17-20. 111.26-112.10.
11. 68.11-69.4 Only in epitaphs, free of any adulation, can we praise frankly and be certain of one's life and happiness.	99.29-100.22 Theodore was a model of virtue during his lifetime, so Manuel cannot be suspected of adulation; Manuel loves the truth; Theodore used to shun praise; Manuel and Theodore's friendship is a guarantee against any accusation of adulation. 111.17-25; 115.19-25.
12. 69.5-71.35 Epitaphs help create good citizens because they <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stimulate emulation of virtues • celebrate the nation (γένος) • demonstrate the existence of a cosmic justice • teach them to disdain death • teach them to act virtuously • provide examples of econom- 	96.29-97.19 FO demonstrates that Theodore served his people throughout his life; therefore, his example should stimulate a desire for emulation. 105.9-107.7 The speech celebrates Theodore's virtue, so that after his death he will pursue his mission to save his people because they, recognizing their debt to Theodore, will seek to emulate his virtuous life.

ics, tactics, politics, virtues.	112.26-115.19.
13. 72 Epitaphs gives pleasure (ἡδέα) because they show that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the laudandus was loved • many others, including the laudator, recognize the laudandus' virtues. 	79.17-24. 102.26-103.1. 104.17-105.7 The description of virtues generates pleasure and doing virtuous deeds gives pleasure.

Nonetheless, the main point of interest of CL is certainly not that it contains a didactic treatise on how to write a funeral oration. Indeed, CL is much more than this, as clearly emerges from reflection on the main reasons provided by Chrysoloras to support his assumption that FO is to be considered an exemplar for funeral orations. First, he argues that its author, the Emperor, is an *optimus orator* who knows and applies to perfection the rules of rhetoric for a funeral oration.¹⁵ Second, FO has the perfect laudator for a funeral oration. Manuel II is not only the person who suffers the most for the laudandus' loss¹⁶ and a trustworthy person of known integrity,¹⁷ but also and especially he is fully aware of the laudandus' life and character, having been Theodore's educator and brother and having known, approved, and/or participated in all of his actions.¹⁸ Last, but even more important, FO is an exemplar because it

¹⁵ Table 1, nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10.

¹⁶ Table 1, nos. 8 and 13, e.g. CL 79.17–18 and 26–28: “Who loved a man as much as he [Theodore] was loved by you [Manuel]? [...] One can understand how intense your sorrow is from the speech [...] by which you caused the others to love him more and feel sorrow.”

¹⁷ Table 1, nos. 7 and 11, e.g. CL 78.18–24: “What inspires trust more than love of truth? Whenever we see that someone loves the truth and speaks of matters he knows perfectly, we must trust him. And as to you [Manuel], who does not know this? Neither those who live under your empire [...] nor the foreigners.”

¹⁸ Table 1, no. 6, e.g. CL 94.12–13: “You [Manuel] yourself were a participant, and not only that, you were the leader and the architect of those [Theodore's] great actions”; 73.29–32: “You were his teacher for everything, not only saying but also showing virtue through the actions you did, so that you called him pupil and son, since a father and a teacher's teachings were shown.”

contains a demonstration that the laudandus was a model human being and ruler. In the paragraphs entitled “God,” “Providence,” etc., which constitute the central part of CL, Chrysoloras comments on several passages and sentence fragments from FO in order to demonstrate its success in depicting Theodore as a virtuous man. Thus these paragraphs present all the reasons why the laudandus depicted in FO embodies the perfect model of a human being and ruler, both for his disposition and for his actions. Chrysoloras argues that Manuel II is so successful in conveying this point because of his knowledge not only of Theodore’s life, but also of ethics.¹⁹

The implications of the strategy used by Chrysoloras to demonstrate that FO is an exemplar of funeral orations seem clear. First, CL is an encomium to the Emperor as a scholar, perfectly schooled in both rhetoric and ethics.²⁰ From Chrysoloras’ point of view, it was this very knowledge that allowed Manuel to construct such a perfect oration. Second, CL 83–115 demonstrates that FO is not only a funeral oration, but also a *basilikos logos*, a speech describing the model of the perfect ruler.²¹ Finally, since Manuel shared his brother’s same nature,

¹⁹ Chrysoloras clearly states for example at CL 87.20–22: “Knowing to perfection all these teachings [passages just quoted on virtue from Aristotle’s *Ethics*] and presenting Theodore’s life as a table of virtues, you first showed most skillfully that as regards the disposition to virtue he possessed all of them”; and 89.28–29: “starting from all his character, his education, his upbringing, and his actions you molded all his virtue.” See also Table 1, no. 3, example 1.

²⁰ CL 124.25–27: “I wrote [...] to praise you for what you said”; 124.30–32: “I added passages from some other authors not chosen accidentally, to demonstrate that your words are in accordance with them and complete them knowledgeably”; 64.9–10: FO “clearly demonstrates the orator’s virtue and the fact that he spoke of the matter in accordance with his disposition and with knowledge”; 89.30–90.2: “Who better could have described the whole of virtue? Who better could have demonstrated its proper nature? I know that these topics are present in the laws of the encomia and epitaphs [...], but others follow them as rules unthinkingly, whereas you proved to be a perfect expert and legislator for them.”

²¹ CL 64.26–65.3: “You, describing his life, showed a model of imperial

educated him, and took part in his actions,²² CL implicitly concludes that Manuel too is a perfect ruler. This would explain why CL presents a continuous juxtaposition of the two brothers. Thus CL is an encomium to Theodore I of Morea and Manuel II Palaiologoi as incarnations of the perfect rulers, i.e. a *basilikos logos*, which in the meantime explains the principles and contents on which this kind of epideictic oratory should be based. Consequently, no title could be more opportune than the one that Chrysoloras says he has chosen for his work and which I have chosen to use in the title of the present article (as opposed to the one arbitrarily chosen by editors).²³

and civic education and set up not only a monument to him, but also a statue of the ruler as he must be, which you already demonstrated in your own figure, becoming his sculptor, instructor, and image. Having brightly polished it through your life, now, as regards your brother, you presented it through your own words, in order to set up another statue connected with you, now fallen, through the speech, which could be a statue of imperial/the rulers' virtue itself after your death." On the image of the imperial statue of virtue see H. Hunger and I. Ševčenko, *Des Nikephoros Blemmydes Basilikos Andrias und dessen Metaphrase von Georgios Galesiotes und Georgios Oinaiotes* (Vienna 1986); on this work see also Angelov, *Imperial Ideology* 188–189. Perhaps Chrysoloras recalls the imperial statue to describe the essence of FO since the Emperor asked him to treat FO as the famous artists of antiquity used to do with less-known artists' works (see n.6 above for the Emperor's text and n.10 for Chrysoloras' reply regarding this image).

