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## CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN AND HER KNOWLEDGE OF GREEK\*

TUA KORHONEN

In early modern Europe, knowledge of Greek was highly esteemed – for various reasons. Protestant interest in an accurate text of the Bible encouraged textual criticism and it was largely believed that nobody knows Latin well, the *lingua franca* of the time, without knowing some Greek. However, often the pro-Greek emphasis was not on the usefulness of Greek, or on the moral value of *humanitas* in general, but on the symbolic value of the Greek language. Humanist education was a social marker of the learned class, and Greek was not only the enchanting icing on that cake, but also a form of self-representation.<sup>1</sup>

Greek was, of course, mostly a male preserve. Queen Christina of Sweden (8 December 1626–19 April 1689) was one of the few women of her time in Sweden who studied Greek, but to what extent she read or could read Greek classics in the original is doubtful. In the following, I shall discuss the scope of Christina's Hellenism, her knowledge of and the value she put on Greek language and literature.

### Women learning Greek

From the Renaissance onwards, the European-wide debate about the nature of woman and her access to education, sometimes called the *Querelle des Femmes*,<sup>2</sup>

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\* Part of this paper was presented in the IX Conference of Nordic Women and Gender Historians, 11.–13. August 2008, Reykjavik, Iceland.

<sup>1</sup> As Simon Goldhill put it: "Learning Greek becomes an issue of cultural self-assertion (and not just educational policy) [...]". *Who Needs Greek? Contests in the Cultural History of Hellenism*, Cambridge 2002, 297.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., e.g., J. Kelly, *Women, History, and Theory*, Chicago 1986, 66–71, and 99 n. 16 for literature.

resulted in lists of *erudita* with their mastery of languages. The learned women could be viewed as anomalies of their gender, but also as bringing prestige to their class and family. Holt N. Parker has argued that one of the reasons for learned women's acceptance was the Renaissance virtue of magnificence, which celebrated the superfluous and court culture for spectacle. Other reasons, according to him, were the social background (nobility and royalty), family (humanist fathers and the education of brothers) and women's own love of learning.<sup>3</sup> However, higher education was generally thought to be useless or even morally depraving for women in their roles as housewives and mothers; the supposed fact about women's lack of abstract intelligence and capacity to rule herself was confirmed already by Aristotle (e.g. *Pol.* 1,1260a13) and Christian doctrines (e.g. *Eph.* 5,22–24, 1 *Tim.* 2,12–14).<sup>4</sup> Women themselves participated in the *Querelle des Femmes*, like Cologne-born Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678), who wrote a treatise about the capacity of the female mind for learning.<sup>5</sup> Schurman corresponded with Batshua Makin (née Rainolds), an English educationalist, dealing among other things with the education of Makin's pupil Princess Elizabeth, the daughter of Charles I. Schurman's and Makin's knowledge of Greek is attested in their exchange of letters dated to 1640 and 1645, which were written in ancient Greek.<sup>6</sup>

The actual level of the knowledge in Greek is not always as easy to detect. For example, the prodigiously learned Vendela Skytte (1608–1629) is reported to have known Greek among other languages, and her fame brought admiration to her father, the Chancellor of the University of Uppsala, Baron Johan Skytte,

<sup>3</sup> H. N. Parker "The Magnificence of Learned Women", *Viator* 38:2 (2007) 265–90 and "Women and Humanism: Nine Factors for the Woman Learning", *Viator* 35 (2004) 581–616, especially 582–3.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., K. Lekeby, *Kung Kristina – drottningen som ville byta kön*, Stockholm 2000, 19–20 and J. Stevenson, "Women and classical education in the early modern period", in Y. L. Too – N. Livingstone (eds.), *Pedagogy and Power. Rhetorics of Classical Learning* (Ideas in Context 50), Cambridge 1998, 81–109, especially 81, 93, 100.

<sup>5</sup> J. Stevenson, *Women Latin Poets. Language, Genre, and Authority, from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford 2005. About *De ingenii mulieribus ad doctrinam, et meliores litteras aptitudine* (1641), which was translated into English in 1659 as *The Learned Maid, or, Whether a Maid may be a Scholar*, see Stevenson (above n. 4) 88 and *op.cit.* 350.

<sup>6</sup> A. M. van Schurman *Opuscula Hebraea, Graeca, Latina, Gallica, Prosaica et Metrica* Utrecht 1652, 162–4 (L1v–L2v). See also <http://www.uni-mannheim.de/mateo/desbillons/opus/seite88.html>. Makin herself insisted on women's right to study the liberal arts in the program for her school for gentlewomen (in 1673). Stevenson (above n. 4) 105–6 and Stevenson (above n. 5) 376–7.

who had paid special attention to the education of his daughters.<sup>7</sup> However, Vendela's learning was mere potential: she married young, and died in childbirth. Of course, it was very seldom that learned women had an academic career, in any fields. In Greek studies, in addition to Schurman and Makin, there was Italian-born Olympia Fulvia Morata (1526–1555) who taught Greek for a short period at the University of Heidelberg and who wrote skillfull poems and paraphrases of Psalms in Greek before her early death. Another was Anne Le Fèvre Dacier (1654–1720), or Madame Dacier as she was called, a French scholar and translator of Homer.<sup>8</sup> All these women had a supporting family (father and/or husband) as a decisive factor in their education and its cultivation after maturity.

