

# Constructing Hellenism: Studies on the History of Greek Learning in Early Modern Europe

## Introduction

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The five papers collected in this special issue of the *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* show some of the ways in which scholars in early modern Europe shaped, used and gave meaning to Greek learning. Instead of starting from one single perspective or discipline, the articles approach early modern Hellenism from diverse viewpoints, such as the history of classical scholarship (Gerald Sandy), book history (Natasha Constantinidou), philology and literary history (Filippomaria Pontani) and Oriental and Jewish studies (Asaph Ben-Tov and Bernd Roling). The title of the collection, *Constructing Hellenism*, has a double meaning: it not only denotes the various ways in which scholars in early modern Europe shaped and used Greek learning, but also refers to how we, as modern scholars, build and articulate our own perceptions of Hellenism in this period. Before presenting the individual articles, I shall first introduce the general theme of the collection, briefly discussing the early modern notion of *Hellenismus*, how ‘Hellenism’ has been treated in recent scholarship on the early modern history of Greek learning and the way in which the term is used in this collection and may be used beyond it.

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In Antoine Birr’s revised edition of Robert Estienne’s *Thesaurus linguae Latinae* (1740–1743), the word *Hellenismus* was defined as ‘litterarum Graecarum notitia’:

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knowledge of, or familiarity with, Greek letters, or Greek learning.<sup>1</sup> In current scholarship, too, ‘Hellenism’ is often used to refer to Greek erudition, with shifting emphases according to the context, whether Byzantium, Classical Islam or German Romanticism. In Renaissance and early modern studies, the term has been used casually, and in a mostly unreflective manner, to denote the increasing knowledge of ancient Greek and Greek literature in humanist circles.<sup>2</sup> While Petrarch (1304–1374) was still ‘deaf to Homer’ (*Epistolae familiares* XVIII.2), two centuries after his death, most of the major Greek authors had been rediscovered and had become more widely available in translations and editions. From the end of the fourteenth century onwards, Greek studies spread from Florence to other Italian cities, mainly Venice and Rome; from there, Greek learning was carried beyond the Alps, not only by travelling Greek scholars such as George Hermonymus (fl. 1475–1508) and Janus Lascaris (c. 1449–1535), but also by Northern European scholars such as Johann Reuchlin (1455–1522) in the German-speaking lands and Guillaume Budé (1467–1540) in France. This period also saw pioneering work in the critical study of the ancient Greek sources themselves and in making this study productive for so many domains of art and knowledge, from literature and history to medicine and geography. Whereas early students of Greek concentrated mainly on ‘classical’ literature and (to a lesser extent) patristics, two centuries after Petrarch’s death, the improved knowledge of Greek in learned circles, and the renewed interest in the Greek New Testament, had even stimulated a serious critique of the Latin Vulgate.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robert Estienne, *Thesaurus linguae Latinae in IV. tomos divisus, cui post novissimam Londinensem editionem, complurium eruditorum virorum collectis curis insigniter auctam*, ed. Antonius Birrius, 4 vols, Basel, 1740–1743, II, p. 496, s.v. ‘Hellenismus’: ‘Graeci sermonis proprietates, vel litterarum Graecarum notitia’. The word is not in the first two editions of Estienne’s dictionary (Paris, 1531 and 1543).

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., from the more recent literature, P. Botley, *Learning Greek in Western Europe, 1396–1529: Grammars, Lexica, and Classroom Texts*, Philadelphia, 2010, p. 117; M. Cadafaz de Matos, ‘Helenismo, filosofia e cultura no Renascimento italiano, de Giovanni Argyropoulos a Constantio e Janus Lascaris’, *Revista Portuguesa de História do Livro e da Edição*, Ano 12, n.º. 24, 2009, pp. 169–241; C. Celenza, ‘Hellenism in the Renaissance’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*, ed. G. Boys-Stones, B. Graziosi and P. Vasunia, Oxford, 2009, pp. 150–66; L. Dorez, ‘L’hellénisme d’Ange Politién’, *Mélanges d’archéologie et d’histoire*, 15, 1985, pp. 3–32. Italian scholarship also uses the general term *umanesimo greco* to denote the Greek learning of the humanists; see esp. M. Cortesi, ‘Umanesimo greco’, in *Lo spazio letterario del medioevo*, 5 vols, Rome, 1992–1998, III, pp. 457–507.

<sup>3</sup> Selective bibliography in notes 23–28 below. Concise discussions of the return of Greek learning to the Latin West in English are e.g. Celenza, ‘Hellenism in the Renaissance’ (n. 2 above); J. Hankins, ‘Greek Studies in the Latin West’, in *Humanism and Platonism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols, Rome, 2003–2004, I, pp. 273–91; J. Kraye, ‘The Revival of Greek Studies in the West’, in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: Volume 3, From 1450 to 1750*, ed. E. Cameron, Cambridge, 2016, pp. 37–60; F. Pontani, ‘Greek, Ancient’, in *The Classical Tradition*, ed. E. Grafton, G. W. Most and S. Settis, Cambridge MA and London, 2014, pp. 405–9. An essential overview in Italian is Cortesi, ‘Umanesimo greco’ (n. 2 above). In the Middle Ages, Greek learning was not entirely absent, but it was limited in many ways. For this ill-understood subject, W. Berschin, *Greek Letters and the Latin Middle Ages: From Jerome to Nicholas of Cusa*, transl. J. C. Frakes, Washington DC, 1988, is still essential, but also see the papers collected in *The Sacred Nectar of the Greeks: The Study of Greek in the West in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. M. W. Herren, London, 1988. More recently, see, importantly, P. Boulhol, ‘Grec language n’est pas douz au François.’ *L’étude et l’enseignement du grec dans la France ancienne (IV<sup>e</sup> siècle–1530)*, Aix-en-Provence, 2014, pp. 13–148, with rich bibliography.

