



Byzantine Armies in the West (5th-11th c.). Studies on the Operations on Land and at Sea: Composition and Mission of the Byzantine Task Forces in the West.

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Book Description

The issue of sovereignty over the Italian peninsula occupied the Byzantines much and certainly many battles were fought so that *this most revered part of the empire* (according to the simple phrasing of Michael Psellos) remain within its bosom. The present volume examines the Byzantine military operations carried out in the West, from the first mission in 409 to the fall of Bari to the Normans in 1071 -an event that marked the end of Byzantine rule in the region. As an addendum the final attempt of the empire to reestablish its presence on Italian soil in the years 1154-1156 is also analyzed. The thorough investigation of Byzantine, and especially of the most informative Latin sources, brings to light the different roles played by Sicily and Italy in Byzantine political and strategic concepts, underlines the paramount importance of the fleet, and reveals that the composition of Byzantine troops in the West was the result of administrative and social choices on the part of the leadership in Constantinople, in accordance with the political attitudes of different factions. The volume aims to provide a comprehensible understanding of the ethical aspects of Byzantine policy and strategy and the changes that these underwent during the course of eight centuries.

Program: Byzantine History Data Bank.

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