



The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium (3-Volume Set)

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The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium is a three-volume, comprehensive dictionary of Byzantine civilization. The first resource of its kind in the field, it features over 5,000 entries written by an international group of eminent Byzantinists covering all aspects of life in the Byzantine world. According to Alexander Kazhdan, editor-in-chief of the *Dictionary*: "Entries on patriarchy and emperors will coexist with entries on surgery and musical instruments. An entry on the cultivation of grain will not only be connected to entries on agriculture and its economics but on diet, the baking of bread, and the role of bread in this changing society."

Major entries treat such topics as agriculture, art, literature, and politics, while shorter entries examine topics that relate to Byzantium such as the history of Kiev and personalities of ancient and biblical history. Each article is followed by a bibliography, and numerous maps, tables, architectural designs, and genealogies reinforce and clarify the text.

The new *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* will be the standard research tool and reference work for Byzantinists from graduate students to advanced scholars, and an essential resource for college and school libraries. It will also be an invaluable guide for classicists, Western medievalists, Islamicists, Slavicists, art historians, religious historians, and scholars of archaeology.

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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.

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Review

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"The editor deserves special thanks for the uniformly lucid and readable style, for the clear illustrations, and for the useful maps....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."--*Library Journal*

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About the Author

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

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