²² Table 1, no. 6, e.g. CL 73.28–74.2: "You first possess every virtue and were the teacher of all the actions you showed that he practiced, not only by what you said but also by what you did. [...] He did all those good actions in accordance with you, as a dancer directed by a *coryphaeus*." Moreover, CL 101.9–10 states: "what you say that he did, you did too, either along with him or on your own initiative."

²³ CL 123.10–16: "But perhaps someone will say to me and ask: 'What do you mean with this [CL]? And why did you write this speech? And what is its form (σχῆμα)? And how should we call it? For it escapes the title of letter'. I care little about its title, so let it be called whatever anyone likes; it won't be one sort or another because of its name. Anyway, let it be entitled *On the Emperor's Speech*, and I will entitle it so." Patrinelis and Sofianos' decision to entitle their book containing the edition of CL *Λόγος πρὸς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Μανουὴλ Β΄ Παλαιολόγο* (transl.: *Discourse addressed to the Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus*) and the edition itself *Λόγος κατ' ἐπιστολήν*

Before examining the specific qualities that CL attributes to Theodore and Manuel as perfect rulers and human beings, still another consideration is needed in order to understand the essence of CL. As previously mentioned, in the paragraphs entitled “Exhortation to the Nation” and “Education” Chrysoloras suggests his recipe for how to save the Empire and how to avoid the risk of losing the memory of Theodore, whose eternal survival as a model citizen and ruler is the aim of FO. He first meditates on the distant yet common origin of the Greeks and the Romans—he had in mind Plutarch’s *Lives*—and on what it would mean for the whole world if the Hellenic cultural heritage preserved by Byzantium for over a millennium were to be lost. He was aware that the Greek cultural heritage was the only thing that could attract the Westerners’ interest in the survival of Byzantium at a time when intellectuals, who were counselors to the princes, were beginning to take an interest in the study of classical antiquity. Who better than the Emperor-scholar Manuel II as depicted by Chrysoloras throughout CL to follow such a plan to save Byzantium? Starting from this consideration, Chrysoloras invites the Emperor to promote culture and protect intellectuals and teachers, in order to have a learned people and a State envied for its culture; his likely implication is that such a nation would give teachers of Greek to Westerners and be considered a fundamental cultural resource by Westerners. Given the contents of these paragraphs, therefore, CL also needs to be inscribed within the genre of the political panegyric, in which counsel usually followed praise.²⁴

περὶ τοῦ βασιλέως λόγου, justified by quoting this very passage (Patrinelis and Sofianos, *Oration* 50), seems inopportune also to Rollo, *BZ* 96 (2003) 310: “perché introduce una chiosa, costituita dall’ espressione λόγος κατ’ ἐπιστολήν, che sebbene sia ricavata dalle parole che Crisolora stesso utilizza rifrendosi alla sua opera (cf. p. 125, rr. 5–6: ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ ὅλον σχῆμα τοῦ παρόντος λόγου κατ’ ἐπιστολήν εἶναι) rimane estranea alla forma che l’autore voleva che il titolo assumesse.”

²⁴ On the genre of Byzantine political panegyrics see Angelov, *Imperial Ideology* 166–180, and D. Angelov, “Byzantine Imperial Panegyric as Advice Literature (1204–c.1350),” in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium* (Al-

And as every good panegyrist asks for something once praise has been offered, Chrysoloras ends with a request for assistance for himself and his dear nephew.

Once we are aware of what CL actually is, it is necessary to examine the image of the ideal ruler that emerges from Chrysoloras' description of Theodore's and Manuel's qualities. He stresses their humanity, beneficence, piety, compassion, goodness, justice, prudence, and wisdom.²⁵ Though these are all virtues traditionally mentioned in imperial panegyrics, the focus on such specific traits must indeed reflect Chrysoloras' personality and thought. Military virtues are mentioned just once (CL 111.3–4), even though a large part of FO is dedicated to Theodore's military feats.²⁶ As stated, Chrysoloras' solution to the dramatic crisis of the Byzantine Empire was cultural in

dershot 2003) 55–72.

²⁵ φιλάνθρωπία (humanity): CL 62.16, 62.30, 63.5, 102.14, 102.26; μισοπνηρία (hatred of evil) 102.14; εὐποία τῶν πενήτων (beneficence) 98.19; ἐλευθεριότης (generosity) 107.30; καλοκαγαθία (nobility) 62.14; χρηστότης (goodness) 62.14, 63.5, 97.18, 109.21, 110.17; στερρότης (firmness) 75.22; καρτερία (perseverance) 75.22, 90.16, 108.28; εὐσέβεια (reverence towards God) 85.17, 95.29, 98.7, 98.15; εὐλάβεια (piety) 95.30; δικαιοσύνη (justice) 91.5–17, 107.30; ἐπιείκεια (equity) 101.30, 102.8; εὐγνωμοσύνη (reasonable spirit) 92.11, 99.22–23; ἀνεξικακία (forbearance) 102.9; σύνεσις (sagacity) 107.29, 114.13, 114.28; σωφροσύνη (prudence) 107.29; φρόνησις (wisdom) 62.30; ἀνδρεία (bravery) 76.15, 90.15, 107.30; γενναιότης (nobility of spirit) 97.18; μεγαλοψυχία (greatness of soul) 80.26, 81.12, 81.19, 107.31, 108.26, 109.6, 110.22; μεγαλοπρέπεια (magnificence) 75.4, 108.26, 109.4; πραότης (gentleness) 108.25; ἐγκρατεία (self-control) 108.28; εὐβουλία (soundness of judgment) 108.28; and αὐτάρκεια (self-sufficiency) 108.28. The chapters entitled “God,” “Providence,” and “Christian Faith” are specifically devoted to illustrating Theodore and Manuel's reverence, devotion, and fear of God, even if the concept is mentioned now and again throughout the speech. The chapters entitled “Parents” and “Relatives” are partly devoted to their piety towards parents and relatives. Furthermore, Chrysoloras mentioned their compassion towards enemies at 98.10–14. For comparison with the qualities attributed to Emperors in Byzantine panegyrics and in the propaganda dedicated to the Palaiologoi see Angelov, *Imperial Ideology* 78–85 and 110–114.

