Some Questions Concerning the Terminology used in Narrative Sources to Designate the Byzantine State

LOUNGHIS T. C. IBE

http://dx.doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.820

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To cite this article:

SOME QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE TERMINOLOGY USED IN NARRATIVE SOURCES TO DESIGNATE THE BYZANTINE STATE

There are a considerable number of terms used by Byzantine writers to designate their empire, the nature of their state, its territorial extent and boundaries, the political regime of the empire and its name. In the study that follows, the terms in question are gathered mainly from narrative sources, and an attempt is made to follow and understand the evolution of each term’s connotations through the centuries.

As one might expect, the most proper and accurate term to designate the territorial extent of the Byzantine Empire throughout its thousand year existence is the term Ρωμαίων ἐπικράτεια, which bears the clearest and most constant meaning among the terms included in this investigation. The term ἐπικράτεια presupposes concrete boundaries, which though they may be respected or disputed by enemies, nevertheless exist.


2. E. g. PRISCUS, 585 and 586-7 (ed. DE BOOR); AGATHIAS, Proem., 24 and V. 11, 6 (ed. KEYDILL, p. 28 and 177); EVAGRIUS, III. 36, III. 37, IV. 9, V. 9 (ed. BIDEZ-PARMENIER, p. 135, 136, 160, 204); GENESIUS, II. 5, III. 2, III. 3, IV. 15 (ed. LESMUELLER-WERNER and THURN, p. 26, 37, 38, 68); THEOPHANES CONTINUATUS, 112, 277, 288, 292, 293, 298, 299, 301, 302 (CSHB); SKYLITZES, 67, 145, 154 (ed. THURN);
The term Τωμαίων (or φωμαϊκή) αρχή may be considered identical in meaning (though with some qualifications) with the term 'Ρωμαίων επικράτεια. Further, the term Τωμαίων αρχή frequently denotes boundaries and is employed in this sense by Nicephorus and Theophanes—the sources of the so-called ‘Dark Ages’—to whom the term Τωμαίων επικράτεια is unknown. Procopius of Caesarea, two centuries earlier, appears also to have been unfamiliar with this latter usage.

In the vast majority of cases, the term Τωμαίων αρχή conveys also the old meaning of imperium, to which people, territories and power belong. Gradually, the term acquires the sense of a state limited in space, as can be observed from Procopius to Theophanes. The phenomenon becomes more than obvious, of course, in the last centuries of Byzantium, while the term

CONSTANTINUS PORPHYROGENITUS, De Administrando Imperio (=DAI), 4.3-5, 43.4-6 (ed. MORAVSCIK-JENKINS, p. 50, 188); LEON DIACONUS, I.2, III.11, X.3, 6, 7, 8 (CSHB, p. 6, 53, 165, 169, 170, 171); ATTALLEIATES, 77 and 229 (CSHB); ACROPOLITES, 120, 233 (CSHB); and CANTACUZENUS, I, 179,188, 189, 204, 205, 323, 328 (CSHB): εῖς τὴν 'Ρωμαίων.

3. PROCOPIUS, Aed., I 3.2, 8.5, II 8.11, III 1.1, 7, 10, V 8.2-3, VI 1.5, 7, 7, 7, 17, (ed. HAURY-WIRTH p. 20, 34, 70, 82, 100-101, 168, 172, 184, 185-186); AGATHIAS, Proem. 26, II, 18.7, 31.2, (p. 8, 65, 81); θαυματικά δρα; EVAGRIUS, IV. 20, V.7 (p. 170, 203); NICEPHORUS, p. 3.8-11, 34.20-22, 37.8-10, 58.11-13 (DE BOOR); THEOPHANES CONTINUATUS, 54; CONSTANTINUS PORPHYROGENITUS, De them., 62 and 97 (ed. Pertus); SKYLITZES, 31; LEON DIACONUS, II.1, II.11 and X.8 (p. 18, 33, 173): 'Ρωμαϊκά δρα; ATTALLEIATES, 181 (Ρωμαϊκά δρα); CINNAMUS, 79, 11-14 (CSHB); ACROPOLITES, 113, 187; GREGORAS, I.3, III.5, III.5 (CSHB, p. 18, 19, 72); PACHYMERES, II.30 (p. 209).