In this context, modern scholars sometimes use expressions such as ‘Venetian Hellenism’ or ‘Florentine Hellenism’ to indicate local varieties of the study of ancient Greek literature.<sup>4</sup> The term Hellenism also refers to a particular school of medical thought (‘medical Hellenism’) which was fuelled by the publication of Galen and Hippocrates in Greek (by Aldo Manuzio in 1525 and 1526 respectively) and which promoted a return to the ancient Greek sources in the original instead of relying on the medieval medical tradition, which was heavily indebted to Arabic translations, summaries and commentaries.<sup>5</sup>

What Greek learning, or *Hellenismus*, meant to early modern scholars becomes apparent if we take a quick look at some of the ways the word was used in the Republic of Letters. The Renaissance borrowing of the Greek term *Ἑλληνισμός* and its Latin rendering encapsulate the ancient linguistic meaning of Hellenism, while also adapting it and adding a wider, cultural dimension to the ancient notion.<sup>6</sup> In ancient Greek, *Ἑλληνισμός* had denoted the use, and especially the *correct* use, of the language, and several works entitled *On Hellenism* (*Περὶ Ἑλληνισμοῦ*) reportedly circulated in antiquity.<sup>7</sup> When the term was adopted by Latin authors, it denoted the imitation of Greek constructions in Latin poetry, mainly Virgil.<sup>8</sup> The humanists took over this ‘linguistic’ meaning of the term, and *Ἑλληνισμός/Hellenismus* for them

<sup>4</sup> For Venetian Hellenism, see most extensively the collection of *L’eredità greca e l’ellenismo veneziano*, ed. G. Benzioni, Florence, 2002. A. Singer, *Aesthetic Reason: Artworks and the Deliberative Ethos*, University Park PA, 2010, p. 49, used ‘Florentine Hellenism’ specifically to denote ‘the importation of Neoplatonic philosophy from the east’. Particularly in the Italian scholarship, expressions such as *ellenismo filelfiano* are sometimes employed to denote individual scholars’ Greek learning, e.g. in S. Fiaschi, ‘Filelfo e “i diritti” del traduttore. L’*autoritas* dell’interprete e il problema delle attribuzioni’, in *Tradurre dal greco in età umanistica: Metodi e strumenti*, ed. M. Cortesi, Florence, 2007, pp. 79–95 (81–82 n. 5).

<sup>5</sup> V. Nutton, ‘Hellenism Postponed: Some Aspects of Renaissance Medicine, 1490–1530’, *Sudhoffs Archiv*, 81, 1997, pp. 158–70. See also N. G. Siraisi, ‘Vesalius and the Reading of Galen’s Teleology’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 50, 1997, pp. 1–37 (3); M. Azzolini, ‘Anatomy of a Dispute: Leonardo, Pacioli and Scientific Courtly Entertainment in Renaissance Milan’, *Early Science and Medicine*, 9, 2004, pp. 115–35 (132: ‘medical Hellenism’); C. Martin, ‘Humanism and the Assessment of Averroes in the Renaissance’, *Renaissance Averroism and Its Aftermath: Arabic Philosophy in Early Modern Europe*, ed. A. Akasoy and G. Giglioli, Dordrecht and New York, 2012, pp. 65–79 (71: ‘Renaissance Hellenism’). D. Campbell, *Arabian Medicine and Its Influence on the Middle Ages*, 2 vols, London, 1926, I, p. 187, speaks of a ‘struggle between Hellenism and Arabism’ in this context, for which see, more recently, P. E. Pormann, ‘La querelle des médecins arabistes et hellénistes et l’heritage oublie’, in *Lire les medecins grecs à la Renaissance*, ed. V. Boudon-Millot and G. Cobolet, Paris, 2004, pp. 113–41.

<sup>6</sup> See R. Hoven, *Lexique de la prose latine de la Renaissance*, Leiden and Boston, 2006, p. 242 s.v. ‘Hellenismus’, which partially records the word’s usage in the work of Guillaume Budé and Theodore de Bèze. Johann Rammingner’s *Neulateinische Wortliste* (<neulatein.de>) as yet has no lemma for Hellenism. For the lexicography of the term, see also A. C. Dionisotti, ‘Hellenismus’, in *Vocabulary of Teaching and Research Between Middle Ages and Renaissance: Proceedings of the Colloquium, London, Warburg Institute, 11–12 March 1994*, ed. O. Weijers, Turnhout, 1995, pp. 45–58. For a discussion of the term in the scholarship before J. G. Droysen, see R. Bichler, ‘Hellenismus’. *Geschichte und Problematik eines Epochenbegriffs*, Darmstadt, 1983, pp. 33–54, concentrating on the later early modern period.

<sup>7</sup> On the concept of Hellenism and its criteria, see now L. Pagani, ‘Language Correctness (*Hellenismos*) and Its Criteria’, in *Brill’s Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, ed. F. Montanari et al., 2 vols., Leiden and Boston, 2015, II, pp. 798–849, with references to the relevant ancient sources.

<sup>8</sup> See on this usage Dionisotti, ‘Hellenismus’ (n. 6 above), pp. 45–53.

referred to the Greek language,<sup>9</sup> in particular to the use of a good Greek style and idiom, following the example of approved ancient Greek authors.<sup>10</sup> As such, the term represented a Greek counterpart to the humanist ideal of *Latinitas*, or a set of normative criteria for language correctness.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, and more specifically, the Latin word and its vernacular cognates came to mean what we would now call a Graecism: an (allegedly) Greek idiom or grammatical feature, or the imitation of Greek constructions, in Latin or any other language.<sup>12</sup> This kind of Hellenism had a special cultural significance, especially for humanists who tried to demonstrate the affinity of their native languages to ancient Greek, as did Andreas Althamer (d. c. 1539) for German and Henri II Estienne (1531–1598) for French.<sup>13</sup> By demonstrating the affinity between ancient Greek and their own languages, they tried to lend dignity to their native tongues: Hellenism becomes a cultural *Kampfbegriff* of sorts directed against Italian claims to ‘Latin’ and ‘Roman’ cultural primacy.<sup>14</sup>

Beyond the linguistic level, *Ἑλληνισμός/Hellenismus* in humanist discourse also referred to the worldview of the ancient Hellenes in both its philosophical and religious aspects. This wider usage of the term, too, at least partly had roots in Greek

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Joseph Justus Scaliger, *Epistolae omnes quae reperiri potuerunt, nunc primum collectae ac editae*, Leiden, 1627, p. 700, and Thomas Reinesius, *Ad viros clariss[imos] D[ominos] Casp[arum] Hoffmannum, Christophorum Ad[amem] Rupertum, Profess[ores] Noricos epistolae ...*, Leipzig, 1660, p. 90.

<sup>10</sup> For some examples of *Hellenismus* meaning ‘good Greek’, see Scaliger, *Epistolae* (n. 9 above), pp. 362 and 635. Isaac Casaubon, *Epistolae, insertis ad easdem responsionibus, quotquot hactenus reperiri potuerunt secundum seriem temporis accurate digestae*, Rotterdam, 1709, p. 295, similarly speaks of ‘Hellenismi leges’ in a letter to Scaliger of 1607. Earlier examples include a letter of 1501 by Johann Reuchlin, in Heinrich Bebel, *Clarorum virorum epistolae Latinae Graecae & Hebraicae variis temporibus missae ad Ioannem Reuchlin Phorcensem LL. Doctorem*, [s.l.], 1514, sig. Cvi<sup>f</sup>, in which he complains that κύριε ἑλλησον is generally pronounced *kyrieleison* (i.e., with five instead of seven syllables) ‘ob ignorantiam Hellenismi’.