²⁶ See Leonte, in *Viewing the Morea*, esp. 406–409.

nature. It can be said that he spent his own life working on the project of saving Byzantium by spreading awareness of his culture as a diplomat and a teacher in the towns and courts of Italy and Western Europe. And by doing so, he came into contact with the new humanistic culture and, in particular, with Coluccio Salutati's Florentine circle, which claimed that the sage must take care for the State and politics.²⁷ Thus, it is not strange that his image of the ideal ruler is that of a sage caring for his family and community.²⁸ Theodore and Manuel are described as very pious, but not "sacred, godlike, and sun-like" or "divine" rulers, as imperial panegyrics tend to characterize the imperial image.²⁹ They possess the cardinal virtues³⁰ and, being ideal rulers, are the incarnation of the law (92.29–30) and not tyrants superior to it.³¹ They possess *eugeneia*

²⁷ See E. Garin, *Il Rinascimento Italiano* (Milan 1941) 154–166; F. Novati (ed.), *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati II* (Rome 1911) 303–307 and 453–455. Salutati and his circle were republicans, but Salutati claimed that the best ruler is a good man who longs for wisdom and takes care for the laws: see F. Ercole, *C. Salutati, Il trattato De Tyranno e le lettere scelte* (Bologna 1942) 179.

²⁸ On Chrysoloras' depiction of Manuel and Theodore as sages see above. Passages are dedicated to the care of the nation throughout CL, but the concept is developed in the chapters entitled "Homeland and Parents" (95.1–96.27) and "People" (96.28–97.19); see also 99.21–22.

²⁹ See Angelov, *Imperial Ideology* 79–80.

³⁰ The four cardinal virtues (ἀνδρεία, δικαιοσύνη, σωφροσύνη, φρόνησις) usually "formed an important part of the image of any emperor" and "were extremely common in panegyrics" (Angelov, *Imperial Ideology* 80). They are all mentioned and frequently alluded to in CL, but there is no stress on bravery, while a paragraph is dedicated to justice. Thus, what emerges from Chrysoloras' speech is in accord with the image of a sage and not a warrior.

³¹ On the concept of νόμος ἔμψυχος in Palaeologan panegyrics see Angelov, *Imperial Ideology* 141. On the origin and circulation of this concept in Greek and Roman antiquity and its meaning and implications see M. Gigante, *Nomos Basileus* (Naples 1993); I. Ramelli, *Il Basileus come nomos empsychos tra diritto naturale e diritto divino. Spunti platonici del concetto e sviluppi di età imperiale e tardo-antica* (Naples 2006); P. Van Nuffelen, *Rethinking the Gods. Philosophical Readings of Religion in the Post-Hellenistic Period* (Cambridge 2011) 114–120, with bibliography.

(94.14–15), but this is not simply a form of blood nobility, usually stressed in the Palaeologan period, but also instead lies at the root of their sound human nature, for it is also moral nobility.³² They hate flattery and are renowned for their love of the truth.³³ In conclusion, we may say that Chrysoloras, going against the other panegyrists of the Palaeologan period, constructed a lay image of the ruler who is august (σεμνός) and stately (ὑψηλός).³⁴ Chrysoloras' ideal ruler corresponds to the sage. But which sage?

At the very beginning of the chapter entitled “Virtue,” Chrysoloras argues that “all the speech [FO] is a treatise on virtue and for others an exhortation to follow it” (CL 86.8–10). He then dedicates several pages to demonstrating that in FO Manuel was able to show that Theodore possessed all the virtues since Manuel perfectly knows the theory on the origin and nature of virtue. To demonstrate this point, Chrysoloras uses his teaching competence, quoting several passages from Aristotle's ethical writings and briefly commenting on them.³⁵ The consequence of this operation is immediately clear. Since Manuel was the teacher of Theodore and Theodore possessed virtues in the Aristotelian tradition, Manuel not only knows the Aristotelian theory of virtues, but also possesses virtue as eluci-

³² On the stress attached to blood nobility in the Palaeologan period see Angelov, *Imperial Ideology* 106–109. This can be viewed as a reaction to the previous period and to the claim of other powerful families. Compare the stress placed on moral nobility as opposed to blood nobility by Emperor Theodore II Laskaris (Angelov 230–234).

³³ Table 1, nos. 7 and 10.

³⁴ CL 84.15. One can compare this image with that depicted by the panegyrist of the Palaeologan period analyzed by Angelov, *Imperial ideology* 79 ff.

³⁵ E.g. CL 87.20–22: “Knowing to perfection all these teachings and presenting Theodore's life as a table of virtues, you first showed most skillfully that as regards the disposition to virtue he possessed all of them”; 89.5–7: “Since you know all these precepts [just quoted from Arist. *Eth.Nic.* 1144b1–8, 10–16, and *Mag.Mor.* 1197b40–1198a 10 and 1206b10–29], you made clear that he had these natural inclinations towards virtues ever since he was a child.”

dated by Aristotle.³⁶ Therefore, Theodore and Manuel are the embodiment of the perfect Aristotelian human beings and rulers. Starting from this position, in the subsequent chapters on justice, philosophy, and human nature Chrysoloras argues that Theodore (and Manuel) possess and apply Aristotle's idea of justice and philosophy. Quotations from Aristotle's ethical writings are sprinkled throughout the rest of CL as well. Table 2 shows the distribution, contents, and contexts of the quotations from and allusions to Aristotle (q = quotation; a = allusion; * = quotation identified by Patrinelis and Sofianos; ** = quotation identified by Rollo, *BZ* 96 [2003]).

