

Byzantine Art: Heaven on Earth

(330 AD – 1453 AD)

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Hagia Sophia, by Isidore of Miletus & Anthemius of Tralles, Constantinople (Istanbul) (532–37)

Early Byzantine Empire 330-843

- Emperor Constantine: 313 Edict of Milan; 330 “New Rome” at Constantinople

First Golden Age of Byzantine Art under Emperor Justinian (527-565)

- Hagia Sophia “Holy Wisdom” (532-537)
- Barberini Diptych (6th c)
- Ravenna
 - S. Apollinare in Classe (549)
 - S. Vitale (526-547)

Iconoclasm 726-787, 814-842

Middle Byzantine Empire 843-1204

Second Golden Age of Byzantine Art / “Macedonian Renaissance”

- Monastery of Hosios Loukas, Greece (1011)
 - Cross-in-square plan
 - Octagon-domed plan
- Daphni Monastery (1100)
- Church as image of the cosmos; icon of the divine world order

Late Byzantine Empire 1204-1453

- 1204 Conquest of Constantinople by Western Crusaders/ 1453 Conquest by Ottoman Turks
- Kariye Camii or Church of the Holy Savior in Chora (mosaics and frescoes 1316-1321)

Conclusion: “Presences,” imperial court as mirror of court of Heaven, Art joins heaven and earth

Further reading:

Catalogue for 1997 Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition: *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843-126*, edited by Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, 1997

Catalogue for 2014 National Gallery of Art exhibition: *Heaven & Earth: Art of Byzantium from Greek Collections*, Eds. Anastasia Drandaki, Demetr Papanikola-Bakirtzi, 2013