<sup>11</sup> E.g., Scaliger, *Epistolae* (n. 9 above), p. 490.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., Thomas Reinesius, *Epistolae ad Cl[arissimum] V[irum] Christianum Daumium ...*, Hamburg, 1670, p. 3, and Z. C. von Uffenbach, *Commercii epistolaris Uffenbachiani selecta variis observationibus illustravit Io. Ge. Schelhornius*, Ulm and Memmingen, 1756, p. 154.

<sup>13</sup> See Andreas Althamer, *Commentaria Germaniae in P. Cornelii Taciti Equitis Rom[ani] libellum de situ, moribus, et populis Germanorum*, Nuremberg, 1536, and Henri Estienne, *Traicté de la conformité du langage françois avec le grec*, Paris, 1569. After Léon Trippault, *Celt’-Hellenisme ou etymologic des mots françois tirez du graec. Plus. Preuves en general de la descente de la nostre langue*, Orléans, 1580, French Hellenism of this kind is sometimes referred to as *celt’hellénisme*.

<sup>14</sup> There is a scattered and disparate literature on this subject. See, e.g., P. U. Dini, ‘Baltic Palaeocomparativism and the Idea that Prussian Derives from Greek’, in *Studies in Baltic and Indo-European Linguistics*, ed. P. Baldi and P. U. Dini, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 2004, pp. 37–50; J. F. Eros, ‘A 17th-Century Demonstration of Language Relationship: Meric Casaubon on English and Greek’, *Historiographia Linguistica*, 3, 1976, pp. 1–15; M. Tavoni, ‘Renaissance Linguistics’, in *History of Linguistics. III: Renaissance and Early Modern Linguistics*, ed. G. Lepschy, London, 1998, pp. 1–108; J. B. Trapp, ‘The Conformity of Greek with Vernacular: The History of a Renaissance Theory of Languages’, in his *Essays on the Renaissance and the Classical Tradition*, Aldershot, 1990, §I; T. Van Hal, ‘Bevoorrechte betrekkingen tussen Germaans en Grieks: Wilhelm Otto Reitz’ *Belga graecissans* (1730)’, *Leuvense Bijdragen: Tijdschrift voor Germaanse Filologie*, 99–100, 2016, pp. 427–43. For a first attempt at synthesis, see H. Lamers, ‘Wil de echte Griek opstaan? Verwantschap en vereenzelviging met de oude Grieken in vroegmodern Europa’, *Tetradio: Tijdschrift van het Griekenlandcentrum*, 26, 2017, pp. 101–29.

sources, where *Ἑλληνισμός* could refer to the philosophy or the religion of the ancient Hellenes. With this meaning, it was normally used polemically in religious contexts to denote the opposite of what was seen as ‘orthodoxy’ (from either Jewish or Christian perspectives) and thus came to mean paganism or heresy.<sup>15</sup> This usage of the word survived in humanist discourse, but not without modification. We see this happening in Guillaume Budé’s treatise *De transitu Hellenismi ad Christianismum* (1535), which is perhaps the first time the word was used in a wider cultural meaning in a manner not attested previously. In this work, the term *Hellenismus* refers to ancient pagan Greek culture or ancient civilization generally. As such, Budé understood Hellenism as sometimes being in discord with Christianity, and sometimes as foreshadowing or anticipating it, depending on context. Moreover, in Budé’s hands, the term seems to have gained, for the first time, a more generalized meaning, not linked to a specific historical culture or period, but expressive of a worldview oriented towards ‘the world’, rather than towards God, in the word’s biblical sense and carrying negative overtones.<sup>16</sup>

A much more profound exploration of the history of the notion of Hellenism, and how it eventually reached us in the twenty-first century, is a desideratum of *Begriffsgeschichte* and the history of scholarship. Even a brief glance at its early modern usage, however, reveals the principal awareness of scholars of this period that ancient Hellas was not confined to the remote past but stood in a meaningful relationship to their own languages, literatures and cultures – a relationship which some perceived as constructive and formative, while others regarded it as inherently problematic and even dangerous.<sup>17</sup>

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In order to capture something of the complexity of Greek learning in early modern Europe, the term ‘Renaissance Hellenism’ has sometimes been used in recent Anglophone scholarship as a retrospective label which yokes together, for analytical

<sup>15</sup> The *locus classicus* in the Old Testament is II Maccabees 4:13. In the Christian context, the word was used to refer to paganism or heresy in the work of, among others, Gregory of Nyssa, Eusebius of Caesarea, Epiphanius of Salamis, Philostorgius, John Chrysostom, Theodoret of Cyrus, Sozomenus and John of Damascus, all with their own nuances. It was also used in this sense at the Council of Chalcedon, where Hellenism was mentioned in one breath with Judaism as a form of heresy; it was discussed as well at the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–1439).

<sup>16</sup> On Budé’s notion of Hellenism, see the insightful discussion in the introduction to Guillaume Budé, *Le passage de l’hellénisme au christianisme*, transl. M.-M. de La Garanderie, Paris, 1993, pp. xxv–lvi (xxxv–xxxviii). It is interesting to compare it with Budé’s usage of similar terms such as *italismus* and *medismus*: ‘Italismus sic dici potest ut medismus. Morum Italiae et verborum et cultus imitatio’, cited by L. Delaruelle, *Guillaume Budé: Les origines, les débuts, les idées maîtresses*, Paris, 1907, p. 270. Note that Budé also used the term simply to refer to Greek as distinct from *celticismus*, meaning French; see L.-A. Sanchi, *Les Commentaires de la langue grecque de Guillaume Budé. L’œuvre, ses sources, sa préparation*, Geneva, 2006, p. 112.