Table 2

CL	Aristotle		Content	Context in Cl
66.13-18*	EN 1105 b12-18	q	to be good and to be a philosopher, you must do good deeds	The laudator must be a speaker who knows the praised actions by direct experience
66.19-20	MM 1183 b15-16	q	if you know what justice is, you are not mechanically just	
86.18	EN 1106 b36	q	virtue is a habitual disposition that orients one's choices	The theoretical definition of virtue and a description of the relationship between natural disposition and the practical realization of virtue is preliminary and functional to demonstrating that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FO perfectly meets the requirements of an encomium, demonstrating in all its sections that the laudandus not only possessed potential virtues in his natural disposition, but also demonstrated them in his actions • Theodore is a model of
86.20*	EN 1140a4	a	the best disposition is a practical disposition	
86.21-22	EN 1144 b26-27	a	virtues are dispositions co-operating with just principles	
86.22-87.6	EN 1.9 EN 10.1 EN 1.1-2 EN 2.1	a	action is better than quiet	
87.2	EN 1103 b21-22	a	habits derive from the according actions	
87.6-8	EE 1219 a8, 10-11	q	action is the aim of the activity	
87.11	EN 1098	q	there are several virtues	

³⁶ CL 73.28–30: “You first possess virtues all and were the teacher of all the actions you showed that he practiced, not only by what you said but also by what you did.”

87.11	a17	q	there are several virtues	the virtuous man • Manuel educated Theodore to be a virtuous man through his own example • Manuel is a perfect orator and a philosopher, since his description of his brother's virtues demonstrate a perfect knowledge of Aristotle's theory on virtues
88.4-11	MM 1197b 39-1198a10	q	virtue completes natural disposition	
88.11-21*	EN 1144 b1-8, 10-16	q	the shift from natural disposition to perfect virtue requires intelligence	
88.21-89.4	MM 1206 b10-29	q	there must be accord between reason and the passions	
89.7-10	EN 1103 b21-22,* 24-25	q	we must be trained from childhood in one set of habits	
89.14-25	MM 1208 a9-21	q	education teaches us how to base our actions on sound reasoning, so that body and soul will not be obstacles to each other	
91.6-15*	EN 1129 b27-1130a2	q	justice is the perfect virtue and chief among them because it embraces all other virtues and is used for them	Since Manuel demonstrates Theodore's possession of all virtues, he also demonstrates that Theodore was just
91.20*	EN 1131 b11-12	a	relationship between justice and equality	FO honors the concept of justice because it celebrates a good ruler
91.21-22*	EN 1134 b1-2, 7	a	justice is giving what is due and the ruler is the guardian of equality	
91.25-26**	EN 1124 a7-8	q	no honor is worthy of perfect virtue	
92.1-7	EN 1100 a18-20	q	honor is the best praise for good people	
	EN 1123 b19-20	q		
	EN 1099 b17-18	q		
92.11	MM 2.2	a	the concept of εὐγνωμοσύνη	
92.21	EN 5.10	a	the concept of ἐπιείκεια	
93.16	EN 6.5-7	a	the definitions of ethical philosophy: φρόνησις and σοφία	Manuel honors the concept of philosophy, celebrating his brother's intelligence and wisdom
96.10-14**	EE 1242 a32-37	q	God : man = father : son = ruler : subject	Theodore's love and obedience towards his father is just, and it is appropriate that the

				laudator speaks of it in the section on family. Theodore and Manuel's relationship was based on equality since they were brothers who loved their father, the Emperor
97.8-9**	EN 1110 a26-27	q	the wise man would rather die than accept certain conditions	Manuel has rightly demonstrated that Theodore spent his life defending his people
97.25-26**	EN 1097 b9-10	q	human life cannot be a life of isolation	Theodore's behavior towards others
97.28-98.1	EN 1126 b27	q	human relationships should not be based on either falsehood or hostility	
100.16-17**	MM 1200 a30	q	nothing can corrupt the good man (σπουδαίος), neither command nor honor	Manuel cannot be suspected of giving false praise in adulation since Theodore's integrity is well known
100.17-18**	EE 1239 b12-14	q	the character of a good man never changes	
104.22-23	EN 1099 a21	a	virtuous deeds are pleasant for the good man	FO adheres to the rule that epitaphs must comfort and give pleasure to the audience
104.23-24	EN 1099 a17-18	q	those who do not enjoy doing noble deeds are not good men	
104.24-25*	MM 1206 a22-23	q	one who grieves at doing good deeds is not good	
104.25-27	EN 1170 a8-11	q	the good man enjoys good deeds as the musician enjoys good music	
104.27-28*	EN 1120 a27	q	a virtuous action cannot be painful	
104.29-30*	EN 1100 b30	q	beauty shines in the face of pain	
104.30-31	EN 1121 a3-4	q	the main feature of virtue is to have pain and pleasure in harmony with moral principles	
112.4-5	EN 1120 a30-33	a	The generous man is not fond of continually asking for favors	Since Theodore did not ask for praise when he was alive, FO cannot be accused of adulation

115.5** EN 1155 b24	q	Good is loved and lovable	FO moves people to love, follow, and emulate their rulers
129.13- 14* EN 1106 a22-24	q	human virtue is the habit from which one becomes virtuous and performs his actions well	Chrysoloras' nephew can rightly be called a virtuous man by the Emperor

The table illustrates that most of the qualities attributed to Theodore and Manuel are intended in Aristotelian terms and that Theodore is presented as a perfect embodiment of Aristotle's virtuous man. The reasoning is simple. Theodore possessed the proper disposition to virtue and kept himself apart from any degeneration (87.24–29). He practiced virtuous deeds that were the natural end of his virtuous disposition and of his possession of good passions (87.31–33), which did what reason commanded of them (89.5 ff.). All this is the result of his strong character and his education, for virtue comes from *physis*, *ethos*, *paideia*, *trophe*, and *praxis*; from the description of such elements, Chrysoloras argues, Manuel molded Theodore's virtue (89.25–30). As we have mentioned, Theodore's educator and laudator was Manuel, and Manuel was a virtuous man who also understood the precepts about virtue (90.4–5). As a consequence, Manuel II emerges as an Emperor-scholar, and an Emperor-philosopher not as a mere *topos*, but in the true sense of the word.³⁷ He knew and applied all the Aristotelian teachings

³⁷ Chrysoloras refers three times to the Emperor as a philosopher, but always in a traditional way without any reference to his knowledge of Aristotelian teachings. The first reference concerns a Platonic idea (CL 65.22–23): “I speak frankly to you [Manuel], since you are not a *basileus* but rather a philosopher; ‘philosophy is to practice death’ [Pl. *Phd.* 81A] or, if you prefer, to remember it.” The second is in relation to a Christian idea (114.5–10): “the fact that in the end he [Theodore] died, even if he was the great man that the speech reveals, teaches each of us to know ourselves and to recognize what in us is inferior and perishable, what better and enduring, what one must take care of and build all his thought on, what is to disdain. This is *philosophhein!*” The third refers to the Emperor's interest in literary studies (118.13–15): “It would be opportune and reasonable that, just as we

both in his life and when writing FO.³⁸ Therefore, it would make perfect sense that Chrysoloras asked him to save Byzantium by preserving culture.