The case in point for the usefulness of Greek was the royal class. In England, Elizabeth I of England (1533–1603) and Lady Jane Grey (1536–1554), "The Nine Days' Queen"<sup>9</sup>, were taught Greek. Elizabeth started to study Greek with Roger Ascham, a Cambridge don, at the age of fifteen, and continued her studies into maturity.<sup>10</sup> Ascham wrote in his *Schoolmaster* that in the year of the plague (1563) – Elizabeth was then thirty years old – they perused Demosthenes' *On the False Embassy*, and that in general, the Queen of England read, Ascham boasted, more Greek every day than "some prebendary" read Latin in a whole week.<sup>11</sup> William Camden also mentions Elizabeth's Greek studies in the beginning of his two-volume treatise on her reign: Elizabeth had read Isocrates, Sophocles, and the New Testament in Greek with Ascham.<sup>12</sup> Camden stated that Elizabeth did not study the liberal arts for the sake of showiness (*pompa*), but because they were

<sup>7</sup> O. Plantin, *Vindemiola literaria, in qua Hellas sub Arcto, sive merita Svecorum in linguam Graecam brevissime et modeste exponuntur*, Wittenberg 1736, 39 and n. g. Plantin also mentions three other Swedish women who knew Greek: Vendela's sister Anna, Catharina Bael, a noble woman, and Sophia Elisabeth Brenner, the wife of the famous miniaturist Elias Brenner. See also Stevenson (above n. 5) 357.

<sup>8</sup> D. Vorländer, "Olympia Fulvia Morata – eine evangelische Humanistin in Schweinfurt", *ZBKG* 39 (1970) 109. Olympia Fulvia Morata, *Orationes, Dialogi, Epistolae, Carmina, tam Latina quam Graeca*, Basel 1562, 248. The book is digitised on the website of the University of Mannheim: <http://www.uni-mannheim.de/mateo/desbillons/olimp/seite133.html>. Her writings are also collected by Holt N. Parker (*The Complete Writings of an Italian Heretic*, Chicago 2003). See also R. H. Bainton, *Women of the Reformation in Germany and Italy*, Minneapolis 1974, 254 and Stevenson (above n. 5) 285–8.

<sup>9</sup> Stevenson (above n. 4) 104 and (above n. 5) 263.

<sup>10</sup> L. V. Ryan (ed.), *The Schoolmaster (1570) by Roger Ascham*, Ithaca NY 1967, xvi–xvii, xxi.

<sup>11</sup> Ryan (above n. 10) 7 and 56.

<sup>12</sup> W. Camden, *Rerum Anglicarum et Hibernicarum Annales regnante Elisabetha*, Frankfurt am Main 1616, 23 *Apparatus* [B4r].

useful for life and for cultivating virtues.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the seventeenth-century biographer wanted to emphasize the moral value of *humanitas*, especially for a female monarch. As Karin Tegenborg Falkdalen has argued, the education received by reigning queens in early modern Europe was important for their legitimacy as monarchs.<sup>14</sup> There were always doubts about women's frailty not only on the intellectual but also on the moral level.

### Christina's education

One would expect that education was especially crucial in Christina's case, because her claim to the throne was not a stable matter: she was the first reigning Queen of Sweden, who had gained her status through succession.<sup>15</sup> What seems certain is that she received a good education, the main lines of which were quite similar to those a male successor to the throne would have received.<sup>16</sup> Gustavus Adolphus, who died in battle when Christina was only five years old, had looked after his daughter's education by appointing his Chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, as a trustee and protector of Christina's upbringing. He had also selected a governor, a subgovernor and a preceptor for his daughter.<sup>17</sup>

The last mentioned, Johannes Matthiae, was the most influential of Christina's early teachers. He taught her from the time she was six until she was fifteen years old, when she began to have her share of a monarch's duties.<sup>18</sup> We have two accounts of the instruction Johannes Matthiae gave to Christina from February 1638 until 1641, that is, when Christina was 11–14 years old.<sup>19</sup> According to

<sup>13</sup> Camden (above n. 12) 24 [B4v].

<sup>14</sup> K. Tegenborg Falkdalen, *Kungen är en kvinna. Retorik och praktik kring kvinnliga monarker under tidigmodern tid*, Umeå 2003, 134–42, 209.

<sup>15</sup> The right of female succession had only been introduced in Sweden about thirty years before Christina was born. Tegenborg Falkdalen (above n. 14) 49. L. Åslund, *Att fostra en kung. Om drottning Kristinas utbildning*, Stockholm 1995, 41.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Tegenborg Falkdalen (above n. 14) 137–8, Åslund (above n. 15) and M. L. Clarke, "The Making of a Queen: The Education of Christina of Sweden", *History Today* 28 (April 1978) 228–35. Unfortunately, Clarke has no specific references to sources. Christina was even proclaimed "king", not "queen" at her coronation, which, according to Tegenborg Falkdalen (above n. 14) 133–4, 209, was "a sign of ambivalence surrounding a reigning queen".

<sup>17</sup> Clarke (above n. 16) 228.

<sup>18</sup> Christina attained her maturity in 1644, but her official coronation happened only when she was twenty-three years old, in 1650.

<sup>19</sup> These accounts are drafts, which Matthiae sketched for official reports; they are preserved in a manuscript N183, 5r, 12r–v, University of Uppsala (*Catalogus collectionis Nordinianae* II).

them, the chief subjects were, at first, Latin and rhetoric, then history and politics. Christina also wrote essays and declamations in Latin, and some of her exercise books are still extant.<sup>20</sup> Christina proceeded on to more complicated Roman authors and read Livy, Caesar, and Curtius' *History of Alexander the Great* – a historical figure that became an idol for her – and Biblical history.<sup>21</sup> What counted most in Christina's education was her future role as a Christian monarch.