<sup>17</sup> In the Renaissance, the word Hellenism was thus not restricted to indicating the Greek language of the Jews – if, indeed, it was used in that way at all. Compare the discussion of Bichler, ‘*Hellenismus*’ (n. 6 above). *Hellenistica* (*lingua* or *dialectus*) was sometimes used, however, to denote Semitized or Judaized Greek, most notably by Daniel Heinsius and Claude de Saumaise; see also R. Van Rooy, ‘Through the Vast Labyrinth of Languages and Dialects: The Emergence and Transformations of a Conceptual Pair in the Early Modern Period (c. 1478–1782)’, PhD dissertation, KU Leuven, 2017, p. 217, with references cited there.

convenience, a whole range of early modern engagements with the Hellenic tradition.<sup>18</sup> As such, the term is used to mean not just *knowledge* of ancient Hellas but also refers more broadly to the ways in which this learning was built up, used and valued in new contexts. This is also how the word is used in the title of this small collection of papers. Thus, importantly, it does not represent a unified view of Greek civilization; it is not the culture of the historical period which is known, with different emphases, from the work of Johann Gustav Droysen (1808–1884) and Arnold J. Toynbee (1889–1975), nor the philosophical notion which is found in the work of Matthew Arnold (1822–1888).<sup>19</sup>

As indicated above, the term ‘Hellenism’ tends to be used rather unreflectively in Renaissance and early modern studies. Although it is commonly recognized that the notion of ‘transmission’ captures the cultural dynamism involved only very imperfectly,<sup>20</sup> there is hardly any methodical reflection on how we can understand the manifold aspects of early modern *Hellenismus*, or Greek learning, in a more systematic and comprehensive manner. This silence contrasts with discussions of the reception of the Greco-Roman heritage within classical reception studies and scholarship on the classical tradition generally.<sup>21</sup> It also contrasts with discussions in adjoining areas of scholarship where Hellenism has been studied intensively (for example, in imperial Rome and late antiquity) and in which scholars have developed a rich – even if sometimes bewildering – vocabulary for discussing the various cultural processes which lurk behind the tidy façade of the word ‘Hellenism’, such

<sup>18</sup> It was perhaps first used as a programmatic phrase in an academic setting in English in the title of a conference at Princeton University (12–14 April, 2007), where it was also the title of the paper delivered by Christopher Celenza. The proceedings of this conference have not been published, but the programme is still available online (<[princeton.edu/hellenic/renaissanceconferenceabstracts.html](http://princeton.edu/hellenic/renaissanceconferenceabstracts.html)>).

<sup>19</sup> On Droysen’s concept of Hellenism, see, apart from his own works, *Geschichte Alexanders des Grossen*, Berlin, 1833, and *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, Hamburg, 1836–1843, with a fully revised edition in 1877–1878, esp. A. Momigliano, ‘J. G. Droysen between Greeks and Jews’, *History and Theory*, 9, 1970, pp. 139–53, who emphasizes that Droysen’s own definition of Hellenism was not at all clear-cut. See also Bichler, ‘Hellenismus’ (n. 6 above), pp. 55–109. On Toynbee’s concept of Hellenism, see A. J. Toynbee, *Hellenism: The History of a Civilization*, Oxford, 1959 and V. Ehrenberg, ‘Toynbee’s Hellenism’, *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 8, 1959, pp. 491–6. For Arnold’s view, see M. Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism*, London, 1869, pp. 142–66 (160), with D. D. Stone, ‘Matthew Arnold and the Pragmatics of Hebraism and Hellenism’, *Poetics Today*, 19, 1998, pp. 179–98.

<sup>20</sup> Criticism of the transmission paradigm was already apparent in the fundamental studies of D. J. Geanakoplos, stressing the transformative agency of individual scholars and discussing the complex relationship between Greek-Palaeologan and Latin-humanist cultures in terms of ‘fusion’; see his *Constantinople and the West: Essays on the Late Byzantine (Palaeologan) and Italian Renaissances and the Byzantine and Roman Churches*, Madison WI, 1989; *Interaction of the “Sibling” Byzantine and Western Cultures in the Middle Ages and Italian Renaissance, 330–1600*, New Haven CT, 1976; *Byzantine East and Latin West: Two Worlds of Christendom in Middle Ages and Renaissance. Studies in Ecclesiastical and Cultural History*, New York and Evanston, 1966; and *Greek Scholars in Venice: Studies in the Dissemination of Greek Learning from Byzantium to Western Europe*, Cambridge MA, 1962.

<sup>21</sup> M. Silk, I. Gildenhard and R. Barrow, *The Classical Tradition: Art, Literature, Thought*, Malden MA, 2014, pp. 166–172 and passim. See also the discussions in *Deep Classics: Rethinking Classical Reception*, ed. S. Butler, London, 2016; *Classics and the Uses of Reception*, ed. C. Martindale and R. F. Thomas, Malden MA, 2006; and L. Hardwick, *Reception Studies*, Oxford, 2003, to cite only four prominent examples from the Anglosphere.



as Hellenization, cultural fusion, appropriation and so forth.<sup>22</sup> Scholars of early modern Hellenism are, by contrast, at the beginning of the discussion.

To define early modern Hellenism more precisely, we can start by looking at the ways in which Greek learning has so far been studied. Roughly distinguished, there are three main objects of research: the various ways of transmission and dissemination of ancient Greek, as well as Greek texts, objects and ideas; the ways in which they were interpreted and studied; and the many different ways in which they were used in new contexts. As previously mentioned, early modern Europe was a key period in all these respects.

The different aspects of early modern Hellenism – the transmission and dissemination, the study and interpretation, and the use of ancient Greek sources – have for the most part been discussed in different branches of a rich body of scholarship, ranging from traditional reception history or *Überlieferungsgeschichte* via the history of scholarship and education, and of printing and reading, to the study of the classical tradition or, in more recent decades, classical reception studies. The reception history of individual manuscripts and the *fortunae* of specific authors have been traced, the activities of individual scribes charted and the role of editors, translators and printers in the dissemination of Greek texts explained.<sup>23</sup> There is an ever-growing interest among scholars in the teaching and learning of Greek in the early modern period as, for instance, the recent volume edited by

<sup>22</sup> Scholarship is extensive. Here I mention only A. Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution*, Cambridge, 2008, pp. 4–37, and T. Whitmarsh, 'Greece and Rome', in *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*, ed. G. Boys-Stones, B. Graziosi and P. Vasunia, Oxford, 2009, pp. 114–28, with further references. See also the discussion of scholarship on Hellenism in late antiquity in Pontani's article in this collection, with references cited there.