4. E. g. DAI, 13.135-137, 21.46-47, 22.29-30, 22.41-43 and 61-62, 30.11-13 (p. 72, 88, 94, 94-96, 96, 140); De them., 60, 62; PROCOPIUS, Aed., I 1.11, 9.17-18, II 6.6, III 2.2, IV 2.2, 5.8 (p. 7, 38, 64., 86, 108, 125); SIMOCATTES, III 18.3, IV 13.6 (ed. de Boor, p. 147, 174); THEOPHANES, 196.23-26, 215.26, 222.4, 300.23-25 (ed. de Boor); EVAGRIUS, I.22, III.3, IV.3, 19 and 21, V.14 (p. 33, 100, 154, 169, 170, 210); ATTALLEIATES, 51, 99, 180, 182, 207, 310; CINNAMUS, 174.2-6, 278.6-11; NICEPHORUS, 76.1-3; GENESIUS, II.4 (p. 25-26); THEOPH. CONT., 112, 305; SKYLITZES, 13-14, 66-67, 197, 240-241; Life of Peter of Aitroas, 85 (ed. LAURENT, 223); Fontes historiae imperii Trapezuntini, 53 and 79 (ed. PAPADOPOULOS-KERAMEUS).

5. E. g. ACROPOLITES, 34, where the notorious expression: ἐν στενφ τεθεαμένος οδηγεῖν τὴν βωμαϊκὴν αρχήν. Cf. ACROPOLITES, 35, 73, 74, 76, 89, 154, 156, 158, 163;
Τωμαίων αρχή is regularly used during the Comnenian period, mainly by Anna Comnena (from whose text the term Τωμαίων πολιτεία is totally absent, as will be discussed below). The same remark is valid for the History of John Cantacuzenus, where all kinds of misfortune are foreseen to engulf the Τωμαίων αρχή.

The constitutional aspect of the term Τωμαίων αρχή needs to be seen as closely associated with the well-known term Τωμαίων πολιτεία, as used, in fact, by Constantine Porphyrogenitus himself in his treatise De administrando imperio: 'and thereafter, whatever reforms have been introduced from time to time in our state (τῇ καθ' ἡμᾶς πολιτείᾳ), and also throughout the Roman empire (ἐν πάσῃ τῇ Τωμαίων ἀρχῇ)'. The order of terms is repeated in another chapter of the same work, as if to confirm the affinity of both meanings.

Generally speaking, the term Τωμαίων αρχή has a much broader meaning than the term πολιτεία, as this is found in Procopius, when dealing with territorial expansion of the empire under Justinian I: 'the emperor,' says Procopius, 'has considerable experience in annexing other states (πολιτείας ἐτέρας) to the Roman empire (τῇ Τωμαίων ἀρχῇ)'.

In a famous passage of the Gothic War, the same author reveals the close connexion that exists between the preservation of a just political order in the empire (πολιτεία...
and the maintaining of its territorial integrity. In another equally unequivocal passage of the *Buildings*\(^{12}\), Procopius makes a remarkable distinction between the component parts of the *πολιτεία*: under Justinian I, the empire (πολιτεία) has more than doubled its territories and other trappings of power (τῇ τε χώρᾳ καὶ τῇ ἄλλῃ δυνάμει). If the term *Ρωμαίων ἀρχή* signifies the Roman empire in general, in Procopius the term *πολιτεία* conveys the meaning of the old *res publica* headed by the emperor, that is, a political system, which, according to Priscus of Panium\(^{13}\), had been invented by wise and good men in Antiquity, who took care to maintain the laws, the army, and other institutions. As early as the first half of the fifth century, Priscus found the laws and the Roman political system to be good (ὡς οἱ μὲν νόμοι καλοὶ καὶ ἡ πολι­τεία *Ρωμαίων ἀγαθή*), excepting a number of critical remarks prompted by the conduct of some of its leaders\(^{14}\).

