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The self-representation of Byzantine scholars in Renaissance Italy

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This study is dedicated to the memory of Hippolyte Noiret who died, aged 24, in Venice in 1888.
Conventions and Abbreviations

The word ‘Byzantines’ to refer to the inhabitants of the Eastern Roman Empire (330 until 1453) was coined not before the sixteenth century. If only for this reason, a brief note on how the ‘Byzantines’ are called throughout this thesis is in order. In discussions of primary sources in Greek or Latin, the choice of the original authors was followed. This means that ‘Graecus’ or ‘Γραικός’ has been rendered as Greek, ‘Ελλην as Hellene, both ‘Romanus’ and ‘Ῥωμαιος’ as Roman, and ‘Romaeus’ as Romaean. The rare Latin ‘Romaei’ has been translated with ‘Romaeans’ in order to differentiate it from the more frequent Latin word ‘Romani’, Romans. Unlike the Latins, the Byzantines used ‘Ῥωμαῖοι’ to refer to both themselves and the ancient Romans they identified with. To my best knowledge, only three Byzantine authors used ‘Ῥωμαῖοι’ and ‘Ῥωμᾶνοι’ to denote different groups. These are Constantine Porphyrogenitus in De administrando imperio (ca. 952), Kanavoutzes in In Dionysium Halicarnassensem commentarius (1st half of the 15th cent.), and Doukas in his Historia Turcobyzantina (ca. 1462). While Doukas (13.8.11) and Kanavoutzes (passim) used ‘Ῥωμαῖοι’ and ‘Ῥωμᾶνοι’ to differentiate between eastern and western Romans respectively, Porphyrogenitus (29.1-53) distinguished between Byzantines (‘Ῥωμαῖοι’) and the Roman colonists who had settled in Dalmatia and elsewhere under emperor Diocletian (‘Ῥωμᾶνοι’). Outside the analysis of primary sources, the terms ‘Byzantines’ and ‘eastern Romans’ or ‘Romans of the East’ are used interchangeably in order to remind the reader that ‘our’ Byzantines actually called themselves Romans.

Inconsistent choices had to be made regarding the names of places and individuals. After Speake (2000) xxxvi, ancient Greek names have been given in their most common ‘Latin’ forms, whereas medieval and modern Greek names have been given in their ‘Greek’ (i.e. transliterated) forms. Transliterations are on the basis of ISO 843: 1997 without indicating accents and diacritics. Exceptions have been made for names with widely used equivalents in English (e.g. George Plethon instead of Georgios Plithon). If possible, the names of contemporary Greeks follow their own transliterations. In the same vein, the names of Renaissance humanists have been given in the Latinised forms they in general preferred unless anglicisations clearly prevailed in academic usage (as with Petrarch and Cyriac of Ancona). All personal names can be looked up in the index nominum, where vernacular names are given together with dates of birth and death.

Further abbreviations used in the footnotes are:

- BA  Biblioteca Angelica, Rome
- BAM  Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan
- BAV  Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City
- BE  Biblioteca Estense, Modena
- BML  Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence
- BNC  Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence
- BNE  Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid
- BNM  Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice
- BNP  Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
- BSB  Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich
List of Illustrations


