

Thesis:

- Byzantine Art and Architecture (and Early Christian Art) were the main influence for most art and architecture later created in the Western world.

I will be examining evidence which shows how Byzantine Art and Architecture (and Early Christian Art) have remained influential in the realm of Western Art and Architecture today.

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- Mt. Athos. <http://poseidon.csd.auth.gr/athos/icon19.jpg> Retrieved on February 25th 2010.
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Limitations of Study:

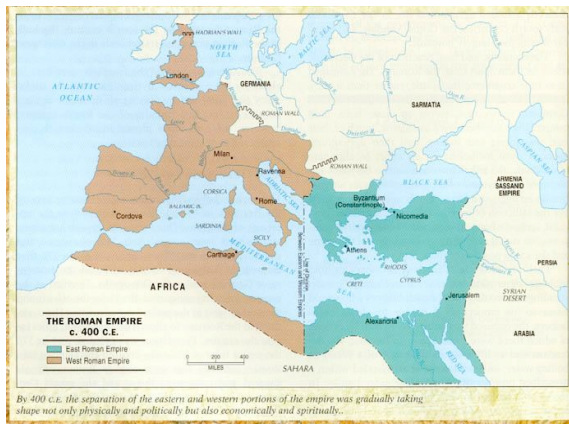
- I feel that there is an almost endless supply of information available on Byzantine Art & Architecture. I was forced to limit my sources and focus my study on only a small part of Byzantine Art and Architecture.
- I was able to find a wide variety of sources. Whereas some of my sources are from the 1950's, while others are from 2000's, I feel that I have had a lot of information to explore and have had to make decisions about what to include in my research. I have had to limit my research and sources.
- Unfortunately, in my research I came across contradictory information. I had to use my own discretion in deciding which information to include in the assignment.

Terms:

- Justinian: Also known as Justinian the great, was the second member of the Justinian Dynasty, was the Eastern Roman Emperor from 527 until his death in 565. Justinian devoted much of his reign to re-conquering Italy, North Africa and Spain and was known as being a prolific builder (Maas, M, 2005).
- Constantinople: the capital city of the Byzantine Empire, was conquered in 1453 (Bassett, Sarah, 2004).
- Saint (Hagia) Sophia: One of the most renowned and well-known churches of the Byzantine Era. The Hagia Sophia is one of the most magnificent examples of Byzantium Architecture, built by Justinian I in 537 AD (archaeolink.com).
- Hippodrome: A Landmark that was once the scene of much excitement and mayhem is now the site of a public garden (Murray, John 79).
- Byzantium: A city in ancient Greece which was founded in 667 BC. The city of Byzantium was later renamed Constantinople after the Roman Emperor Constantine, and became the capital of the Byzantine Empire on the 11th of May 330 (Grant, Michael, pg 133).

Byzantine Art & Architecture:

- The Byzantine Empire was one of the strongest civilizations in the world. When Roman Empire was divided in 395 the Western half was ruled by the barbarians until the 5th Century, while the Eastern half (the Byzantine Empire) remained strong for over 1,000 years.



Roman Empire C. 400 C.E (www.ata.boun.edu.tr)



Byzantine Empire 1000-1100 (www.ata.boun.edu.tr)

- The Art and Architecture that was produced during this Era is extremely impressive and very distinguished.

Early Byzantine Art & Architecture (324-527):

- Early Christian and Byzantine Art erupted in the first Century AD after the death of Christ, and continued until the fourth century AD. Early Christian and Byzantine Art was often produced in secret whereas Romans persecuted Christians. Artists were forced to camouflage their Art with symbols and hints of Christian aspects. Christianity was the first cult to not involve rituals of sacrifice of animals and refused to worship an Emperor causing the Roman Empire to make Christianity illegal.
- Art during the reign on Justinian can be divided into three different diverse periods:

- The first period can be defined by the persecution that Christians faced from the first to the third century, forcing them to produce their Art secretly.
- The second period can be defined by Constantine legally recognizing Christianity as a religion in the fourth century.
- The third period is known as the 'New Christian Style' starting in the fifth century. Most of the art produced during this period were frescoes, mosaics, and architecture.