<sup>23</sup> The literature is extensive. On the transmission and dissemination of Greek literature generally, see the third edition of the classic study by L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*, Oxford, 2013. On scribes involved in the reproduction of Greek manuscripts, see mainly M. Vogel and V. E. Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, Leipzig, 1909, with several later supplements, and H. Hunger and E. Gamillscheg, *Repertorium der Griechischen Kopisten: 800–1600*, 3 vols., Vienna, 1981–1997. For the role of the Byzantine scholars in the dissemination of Greek learning, see esp. Geanakoplos, *Greek Scholars in Venice* (n. 20 above) and N. G. Wilson, *From Byzantium to Italy: Greek Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, London, 2017. For Greek printing, R. Proctor, *The Printing of Greek in the Fifteenth Century*, Oxford, 1900, is still fundamental, even if it is now obviously out-dated in many respects. For more recent work, see, e.g., N. Barker, *Aldus Manutius and the Development of Greek Script and Type in the Fifteenth Century*, 2nd edition, New York, 1992, H. Jones, *Printing the Classical Text*, 't Goy-Houten, 2004, pp. 130–94, and K. Staïkos, *Charta of Greek Printing: The Contribution of Greek Editors, Printers and Publishers to the Renaissance in Italy and the West*, Cologne, 1998 (to be consulted with caution: see Davies' review in *The Library*, 7th series, no. 1, 2008, pp. 454–5). For the incunabular editions of individual Greek authors, see esp. O. Mazal, *Die Überlieferung der antiken Literatur im Buchdruck des 15. Jahrhunderts*, 4 vols, Stuttgart, 2003, I, pp. 85–334. The *fortunae* of individual authors (up to 600) are examined in the *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum: Mediaeval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries. Annotated Lists and Guides*, ed. P. O. Kristeller et al., Washington DC, 1960–, covering the period from antiquity itself to 1600. The reception of Byzantine Greek literature is not entirely understudied but the attention is scarce and distributed unevenly. For Byzantine historiography, for example, see A. Pertusi, *Storiografia umanistica e mondo bizantino*, Palermo, 1967 and, more recently, D. R. Reinsch, 'The History of Editing Byzantine Historiographical Texts', in *The Byzantine World*, ed. P. Stephenson, London and New York, 2010, pp. 435–44.

Federica Ciccolella and Luigi Silvano shows.<sup>24</sup> Studies have moreover been devoted to how scholars expanded their knowledge of ancient Greek literature and history, including Greek antiquities such as inscriptions, coins and monuments, as well as of various branches of Greek thought, both pagan and Christian: the Greek philosophers, grammarians and philologists, the Church Fathers and theologians.<sup>25</sup> The early modern study, interpretation and edition of the ‘rediscovered’ Greek New Testament and its implications have also been studied intensively.<sup>26</sup> The ways in which writers, thinkers and artists used their knowledge of Greek letters beyond Greek studies strictly speaking have been explored from many different perspectives and in various fields of scholarship including the history of science and political thought, art history and literary studies, among numerous others.<sup>27</sup> Generally speaking, however, the uses of Greek learning have been studied less systematically than the transmission and dissemination of Greek learning, probably because these uses were so manifold that it is difficult to systematize them.

<sup>24</sup> *Teachers, Students, and Schools of Greek in Renaissance Europe*, ed. F. Ciccolella and L. Silvano, Leiden, 2017, mainly focusing on Italy. On the study of Greek in the early modern period, see also Botley, *Learning Greek* (n. 2 above); F. Ciccolella, *Donati Graeci: Learning Greek in the Renaissance*, Leiden, 2008; J.-C. Saladin, *La bataille du grec à la Renaissance*, Paris, 2000 and 2004 (2nd revised edition), to be consulted in conjunction with the review of A. Pontani in *Aevum*, 76, no. 3, 2002, pp. 852–67 (also relevant to the revised edition). For monographic treatments of two major geographical areas in the history of Greek studies, France and Germany, see recently, e.g., Boulhol, “*Grec languaige n'est pas doulz au françois*” (n. 3 above) and W. Ludwig, *Hellas in Deutschland. Darstellungen der Gräzistik im deutschsprachigen Raum aus dem 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Hamburg, 1998.

<sup>25</sup> To get an idea of how early modern scholars working in diverse contexts studied Greek history, and how their work has been studied in the scholarship, see, e.g., M. Chatzidakis, *Ciriaco d'Ancona und die Wiederentdeckung Griechenlands im 15. Jahrhundert*, Petersberg, 2017; A. Ben-Tov, *Lutheran Humanists and Greek Antiquity: Melanchthonian Scholarship between Universal History and Pedagogy*, Leiden, 2009; W. Stenhouse, *Reading Inscriptions and Writing Ancient History: Historical Scholarship in the Late Renaissance*, London, 2005; and R. Weiss, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity*, Oxford, 1969. On Greek philosophy and philology, see the work of James Hankins (e.g., *Plato in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols, Leiden, 1991), Jill Kraye (e.g., *Classical Traditions in Renaissance Philosophy*, Aldershot, 2002) and John Monfasani (e.g., *Greeks and Latins in Renaissance Italy: Studies on Humanism and Philosophy in the 15th Century*, Aldershot, 2004). For the reception of the Church Fathers see, most comprehensively, *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: From the Carolingians to the Maurists*, ed. I. D. Backus, 2 vols, Leiden, 1997. The incunabular editions and translations of Greek patristics are recorded in O. Mazal, *Die Überlieferung* (n. 23 above), IV, pp. 900–925.

<sup>26</sup> Literature on early modern biblical scholarship is extensive. For an overview, see e.g. the relevant chapters in *A History of Biblical Interpretation, II: The Medieval Through the Reformation Periods*, ed. A. J. Hauser and D. F. Watson, Michigan and Cambridge, 2009; *Biblical Humanism and Scholasticism in the Age of Erasmus*, ed. E. Rummel, Leiden and Boston, 2008; and *The New Cambridge History of the Bible, III: From 1450 to 1750*, ed. E. Cameron, Cambridge, 2016, with the bibliographies there. The impact of the humanists’ return to Greek on biblical scholarship is also concisely discussed in A. Hamilton, ‘Humanists and the Bible’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. J. Kraye, Cambridge, 1996, pp. 100–117.

<sup>27</sup> Literary scholars have recently returned to the use of ancient Greek as a literary language in the early modern Republic of Letters, among other fascinating research areas enjoying renewed interest. For a first Europe-wide discussion, see *Hellenisti! Altgriechisch als Literatursprache im neuzeitlichen Europa. Internationales Symposium an der Bergischen Universität Wuppertal vom 20. bis 21. November 2015*, ed. S. Weise, Stuttgart, 2017. For a recent discussion of the German context, see mainly S. Weise, ‘*Ἑλληνιστὸν αἶαν εἰσοδεῖν ἡμῶμετα* – Neualt-griechische Literatur in Deutschland (Versuch eines Überblicks)’, *Antike und Abendland*, 62, 2016, pp. 114–81. See also Pontani’s article in this collection, with the references there.



