



The Public Defense of the Doctoral Dissertation of

**Juan Bautista Juan López**

on

**MANUEL GABALAS: BIOGRAPHY, INTELLECTUAL NETWORK, WORKS AND  
THOUGHT**

will be held on

**Friday, 3 May 2024 3:00 pm CET**

**Examination Committee**

Chair: Matthias Riedl, CEU, Department of History

Members: Baukje van den Berg (supervisor), CEU, Department of Medieval  
Studies

István Perczel, CEU, Department of Medieval Studies

György Geréby, CEU, Department of Medieval Studies

External readers and external members:

Niels Gaul, University of Edinburgh, School of History, Classics and  
Archaeology

Alexander Riehle, Harvard University, Department of the Classics

The doctoral dissertation is available for inspection on the CEU e-learning site. Should you wish to access it and/or join the defense contact Csilla Dobos ([dobos@ceu.edu](mailto:dobos@ceu.edu))

## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the life, works, and thought of Manuel Gabalas – Matthew of Ephesus (ca. 1272–1357), a Byzantine theologian condemned at the Fifth Council of Constantinople in August 1351. The study provides an examination of his involvement in the socio-political, intellectual, and religious controversies of his time. Through detailed investigation, it reveals Gabalas’ extensive influence among the Constantinopolitan intellectual elite and his unique synthesis of secular wisdom with Christian theology, with ethics serving as a common thread. Thus, Gabalas’ life and works are presented as a valuable case study through which one can discern the multifaceted dynamics of the late Byzantine Empire.

Gabalas led an extensive life that spanned the reigns of five Palaiologan emperors, from Michael VIII to his great-grandson John V Palaiologos, which included two civil wars and three sieges of Gabalas’ home city, Philadelphia in Lydia. Chapter 1 aims to illuminate his active engagement in the tumultuous political and ecclesiastical landscape of his era. Chapter 2 explores his intellectual network, revealing his role in the exchange of manuscripts and ideas, crucial for the continuation of teaching activities and scholarly practices in Constantinople. This chapter also analyses his involvement in the Palamite controversy and critiques of Gregory Palamas’ theology. Chapters 3 and 4 examine Gabalas’ literary, philosophical, and theological writings, showcasing his Christian Neoplatonist interpretation of Homeric epics as well as his ascetic and theological views, based on the Evagrian tradition. These chapters offer a novel theoretical framework for understanding the ethical and mystical interpretation of the *Odyssey* as well as explore Gabalas’ views on the deification of man, presenting them as an Orthodox alternative to Palamite Hesychasm. To achieve this, the research presents the *editio princeps* and English translations of several previously unknown texts.

Ultimately, this dissertation sheds light on the intricate dynamics of personal, intellectual, and spiritual life in the late Byzantine Empire. By offering a deeper

understanding of Gabalas' contributions and the broader historical and doctrinal developments of his time, this work enriches the narrative of Byzantine intellectual history and underscores the continuous philosophical dialogues among Palaiologan scholars. Gabalas' legacy is thus presented as a sort of Platonic *Odyssey* of a Byzantine theologian.

**KEYWORDS:** Byzantine intellectual history, Palaiologan period, Palamite controversy, Homeric reception, Christian Platonism, Ethics, Deification,

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### Education

2024. **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Late Antique, Medieval and Early Modern Studies**, Central European University (CEU), Austria – United States

03.05.2024: Dissertation: *Manuel Gabalas: Biography, Intellectual Network, Works and Thought*, Dr. Baukje van den Berg (supervisor)

2–7/2021. Research stay at Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), Madrid

2017. **Research MA in Greek Literature and Philology**, University of Granada (UGR)

Dissertation: *Anónimo, De Ulixis Erroribus. Traducción y Comentario*

2016. **Educational MA in Humanities (Classics)**, UGR

2015. **BA in Classics**, University of Valencia

Dissertation: *El Fragmento Dike, status quaestionis* [POxy. 2256]

08/2015. Erasmus Internship, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster

### Preparation Courses

08/2021. Ancient Languages of Anatolia Summer Program (ALA), ANAMED. Koç University

07/2021. Título de Experto en Bizantinística, University of Alcalá

08/2020. Online Ancient Greek course, Exedra. Mediterranean Center, Siracusa

07/2020. Byzantine Greek Summer School, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.

02/2020. Egypt and the Bible. History and Myth, University of Barcelona (UB)

02/2020. Crash-course in Greek Palaeography, Ghent University

09/2019. Workshop on Greek Papyrology, UB

08/2019. Workshop on Egyptology, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (IEROA)

## Peer-reviewed Publications

### Journal Articles and Book Chapters

2024. The Scholia to Hesiod of John Pediasimos, Protospatharius and Diaconos Galenos. Content, Authorship and Textual Transmission. In *Mythographica Graeca*. Ed. M. Alganza Roldán and Á. Ibáñez Chacón, 87–104. Madrid: Dykinson.
2021. El significado de un proverbio en De Audiendis Poetis de Plutarco. Un nuevo fragmento de Filóxeno de Citera?, *Antiquité Classique* 90: 155–165.
2020. Outline of the Homeric Project of Matthew of Ephesus. In *CsB VIII – XIes Rencontres annuelles internationales des doctorants en études byzantines (2018)*. Ed. L. M. Ciolfi and J. Devoge, 48–58. Porphyra.
2019. Sobre la identidad y procedencia del poeta Filóxeno y la autoría del ditirambo Δεῖπνον. *Studia Philologica Valentina* 21: 165–189.
2018. El manuscrito original y la edición definitiva del *De Ulixis Erroribus*. *eClassica* 4: 53–62.
2018. On the Road to Ephesus. Hardship and Despair. *Brolly. Journal of Social Sciences* 1.3: 97–112.
2017. El Fragmento Dike (TrGF 281 a–b). In *De Falsa et Vera Historia I. Estudios sobre falsificación documental y literaria*. Ed. A. Guzmán e I. Velázquez, 215–228. Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas.