We may conclude that Chrysoloras wrote CL with Aristotle's ethical writings close at hand on his desk,³⁹ for he wrote a *basilikos logos* based on Aristotelian ethics, intending most of the qualities attributed to Theodore and Manuel in Aristotelian terms. This could surprise the reader, since Aristotle's ethical writings were not widely read in Byzantium, although the Byzantines produced commentaries on them between the tenth and twelfth centuries.⁴⁰ As far as I know, no political panegyrics were based on Aristotelian moral theories in the Byzantine age; moreover, Aristotle was for the most part disdained during the Palaeologan period.⁴¹ Thus CL represents an isolated and new voice within the framework of Byzantine political panegyrics and treatises on rhetoric. Nonetheless, in my opinion the reason for Chrysoloras' countertendency is easily explainable if we return to his biography.

Many years before writing CL, between 1397 and 1400 Chrysoloras was professor of Greek at the Florentine Studium. There he lectured on Plutarch, Lucian, Plato, Basil of Cae-

see that with a dissolute and mean ruler those who are similar to him or share his vices share the most success, so with an educated and scholarly ruler those who care about literary studies and knowledge are not inferior." On the uses and meanings of the image of the Emperor-philosopher in Palaeologan panegyrics see Angelov, *Imperial Ideology* 93–94 and 195.

³⁸ At 96.15–16 Chrysoloras states explicitly that Manuel meditated on Aristotle's teachings about the relationship between fathers and children.

³⁹ Aristotle's ethical writings were so present in Chrysoloras' mind that he also adopted a word (*anthropologos*: 102.16) which had been used only by Aristotle at *Eth.Nic.* 1125a5 and his word-for-word commentators.

⁴⁰ On Aristotle's ethical writings in Byzantium see D. Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics in the Italian Renaissance (ca. 1300–1650): The Universities and the Problem of the Moral Education* (Leiden 2002) 39–41.

⁴¹ See B. Bydén, "‘No Prince of Perfection’: Byzantine anti-Aristotelianism from the Patristic Period to Pletho," in D. Angelov and M. Saxby (eds.), *Power and Subversion in Byzantium* (Franham 2013) 147–176.

sarea, and many other classical and patristic Greek authors.⁴² The most famous of his Florentine pupils, Leonardo Bruni, became an influential translator of Greek texts into Latin.⁴³ It is highly likely that many of his translations sprang from work done in class or as homework at the time of Chrysoloras' lessons. Of Bruni's translations, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics* were two of the most widely received.⁴⁴ They were published several years after Chrysoloras' departure from Florence, but it is likely that Bruni spent many years on these translations, and it is not impossible that they are in fact the later development of passages translated in his youth in Chrysoloras' classroom. We know that Chrysoloras and Bruni remained in touch after 1400, and there is evidence to show that Chrysoloras continued to support Bruni in his Greek studies.⁴⁵ Bruni's translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* dates to 1416/7, less than two years after CL, and though we have no concrete evidence, Bruni may indeed have asked Chrysoloras for advice during his preparatory phase. This might explain why in 1414/5 Chrysoloras had Aristotle's *Ethics* on his desk. But Chrysoloras' interest in Aristotle's *Ethics* must date back even further. In 1415 Francesco Barbaro purchased from Roberto Rossi or was given a manuscript containing the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which had been in Chrysoloras' possession and probably was left in Florence

⁴² On the readings in Chrysoloras' Florentine class see R. Weiss, "Gli inizi dello studio del greco a Firenze," in *Medieval and Humanistic Greek. Collected Essays* (Padua 1977) 239–255; E. Berti, "Alla scuola di Manuele Crisolora. Lettura e commento di Luciano," *Rinascimento* 27 (1987) 3–73; R. Maisano and A. Rollo, *Manuele Crisolora*; A. Rollo, "Alle origini della lessicografia umanistica: prime ricerche sul Vat. gr. 877," in J. Hamesse and J. Meirinhos (eds.), *Glossaires et lexiques médiévaux inédits. Bilan et perspectives* (Porto 2011) 181–213.

⁴³ P. Botley, *Latin Translation in the Renaissance. The Theory and Practice of Leonardo Bruni, Giannozzo Manetti and Desiderius Erasmus* (Cambridge 2004) 6–23.

⁴⁴ See Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics* 49–50.

⁴⁵ J. Hankins, "Chrysoloras and the Greek Studies of Leonardo Bruni," in Maisano and Rollo, *Manuele Crisolora* 175–203, at 184–185.

after his departure in 1400.⁴⁶ Moreover, Chrysoloras' interest in the *Nicomachean Ethics* may derive not so much from his contacts with Western intellectuals, who longed to read Aristotle in the original, but from Chrysoloras' own education, which I suppose was in the circle of Demetrius Kydones,⁴⁷ the Greek translator of Thomas Aquinas' *Summa* and a passionate reader of Aristotelian philosophy.⁴⁸ This, however, remains just a hypothesis, since there is no actual evidence of any collaboration between Chrysoloras and Kydones in the study of Aristotle.

Thus, although it is difficult to establish for certain whether Chrysoloras taught Aristotle in Florence, and if so why, the decided presence of Aristotle's ethical writings in CL represents strong new evidence of the cultural exchanges between Byzantium and the West at the beginning of Western Humanism. After Chrysoloras' sojourn, Florence became a main hub of

⁴⁶ See A. Rollo, "Preistoria di un Aristotele nella biblioteca dei Barbaro," *Studi medievali e umanistici* 2 (2004) 329–333.

⁴⁷ On the relationship between Demetrius Kydones and Manuel Chrysoloras see Rollo, in *Manuele Crisolora* 37–39, 45–46; R. J. Loenertz, *Correspondance de Manuel Calecas* (Vatican City 1950) 63–71. There is no direct evidence that Chrysoloras was among Kydones' pupils, but his collaboration with him, his strong knowledge of Latin, and his acquaintance with Calecas and the Chrysobergas brothers, who were Kydones' pupils, would lead us to suppose that Chrysoloras was part of the scholarly circle around Kydones—though unfortunately not yet deeply investigated. On the Palaeologan scholarly circles/schools see Constantinides, *Higher Education* 31–110; D. Bianconi, *Tessalonica nell'età dei Paleologi. Le pratiche intellettuali nel riflesso della cultura scritta* (Paris 2002) 238–242; Bianconi, in *Libri e pratiche didattiche* 508–512.