Scholarly attention has been distributed unevenly over the different areas of early modern Europe, with Italy attracting most interest, followed by France and Germany, although the situation is gradually changing in favour of a more inclusive picture also covering, for instance, Eastern and Central Europe as well as Scandinavia and the Baltics.<sup>28</sup>

Apart from the aspects of Hellenism mentioned so far, another, less intensively studied, question is: how did scholars themselves reflect upon Greek learning? The different, sometimes conflicting, viewpoints scholars have expressed about the role and value, as well as the scope and limits, of Greek studies can bring interesting perspectives to our understanding of early modern Hellenism. Dissenting voices are particularly relevant in this respect: from the earliest critics and ‘Hellenophobes’ of Quattrocento Italy to Counter-Reformation reservations about Greek and, towards the end of the period, the ‘Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns’.<sup>29</sup> Such contested views shed light on the social and political struggles in which Greek learning was implicated as well as the cultural tensions involved. In the scholarship, this perspective has sometimes been eclipsed by the humanist enthusiasm for Greek – or even ‘Grecomania’ – and triumphalist discussions of the subject explaining how, from Manuel Chrysoloras (d. 1415) onwards, Greek learning flourished and expanded in the Latin West.<sup>30</sup>

The various perspectives early modern writers took on Greek learning also shed light on another important question which is, perhaps surprisingly, seldom posed rigorously: what exactly *was* Greek learning in the early modern period? Modern scholars have been inclined to concentrate, often tacitly, on the reception of what they regarded as ‘classical’ literature. The transmission, interpretation and use of, for instance, Hellenistic, late antique and especially Byzantine Greek texts have been studied less intensively and often in more or less unrelated branches of scholarship. Early modern readers and writers were, however, differently selective and presumably made connections different from ours. This sparks the question of how they saw the relationships between the various ‘Greek archives’ – not only between pagan and Christian Greek literatures but also, for example, between ‘Hellenistic’ and ‘Byzantine’ materials. And perhaps even more importantly: what are the implications of their views about the scope and limits of Greek learning for

<sup>28</sup> For the Eastern European context, see, e.g., the relevant chapters in *A Handbook to Classical Reception in Eastern and Central Europe*, ed. Z. Martirosova Torlone et al., Chichester, 2017, with the references there. For some aspects of Greek in the Scandinavian (Swedish) and Baltic (Estonian and Livonian) areas, see, e.g., T. Korhonen, ‘The Dissertations in Greek Supervised by Henrik Ausius in Uppsala in the Middle of the Seventeenth Century’, in *Classical Tradition from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century to Nietzsche*, ed. J. Päll, M. Steinrück and I. Volt, Tartu, 2010, pp. 89–113, and J. Päll, ‘Humanistengriechisch im alten Estland und Nord-Livland’, *ibid.*, pp. 114–47. There is also interest in areas traditionally less central to classical learning, e.g., C. Joby, ‘The Reception of Ancient Latin and Greek Authors in Early Modern Norwich’, *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 28, 2018, pp. 1–35.

<sup>29</sup> Some of the early quarrels involving Greek studies are discussed, e.g., in F. Ferri, *Una contesa di tre umanisti: Basinio, Porcelio e Seneca. Contributo alla storia degli studi greci nel Quattrocento in Italia*, Pavia, 1920, and Saladin, *La bataille* (n. 24 above), pp. 177–202 and 257–300. On the polemics about Greek studies surrounding Erasmus, see also S. Goldhill, *Who Needs Greek? Contests in the Cultural History of Hellenism*, Cambridge, 2002, pp. 14–59.

<sup>30</sup> Similar criticism in Goldhill, *Who Needs Greek?* (n. 29 above), pp. 4–5.

the ways in which we, modern scholars, understand early modern Hellenism as well as the range of our field of study? These questions cannot be pursued here, but they deserve a more serious treatment elsewhere.

The different facets of Hellenism discussed so far can seldom be treated in complete isolation from one another. Whoever examines the study and use of, say, Ptolemy's *Geography* can hardly ignore the ways in which the work reached the Latin West and how it was transmitted and disseminated there.<sup>31</sup> Beyond the level of such specific case studies, concerted attempts in recent scholarship to produce a more integrative overview of early modern Hellenism, of its multiple channels of transmission and diffusion as well as its diverse uses and meanings, are few and far between.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps it is simply too early to arrive at such an understanding of the phenomenon given the state of research in the field. Indeed, a good deal of work still needs to be done to smooth out the imbalances and fill lacunae in our knowledge of the subject.<sup>33</sup> The relative lack of general, more integral accounts probably has to do with the fact that researchers in this field have generally worked in relative isolation from each other. To bring together scholars from different backgrounds who study early modern Hellenism in workshops and conferences (of which we have seen many in the last couple of years) is an important step to identify the main lacunae and imbalances and to find common perspectives on both the subject and the field of study. The articles collected here were presented at such a meeting.<sup>34</sup>

The authors of the papers presented here do identify some lacunae and imbalances in the current scholarship, as they themselves make clear. They also invite scholars to explore the less trodden paths of this field of study and to connect various strands of scholarship to arrive at a more balanced understanding of early modern Hellenism. On the premise that the story of Greek learning in early modern Europe cannot be written exclusively in terms of textual transmission, in their own ways, these articles address how it was shaped, used and given meaning at various important moments in European history, from the fifteenth to the early eighteenth century, and in diverse areas, including Italy, France, Germany and England. They do not focus exclusively on the philological minutiae of intellectual history, but consistently connect detailed analyses of sources with a consideration of the specific social, cultural or political settings of Greek learning. Thus, they present an attempt

<sup>31</sup> See P. Gautier Dalché, 'The Reception of Ptolemy's Geography (End of the Fourteenth to Beginning of the Sixteenth Century)', in *The History of Cartography*, III: *Cartography in the European Renaissance*, ed. D. Woodward, Chicago, 2007, pp. 285–364.

<sup>32</sup> Transcending regional boundaries, the 2007 conference at Princeton University (n. 18 above), covered various aspects of early modern Hellenism. For specific regions there are some more integrative overviews: for Venice, e.g., *L'eredità greca* (n. 4 above); for France, E. Egger, *L'Hellénisme en France*, 2 vols, Paris, 1869, to mention only two examples.

<sup>33</sup> E.g., the absence of the perspective of the Greek world is a striking lacuna. Sometimes this is a matter of lacking evidence from visual culture, literature and scholarship, as is the case for the Gattilusio lordships in the Aegean; see C. Wright, *The Gattilusio Lordships and the Aegean World, 1355–1462*, Leiden, 2014, pp. 9 and 13–14. For other places such as Cyprus and Crete, however, there is plenty of material awaiting further study: for the context of Greek studies, see Ciccolella and Silvano, *Teachers, Students, and Schools* (n. 24 above), p. x.

<sup>34</sup> 'Constructing Hellenism in Renaissance Europe and Classical Islam', Humboldt University in Berlin on 21 and 22 November 2014. See also n. 37 below.

to give historical substance to the premise that ‘the story of Hellenism’s transformation in Europe ... is a story of acquisition, appropriation and domestication’.<sup>35</sup> Together they illustrate that, if we want to arrive at a fuller understanding of early modern Hellenism, the transmission and dissemination of Greek texts, their interpretation and study, and their use in entirely new contexts should not always be treated as separate fields of interest but must be ‘thought together’ as communicating vessels.

