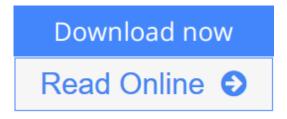


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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

After 35 years that witnessed the explosion of information on virtually every subject, we are in the age of synthesis: encyclopedias and dictionaries abound. With the recent 12-volume Dictionary of the Middle Ages (LJ 2/1/83) and the older one-volume Oxford Classical Dictionary (LJ 5/1/71. 2d ed.), this forms a trio of essential resources. The 100 contributors, many of them distinguished experts, have succeeded in their "attempt to collect within a single work data concerning all fields of Byzantine studies." The 5000-plus entries provide authoritative coverage not only of "traditional" topics such as art and architecture, basilica, agriculture, chronology, geography, literature, medicine, military strategy, science, and theology, but also many facets of everyday life--baths, clocks, houses, locks and padlocks, etc. The social historian will be especially pleased with the entries on abortion, childbirth, criminal procedure, food and diet, homosexuality, marriage and the family, names, prostitution, and slavery. The editor deserves special thanks for the uniformly lucid and readable style, for the clear illustrations, and for the useful maps, though the captions are not very informative. Three caveats: many terms appear only in Greek transliteration without adequate definition or explanation; the bibliographies are often skimpy; and the genealogical tables lack the emperors' regnal years. Still, this will endure as the first book the beginning student or the advanced scholar will reach for on the 1100-year history of Byzantium. Academic, large public, and research libraries must acquire this treasure.

-Bennett D. Hill, Georgetown Univ., Washington, D.C. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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About the Author

Alexander P. Kazhdan is at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C..

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