There are some exceptions to the rule. Less literary sources of the second half of the sixth century, such as the *Chronography* of John Malalas and the *Ecclesiastical History* of Evagrius, use the term *Ρωμαίων πολιτεία* in a strictly territorial sense, almost equivalent to the term *ἐπικράτεια*\(^{15}\). This tendency seems to become general towards the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century, when a literary source such as the *History* of Theophylactus Simocattes uses the term *Ρωμαίων πολιτεία* in the same sense as Malalas and Evagrius\(^{16}\). This evolution of the meaning of the *Ρωμαίων πολιτεία* is of crucial interest, not only because the tyrant Phocas destroyed the τάξις in 602, δόντος, ἐξόμοιους Γαλλίαν Ὀσιγοίτου ἔχον μέχρι Ἀλπῶν, αἱ τὰ Γάλλων τε ὄρα καὶ Λιγούρων διορίζονσι.

12. PROCIPIUS, I 1, 15-16 (p. 7-8); AGATHIAS, I 2. 2 and 20. 3 (p. 11, 35) prefers the term *πολιτεία ρωμαϊκή*, while the term *ρωμαϊκή κατάστασις* (IV 26, p. 156) conveys the meaning of the whole Roman political establishment.

13. PRISCUS, 136; CANDIDUS OF ISAURIA, Frg. 1: FHG IV, 136, designates by the same term the byzantine state under Zenon (474-491).


15. MALALAS, 361, 412, 422, 449, 460 (CSHB); EVAGRIUS, II. 9 (p. 59).

16. SIMOCATTES, II 10.4 and IV 11. 8 (p. 89, 170). It must be noted, however, that the old, "constitutional" use of *Ρωμαίων πολιτεία* is also to be found in SIMOCATTES, III 5.4 (p. 117). Cf. also the use of the expression τὸ *Ρωμαίων πολίτειμα*, SIMOCATTES, III 9.6 (p. 128). All mentions in Simocattes concern the earliest part of his *History*, thus they do not extend beyond Book IV, with the single exception in VIII 11.11 (p. 306).
γενόμενος ἐπίβουλος τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς πολιτείας, according to the Chronicon Paschale, but mainly because, starting from that time, the Chronography of Theophanes the Confessor uses the term Ῥωμαίων πολιτεία in the sense of ‘the Byzantine State’. In Theophanes, all uses of the Ῥωμαίων ἀρχή concern the early Byzantine period, till the beginning of the seventh century. From then on, it is replaced by another, more current, term.

Theophanes, Constantine Porphyrogenitus (who follows his great-uncle) and, at times, Nicephorus the Patriarch, make use of the term Ῥωμαίων πολιτεία in this sense very frequently throughout the seventh century, up to the year 724, while very few echoes of its old meaning are to be detected in the Short History. Such is the case for the year 641 (under the empress Martina), when the author uses highly expressive language to point out his exasperation: ‘God forbid that the Roman state sink into such bad order’. From the year 724 on, there are no references to the term Ῥωμαίων πολιτεία and it is totally absent from the Chronography of Theophanes which covers the entire eighth century up to the year 813, that is, shortly after Charlemagne’s diplomatic recognition.

The beginning of the ninth century witnesses the appearance of the term Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονία. Its first mentions are attributed to Genesius and Skylitzes almost simultaneously with the revival of the term Ῥωμαίων πολιτεία, used alternatively by the same authors. Here, the term Ῥωμαίων πολι-

