



# Daily Life in the Byzantine Empire

*By Marcus Rautman*

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## Daily Life in the Byzantine Empire By Marcus Rautman

Discover how ordinary people lived during the Middle Ages in the eastern Mediterranean in this unparalleled exploration of life in the Byzantine Empire. Learn how the subjects of the Byzantine Empire kept track of time with sundials and water clocks. Witness a typical wedding and all of the traditions followed by the bride, groom, and guests. Find out how the Byzantines kept up their appearance, covering everything from skincare to dental care. Learn the rules of games that children played, and explore everything in the city of Constantinople, from tourist attractions to city administration and defense strategies. Learn about sports entertainment at the Hippodrome as well as theaters and other festivals. Compare city life to that of the country, military, and monastery. Understand Byzantine humor, education system, and musical instruments. Ideal for high school students and undergraduates. Even general readers can explore the world of the Byzantine Empire in this comprehensive study that covers everything from clothing styles to typical city life.

Rautman discusses not only general issues of everyday life in the Byzantine Empire, but also probes into very specific topics. Questions such as Who were some writers during the Byzantine Empire? as well as, How did people brush their teeth? are answered in this extensive study. Topics include Byzantine worldviews, how their society and economy flourished, and how families were structured. Rautman also looks at the city of Constantinople (modern Istanbul), as well as other cities and towns and the countryside. Other topics include life in the military and monastery, artistic life, and education beliefs. Also included are a list of Byzantine rulers, a list of Byzantine and contemporaneous writers, and a glossary. This all-inclusive study is essential to all high school, academic, and public library reference shelves.

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### **Review**

"[B]y placing a chapter on education, health care, technology, astronomy, astrology, and magic at the end of the book, Rautman leaves the reader with a complex and interesting view of Byzantine culture that escapes the usual preconceptions regarding the overwhelming orthodox nature of the state. Rautman's Byzantines are social beings with religious beliefs, not religious subjects with an incidental social and intellectual life....[A] welcome addition to the field and should provide the general public and instructors of Byzantine history with a good introduction to Byzantine life." - **Speculum, A Journal of Medieval Studies**

"Because of the chronological and geographical scope, Rautman has not focused on a representative location and period, but sketches the diversity of daily experiences as a way of conveying what did and did not change over the thousand years. His topics include society and economy, family and household, cities and towns, military life, the monastery, and artistic life." - **Art Book News Annual**

"[D]iscusses daily life ranging from social events and sports to games kids played, tourist attractions, war and peace times and more. Supplementing such daily concerns are insights into Byzantine perceptions, society, and family structure and the major towns and rural life which affected all classes. Any high school or college-level holding strong in Mongol Empire, from its justice system to its cooking....A top pick for any program which includes Mongol Empire studies." - **Midwest Book Review/California Bookwatch**

### **About the Author**

**MARCUS RAUTMAN** is Professor and Department Chair of the Department of Art History and Archaeology, University of Missouri, Columbia.

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