There is no explicit reference to Greek studies – not a Greek word – in Christina's exercise books or in Johannes Matthiae's accounts of the instruction he gave to her. However, Aesop's *Fables* and *Carmina Catonis* are mentioned in the lists of texts, which Christina had studied.<sup>22</sup> Aesop was usually read in the original at the elementary level of Greek studies – *Fables* commonly formed a part of Greek grammars of the day – and even the latter text, popular moral aphorisms attributed to Dionysius Cato, was often read in Greek translation done by the Byzantine scholar Maximus Planudes.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, in his compact Latin grammar, which Johannes Matthiae published for Christina's use in 1635, he listed Greek and Roman writers, whom he recommended her to read.<sup>24</sup> What is interesting is that this list (*Indiculus*) included not only the familiar authors like Homer as the best of the poets, and Polybius of historians, but also Theognis, Phocylides (i.e., pseudo-Phocylides) and *carmen auream* (i.e., pseudo-Pythagoras' *Golden verses*), of which the three last ones were used like Aesop's *Fables* in the Swedish schools and universities for elementary Greek instruction.<sup>25</sup> It is obvious that to be a cultivated person, one

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See also Åslund (above n. 15) 110–2 and Appendix 229–30, J. Arckenholtz, *Mémoires, concernant Christine reine de Suede, vols. I–IV*, Amsterdam – Leipzig 1751–1760, vol. IV, 195–6.

<sup>20</sup> N183, see above n. 19. The manuscript contains Christina's letter concepts (*Exemplar Epistolarum Christinae Suecorum etc. Reginae designatae*) and *exercitia styli*. See also Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. IV, 197–9. Christina wrote Latin letters and cited Roman authors in Latin in her Swedish letters, too, e.g., Tacitus in the letter dated 27 November 1647, see Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. I, 133.

<sup>21</sup> Åslund (above n. 15) 138–41, 229–30.

<sup>22</sup> N183 (see above n. 19) 5r.

<sup>23</sup> About Cato's sentences, see, e.g., Åslund (above n. 15) 135–6; about their translations into Greek, see T. Korhonen, *Ateena Auran rannoilla*. E-thesis, University of Helsinki, Helsinki 2004, 29, 36, 88. (<http://ethesis.helsinki.fi/julkaisut/hum/klask/vk/korhonen2/>). Jan Comenius' encyclopaedic *Janua linguarum*, which is also included in Matthiae's account [N183 (see above n. 19) 5r.], was often published in Greek translation, see Korhonen (*op. cit.*) 28.

<sup>24</sup> Johannes Matthiae, *Ratio discendi linguam Latinam pro Christina Suecorum &c. regina designata*, Stockholm 1635, 49–56.

<sup>25</sup> Ps.-Pythagoras' and Ps.-Phocylides' texts were already included in Constantinus Lascaris' Greek grammar (1495), which was one of the first Greek grammars in the West: Korhonen (above n. 23) 21.

needs to read Homer, and if not in the original, then in Latin, but the question is: why read elementary Greek texts in any other language but Greek? The book also contains some Greek words and phrases, like the reference to Polybius' *Histories* (*Ecloga Polybii περὶ πολιτειῶν*).<sup>26</sup>

Remarkably, there is other evidence that Johannes Matthiae, who had graduated from the University of Leiden, favoured acquiring an excellent knowledge of Greek at an early age. In 1636, he published a treatise on education (*Ratio studiorum*) for the *Collegium illustre* in Stockholm, a school for boys of noble families, where he himself had been principal (1625–29).<sup>27</sup> There he states that nobody knows Latin well without knowing Greek, and that boys should learn Greek if they wanted to be honoured as learned men. However, one only needs to be able to read Greek, speaking Greek was not necessary.<sup>28</sup> At the end of the *Ratio studiorum*, there is a timetable for pupils aged 7–12, in which it is advised that boys should start to study the Greek alphabet at eight years of age. The next year they would read Aesop and some Greek New Testament, then, in the next year, the *sententiae* of the Seven Sages and Plutarch's Περὶ παίδων ἀγωγῆς (i.e., pseudo-Plutarch's). Homer they would read when they were eleven (the first book of the *Iliad*) together with Plutarch's "Sayings of kings and commanders", then one of Demosthenes' Olynthiac speeches, Isocrates' *Ad Demonium* and even Nonnus' paraphrase of the Gospel of John. Finally, they would read one comedy by Aristophanes, another speech of Demosthenes and the Epistle to the Romans when they were thirteen years old.<sup>29</sup>

It is surely a justifiable assumption that less Greek was read at the *Collegium illustre* than what Johannes Matthiae recommended. However, Greek was sometimes valued especially among the nobility. For example, the son of Christina's protector, Axel Oxenstierna, read Greek quite extensively. Erik Oxenstierna's private teacher announced to Count Oxenstierna in 1639 that fifteen-year-old Erik's instruction also included writing and speaking Greek – *scribendo pariter et loquendo*.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Johannes Matthiae (above n. 24) 50, 51, 56.

<sup>27</sup> Johannes Matthiae, *Ratio studiorum ante decennium ad petitionem dd. directorum illustris: collegij Stokholmensis conscripta, nunc vero in gratiam juventutis edita a J.M. Gotho*, Stockholm 1636. The book is translated into Swedish by C. A. Brolén in B. R. Hall (ed.), *Erasmii De civilitate samt Matthiae Ratio och Libellus* (ÅSU 17), Lund 1926, 57–88. Johannes Matthiae dedicated the book to Johan Skytte.

<sup>28</sup> Johannes Matthiae (above n. 27) [A11r].

<sup>29</sup> Johannes Matthiae (above n. 27) C3r–C5v. Åslund (above n. 15) 174. Furthermore, Johannes Matthiae mentions Johannes Posselius' famous *Colloquia familiaria* (see Korhonen [above n. 23] 97–9) and *Evangelia Dominicalia*, both in Greek and Latin.