17. Chronicon Paschale, 707 (CSHB). According to the same source (p. 706), Heraclius liberated the Ῥωμαίων πολιτεία in 610.
20. DAI, 21. 52-54 (p. 88); Theophanes, 355.21-25, 359.17-19, 395.5-7; Nicephorus, 15.11-15, 23.17-21, 50.4-6, 52.7-9.
22. Nicephorus, 28.5-8: μηδὲ δοίη θέσις ἐν τούτῳ τάξεως τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆν ἐλθεῖν πολιτείαν...
23. Cf. supra, note 6, on the absence of the term in Anna’s Alexiad.
24. Genesius, 1.9 (p. 9).
25. Skylitzes, 12.
26. Genesius, I.16 (p. 14); Skylitzes, 47.
τεία seems to have lost something of its earlier meaning and to return to its original sense, adapting to new realities: 'Ῥωμαϊὸν πολιτεία in the ninth century means 'the organisation of the state', not only in Genesius and Skylitzes but also in other sources up to the twelfth century, whereas 'Ῥωμαϊὸν ἡγεμονία fulfills the functions of the old term 'Ῥωμαϊὸν δροχῆ, the imperium romanum, and is used in this sense by Anna Comnena. Only once is the term πολιτεία (unaccompanied by 'Ῥωμαϊὸν) to be found in Anna's text in clear juxtaposition with the term 'Ῥωμαϊὸν δροχῆ: Anna Dalassena was able to govern the state apparatus (πολιτείαιν), not only in the Roman empire, but also in any realm under the sun.

It could be argued, that the reappearance of the term 'Ῥωμαϊὸν πολιτεία in its original, constitutional sense, is attributable to the decline of the rather confusing style of the Chronography in general and to the revival of the sounder historiographical style, something that is very apparent in Leo Diaconus: in the text of his History (a literary genre that reappears at the end of the tenth century), we have four clear mentions of the term with the meaning 'state organisation' as well as six mentions of the term 'Ῥωμαϊὸν (or φωμαϊκή) ἡγεμονία with the meaning of Roman empire, inclusive of its territories and power. The History of Leon Diaconus is permeated by a belief in long-term stability and power, which underlines the longevity of the Empire. Hence, all terms concerning Byzantine self-determination are used very clearly. However, just

28. Which may be interpreted: the singularity of Byzantine state organisation.
29. DAI 13. 173-175 (p. 74): τὴν εὐγενὴ πολιτείαν Ῥωμαίοιν; THEOPH. CONT., 442,446; Fontes historiae imperii Trapezuntini, 79.3-9; CINNAMUS, 281.10-12.
30. ANNA COMNENA, I 10, 57, 72, 106, 127, II 72, 73 passim. Cf. also supra, note 6.
31. ANNA COMNENA, I 123.
33. LEON DIACONUS, III. 3, 5, VI. 2, VII. 7 (p. 40, 42-43, 95, 124).
34. LEON DIACONUS, III. 6, IV. 1, V. 1, 7 and VIII 7 (p. 44, 56, 77, 88, 90, 124). Similar use of the term in ATTALLEIATES, 131 and 194.
35. Cf. the combined use of three terms in order to describe the empire’s growth in LEON DIACONUS, III.6 (p. 45): καὶ προσέτα τὰ μέγιστα τὴν πολιτείαν ὁνήμονα, καὶ τῆς Ῥωμαϊῶς δροχῆς τὴν ἐπιφύλαξαν αἰτία ὁνήμονα. The double use in LEON DIACONUS, IX.4 (p. 146): τὴν τῆς ἡγεμονίας δροχῆν, presents no difficulty. It must be noted, however, that
the opposite occurs in Michael Attaleiates, Anna Comnena and Nicetas Choniates, whose historiographical texts constitute the beginning and end of a particular period of ‘Roman’ history: the term Ρωμαίων πολιτεία is totally absent from their texts, literary though they may be. The term exists, however, in the History of John Cinnamus, in whose time the empire was not on the brink of destruction, as it was in the case of Anna and Nicetas. In the History of John Cinnamus the term Ρωμαίων πολιτεία acquires, as a rule, a meaning which includes state organisation and society and which will later also be found in George Pachymeres and Nicephorus Gregoras. Last, but not least, we have to take into account the fact that the term Ρωμαίων ηγεμονία means indisputably the Byzantine empire in Gregoras, but not in Pachymeres, who uses the rather ambiguous expression τα πράγματα της των Ρωμαίων ηγεμονίας. The term τα Ρωμαίων (sc. πράγματα) is known by its broad use in the History of Nicetas Choniates, to whom the term Ρωμαίων πολιτεία is totally unknown (as already pointed out). A similar example is to be found in John Cantacuzenus in the fourteenth century.