⁴⁸ On Kydones' philosophical interests and translation activity see C. Delacroix-Besnier, "Les prêcheurs, du dialogue à la polemique (XIII^e–XIV^e siècle)," in M. Hinterberger and C. Schabel (eds.), *Greeks, Latins, and Intellectual History 1204–1500* (Leuven 2011) 151–168; see also the somewhat dated but still essential G. Mercati, *Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidone, Manuele Caleca e Teodoro Meliteniote ed altri appunti per la storia della teologia e della letteratura bizantina del secolo XIV* (Vatican City 1931). On Kydones' political and cultural significance see J. R. Ryder, *The Career and Writings of Demetrius Kydones* (Leiden 2010).

activity in the study of Aristotelian moral philosophy.⁴⁹ It would be impossible, at this point, not to tie this fact to Chrysoloras' teaching, which directly or indirectly created the conditions for Leonardo Bruni to read and translate Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, teaching him and other Florentine humanists Greek and perhaps also reading passages from Aristotle,⁵⁰ either at the request of his students or on his own initiative. Until now, scholars have insisted on what Chrysoloras gave to Western humanism. Thanks to CL, we see for the first time that perhaps Chrysoloras also took something from his students, since it is highly likely that his interest in Aristotle's ethical writings reflected his pupils' requests and interests.

A last point deserves a few words. The Emperor had asked Chrysoloras to revise and correct FO. Evidently, Chrysoloras did not comply with this request, choosing instead to demonstrate that the Emperor's text is flawless. To reach this goal, Chrysoloras alludes to or quotes passages from FO. The total number of quotations which I have identified is 54, 15 of which are identical to the original,⁵¹ while the others for the most part

⁴⁹ See Lines, *Aristotle's Ethics* 185–191.

⁵⁰ This is the hypothesis of Rollo, *Studi medievali e umanistici* 2 (2004) 332.

⁵¹ The following quotations are literal: CL 83.21–22 = FO 113.13–14: ἄνευ θείου νεύματος καὶ ῥοπῆς; CL 83.22–23 = FO 133.12: εὐμενὲς τὸ θεῖον ἔχοντι; CL 83.23–4 = FO 207.16: οὐρανόθεν ἐπικουρίας; CL 84.1 = FO 141.25: θεόθεν τυφλούμενος ἠγνόει; *CL 84.2 = FO 165.4: ἕως, εἰ βούλοιο τὸ θεῖον, ὑποστρέψαιμι; CL 84.15–17 = FO 257.19–21: θεὸς μὲν γὰρ ἐπίσταται καὶ δύναται καὶ βούλεται τὸ πᾶσι λυσιτελήσον, ἡμεῖς δὲ τῶν χειρόνων ὀρεγόμεθα πολλακίς τὰ βελτίω διαπτύοντες; CL 85.20 = FO 83.22: τῷ θεῷ διαφερόντως πεφιλημένον; CL 85.22 = CL 122.14–15 = FO 245.19: ὃ ζωῆς οὐ φορητῆς, εἰ μὴ δι' εὐσέβειαν; CL 86.12–13 = FO 213.11–13: ἀδικοίην ἂν αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν [...] εἰ τοῖς νῦν ἀνθρώποις παραβάλλοιμι; CL 96.5–6 = FO 117.30–31: ἐπεποίθει δὲ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ταῖς τῶν φυσάντων εὐχαῖς καὶ τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ τρόποις; CL 101.16 = FO 167.19: οὐδ' ἀπὸ γνώμης τῆς μητρὸς καὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας; CL 101.20 = FO 213.22: τὰ γὰρ ἀδελφῶν κοινά; *CL 101.29–30 = FO 249.30–31: τὰ μὲν διδούς ὡς ἀπὸ πηγῆς, τὰ δὲ που συμβουλεύων ἢ προνοοῦμενος ἅπαντα τρόπον; *CL 110.12 = FO 205.17: δεχόμενος τὸ θανεῖν ἄσμενος; CL 113.29–31 = FO 215.4–5: ὑπὲρ ἀγαθῆς δόξης, αὐτὸν ὃν φρίττουσι πάντες θάνατον φίλον

contain minimal changes. Table 3 shows the differences between the original text in FO and CL's quotations (an asterisk indicates quotations that the editors of CL did not highlight) and suggests the nature of the change: grammar and style (G/S), vocabulary (L), word order (W.O.), rewriting (RW), simplification (S), and augmentation (A).

Table 3

CL	FO	G/S	L	W.O.	RW	S	A
83.22 τῆ παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ δὴπου συμμαχία	197.10 τῆ τοῦ θεοῦ συμμαχία	x					
83.23 οὐρανόθεν χάριτος συνεφαπτομένης	181.9 οὐρανόθεν θείας χάριτος συνεφαπτομένης					x	
*83.24 τῆς θείας ροπῆς συνεφαπτομένης	111.18; 201.21 συναιρομένης τῆς θείας ροπῆς			x			
83.25 οὗ τῆ ροπῆ ταῦτα ἐτελείτο	207.13 οὗ καὶ τῆ ροπῆ ταῦτ' ἐπράττετο		x				
83.25 τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τοῦτο εὐμενείας τεκμήριον τῆς πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα	207.17-18 τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦτο εὐμενείας τῆς πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα τεκμήριον			x			
83.27-28 ὁ Θεὸς ἐπέταττεν αὐτῷ μηδαμῶς ταῦτα ποιεῖν	141.9-10 ὁ θεὸς ἐπέταττεν αὐτῷ μηδαμῶς τοῦτο πράξει		x				
84.3 χάριτας ἀνωμολόγει τῷ συνεργούντι σωτήρι	181.6 ἀνωμολόγει χάριτας τῷ συνεργούντι Σωτήρι			x			
84.4-5 τὸ προσκρούειν ἡμᾶς Θεῷ τὸ πολὺ τῆς εὐτυχίας τῶν ἀσεβῶν	159.19-21 τὸ πολὺ τῆς εὐτυχίας τῶν ἀσεβῶν, μάλλον δὲ τὸ τῶν εὐσεβῶν δυστυχῆς ἐκ τοῦ τῷ θεῷ προσκρούειν					x	
84.7-10 ἐκεῖνο δὲ εἰπεῖν καὶ ἀποχρῶν καὶ δίκαιον. τοῦτο τὸ ἔργον καλῶς μὲν καταρχὰς διανοηθέν, κάλλιον δὲ πραχθέν καὶ πέρασ εἰληφὸς ὅτι κράτιστον, δῆλον ἐστὶν ἅπασιν, ὡς οὐκ ἄνευ θείας ροπῆς γέγονεν.	151.26-29 ἐκεῖνο δὲ πάντως εἰπεῖν καὶ ἀποχρῶν καὶ δίκαιον πάντων ἕνεκα. Τοῦτο τὸ ἔργον καλῶς μὲν κατ' ἀρχὰς διανοηθέν, κάλλιον δὲ πραχθέν καὶ πέρασ εἰληφὸς ὅτι κάλλιστον, δῆλόν ἐστιν ἅπασιν ὡς οὐκ ἄνευ θείας ροπῆς γέγονε		x				