<sup>30</sup> C. Annerstedt, *Uppsala universitets historia I* (1477–1654), Uppsala 1877, 395–396. The let-



Learning Greek was demanded not only of boys from noble families. A Swedish school ordinance from the year 1611 recommended that boys in *scholae provinciales* should read texts from the Greek New Testament and Aesop, and later, namely in the fourth class, when they were in their early teens, also some texts by Plutarch, Isocrates and even by Hesiod in Greek.<sup>31</sup> The next school decree, which was issued in 1649 and called "Christina's School Ordinance", because the Queen had a certain effect on it with the aid of Axel Oxenstierna, displayed a substantial list of Greek authors as well.<sup>32</sup> The ideal and the practice were, without doubt, wide apart in this case, too. What is certain is that schoolboys had to study some Greek before puberty, that is, Greek was part of the normal curriculum. Against this background, it would be curious if Johannes Matthiae had not taught any Greek to Christina, at least the Greek alphabet and some Greek *sententiae*. After all, we have no complete account of the instruction Johannes Matthiae gave to Christina.

Christina's first known teacher in Greek<sup>33</sup> was the German-born Johannes Freinshemius, who had been a *professor Skytteanus* at the University of Uppsala since 1642, and whom Christina summoned not only as her royal librarian, but also appointed as the state's official historiographer in 1647.<sup>34</sup> In December of the same year, Freinshemius delivered a panegyric on Christina's 21st birthday, where he stated that Christina learnt to read Greek in one month's time – not saying if this (obviously exaggerated) development had occurred under his tutelage or not.<sup>35</sup>

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ter is reprinted in the Appendix to Annerstedt's history of the University of Uppsala (Bihang I, 365-367).

<sup>31</sup> *Lectiones et lectionum ordo pro scholis cathedralibus et provincialibus* reprinted in B.R. Hall (ed.), *Sveriges allmänna läroverksstadgar 1561–1905: 1561, 1611 och 1649 års skolordningar* (ÅSU 4), Lund 1921, 25–40.

<sup>32</sup> Schoolboys read Aesop's *Fables* and some excerpts from the New Testament in elementary schools, but Isocrates, Xenophon, and Plutarch in the Gymnasium, see *Ratio informandi in scholis trivialibus et gymnasiis* reprinted in Hall (above n. 31) 41–111, 50, 104.

<sup>33</sup> An old biographical tradition states that Christina could read Thucydides in 1644 (see e.g. Arckenholtz [above n. 19] vol. I, 30 and 30 n. b), that is, at the age of eighteen. However, there is no evidence for it.

<sup>34</sup> About Freinshemius, see, e.g., I. Kajanto, *Christina Heroína. Mythological and Historical Exemplifications in the Latin Panegyrics on Christina Queen of Sweden* (AASF B 269), Helsinki 1993, 17.

<sup>35</sup> J. Freinshemius, *Panegyrica virtuti et honori serenissimae reginae quum natalem suum alterum et vicesimum celebraret*, Stockholm 1647, Q5. The oration is reprinted in *Johannes Freinshemii orationes cum quibusdam declamationibus*, Frankfurt 1662 (see p. 369 for this passage). See Kajanto (above n. 34) 17 (no. 27.1). Both Plantin (above n. 7) 37–8 n. g and E.

French ambassador Pierre Chanut came to Christina's court in 1645. His letter dated February 1648 to a French cabinet minister gives valuable information on Christina's interests, and it is more reliable as a testimony than Freinshemius' flattery. Chanut reports to his compatriot that the Queen can speak Latin, French, Dutch, German and Swedish and is also studying Greek in which she is making progress. While Chanut himself found Greek a difficult language, the Queen had compared her Greek studies to the way she learnt to play chess: Greek was to her "un divertissement" alongside more serious studies ("lectures serieuses") like reading Tacitus.<sup>36</sup>

Later in the same year, 1648, a German named Joachim Gerdes, a philologist and a jurist from the University of Rostock, was invited to the court. During his sojourn in Sweden, Gerdes published a translation of Cebes' *Tabula* and Epictetus' *Enchiridion* (1649), which he dedicated to Christina. In his Latin dedication, Gerdes praises Christina for her enthusiasm for Greek literature and reports that the Queen likes to read the New Testament, Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus.<sup>37</sup> It is well known that Roman Stoicism was a lasting interest of Christina. Cebes' *Tabula* was a vague text written in the first century CE, but like *Enchiridion*, it was a common Greek textbook in early modern universities because it was thought to be morally edifying and its Greek was quite easy to read.<sup>38</sup> Thus, it is conceivable, that Gerdes also instructed Christina Greek but on quite an elementary level.

Freinshemius, too, dedicated his study to the Queen. In his introduction of his treatise of Livy's lost books (1649), he mentions that he had been the Queen's teacher for two years and that Christina's progress has been outstanding: *Quum Graecarum literarum amore flagraret [...] ista Tua arte factum est, [...] ut post experimenta in Polybio, in Plutarcho facta, Platonem, at quem Virum! ita legas ut operae meae vix leviter egens, cursim exponas eleganti latinitate verbisque significantissimis [...]*.<sup>39</sup> Freinshemius even praised Christina for proposing emenda-

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M. Fant, *Historiola litteraturae Graecae in Svecia*, Uppsala 1778–1785, I, 90 n. h cite Freinshemius' oration.

<sup>36</sup> C. Callmer, *Königin Christina, ihre Bibliothekare und ihre Handschriften* (ActaB 30), Stockholm 1977, 22 and n. 31 (text). See also Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. I, 222 and Fant (above n. 35) 91 n. p.

<sup>37</sup> J. Gerdes, *Des Kebes recht guldene Tafel, und Epictetvs ädeles Handbuechlein, aus fleissig verbässerten griechischen Texten getrewlich von Joachim Gerdes verdolmetschet*, Stockholm 1649, dedication. See also Plantin (above n. 7) 35–36 n. g and Fant (above n. 35) 89–90. Both have a citation from Gerdes' dedication.

<sup>38</sup> Korhonen (above n. 23) 98.

