



Law and Legality in the Greek East: The Byzantine Canonical Tradition, 381-883 (Oxford Early Christian Studies)

By David Wagschal

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Byzantine church law remains *terra incognita* to most scholars in the western academy. In this work, David Wagschal provides a fresh examination of this neglected but fascinating world. Confronting the traditional narratives of decline and primitivism that have long discouraged study of the subject, Wagschal argues that a close reading of the central monuments of Byzantine canon law c. 381-883 reveals a much more sophisticated and coherent legal culture than is generally assumed. Engaging in innovative examinations of the physical shape and growth of the canonical corpus, the content of the canonical prologues, the discursive strategies of the canons, and the nature of the earliest forays into systematization, Wagschal invites his readers to reassess their own legal-cultural assumptions as he advances an innovative methodology for understanding this ancient law. *Law and Legality in the Greek East* explores topics such as compilation, jurisprudence, professionalization, definitions of law, the language of the canons, and the relationship between the civil and ecclesiastical laws. It challenges conventional assumptions about Byzantine law while suggesting many new avenues of research in both late antique and early medieval law, secular and ecclesiastical.

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Review

"Wagschal's *Law and legality* is an impressive synthesis of various schools of scholarship and a thoughtful analysis of the Byzantine canonical corpus. It deserves to become a standard entrée for anyone interested in Byzantine law and the canon law of Eastern Christianity more generally." --Zachary Chitwood, Humboldt University of Berlin

About the Author

David Wagschal studied medieval history and Byzantine theology at the University of Toronto and St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary before embarking upon his doctoral studies at the University of Durham, England in 2005-2010. A former Assistant Professor of Church History and Canon Law at St. Vladimir's Seminary in New York, he has also taught at the Toronto School of Theology, University of Toronto.

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