### Book Reviews

2022. Review of A. Rengakos, P. Finglass, B. Zimmermann (eds.), *More than Homer Knew – Studies on Homer and His Ancient Commentators*. In Honor of Franco Montanari, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 2020, 528 pp. In *Liburna. Revista Internacional de Humanidades* 19: 266–271.

## Conference Participation

### As Presenter

2024. *'We will become another heaven ... and God will dwell within us': Spiritual Perfection in the 200 Chapters of Manuel Gabalas*. The Desire for Perfection in Late Antique Christianity: Martyrs, Ascetics and Ordinary Christians, 19<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Patristic Studies, Oxford, 5–9 August 2024
2024. *The Interplay of Pagan and Christian Thought in the Late Byzantine Period*. 3rd Annual Late Antique and Byzantine Studies Graduate Workshop, Central European University & University of Vienna, 23 February 2024
2024. *Sailing Beyond the Epic: The Wanderings of Odysseus as Paradigm of Spiritual Virtue in the Writings of Manuel Gabalas*. Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies, Vienna, 22 February 2024
2022. *Anotar y reescribir los clásicos. Los manuscritos de Manuel Gabalas*, Taller de Paleografía y Crítica Textual Griega, UGR (Workshop), 25 October 2022
2022. *Los escolios de Juan Pedíasimo a Hesíodo: autoría y tradición manuscrita*. Coloquio Internacional Mythographica & Paramythographica Graeca I: La transmisión de los textos, Universidad de Granada (UGR), Granada, 3–4 March 2022
2022. Respondant to Alberto Ravani, *A Komnenian Muse? Hermoniakos' Iliad*. Poetry in Late Byzantium, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, 9–11 February 2022
2022. *Ideología del Arsenitismo y repercusión política de los pactos de 1310*. XIX Jornadas de Bizancio, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Sociedad Española de Bizantinística, Madrid, 24–27 January 2022
2021. τὸν ἄθλον τῶν πόνων: *a Christian, Platonist and Ascetic Biography of Odysseus and his Errors?* 2nd International Scientific Conference: Georgia and Christian Civilization, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, 20–21 September 2021

2019. *Allegorical Readings on Odysseus's Wanderings: The case of Manuel Gabalas*. *Contested Heritage: Adaptation, Restoration and Innovation in the Late Antique and Byzantine World*, Oxford University Byzantine Society, Oxford, 22–23 February 2019.

**Newspapers Echoing: [Un filólogo valenciano presentará en Oxford su investigación sobre la autoría de un tratado bizantino sobre Ulises](#)**

2019. *Manuel Gabalas y el Manuscrito Inédito del De Ulixis Erroribus*. XVIII Jornadas de Bizancio, Sociedad Española de Bizantinística, Barcelona, 30 January – 2 February 2019

2018. *La filosofía del naufrago: El obstáculo es el camino*. Congreso Escuela Internacional de Doctorado, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Madrid, 27–28 November 2018

2018. *El manuscrito Original y la edición definitiva del De Ulixis Erroribus*. Encuentros In Flore Novo, Universidad de Cádiz y Lisboa, Baeza, 18–19 October 2018

2018. *Shipwrecked Philosophy: Impassive Wanderings*. XI<sup>és</sup> Rencontres Internationales des Doctorants en Études Byzantines, Université Paris-Sorbonne, Paris, 12–13 October 2018

**As Organiser**

2023. *Medievalisms on the Screen III. Digital Medievalisms and the Teaching of History*, Central European University, 13–15 April 2023 (with Karolina A. Kotus and Juan Manuel Rubio Arévalo)

2022. *Medievalisms on the Screen II. The Middle Ages as a Digital Experience*, Central European University, 21–23 April 2022

2022. Proceedings of Medievalisms and Computer Games, *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 28: 95–200 (ed. Ildikó Csepregi).

2021. *Medievalisms in the Screen. The Representation of the Middle Ages in Audio-visual Media in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Central European University, 29 April–1 May 2021

2021. *Materiality in the Eastern Mediterranean World: CEMS Graduate Conference 2021*, Centre for Eastern Mediterranean Studies, Central European University, 28–29 May 2021

### **Former Positions**

02–08/19. Curator of Documentary Collections of the Bernat Metge Classics Series, National Library of Catalonia, Barcelona

06–08/19. Cultural Advisor, Sagrada Familia. Palacios y Museos, Barcelona

09/17–04/18. Night Auditor, Novotel am Konzerthaus, Freiburg am Breisgau

07–08/17. Library Archivist, Public Library, Valencia

09/16–07/17. German Teacher, Mulhacén Highschool, Granada

07–08/16. Library Archivist, Public Library, Valencia