<sup>39</sup> J. Freinshemius, *Supplementorum Livianorum ad Christinam Reginam Decas. Auctore I.*

tions to Greek texts with convincing arguments.<sup>40</sup> Though Freinshemius' tone in general is flattering, it seems nonetheless plausible that he had read these authors together with the Queen, and helped her to translate passages into Latin.

In the spring of 1649, Christina had two sons of outstanding Dutch scholars in her court: Isaacus Vossius and Nicolaus Heinsius. The father of the latter, Daniel Heinsius, was known as an excellent philologist and also for his genius in Greek versifying.<sup>41</sup> However, it was Isaacus Vossius, son of Gerhard Johannes Vossius, a famous professor of rhetoric in Leiden, who confirms in a letter written in May 1649 to a friend and the leading philologist of the time, Claudius Salmasius, that Christina reads Polybius in the original.<sup>42</sup> Salmasius was waiting for a call to Christina's court as well.

It was in May 1649, too, when Johannes Gezelius the Elder praised Christina's daily devotion to Greek – in Greek: Ταύτης τῆς γλώττης ἀρχαίας, ἀγίας, ἡδείας, ἐμφορικῆς, εὐπόρου, χρηστῆς καὶ ἀναγκαίας ἕμερος ὅτε καὶ ΤΗΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΕΙΟΤΗΤΑ ΣΟΥ, ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΑ ΠΑΝΙΛΑΕ, αἰρεῖ καὶ σπουδῆ οὐκ ὀλίγη καθ' ἡμέραν ταύτη τῇ γλώττῃ δίδοται.<sup>43</sup> The eulogy is at the end of the Greek dedication to Christina, which Gezelius included in his New Testament Greek Lexicon.<sup>44</sup> The Professor of Greek and Hebrew at the University of Tartu in Estonia (then a part of Sweden) exhibits in the six-page long dedication his ideas on the history and features of the Greek language. He begins with a long address to the Queen with all her royal epithets and states that one has to always consider

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*Freinshemio*, Stockholm 1649, [9r–v]. See also Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. I, 344 n.\* gives an abridgement of this passage and Clarke (above n. 16) 231–2 a loose translation into English.

<sup>40</sup> Freinshemius (above n. 39) [9v].

<sup>41</sup> Daniel Heinsius published his Greek poems along with his Latin poems in a collection in 1649.

<sup>42</sup> *Minimum in ea est [...] quod poetas fere omnes memoriter teneat, quod Polybium Graece legat et intelligat*, see Callmer (above n. 36) 47 and 78 note 16. Isaacus Vossius' contact with Christina in general, see Callmer *op. cit.*, 45–57, Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. I, 268 and Fant (above n. 35) 89.

<sup>43</sup> J. Gezelius the Elder, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum*, Tartu 1649, the dedication, 2r–5r. Gezelius summarises here the seven main characteristic features (according to him) of Greek language: its antiquity, holiness, pleasantness, emphasis, rich vocabulary, usefulness, and necessity.

<sup>44</sup> Christina had probable planned for Gezelius to be one of the members of a theological collegium, which would have been established for a union between the Lutherans and Calvinists. The plan did not succeed. See, e.g., Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. I, 227 n.\* and 328; J. Päll, "Academia Gustaviana (1632–1656) trükistes esinev titulatuur ja dateerimine täpsustusi", in E. Küng (ed.) *Läänemere provintside arenguperspektiivid Rootsi suurriigis 16./17. sajandil*, Tartu 2006, 106–7.

the worth of a thing, which one is going to study and that this pertains also to languages.<sup>45</sup> This wording suggests that Christina was still – in spring 1649 – in the beginning of her Greek studies.

In September 1649 one of the most brilliant intellectuals of the day came to Sweden – but René Descartes' fatal stay at the Queen's court lasted only few months. Descartes complained in a letter dated on the 9 of October 1649 to Elizabeth of Bohemia that Christina was more focussed on studying Greek and collecting Greek manuscripts than studying philosophy.<sup>46</sup> In that year, the Queen had indeed received the royal book and manuscript collection from Prague as booty from the Thirty Years' War.

That Christina continued to be interested in her Greek studies is suggested by a letter, which Roland Desmarets wrote to Christina in 1650. Desmarets advises the Queen in her studies by listing important authors and using even some Greek words in his Latin letter. The French philologist recommends especially Plato and his Πολιτεία, Xenophon's Παιδεία Κύρου, and mentions that Plutarch is an excellent βιόγραφος. It seems that Desmarets was encouraging Christina not only to continue, but to begin anew her Greek studies. We may ask why it was necessary to list these well-known authors to the cultivated Queen. At the same time, he praises Christina's library as superior to the Alexandrian library, because it was constructed for serious study, not for ostentation.<sup>47</sup>

Christina's extensive library was abundant with Greek authors. There were both manuscripts and early prints, and scholarly works on Greek literature. Many of the scholars in Christina's court served as acquirers of books from Germany, France and the Low Countries.<sup>48</sup> The valuable collection can be seen as one factor

<sup>45</sup> Gezelius the Elder (see above n. 43) the dedication, 2r–v: καθὼς παντὸς τοῦ πράγματος τὴν ἀξιότητα καὶ τίμημα περινοῆσαι χρή, πρὶν ἢ περὶ αὐτὸ ὑπερσπουδάζειν· οὕτω καὶ τὴν τῶν γλωττῶν ἀξίαν πρότερον διασκέπειν πρεπὸν ἐστίν, ἢ αὐταῖς ὄλως προσέχειν.

<sup>46</sup> C. Adam–P. Tannery (eds.) *Oeuvres de René Descartes. Correspondance 5: Mai 1647–Février 1650*, Paris 1903, 430. See also Fant (above n. 35) 90–1. Elizabeth of Bohemia (1618–1680), who was the daughter of Elizabeth Stuart and granddaughter of James I of England, was, for her part, nicknamed "La Grecque" for her impressive knowledge of classical languages. See, e.g., E. Harth "Cartesian Women", *YFS* 80 (1991) 147.