The term, which almost imperceptibly replaced Ρωμαίων πολιτεία in Byzantine narrative sources, is not τα Ρωμαίων πράγματα, but the very commonly encountered expression Ρωμαίων βασιλεία, also very frequent in Nicetas Choniates and designating the nature of the Byzantine political

in Leon Diaconus, V.3 (p. 81): δυναστεία βασιλεία denotes the successive emperors, the line of sovereigns, and not the dynasty.

37. E.g. CINNAMUS, 276-277, 275, 285.
39. GREGORAS, II.6 (p. 42). Cf. also supra, notes 3 and 5, for the meaning of the term Ρωμαίων ήγεμονία in Gregoras.
40. GREGORAS, I.2, 4, 17, II.1, V.5, VI.6, 11, VII.1, 5, XII.2 (p. 13, 13-14, 20, 77, 24-25, 144-145, 187, 208, 208-209, 214 [two mentions], 215, 234, 579); GREGORAS, Epp. 90.41-49 and 130, 11-19 (ed. Leone, p. 242 and 331).
41. PACHYMERES, I.17 (p. 77).
42. CHONIATES, 46, 96, 194, 223, 436, 438, 472, 507, 510, 522, 551, 572. ATTALEIATES also uses this expression, though not so often (199, 223).
44. CHONIATES, 120, 127, 238, 327, 433, 477, 557, 571.
system, starting from the second half of the sixth century, that is at the same 
time that Malalas, Evagrius and Simocattes begin to alter the original, 
constitutional meaning of the old term Τωμαίων πολιτεία. The first mention 
of the term Τωμαίων βασιλεία in the sense of the Byzantine political system, 
and not the reign of a given sovereign, which is current much earlier, is to be 
seen in Evagrius of Epiphania, followed by the Chronography of Theophanes and its Continuators, just once by Nicephorus the Patriarch, by the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, John Skylitzes, Michael Attaleiates, Anna Comnena, John Cinnamus (who, using the term Τωμαίων πολιτεία, seldom uses βασιλεία), Nicetas Choniates and, afterwards, George Acropolites, George Pachymeres, Nicephorus Gregoras and the emperor John Cantacuzenus, who prefers both the term Τωμαίων αρχή, and, more importantly, Τωμαίων ηγεμονία, which is mentioned some seventy times in his work in the sense of the Roman empire, in most cases coinciding

45. Cf. supra, notes 15 and 16.
46. Cf. e. g. Priscus, 584; Procopius, Aed., III 1.11 (p. 83-84).
48. Theophanes, 68.2-3, 115.22-25, 220.2-9, 290.12-16, 291.4-6, 294.1-7 (passim), 326.16-20, 386-387, 456-457, 482.16-17.
50. Nicephorus, 35-36; cf. also Life of Peter of Atroa, 63.1-3 (p. 187).
52. Skylitzes, 29, 56, 97, 115, 130, 145, 197, 204, passim.
53. Attaleiates, 45, 139.
54. Anna Comnena, I. 9, 10 (alternately with Τωμαίων ηγεμονία), 18 (two 
mentions) 92, 130, 132, 144; II, 43. II. 63, 73, passim.
55. Cf. supra, note 37.
56. Cinnamus, 229-230.
57. Cf. supra, note 44.
58. Acropolites, 84 (as in the case of Cinnamus).
60. Gregoras, II.3, III.2, VII.5, XIII.3 (p. 28, 59, 242, 644, passim).
with the term 'Ρωμαίων ἀρχή, which only in relatively few examples draws nearer to the official term 'Ρωμαίων βασιλεία. It is also worth pointing out that in the History of John Cantacuzenus, the term 'Ρωμαίων βασιλεία is used to designate the old, Roman age. The historical work of Cantacuzenus, replete with a steady devaluation of the old, traditional terms, consists of an epilogue worthy of the best Byzantine administrative traditions. The author seems so conscious of the decline of all 'Roman' realities that, instead of a substantive, he ventures to use an adjective, το 'Ρωμαϊκόν, earlier used only by Attaleiates. The adjective, το 'Ρωμαϊκόν, which tends to be an equivalent of το κοινό των 'Ρωμαίων, also used by Cantacuzenus, has the meaning of what today we—in a non-Roman world—would call 'the Roman element' or 'the Roman community', an element which clearly has weak dimensions, as the empire dies away.

