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The present project studies how Byzantine learned texts discuss knowledge and the different attitudes to its acquisition they portray, such as intellectual curiosity, love for learning, and erudition. The inquiry is focused, in particular, on the problem of acquiring knowledge of the natural world and on how Byzantine thinkers reflected on it. In pursuit of its main research direction, the project analyzes two groups of sources produced between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries, namely rhetorical, scientific, and philosophical works, on the one hand, and collections of such, on the other. The main research question directed to the first group of sources explores Byzantine discourses of intellectual curiosity and erudition (polymathy), as well as the ways in which the philosophers employed such discourses in order to construct their social and political *personae*. With respect to the second source group, through the study of the content and organization of the material included in Byzantine educational miscellanies (dedicated either to rhetoric, the mathematical sciences, or to philosophy), the present project examines the teaching and learning of philosophy during the late Byzantine period and aims at reconstructing the corpus of knowledge which the philosopher was expected to master.

Byzantine science and philosophy are still very little-studied in comparison to their western medieval or Arabic counterparts. Moreover, they have been little-integrated in the larger narrative of medieval European thought. The study of the history of knowledge and its pursuit in Byzantium, wide-ranging (polymathy) and/or limits-exceeding (intellectual curiosity), enables us to revisit the existing paradigms concerning Byzantine thought and to see it as embedded in structures of education and patronage. In addition, it will incorporate the Byzantine achievements in the larger narrative of the history of the medieval European discourses of intellectual curiosity.

With respect to Byzantine discourses of knowledge, the inquiry is interested in the question as to what range of knowledge was expected that the philosophers should acquire and display and in the changes this 'corpus' would have undergone under the influence of new or foreign knowledge. Correspondingly, the project includes a case study of the changes in the Byzantine epistemic discourse incurred by the elaboration of Palamite theology and the translations of works by Augustine, Boethius, Macrobius, and Thomas Aquinas into Greek during the fourteenth century.

Since knowledge of the natural world represents one of the most important preoccupations of the ancient and medieval philosopher, the project also seeks to answer the question as to what knowledge of the natural world the Byzantines deemed possible and, in relation to that, whether epistemological skepticism manifested itself among Byzantine thinkers. Particular attention is paid to Byzantine discussions of the status of astronomy and astrology. On the one hand, mathematical astronomy occupied a privileged position among the sciences, as it studied the heavenly bodies and their constant and regular movements, thus, achieving as certain knowledge of a natural phenomenon as possible. Its practical application in the guise of astrology, however, raises the question of what knowledge was regarded as either legitimate or illegitimate by the Byzantines.

Finally, having thus outlined the range of knowledge associated with the philosopher's *persona* during the late Byzantine period, the present project problematizes the transgression of the limitations of the so-defined corpus. To this end, the inquiry analyses Byzantine discourses of curiosity and innovation, or in other words, the ways in which late Byzantine learned texts address the pursuit of excessive knowledge, as well as the claim of advancing knowledge by having offered something novel.