<sup>47</sup> Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. II (Appendice), 52–4. See also Kajanto (above n. 34) 109. Desmarets, a friend of Isaacus Vossius, had taught his niece, Mary Dupré, Greek; see Harth (above n. 46) 149.

<sup>48</sup> Callmer (above n. 36), especially 28–42 and C. Callmer, "Queen Christina's Library of printed Books in Rome", in M. von Platen, *Queen Christina of Sweden: documents and studies*, Stockholm 1966; Fant (above n. 35) 97–102.

which lured scholars to Sweden. At the beginning of the 1650's, classical scholars, like Salmasius in 1650, and Marcus Meibom, who dedicated his renowned work on ancient Greek music to Christina, and young Pierre-Daniel Huet, both in 1652, visited Christina's court.<sup>49</sup> For Huet, the visit was even pivotal for his later career due to his finding of an important manuscript of Origen in Christina's library.<sup>50</sup>

Christina did not need to count only on foreign scholars. The leading classicist of Sweden at that time, Johannes Schefferus, published a study about Pythagoreanism in 1664.<sup>51</sup> In the letter to the reader, he points out that he started the study at Christina's request – most certainly before the abdication in 1654. Schefferus tells how he ignited Christina's interest on the subject and how she then perused Iamblichus, Porphyrius, and Diogenes Laertius in order to find references to the Pythagoreans, finally asking Schefferus to collect testimonia for her.<sup>52</sup> It is, of course, most plausible that Christina did not read, e.g., Iamblichus in the original, or, at least, not without assistance. It deserves to be underlined that only Freinshemius', Gerdes' and Vossius' evidence suggest that Christina read more difficult Greek authors (like Plato) in Greek. We may also assume that in these cases, she read together with a scholar, like Elizabeth I of England did with Ascham.

In Christina's case, her own enthusiasm seems to be crucial to her start on studying Greek. She had no Ascham, but when her manuscript collection attracted eminent scholars to her court, she noticed that she lacked something highly valued. In addition, she had an obvious role model in the learned queen in Elizabeth I. Christina knew Elizabeth's career well, because she had read Camden's history of the reign of Queen Elizabeth under the tutelage of Johannes Matthiae.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, it was Elizabeth to whom Christina was most often compared in the panegyrics.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Plantin (above n. 7) 40, 41 and n. 1 (an anecdote about Huet). Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. I, 241–2. A list of foreign scholars in Christina's court, see S. Åkermann, *Queen Christina of Sweden and her Circle. The Transformation of a Seventeenth-century Philosophical Libertine*, Leiden – New York – København – Köln 1991, 104–7.

<sup>50</sup> See, e.g., Callmer (above n. 36) 72.

<sup>51</sup> Schefferus was a German, but a temporary resident in Sweden: he was employed at Uppsala University from 1648 to his death.

<sup>52</sup> J. Schefferus, *De natura & constitutione philosophiæ italicæ seu Pythagoricæ*, Uppsala 1664, [vii]. Fant (above n. 35) 91 and n. n; according to Åkermann (above n. 49) 97, this happened in 1653, but there is no reference to that year in Schefferus' preface.

<sup>53</sup> N183 (see above n. 19) 12v: *Historia Elizabethæ Camdeni*. See also Åslund (above n. 15) 85, 230. The first volume of Camden's history was published in 1615, the second in 1625.

<sup>54</sup> She was also compared to Lady Jane Grey, see Kajanto (above n. 34) 102. Others were,

## The Queen who knows Greek

Christina's erudition was sometimes praised as surpassing even male monarchs. At least in one eulogy, her superiority was her knowledge of Greek. A German scholar, Lucas Langermannus, wrote in his oration, which was published in 1650 in Tübingen, that Christina was interested in Thucydides like the Spanish emperor Charles V, but unlike the emperor, the Queen could read Thucydides in the original. Langermannus also disclosed that Christina kept Homer's *Iliad* under her pillow like Alexander the Great had done, however, Christina not only slept on Homer, but also read him.<sup>55</sup> The long eulogy was without doubt useful for Langermannus – the next year he was recruited to help Nicolaus Heinsius collect manuscripts for the Queen.<sup>56</sup>

Although Christina's learning was a common topic in the eulogies<sup>57</sup>, the impressive list of authors, which, for example, Johan Sparre stated Christina had read (Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Thucydides, Polybius, Plutarch, and Diogenes Laertius),<sup>58</sup> reflects the erudition of the young Baron himself rather than the Greek studies of the Queen. Sparre recited his congratulatory speech on Christina's 22nd birthday in December 1648; the next year he got a generous travel grant from Christina.<sup>59</sup>

Both Langermannus and Sparre wrote their panegyrics in Latin. We may suppose that when the image of Christina as the Queen who can read Greek spread, the self-promoting eulogists might also have pondered on the profit of choosing Greek as the language of their panegyrics to her. Gezelius' Greek dedication, which was written in 1649, coincides with Christina's most intent interest in Greek. However, there was one earlier Greek text connected to her. Johannes Paulinus

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e.g., Olympia Fulvia Morata in 1650 (Kajanto, *op. cit.*, 13 (no. 11.3), 90) and Anna Maria van Schurman in 1651. Kajanto refers to the young lady from *Belga* alluded to in two panegyrics (*op. cit.*, 73 [no. 25.1] and 95 [no. 75]). It is certain that the references are to van Schurman. The north of the Netherlands was called *Belgica Foederata* during the seventeenth century. Christina visited Schurman in Utrecht in 1654, see Callmer (above n. 36) 178; Christina had one of Schurman's books (see above n. 6) in her collection, see Callmer (above n. 48) 67.