The term 'Ρωμαίων ἐξουσία in the sense of 'the Roman power' or 'the Roman domination' appears in the Byzantine narrative sources from Nicephorus the Patriarch to Anna Comnena, that is from the mid-eighth to the end of the eleventh century, in other words during the period of the so-called 'limited oikoumene', which starts with the papal political secession from the Empire and the forgery of the Constitutum Constantini, and ends around the time of the first Crusade. The term 'Ρωμαίων ἐξουσία is used mostly by Byzantine sources close to the ideology of the Macedonian dynasty, that is the Continuators of Theophanes, Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and John


64. Cf. the cases in the examples cited in note 61.
65. CANTACUZENUS, I 422.
66. ATTALEIATES, 76, 141, 163, 233.
67. CANTACUZENUS, I 228, 283, 393, 505; III 253.
68. NICEPHORUS, 64, 10-12.
69. ANNA COMNENA, II 55.
70. THEOPHANES CONTINUATUS, 277, 291, 346.
Skylitzes\textsuperscript{72}, and underlines very clearly the fact that the Byzantine Empire rules territories and peoples beyond certain limits, that is, it points to Byzantine expansion. This, however, is not the subject of our discussion here: it is enough merely to compare the term with the \textit{Ρωμαϊκόν} in the world of the fourteenth century, when the \textit{ἐξουσία} belonged to others.

In the second half of the sixth century, the Oriental chronicler John Malalas used the term \textit{Ρωμανία} in order to depict the eastern provinces of the Empire, that is the Eastern Roman Empire itself, since his use of the term does not embrace the reign of Justinian\textsuperscript{73}. At the beginning of the seventh century, in the \textit{Chronography} of Theophanes, the term \textit{Ρωμανία} replaces the term \textit{Ρωμαϊκόν} \textit{ἄρχει}, which is henceforth totally abandoned. The term \textit{Ρωμανία} in the territorial meaning of the Empire is more than frequent throughout Theophanes’s text\textsuperscript{74}. In a single mention, the Continuators of Theophanes inform us that the glorious general of the tenth century, John Courcousas, has doubled the size of \textit{‘Romania}\textsuperscript{75}. The term seems to have been preferred by Skylitzes\textsuperscript{76} and especially by Constantine Porphyrogenitus\textsuperscript{77}, for whom \textit{Ρωμανία} has precise boundaries, such as with Armenia\textsuperscript{78}. It seems natural to conclude, therefore, that, for those same authors who also employ the term \textit{Ρωμανία}, the \textit{Ρωμαϊκόν} \textit{ἐξουσία} represents a notion of Byzantium that goes far beyond the boundaries of \textit{Ρωμανία}, a term that had restricted the \textit{Ρωμαϊκόν}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{72} SKYLITZES, 146-147, 156, 167. An echo of the achievements of the Macedonian dynasty \textit{en bloc} in \textit{Fontes historise imperii Trapezuntini}, 79, where \textit{ἄρχει}, \textit{πολιτεία} and \textit{ἐξουσία} are \textit{ομώνυμοι} (i.e. Roman).
\item \textsuperscript{73} MALALAS, 398, 400, 407, 408, 409.
\item \textsuperscript{74} THEOPHANES, 304.24, 332.15, 345.25, 348.10, 17, 23, 26, 349.1, 363.19, 364.4, 367.1, 10, 11, 370.2, 18, 372.2, 377.16, 383.2, 27, 31, 384.4, 389.5, 392.8, 393.24, 25, 403.27, 404.16, 409.24, 410.3, 30, 411.10, 15, 415.23, 416.16, 430.9, 431.3, 444.28, 445.16, 446.19, 24, 447.6, 449.9, 451.4, 452.22, 463.15, 473.24, 482.2.
\item \textsuperscript{75} THEOPH. CONT., 426-427: καὶ τὴν \textit{Ρωμανίαν} διπλῶν \textit{κατεστήσατο}.
\item \textsuperscript{76} SKYLITZES, 135, 154.
\item \textsuperscript{77} DAI, 9.111-113, 22.21-22, 46.128-135, 46.135-142, 47.23-25, 53.530-532 (p. 62, 94, 220, 220-222, 224, 286).
\item \textsuperscript{78} Cf. DAI, 44.125-128 (p. 204): μέσον \textit{Ρωμανίας} καὶ \textit{‘Αρμενίας}; cf. also DAI, 46.15 (p. 214).
\end{itemize}
αρχή at the beginning of the seventh century and which resulted in debasing the value of the term Ῥωμαίων πολιτεία, predicted once by Procopius of Caesarea.

