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<<http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=h-earlyslavic&month=1112&week=a&msg=iw5NeJ82urL9I24xS4ezoA&user=&pw=>>

I'm not sure I can recommend this, but at least here are some superficial observations (in the event you see the title and are wondering....).

The publication is:

Vizantiiskii slovar', 2 vols. SPb.: Amfora; Izd-vo. RKhGA; Izd-vo. Olega Abyshko, 2011. 573, 591 pp.

Compiled principally and edited by Konstantin Filatov, it is a "nauchno-populiarnaia" book, produced in the first instance for the Russkaia Khristianskaia Gumanitarnaia Akademiia and intended for students (especially of history) and anyone else with a broad interest in Byzantium. There are some 4000 entries, some only a line or two; a few occupying as many as several pages.

I have only dipped into it, using as my comparison the estimable *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* in 3 vols. The coverage is by no means identical, though there is naturally a lot of overlap. For example, the Russian work seems to have short biographical entries on various Byzantine military commanders who are not found in the Oxford dictionary. The entries here though tend to be dry historical narratives; the Oxford entries generally are more penetrating in analyzing the significance of their subjects, even if at times in less space. Given the deep knowledge of the chief compiler of the Oxford project (Alexander Kazhdan), there understandably a lot in it that tells us about Byzantine literature and texts attributed to individual authors. Oxford entries have references; those here do not.

I have not really checked for factual accuracy, though have noted some discrepancies between the two reference works in dates. I think I am a bit on my guard about the Russian dictionary, after seeing in the entry under "Hippodrome" an indication Yaroslav the Wise built one in Kiev and an assertion in the longish entry for the Shroud of Turin that it has been proven to be authentic (i.e., early). For entries about titles/ranks or government positions, Oxford generally is more expansive. Yet in the Russian dictionary one can find a slew of entries for various memorial columns or statues; whereas for the columns there are only a couple of general entries in Oxford. The Russian dictionary had an entry for a relic purporting to be the hair of John the Baptist, but, as near as I can determine, no entry for the saint himself (who is in the Oxford dictionary).

It is curious to see how the wider Byzantine commonwealth and neighboring areas figure here. Some entries relate to the western part of the Roman Empire, with no clear connection to Byzantium. For Rus', we have Ol'ga and Vladimir but apparently none of the Greeks who were bishops there once Christianity arrived. Such an outstanding representative of Byzantine learning in Rus as is Metropolitan Hilarion

(even though not a Greek) might reasonably have been included, but he is absent. One might think there would be an entry on the Icon of the Vladimir Mother of God, the most important of the Byzantine icons to make it to Rus', but I did not find one. On the other hand, Feofan Grek gets a short paragraph. I guess the assumption is that for Rus' students would naturally turn to other sources of reference.

At the end of volume 2 is a longish chronology of Byzantine history and lists of the various rulers and church hierarchs with their dates.

I can see using this dictionary for reference in conjunction with the Oxford volumes, but, given what I know about the credentials of the contributors to the latter, I would rely on them if there is a choice. I suppose, as an experiment, one could run some comparisons between the Russian dictionary entries and what is available on Wikipedia, though the coverage in the latter (apart from questions of accuracy) is not likely to be as broad.