<sup>55</sup> Kajanto (above n. 34) 21 (no. 45) and 104.

<sup>56</sup> Callmer (above n. 36) 62. Langermannus met Christina only in 1653 when he aided Isaacus Vossius in arranging Christina's library.

<sup>57</sup> Kajanto (above n. 34) 89-95.

<sup>58</sup> Plantin (above n. 7) 38 n. g. Fant (above n. 35) 91. E. Meyer *Program utg. vid Uppsala universitetet 1599-1700* (UUÅ 1905), Uppsala 1905, 36 (no. 279).

<sup>59</sup> Annerstedt (above n. 30) 336-7. About Sparre's later career, see Kajanto (above n. 34) 32 (no. 76).

(later ennobled as Olivekrantz), delivered an oration in Greek at the University of Uppsala in October 1646, in which he praised Christina.<sup>60</sup> The speech is lost and although later in his career Olivekrantz became the Counsellor of the State and Christina's trustee, it seems plausible that the purpose of the oration would rather have been to show Olivekrantz's Greek erudition to the academic circles than please Christina with the image of the queen who understands Greek.<sup>61</sup> To show off his erudition was also Sveno Gelzenius' main purpose when he delivered his speech on resurrection in June 1649 at the recently founded Academy of Turku, Finland. Gelzenius, however, mentions in his Latin dedication to Christina that he had written his Greek oration to Christina to "look upon".<sup>62</sup> This oration was the first Greek publication issued from the Academy's printing press, and Gelzenius had himself cast the Greek type.<sup>63</sup>

More important than these academic Greek orations for Christina's image of the Queen who knows Greek were two Greek dissertations, which were dedicated to Christina and composed during 1648–1650. The first dissertation was defended at the University of Uppsala in December 1648.<sup>64</sup> There is some dubious evidence that Christina even attended the Greek *disputatio* as a guest of honour.<sup>65</sup> It is true that Christina visited the University of Uppsala several times and also attended public (Latin) defences.<sup>66</sup> The subject of the dissertation, public edu-

<sup>60</sup> Invitation to come to listen the oration, see Meyer (above n. 58) 32 (no. 244). See also Annerstedt (above n. 30) 396 and Fant (above n. 35) 104. Paulinus was the son of the archbishop of Uppsala Johannes Paulinus Gothus.

<sup>61</sup> Besides, Freinshemius began to teach Christina Greek only in 1647, see above n. 39.

<sup>62</sup> S. Gelzenius, Λογάρτιον περὶ τῆς τῶν νεκρῶν ἀναστάσεως, Turku 1649, A1v: [...] *serenissimae Tuae Clementiae inspiciendae*.

<sup>63</sup> The publication also includes a Latin panegyric to the Queen (*Epos ad serenissimam & Potentissimam Reginam Christinam*) composed by Gelzenius' fellow-student, see Gelzenius (above n. 62) B4v.

<sup>64</sup> Henricus Ausius (*praeses*) – Petrus Rezander (*respondent*), Περὶ τῆς τῶν νέων παιδείας κατὰ τὸν Ἀριστοτέλη, βιβλ. ι. κεφ. α. Πολ., Uppsala 1648.

<sup>65</sup> J. H. Lidén, *Catalogus disputationum in academiis et gymnasiis Sveciae, atque etiam, a Svecis, extra patriam habitarum. Sectio I: Disputationes Upsalienses, 1778, 53: ventilata praesente Regina Christina*.

<sup>66</sup> Annerstedt (above n. 30) alludes to three disputations of (Latin) dissertations, which Christina attended. The first one, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1647, is mentioned also in the protocol of the Consistorium of the University, see H. Sallander (ed.) *Uppsala Universitet Akademiska konsistoriets protokoll III 1641–1649*, Uppsala 1969, 216. The other dissertations were publically defended in July 1648 and on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1653; for the last one, which dealt with Hebrew language, Christina even named an opponent. See Annerstedt (above n. 30) 318 n. 1, 319 n. 4, and 349.

cation, was Christina's special interest at that time due to the above-mentioned new school ordinance, which was issued the next year. The defender of the dissertation, Petrus Rezander, had studied under the guidance of Christina's tutor, Johannes Freinshemius.<sup>67</sup> In the first part of the dissertation, Rezander<sup>68</sup> even praises the Queen,<sup>69</sup> although, the eulogies to the monarch were usually placed at the end of the dissertation. Whether Christina was present at the *disputatio* or not, the next year Rezander was, nevertheless, sent to Paris to copy some Greek manuscripts for the Queen.<sup>70</sup>

The second Greek dissertation dedicated to the Queen (1650) was supervised by Gezelius the Elder and defended by Ericus Emporagrius at the Stockholm Gymnasium.<sup>71</sup> On the title page, it is announced that Christina had instigated the dissertation: ἐπὶ κελεύσματι ὑπερδοξοτάτης καὶ δυναμικωτάτης τῆς βασιλίσσης προστιθήσεται.<sup>72</sup> Emporagrius became later the bishop of Strängnäs and served as a chaplain to Christina.<sup>73</sup>

There were also short Greek eulogies to Christina. Two French scholars wrote four Greek epideictic poems, consisting only of one distich each, which functioned as thanks for the gold medals, which Christina had given them. The medal, which shows Christina as Pallas Athene, was struck in 1650 celebrating Christina's coronation.<sup>74</sup> Two other Greek panegyric poems to Christina were

<sup>67</sup> Freinshemius wrote a congratulation (dated in November 1648) to Rezander, in which he mentioned that Rezander's model in his study of literature has been Queen Christina. Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. I, 324 cites a part of Freinshemius' congratulation.

<sup>68</sup> The *praeses*, Greek professor Henricus Ausius, could be the writer of the dissertation as well. Ausius supervised four other Greek dissertations, two in 1650 and two in 1658.