The last Byzantine author to employ the term Ῥωμανία is George Pachymeres, in whose times the decline was not yet so marked. Later, however, with Cantacuzenus, a humbler polity seems to be implied by τὸ Ῥωμαϊκόν.


80. Pachymeres, I.31, V.3 (p. 123 and 125, 443).
Τ. Κ. ΛΟΥΤΗΣ, Σχετικά με την ορολογία των αφηγηματικών πηγών για το χαρακτηρισμό του βυζαντινού κράτους

1. Ο όρος 'Ρωμαίων επικράτεια προϋποθέτει συγκεκριμένα σύνορα και χρησιμοποιείται σε ολόκληρη την υπερχιλιετή ζωή του βυζαντινού κράτους.

2. Ο όρος 'Ρωμαίων αρχή προϋποθέτει σύνορα μόνο στη διάρκεια των «σκοτεινών αιώνων» και αντικαθιστά στο Νικηφόρο και στο Θεοφάνη τον όρο 'Ρωμαίων επικράτεια. Βαθμιαία, ο όρος υπονοεί το ρωμαϊκό κράτος περιορισμένο στο χώρο, από την Άννα Κομνηνή ως τον Ιωάννη Καντακουζηνό.

3. Ο όρος 'Ρωμαίων αρχή είναι ευρύτερος σε περιεχόμενο από τον όρο 'Ρωμαίων πολιτεία (Προκόπιος ή, ακόμα, Πρίσκος Πανίτης). Αντίθετα, στον Ιωάννη Μαλάλα, στον Εικάγιο και στον Θεοφύλακτο Σιμοκάττη, ο όρος Ρωμαίων πολιτεία έχει εδαφική σημασία. Η συνήθεια αυτή θα υιοθετηθεί και από τους Νικηφόρο πατριάρχη, Θεοφάνη και Κωνσταντίνο Πορφυρογέννητο για να αποδώσει καταστάσεις ως το 724.

4. Από τις αρχές του 9ου αιώνα εμφανίζεται ο όρος 'Ρωμαίων ηγεμονία (Γενέσιος, Σκολίτζης), ταυτόχρονα με την επανεμφάνιση του όρου 'Ρωμαίων πολιτεία με ελαφρά διαφορετική έννοια τώρα (κρατική οργάνωση). Στην Άννα Κομνηνή και στο Νικήτα Χωνιάτη, ο όρος 'Ρωμαίων πολιτεία απουσιάζει, ενώ απαντάται σε κείμενα που αποτελούν βυζαντινή ιρακτή συνέχεια και σταθερότητα (Λέων Διάκονος, Ιωάννης Κίναμος).

5. Η μελέτη προσπαθεί να παρακολουθεί την εναλλαγή των αποχρώσεων της έννοιας των πιο πάνω όρων σε αντιστοιχία με την εξέλιξη της βυζαντινής πολιτικής ιδεολογίας στην εξωτερική πολιτική. Πρόκειται για προσωπικά συμπεράσματα, ιδιαίτερα σε ό, τι αφορά την εξέλιξη των όρων 'Ρωμαίων βασιλεία, το ρωμαϊκόν, Ρωμανία κλπ.