While the first paper in this collection concentrates on how Italian humanists used ancient Greek to create a Hellenic literature of their own, the second and third papers discuss, from different perspectives, how scholars in the sixteenth century helped to build up Greek learning in France and tried to integrate it into French and European intellectual culture. The two final papers then explore some of the ways in which knowledge about Greek history was used beyond the limits of Greek language and literature studies, focusing on two illuminating early modern episodes, one from England, the other from Germany. In the next section, I shall briefly lay out the main arguments of each paper and relate them to the general theme of the collection.

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In terms of how humanist scholars used Greek learning, one of the more astonishing effects of the renewed interest in ancient Greek in the Latin West was the emergence of a Greek literature outside the Greek world, which, starting from Italy in the fifteenth century, spread all over Europe. Writing Greek letters, poems and speeches became a characteristic of the more sophisticated branches of European humanism, not only in Italy but also in France, Germany and even as far north as the Baltic and Scandinavian lands. In ‘Hellenic Verse and Christian Humanism’, Filippomaria Pontani sheds light on this (understudied) aspect of Renaissance Hellenism, showing how Greek learning was exploited to ‘construct a plausible Hellenic poetry in a learned Christian world’. Discussing the production of ancient style Greek poetry from late antiquity via Byzantium to the Italian Renaissance, Pontani focuses on the perceived conflict between Hellenic forms and Christian content. How can Christian notions be expressed in ancient forms? Do Hellenic forms eclipse the tenets of Christian thought, or does an allusive Hellenic style, by contrast, ‘ennoble’ Christianity? Concentrating on a selection of Greek poems by Francesco Filelfo (1398–1481), Angelo Poliziano (1454–1494), Marcus Musurus (c. 1475–1517) and Janus Lascaris (c. 1445–1534), Pontani demonstrates how, and explains why, these Renaissance poets used Greek poetic models to express Christian ideas. His analyses go beyond tracing textual affinities and draw our attention to structural analogies between the culture of late antiquity and the Middle Ages, on the one hand, and the Italian Renaissance, on the other: ‘two changing worlds, where the tension between Hellenism as form and Hellenism as content is a paramount element for the shaping of a new poetic texture’. Accordingly, Pontani argues, any future exploration of humanist Greek literature will benefit from a comparison with late ancient and medieval literatures, in which we find similarly controversial appropriations of Hellenic sources in Christian milieus. By inviting

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<sup>35</sup> Celenza, ‘Hellenism in the Renaissance’ (n. 2 above), p. 151.

scholars of Renaissance Hellenism, more generally, to explore new ways to relate their findings to previous and other ‘Hellenisms’, this article also contributes an important methodological point of its own to the discussion.

The various ways in which Greek learning was shaped and given meaning beyond the Alps is the topic of ‘Guillaume Budé and the Uses of Greek’, in which Gerald Sandy discusses the key role of the famous French philologist in the establishment of Greek studies in sixteenth-century France. He illustrates Budé’s contributions by following the career of Jacques Amyot (1513–1593): an early student of the Collège de France (established in 1530), whose translations of Heliodorus and Plutarch, among others, helped to reorient Europe’s literary history and emancipate European literature from Neo-Latin. After outlining the state of Greek studies in France before Budé, Sandy discusses how the French philologist helped to overcome the three main obstacles to studying Greek: (1) the absence of competent teachers of Greek, (2) the absence of Greek manuscripts and printed editions and (3) the lack of reference works such as reliable dictionaries. Budé’s contributions, Sandy argues, transformed France into a centre of Hellenic studies, in which a scholar such as Amyot could flourish. Thus, the article shows the construction of Hellenism in its most fundamental form: the implementation of Greek studies in French scholarly culture by teaching, editing and translating activities. At the same time, it also shows how learning Greek became implicated in wider cultural discourses, beyond scholarship: French Hellenism, this article reminds us, was also regarded as the principal way to snatch cultural superiority away from the Italians, so that, by 1517, as Sandy reminds us, Erasmus could write that he did ‘not believe that there is any Italian at this time who is so perverse or arrogant that he would be foolhardy enough to join arms and do battle with Budé for recognition of this field of accomplishment’.

The establishment of Greek studies not only involved producing language study tools such as grammars and dictionaries but also relied on editing and publishing Greek works. This obviously involved processes of selection, and the choices made in the process reflected, as well as helped to shape, specific understandings of what Greek learning meant. In ‘Constructions of Hellenism through Printing and Editorial Choices’, Natasha Constantinidou discusses how the French scholar Adrien de Turnèbe (1512–1565) constructed his view of Hellenism through the Greek works he edited and published during the short period in which he served as royal printer in Greek (1551–1555). Unlike members of his circle such as J. J. Scaliger, Montaigne and Ronsard, Turnèbe’s work has generally remained understudied, so Constantinidou’s article fills a conspicuous lacuna in the history of French Hellenism. During his time as royal printer, Turnèbe published about twenty Greek volumes, covering literature and philology, natural philosophy and medicine, as well as religious syncretism and Neoplatonism. Distinguishing between publications for students, editions intended for Turnèbe’s own classes and books mainly serving his own philosophical interests, Constantinidou reveals that there was an intellectual programme behind the printer’s selections. Drawing on the paratexts to his editions such as prefaces and dedicatory epistles, she maintains that Turnèbe’s publications often served the purpose of promoting ancient Greek philosophy as a handmaid of the Christian faith. For instance, she shows that Turnèbe coupled his study of Theophrastus’s *De odoribus* – which he translated into

Latin – with thoughts about the role of perfumes in the contemplation of God and religious worship. In particular, the editions centred on Plato's *Timaeus* reflect Turnèbe's profound interest in Christian Platonism, *prisca theologia* and Christian apologetics. Constantinidou interprets his editions of works by Hermes Trismegistus, Plato, Plutarch, Philo of Alexandria, Synesius of Cyrene, Apollinaris of Laodicea and Gregory Palamas, as well as his edition of the pseudo-Clementine *Homilies*, as part of the printer's attempt to project an interpretation of Greek philosophy as 'prefiguring' Christianity. According to her, Turnèbe attempted to harmonize Greek thought and Christian doctrine along the lines set out by Italian humanists, most famously Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), as well as French colleagues such as Guillaume Budé. In order to bring out the specificities of Turnèbe's use of Greek learning, Constantinidou finally compares his editorial activities with the intellectual programmes of Rutgerus Rescius (Rutger Ressen, c. 1495–1545) and the French scholars Robert Estienne (1503–1559) and Jacques Toussain (1490–1547).