ἠγησάμενος. To this list we must add CL 83.26–27 (πίστει πορευόμενον, τοῦ δύναμιν ἔχοντος σφύζειν), which corresponds to FO 139.23–24 (πίστει πορευόμενοι τοῦ δύναμιν ἔχοντος σφύζειν); the change in case and number of the participle could be an error of transcription on the part of the editors of CL or an intentional change made by Chrysoloras to adapt the sentence to a context in which he was quoting passages referring only to Theodore.

109.14-15 οὐ κατεδέχετο. φῆς. οὐδὲ γούν ψευδῆ τῶν οὐ καλῶν αὐτῶ δόξαν προστριβῆναι	107.16-17 οὐ κατεδέχετο οὐδὲ γούν ψευδῆ τινα δόξαν τῶν οὐ καλῶν προστριβῆναι								X
*109.15-16 τοσοῦτον ἦν τὸ φιλότιμον παρ' αὐτῶ ὡς τε εὐλαβεῖσθαι καὶ τὰς οὐ δικαίας μέμψεις	107.9-10 ἦν γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἐν αὐτῶ τὸ φιλότιμον. ὅσον εὐλαβεῖτο καὶ τοὺς οὐ δικαίαν ἐξοίσοντας ψῆφον	X		X					
*109.18-19 ἐπίστευεν, οἴκοθεν ἔχων τὸ πιστὸς εἶναι, ὃ γὰρ τις ἔχει καὶ δίδωσι	121.12-13 πιστεύει μὲν, οἴκοθεν ἔχων τὸ πιστὸς εἶναι (ὃ γὰρ τις ἔχει δίδωσι...	X							
*109.19-21 μηδὲν προσαναλώσας ἢ τρία ταῦτα, γνώμης ὀξύτητα, γλώττης δεινότητα, τρόπων χρηστότητα· ἕκαστον τούτων χρῆμα ἀκένωτον	121.21-22 μηδὲν προσαναλώσας ἢ τρία ταῦτα. γνώμης ὀξύτητα. γλώττης δεινότητα. τρόπων χρηστότητα· ἕκαστον χρῆμα ἀκένωτον								X
109.22-24 τεθνάναι μᾶλλον πρόθυμος ἦν πρὸ τοῦ ποιῆσαι ὃ μὴ προσήκε τῷ τε αὐτοῦ σχήματι καὶ τῷ βίῳ καὶ καταισχύναί τούς τε προγόνους καὶ τὸ γένος	117.27-29 τεθνάναι πρόθυμος ἦν πρὸ τοῦ ποιῆσαι ὃ μὴ προσήκε τῷ τε ἑαυτοῦ σχήματι καὶ τῷ βίῳ καὶ ταύτη γε περιφανῶς καταισχύναί τούς τε γονέας καὶ πᾶν τὸ γένος		X					X	
110.13-14 χαίρων ἂν ἠλλάξατο τοῦ ζῆσαι μῆκιστον χρόνον οὐ μετὰ δόξης τὸ βραχύτατον μετ' εὐκλείας	145.17-18 χαίρων ἂν ἠλλάξατο τοῦ ζῆσαι μῆκιστον χρόνον οὐ μετὰ δόξης βίον μετ' εὐκλείας βραχύτατον			X					
*111.16-17 τὰς μείζους, αἰτινές ποτ' ἂν εἶεν κατ' ἀνθρώπους, δέξαιτο τιμὰς	189.4-6 τὰς μείζους αἰτινές ποτ' ἂν εἶεν ἢ νομίζονται παρ' ἀνθρώποις δέξαιτο τιμὰς	X						X	
113.17-18 ἐκεῖνος ἀνδριάντας ἑαυτῷ πεποιήκε, τῆ τῶν ἠθῶν εὐκοσμία τοῦτο (sic) σώζοντας	213.5 τύπον ἀνδριάντος ἐκεῖνῳ σφύζοντας τῆ τῶν ἠθῶν εὐκοσμία...		X	X					
114.1-3 ὄντος δὲ ἐφ' ἡμῖν τοῦ μετ' ἀρετῆς ζῆσαι, λέγων, οὐκ ἀνέλπιστον τὸ κρατήσιν, τὴν μὲν κακίαν μισήσαντας, φίλους δὲ τῆς τῶν φυσάντων γενομένους ἀρετῆς	161.9-12 ὄντος γε τῶν ἐφ' ἡμῖν τοῦ μετὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς ζῆσαι. εἴη ἂν πάνυ δικαίως ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα ἐπιζομένοις τῶν νῦν κρατούντων ἡμᾶς. κρατήσιν, τὴν μὲν κακίαν μισήσαντας, φίλους δὲ τῆς τῶν φυσάντων ἀρετῆς γεγονότας	X				X	X		
130.28-129.1 ὃν περὶ πάντα μέτριος καὶ μηδαμῶς δύσερις κατὰ τὸ φιλεῖν καὶ εὖ ποιεῖν καὶ ἀποδιδόναι, προσκείσθω δὲ καὶ παρ' ἑαυτοῦ πρώτως δίδοναι, κρατεῖν ἀπάντων ἐφιλονεῖκει καὶ ὡς ῥάστα ἂν ἀφήκε καὶ τὸ ζῆν, ὅπως τὸ φίλτρον ἐνδείξαιτο	99.26-29 ὃν πρὸς πάντα μέτριος καὶ μηδαμοῦ δύσερις, κατὰ τὸ φιλεῖν καὶ εὖ ποιεῖν καὶ ἀποδιδόναι, κρατεῖν ἀπάντων ἐφιλονεῖκει καὶ ῥάστα ἂν ἀφήκε καὶ τὸ ζῆν, ὅπως τὸ φίλτρον ὅσον ἐνδείξεται			X					
131.2-5 δεῖσθαι γὰρ καὶ τοὺς εὐπορωτέρους φῆς αὐτὸν οἶεσθαι τῶν δωρεῶν τῶν ὑψηλοτέρων, καθάπερ τὰ φυόμενα φασιν ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι τῶν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ὑετῶν, εἰ μέλλοιεν καρπὸν οἶσειν	245.2-5 δεῖσθαι γὰρ καὶ τοὺς εὐπορωτέρους τῆς δωρεᾶς τῶν ὑψηλοτέρων, καθάπερ τὰ φυόμενά φασιν ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι τῶν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ὑετῶν, εἰ μέλλοιεν οἶσειν καρπὸν οἶσειν	X		X					