<sup>69</sup> Ausius – Rezander (above n. 64) A2r: Ἀνάσσης εὐσεβ[ε]στάτης, ποικίλαις Ἐπιστήμαις, καὶ γλώτταις, καὶ ἀρεταῖς θαυμασέως κεκοσμημένης τετυχηκότες ἡμεῖς, παμμάκαρές ἐσμεν.

<sup>70</sup> Callmer (above n. 36) 154–5, with a list of the manuscripts.

<sup>71</sup> J. Gezelius the Elder (*praeses*) – E. Emporagrius (*respondent*), *Συζήτησις θεολογική, περὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀδιαφθόρου*, Stockholm 1650. The dissertation dealt with the original purity of man and the creation of body and soul.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. J. Gezelius the Elder, *Index librorum & tractatum*, Turku 1684, 1: "[...] *ad mandatum Reginae Christinae.*"

<sup>73</sup> However, Gezelius the Elder could have been the author and Emporagrius' Greek dedication, where he mentions Christina's regal epithets and then briefly wishes Christina peace and happiness, may be his only contribution to the dissertation.

<sup>74</sup> Kajanto (above n. 34) 33–4 (no. 85) and Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. II (Appendice), 55. However, when these epigrams were written, is difficult to say. One was most probably composed shortly after the coronation, because Henri de Valois, who wrote it, indeed delivered an oration at Christina's coronation. A French lawyer and philologist Gilles Ménage (Aegidius Menagius) wrote three other Greek "medal-epigrams". One of them is clearly composed after



both published after her abdication, in Rome in 1656. The longer one (*Christinae Suecorum Reginae plausus trilinguis*) was a "lapidary" poem of six pages and was written by Ottavio Falconieri, a young member of Christina's Roman "Academy".<sup>75</sup>

Medals were one means of promoting one's public image. In 1653, a medallion bearing a Greek inscription was struck in Christina's honour. The phrase ΟΡΘΟΣ ΟΥΧΙ ΟΡΘΟΜΕΝΟΣ [!]<sup>76</sup> is an abbreviation of Marcus Aurelius' sentence ὀρθὸν οὖν εἶναι χρή, οὐχὶ ὀρθούμενον (*Med.* 3,5). More famous is the ΜΑΚΕΛΩΣ medal, which was executed in 1659 (and restruck in 1665) in Rome. The medallion points to Christina's uniqueness<sup>77</sup> and it was her whimsical way of establishing her role in the learned world of Rome.

Some panegyrists stated that Christina had abdicated in order to concentrate on her studies.<sup>78</sup> According to our evidence, Greek was no longer among her interests. In her unfinished autobiography, which she began to write only late in life, Christina states that she studied "all languages", but mentions by name only modern ones (German, French, Italian, Spanish), not stressing her Classical learning.<sup>79</sup> However, the image of Christina as the Queen who can read Greek stayed. This is indicated in the Latin letter, which Madame Dacier wrote to her in March 1678, when the Queen was 51 years old and well established in Rome with her *Accademia Reale*. The French scholar was presenting her translation of Publius Annii Florus to Christina and the elegant letter contains some Greek words and even two verses (without loci) in Greek<sup>80</sup> – one of them is identified

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the abdication, because it speaks about leaving the Swedish sceptre: Περὶδων ἡ σκῆπτρα φέρει, λείπον [!] δὲ Σουήδων. Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. II (Appendice), 55 and Arckenholtz, vol. I, 264.

<sup>75</sup> Kajanto (above n. 34) 16–8 (nos. 23, 29). In the same year (1656), Christina impressed her librarian Lucas Holstenius by consulting him about a Greek love epigram, whose author she was not sure of – she only remembered the content and suggested different authors; see Fant (above n. 35) 92. The epigram in question is preserved by Diogenes Laertius (3,29). About Holstenius, see, e.g., Callmer (above n. 36) 193–4.

<sup>76</sup> E. Brenner, *Thesaurus nummorum Sveo-Gothicorum*, Stockholm 1731, 185–6 (tab. II, no. 3), Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. II, 341 no. 61.

<sup>77</sup> ΜΑΚΕΛΩΣ is a Swedish word in Greek letters – Swedish *makalös* means "without a rival in excellence", "incomparable", "without spouse". See Callmer (above n. 48) 310, 314 (no. 35), Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. II, 84–6, 150, Plantin (above n. 7) 38 n. g; Fant (above n. 35) 93.

<sup>78</sup> Kajanto (above n. 34) 119.

<sup>79</sup> Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. III, 53.

<sup>80</sup> Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. II (Appendice), 154. Dacier had also translated Callimachus.

as a line of Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* (42). Christina answered in French (in May 1678) with strong religious emphases.<sup>81</sup>

As a conclusion, I suggest the following ideas: it is plausible that Johannes Matthiae instructed Christina in some elementary Greek, at least the alphabet, but learning Greek better was her own idea. It was fuelled by the symbolic value of Greek and by her role model, Elizabeth I of England, who had been taught Greek from the age of fifteen. It seems beyond doubt that Christina showed genuine enthusiasm for the Greek language around the year 1649 when she was 22–23 years old. It is most probable that Christina read the more difficult Greek Classics only together with Swedish and visiting scholars. The evidence adduced above suggests that Christina read, among other things, Plato with Freinshemius, Marcus Aurelius with Gerdes, Polybius with Vossius. Her studies might be sporadic and were rekindled anew when a new scholar entered her court. The reading together included, we may suppose, a lot of discussion of contents and interpretation of difficult passages and the scholar giving some excerpts and the essential technical terms in Greek. The image of a Queen who knows Greek was one that she herself and her contemporaries wanted to cultivate, because it helped to secure her position as the first female monarch in Sweden and heightened her fame as an exception of her gender.

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<sup>81</sup> Arckenholtz (above n. 19) vol. II, 188–9.