

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910828973803321
Autore	Kaldellis Anthony
Titolo	Ethnography after antiquity : foreign lands and peoples in Byzantine literature // Anthony Kaldellis
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Philadelphia, : University of Pennsylvania Press, c2013
ISBN	0-8122-0840-4
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (288 p.)
Collana	Empire and After
Disciplina	880.09
Soggetti	Byzantine literature - Themes, motives Cultural awareness - Byzantine Empire Ethnic attitudes in literature Ethnic attitudes - Byzantine Empire Ethnology - Byzantine Empire Foreign countries in literature
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Preface -- Chapter 1. Ethnography in Late Antique Historiography -- Chapter 2. Byzantine Information- Gathering Behind the Veil of Silence -- Chapter 3. Explaining the Relative Decline of Ethnography in the Middle Period -- Chapter 4. The Genres and Politics of Middle Byzantine Ethnography -- Chapter 5. Ethnography in Palaiologan Literature -- Epilogue: Looking to a New World -- Abbreviations -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index -- Acknowledgments
Sommario/riassunto	Although Greek and Roman authors wrote ethnographic texts describing foreign cultures, ethnography seems to disappear from Byzantine literature after the seventh century C.E.-a perplexing exception for a culture so strongly self-identified with the Roman empire. Yet the Byzantines, geographically located at the heart of the upheavals that led from the ancient to the modern world, had abundant and sophisticated knowledge of the cultures with which they struggled and bargained. Ethnography After Antiquity examines both the instances and omissions of Byzantine ethnography, exploring the political and religious motivations for writing (or not writing) about other peoples. Through the ethnographies embedded in classical

histories, military manuals, Constantine VII's *De administrando imperio*, and religious literature, Anthony Kaldellis shows Byzantine authors using accounts of foreign cultures as vehicles to critique their own state or to demonstrate Romano-Christian superiority over Islam. He comes to the startling conclusion that the Byzantines did not view cultural differences through a purely theological prism: their Roman identity, rather than their orthodoxy, was the vital distinction from cultures they considered heretic and barbarian. Filling in the previously unexplained gap between antiquity and the resurgence of ethnography in the late Byzantine period, *Ethnography After Antiquity* offers new perspective on how Byzantium positioned itself with and against the dramatically shifting world.

---