As the table indicates, the changes, however minimal, are frequent. On the contrary, as we have seen, Chrysoloras is very attentive when citing the long passages from Aristotle and two excerpts from the Emperor's letter accompanying FO (CL 79.32–33 and 122.3–5). One possible explanation for this inconsistency is that Chrysoloras quoted not from the final version of FO, but from a text belonging to a previous stage, since FO underwent many revisions. However, none of the modified quotations correspond to points identified as a previous textual stage by Juliana Chrysostomides, the editor of FO, or by Schreiner and Rollo, who suggested revisions to Chrysostomides' stemma based on a new witness.⁵² On the contrary, in two cases CL presents a word that is present only in the final stage of FO: εὐμενείας at CL 83.25 and σωτήρι at 84.3. Therefore, the discrepancies between CL and FO must be the result of either inaccuracy or deliberate intention.

One might suppose that in most cases Chrysoloras quoted not so much to demonstrate certain theoretical assumptions, but rather to indirectly suggest small formal changes to FO, even if several times in CL he states that FO is a perfect text and in the "Apologia" clearly states that the Emperor's words are of great help to his own words.⁵³ If such were the case, one might ask why there is no trace of Chrysoloras' suggestions in any witness of FO in our possession. One possible answer is that CL may have never reached the Emperor. The autograph containing CL presents a separate codicological unit, dating from the first decades of the Quattrocento (judging from the

⁵² Schreiner, in *Lesarten* 211–222; Rollo, *Nea Rhome* 3 (2006) 386–388.

⁵³ See n.10 above. Cf. CL 84.23–24: "Do you see that I rejoice at your words and I could not easily change them of my own free will?"; 126.31–127.2: "I mixed many of your words with mine, creating, so to speak, one speech, so that my words, mixed with yours, do not cause shame to them, and your words beautify mine in a certain sense"; 124.11–15: "As for the quotation from your speech [FO], let nobody be astonished, since on the one hand the purpose of my speech forces me to do so, and on the other so does the memory and the joy in your words, which are so fine and pleasant and beloved by me, who gather them as flowers and pick some from them."

watermarks) and containing such texts as Aesop, Lucian, and the Psalms, which were used in the teaching of Greek in the West.⁵⁴ Rollo suggests that CL may have been used to practice Greek among the first students of Greek in the West because of the fame of its author.⁵⁵ To confirm such a hypothesis, it would be useful to check the Eastern or Western origin of the codicological units accompanying CL in the *Meteorensis* manuscript—an assessment that neither Rollo nor I have had the opportunity to make. Nevertheless, as far as I know, there is no evidence in the codicological units containing CL of any use by Westerners, as none of the humanists mention this work, and no one copied it during the Renaissance. Moreover, the place where the manuscript is now preserved indicates that it made its way to the East at a certain point in time. Therefore, since no conclusion can be drawn about the fate of CL, it is impossible to establish whether the changes to FO made by Chrysoloras in his quotations were ever considered during the Emperor's long revision process of FO. Since they were not accepted (and two possible exceptions alone are too meagre to draw any conclusion), for the time being we will simply have to consider them as a feature of Chrysoloras' modus operandi in reading and citing a text which he deemed perfect in every respect.

In conclusion, the analysis of the structure and the contents of CL indicates that it is far from being merely a late Byzantine piece of flattering writing unworthy of much consideration. First, it provides further evidence that Chrysoloras' experience in the West represented a true moment of bridging cultures and that the exchange was bidirectional. Moreover, thanks to his contact with the West, Chrysoloras developed an idea of the ideal ruler grounded in Aristotle's ethical writings, which is

⁵⁴ N. Bees, *Τα χειρόγραφα των Μετεώρων. Κατάλογος περιγραφικός των χειρογράφων κωδίκων των αποκειμένων εις τας Μονάς των Μετεώρων I Τα χειρόγραφα της Μονής Μεταμορφώσεως* (Athens 1967) 185–188; Patrinelis and Sofianos, *Manuel Chrysoloras* 53–54.

⁵⁵ Rollo, *BZ* 96 (2003) 310.

almost isolated in Byzantine literature. Second, CL is one of our best pieces of evidence for Chrysoloras' scholarly pursuits and academic profile, since it contains a detailed account of theory on the funerary oration and an in-depth analysis of the fulfillment of rhetorical rules in FO. Third, it gives us the main evidence for Chrysoloras' diplomatic strategy as a teacher of Greek in the West. Finally, because it represents a very rare case of a commentary on a contemporary text that is in our possession, it enables us to see the ways in which the model was interpreted, read, and quoted.⁵⁶

November, 2015

Turin
erika.nuti@gmail.com

⁵⁶ I would like to express all my gratitude to Prof. Enrico V. Maltese, who introduced me to the text analyzed here in a course I attended while completing my M.A. and thereafter supported my further research. Moreover, I am very grateful to Prof. Anthony Kaldellis, who discussed this topic with me and gave me his valuable opinions and advice after I presented a preliminary sketch of this article at the 39th Byzantine Studies Conference (Yale University, 2013). Finally, let me express all my gratitude to Prof. John Haldon, who revised my translations from Greek into English.