Justinian Art & Architecture (527-565):

- During the 6th century, Byzantine Art flourished. There were some significant changes in Byzantine art; these changes coincided with the reign of Justinian. (Maas, M, 2008).
- The distinct difference between Christian Art and Byzantine Art was 'earth beyond realism' expressed in Christian Art, while Byzantine Art was more spiritual and possessed a 'strong worldly style'.
- Distinct Architecture of Justinian's time can be seen in the renovation of the church of the Apostles and the church of Sts. Sergius and Bacchus; both of these churches are located in Constantinople and have a dome-crowned octagon with an exterior aisle.



Church of Sts. Sergius and Bacchus (www.media-cdn.tripadvisor.com)

- Hagia Sophia, a church in Constantinople, was rebuilt by Justinian during his reign. There have been several disputes about the dates of the erections of Hagia Sophia; historians believe it to have been erected sometime between the 6th and 8th Centuries (Murray, John, 55). After much research, I have come to believe Hagia Sophia was erected approximately AD 558.



Hagia Sophia (www.dailyistanbultours.com)

Late Byzantine Art & Architecture (565-1453):

- After the arrival of the Crusaders in 1204, Constantinople began to lose the character it had been so well known for, at this time Constantinople's Influence was far-reaching, spreading to Western nations (Blackman, Bill (1986).
- There were still four centers of Byzantine art: the capital itself (Constantinople), Mt. Athos, Hellas, and Trebizond.



Constantinople (www.old-picture.com)



Constantinople (www.leatherlandancestry.info)



Mt. Athos (www.poseidon.csd)

- “The architecture of Mt. Athos presents the most faithful reflection of the Byzantine style. The model of the church of the monastery of Laura, belonging to the previous period, is more or less faithfully reproduced. A dome, supported on four sides by barrel vaults, stands directly over the middle of the transept, which is terminated at either end by a round apse. The real architectural ornaments are forced into the background by the costly mosaics and which practically cover all available wall surface. The architecture of this period remained still.” (Knight, Kevin. 2009).

(No image available for Hellas, and Trebizond).

Connection to Modern Art & Architecture:

- Some of the most beautiful and unique Art and Architecture in the world was created during the Byzantine Era. The majority of Byzantine Art and Architecture was produced between the 4th century and the fall of Constantinople which occurred in 1453.

- Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, is recognized as being decorated with classical sculptures; these classical sculptures were brought to Constantinople from all parts of the Byzantine Empire (Bassett, Sarah, 2004). The city of Constantinople is also home to several famous churches, with The Church of the Holy Apostles being most famous church in Constantinople, second only to Saint Hagia Sophia (Doukas, Nikos).



Statues of Constantinople (www.traveltowork.net)

- Byzantine Art in itself developed largely as a result of the Art that was produced by the Roman Empire, and was also indirectly influenced by the art of Ancient Greeks. Byzantium Art seems to take a symbolic approach in comparison to Classical Art which was based more closely on reality (Brendel, O. 1979). This being said, Byzantium Art was not unrealistic, and although it was more abstract than the Art of the previous Era, Byzantines regarded the Art as being (Mango, Cyril, 65).
 - “Byzantine art displayed the same constancy: in the fifth and sixth centuries, it developed a formal expression that was manifested in the thousands of works of art that came to be regarded as sacred and immutable” (Marceau, Jo, 136).

Conclusions:

- The Early Christian and Byzantine art is the founder of most art found later in the western world. Christian subject matter is one of the main sources of Art building up to the Modern Era. Religious Art exists in all styles and mediums.
- Byzantine Art and Architecture were generally religious in nature and were often created in conjunction with the Eastern Orthodox Church.
 - The story has no end. The Orthodox Church continues the patterns begun so long ago. Early Christian and Byzantine designs have been revived in recent times, though not to the extent that Western medieval architecture has been reproduced. When Renaissance architects sought to learn from buildings of ancient Rome, they went to same sources that had helped shape medieval Christian buildings, and they created a style whose consanguinity with early Christian and Byzantine architecture has yet to be properly explored. In the recurrent rhythms of Mediterranean life, that architecture is a force alive.
- In modern times, our understanding of Byzantine Art and Architecture, and Constantinople in particular, barely compare to that Ancient Greece or Rome. Unlike Rome, Constantinople has not had the advantage of decades of meticulous and methodical excavations and investigations.