While some humanists addressed the tension between Hellenism and Christianity by revealing affinities between Greek philosophy and Christian doctrine, or by showing that Christian ideas could be expressed in ancient Hellenic forms without 'disintegrating', others had recourse to other means of aligning Hellenism and Scripture. With the flourishing of the *studia orientalia* in the seventeenth century, some scholars insisted on the cultural primacy of the Near East – especially Hebrew writings – and regarded the civilization of ancient Greece as having freely adopted and adapted elements from the East.<sup>36</sup> In a work called *Homerus ἑβραϊζων*, Zachary Bogdan (1625–1659), for example, 'revealed' manifold Homeric and Hesiodic borrowings from the Old Testament in an attempt to show that the founding father of ancient literature had been familiar with Scripture. Such dazzlingly learned arguments entailed a profound reevaluation – and not, as one might suspect, a devaluation – of Greek antiquity.

In 'Joshua Apollo: Edmund Dickinson's *Delphi phoenizantes* and the Biblical Origins of Greece in Seventeenth-Century England', Bernd Roling shows how one of Bogdan's contemporaries, the English physician, alchemist and antiquarian Edmund Dickinson (1624–1707), attempted to demonstrate that ancient Greek culture had been built on Phoenician foundations and on the soil of Israel. In his demonstration, he 'de-Hellenized' one of the hallmarks of ancient Greek paganism: the famous oracle at Delphi as well as its mythic founder, Apollo, whom he identified with Joshua. Anticipating one of the central arguments of Pierre-Daniel Huet's *Demonstratio evangelica* (1694), Dickinson argued from the assumption that the mysteries of Scripture were echoed in the myths of the Greeks and Romans. Roling offers a detailed account of how Dickinson expanded this general idea by using, among other things, comparative etymology and mythological archaeology as his principal tools. Whereas Turnèbe, as Constantinidou reminds us, still found that the Hebrews had 'inherited the Platonic Muse and admitted her to their innermost

<sup>36</sup> As Asaph Ben-Tov explains in his article in this volume, the early modern *studia orientalia* are not equivalent to modern 'Near Eastern studies' since they usually also included North Africa and could even extend into South-East Asia.

sanctuary', Roling explains how Dickinson changed this picture by making Hellenism look thoroughly Semitic. From today's viewpoint, this might seem a *deconstruction* of what we now commonly see as typically Hellenic, yet Dickinson's 'de-Hellenization' of Delphi constitutes a shrewd and erudite attempt to construct Hellenism *alternatively* on Semitic foundations in order to re-evaluate ancient Greece as a venerable branch of the Elect Nation. 'Delphi revealed', Roling writes, 'that the events of the history of salvation had been burned into the memory of the Hellenes and that this knowledge, which saved the honour of the "pagan" Greeks, had simply been waiting to be freed once again from obscurity.'

Throughout the early modern period, the use of Greek learning was not necessarily oriented towards the scholarly 'reconstruction' of Greek antiquity. From Pontani's article, for instance, we learn that some Italian humanists used their Greek learning to create a Greek literature of their own. The concern for ancient Greek texts, as expressed by Italian humanists, was multifaceted and, at the same time, often mainly Latin-oriented. They took special interest in the Greek historians, above all, for what they had to say about Roman history; they studied Greek grammar, style and rhetoric in order to improve their competence in Latin, from matters of orthography to rhetorical issues of textual organization; they worked their way through Greek literature and Byzantine commentaries to emend corrupt passages in Latin authors (so that Greek learning appears as the handmaid of Latin textual criticism); and they mined the ancient Greek philosophers and theologians for solutions to the more theoretical problems which haunted their minds, for example, the need to bring pagan ideas into harmony with Christian doctrine.

The use of Greek learning outside the direct context of Greek philology was not restricted to Italian or Latin humanism, nor to the fifteenth century, though the Italian context of Greek studies has been researched much more intensively than have the Northern European uses of Greek learning. Especially for the study of Oriental history, Greek authors such as Herodotus and Plutarch were indispensable sources. As Roling's article already showed, the increasing awareness of Oriental cultures and languages also catalysed new questions about the cultural and historical connections between ancient Greece and the Near East. In the final paper of the collection, 'Hellenism in the Context of Oriental Studies', Asaph Ben-Tov demonstrates how Greek learning was used in this way by Johann Gottfried Lakemacher (1695–1736), professor of Greek (from 1724) and Oriental languages (from 1727) in German Helmstedt. Ben-Tov shows how Lakemacher broke with the notion of Oriental or Hebrew primacy exemplified by Dickinson's *Delphi phoenizantes*, discussed by Roling. Placing Lakemacher's ideas on ancient Greece and its role in Oriental history against the background of the controversial ideas of his colleague Hermann von der Hardt (1660–1746), Ben-Tov argues that Lakemacher 'desacralized' the ancient past by tracing biblical antiquity to ancient Greece instead of vice versa. Specifically, he argues, Lakemacher attempted to demonstrate that the Jews were not the origin of other religions, cultures and languages but rather 'were part of a network of ancient cultures, and were often the imitators rather than the source of inspiration'. Although Lakemacher kept his distance from the provocative ideas about the Greek origins of the Oriental languages, voiced by von der Hardt, he did trace various other cultural phenomena



to ancient Greece and Greek literature. Ben-Tov demonstrates, for example, how Lakemacher interpreted the traditional carrying of the *lulav* during Sukkot, against the authority of Daniel Heinsius (1580–1655), in terms of Josephus’s *θυρσοφορία* (‘carrying of the thyrsus’). For Lakemacher, the carrying of the *lulav* was just one example of how Bacchic rituals had entered post-biblical Jewish ceremonies. By uncovering and contextualizing the specificities of Lakemacher’s argument, Ben-Tov shows how he transferred his Greek learning beyond the limits of Greek philology *stricto sensu* and merged traditional textual antiquarianism with his own observations of a neighbouring Jewish community.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> The papers published here resulted from the workshop ‘Constructing Hellenism in Renaissance Europe and Classical Islam’, which took place at Humboldt University in Berlin on 21 and 22 November 2014. The initial idea was worked out by Damien Janos and myself; the event was co-moderated by Lukas Mülethaler. I am grateful to both for their help and also to Philip van der Eijk, as well as to the Berlin Centre for the History of Knowledge, the Department of Classics of Humboldt University, for their financial support and practical assistance. Thanks also to all participants in the workshop and especially to the speakers. Apart from the contributors to this issue, speakers included Dimitri Gutas, Olga Lizzini, Maria Mavroudi and Philippe Vallat. I am thankful to the contributors for their insightful comments on an earlier draft of this text. Steven Bockhardt kindly assisted with the preparation of the complete manuscript, and Jill Krayer meticulously went through the final text; I am indebted to both.