



The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire

Edward N. Luttwak

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In this book, the distinguished writer Edward Luttwak presents the grand strategy of the eastern Roman empire we know as Byzantine, which lasted more than twice as long as the more familiar western Roman empire, eight hundred years by the shortest definition. This extraordinary endurance is all the more remarkable because the Byzantine empire was favored neither by geography nor by military preponderance. Yet it was the western empire that dissolved during the fifth century. The Byzantine empire so greatly outlasted its western counterpart because its rulers were able to adapt strategically to diminished circumstances, by devising new ways of coping with successive enemies. It relied less on military strength and more on persuasion—to recruit allies, dissuade threatening neighbors, and manipulate potential enemies into attacking one another instead. Even when the Byzantines fought—which they often did with great skill—they were less inclined to destroy their enemies than to contain them, for they were aware that today's enemies could be tomorrow's allies. Born in the fifth century when the formidable threat of Attila's Huns were deflected with a minimum of force, Byzantine strategy continued to be refined over the centuries, incidentally leaving for us several fascinating guidebooks to statecraft and war.

The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire is a broad, interpretive account of Byzantine strategy, intelligence, and diplomacy over the course of eight centuries that will appeal to scholars, classicists, military history buffs, and professional soldiers.

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