



# BYZANTIUM: LONGEST IMPERIAL GOVERNANCE

The traumatic demise of 33-year-old Alexander the Great at the apogee of his fame and might, before he could achieve his megalomaniac conquest of Italy and Arabia, left a vacuum of leadership that his generals filled with acrimonious dynastic struggles. They carved the Hellenic Empire from the Adriatic Sea to the Himalaya Mountains in Asia into kingdoms that confronted ...

**Christianity Rivals Hellenism/Taiganides.....134**

**Apostle Paul, Vision, Energy, Tenacity/Taiganides.....136**

**A Great Emperor, A Saint, A Strange Life/Kaldellis.....140**

Constantine is the first political ruler to convert to Christianity, an act the consequences of which cannot be calculated. Constantine did convert to Christianity, but we should not imagine him as a regular Christian. He was not baptized until his death-bed; he did not attend church services; he believed that disputes over theology were a waste of time (here he obviously disagreed with the Church Fathers); and he seems to have thought of himself as an apostolic .....

**Agia Sophia, Monument of Byzantium/Fullerton .....141**

Light enters Hagia Sophia through a series of windows, 40 of which are strategically located at the base of the dome. According to the historian Procopius, the dome seemed to hang suspended “on a golden chain from Heaven.” Light struck the gilded mosaics and was reflected and diffused throughout the interior, dissolving matter and creating an environment far removed from the outside

**Byzantium, A Conglomerate of Cultures/Kaldellis .....143**

**Greece Civilizes Romans, so they Wrote/Kritsotakis .....145**

**Hadrian, The Philhellene Roman/Fullerton.....147**

“He became so imbued with and earnest about the study of things Greek, and his nature inclined to these subjects to such a degree, that he was called by some people the .....

**The Eccentric Designers of Hagia Sophia/Kaldellis.....148**

Byzantium is often viewed as a highly religious civilization, indeed sometimes it is virtually equated with Orthodoxy. Obviously, Orthodoxy was very important but recently historians have been fleshing out other aspects of life. For example, it is not as well known that Byzantium was the most technologically advanced Christian culture of the Middle Ages. It preserved and improved the traditions of ancient Greek science and experimented with new .....

**Mount Athos, Monasticism Center/Taiganides.....150**

**Blue Mosque, vs Hagia Sophia/Yessios.....152**

In 1609, more than 10 centuries after Hagia Sophia was built, Sultan Ahmed I gave a mandate to his architect Sedefhar Mehnet Aga to spare no expense in creating a most magnificent Mosque that would surpass Hagia Sophia. The Mosque was deliberately sited to face Hagia Sophia, “to demonstrate that Ottoman architects and builders could rival anything their Christian ....

**Romanos, Pindar of Christian Poetry/Hnaraki.....154**

Romanos a Jewish convert, is one of the giants of our sacred music, one of the pillars of “Golden Epoch of Byzantine hymnography”, which included ....

**Love, Greatest of Christian Virtues/Taiganides .....156**

**An Empress and Saint and ??/Fullerton.....157**

Arguably the most influential woman in Byzantine history, Theodora (r.525AD-565AD) was more than a consort to Justinian. He viewed her as his intellectual equal and sought her advice on matters of imperial policy. She initiated a number of reforms aimed at improving the status of women, and she was not afraid to openly disagree with her husband, most notably on issues involving religion

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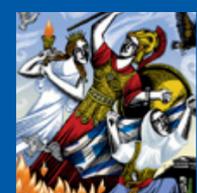
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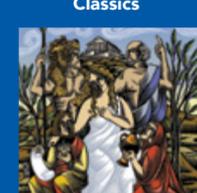
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