

Byzantine Empire and Kievan Rus

*"Justice is the constant and perpetual wish to render every one his due.
The maxims of law are these: to live honestly, to hurt no one,
and to give every man his due."*

—*Corpus Iuris Civilis*

By 330 C.E., the eastern half of the Roman Empire had become wealthier and more important than the western half. Thus, Emperor Constantine made the city of *Byzantium* the capital of the empire and renamed it *Constantinople* in his own honor. Today, this city is known as Istanbul. Later, in 395, the Roman Empire was divided administratively into completely separate empires, a western one ruled from Rome and an eastern one ruled from Constantinople. As explained in Chapter 4, the western empire declined until it was taken over by German invaders in 476. However, the eastern half, the *Byzantine Empire* grew and prospered.

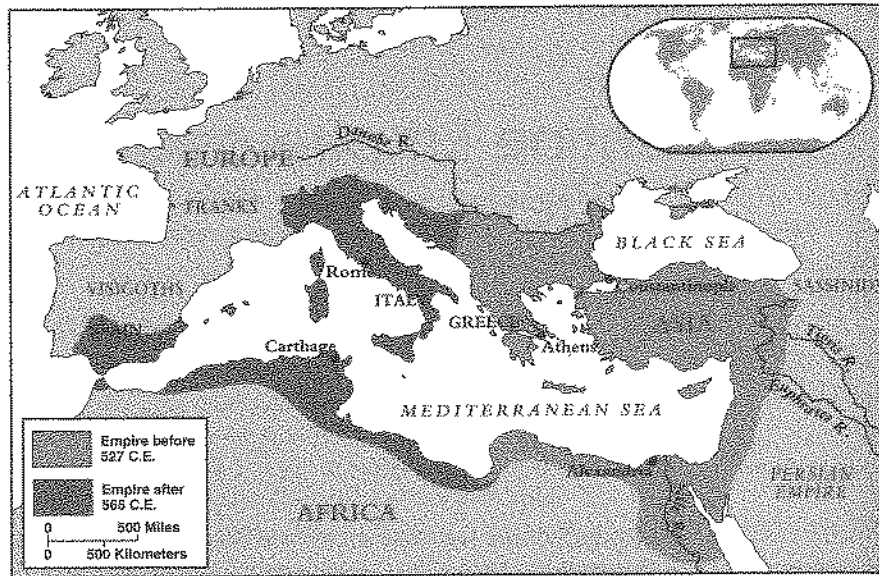
The capital and cultural center of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople was located on the European side of the *Bosporus Strait*. That narrow body of water connects the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara, which in turn connects to the Mediterranean. The city's location made a center of trade connecting Europe and Asia. This brought the city great wealth, and made it a blending of strong European and Asian influences.

The Byzantine Empire

As the map shows, by 527 C.E., the Byzantine Empire stretched over large swaths of the lands bordering the Mediterranean, including North Africa, Spain, Italy, Greece and the rest of the Balkans, and Southwest Asia. In addition to the capital of Constantinople and its surroundings, the empire also controlled the city of Rome.

As the wealthy capital of an expanding empire, Constantinople faced attacks from Germanic invaders. That is why strong, wide stone walls were built around Constantinople. Similar defenses were strengthened in other Byzantine cities. The Byzantines fought repeated battles on their eastern border with the powerful Sassanid Empire based in Persia. The two empires fought for control of land in Asia Minor and Syria.

BYZANTINE EMPIRE



Byzantine Government The Byzantine government was highly centralized. A vast imperial bureaucracy brought continuity to the empire even during periods of unrest and war. Although the empire enjoyed comparatively long periods of peace, it did experience instability, mostly caused by power struggles over succession to the throne.

Justinian the Great Along with his wife Empress Theodora, Emperor Justinian I (ruled 527–565) oversaw a revitalization of Constantinople. Most notably, a Christian church called *Hagia Sophia* was expanded, and its large dome became a focal point of the city’s architecture. According to legend, when a Russian visitor in the tenth century saw the spectacular church, he commented, “There God dwells among men.”

Another of Justinian’s significant contributions was the revival of the legal traditions of Rome. Justinian’s collection of laws was called the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* (*Body of Civil Law*), although it is often referred to simply as the Justinian code. The code remained a foundation of legal knowledge in Europe until the nineteenth century. (Test Prep: Write a paragraph comparing Justinian with another leader who codified the law, Hammurabi. See page 21.)

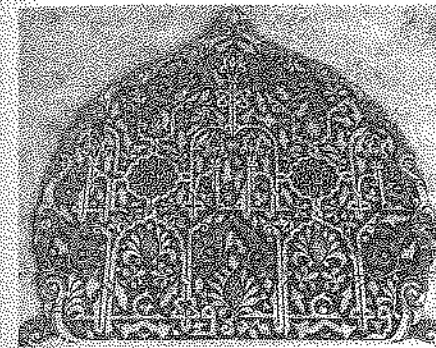
Under Justinian, the Byzantine Empire expanded its territory. In the east, Byzantine forces under General Belisarius defeated the Sassanids. This established the eastern border of the empire. In the west, the Byzantines conquered parts of North Africa, southern Spain, Sicily, and Italy. The expansion, however, was expensive. The Byzantine Empire was nearly bankrupt by the time Justinian died in 565.

Byzantium after Justinian After Justinian’s reign, the borders of the Byzantine Empire contracted. *Bulgars* (Turkic people originally from Central

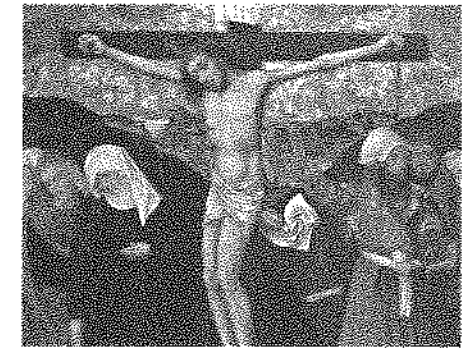
Asia) took over much of the Balkans. Germanic tribes reoccupied much of Italy. Arab peoples took over Syria, Egypt, and the rest of North Africa, spreading the Islamic faith. The Islamic forces put Constantinople under siege twice, but the Byzantines were able to hold them off. In the 800s and later, the Byzantine Empire was able to expand again. (Test Prep: Write a paragraph connecting the Byzantine Empire with later events in the Balkans, see page 355.)

Heraclius Unlike previous Byzantine emperors, *Heraclius* (ruled 610 to 641) spoke Greek rather than Latin. During his reign, the attention of the empire was largely focused toward the east and resisting numerous invasions from Islamic forces in the Near East and Sassanid forces in Asia Minor. Although Heraclius never attained complete victory over the invaders, he did manage to greatly reduce the power and influence of the Sassanids in Southwest Asia.

Leo III Conflicts between the Byzantine Empire and Islamic forces continued into the next dynasty, known as the Syrian, which took power in 717. The first Syrian ruler, Leo III (ruled 717 to 740), defeated and reclaimed much of the Near Eastern territory lost by his predecessor, and gained additional lands in Asia Minor.

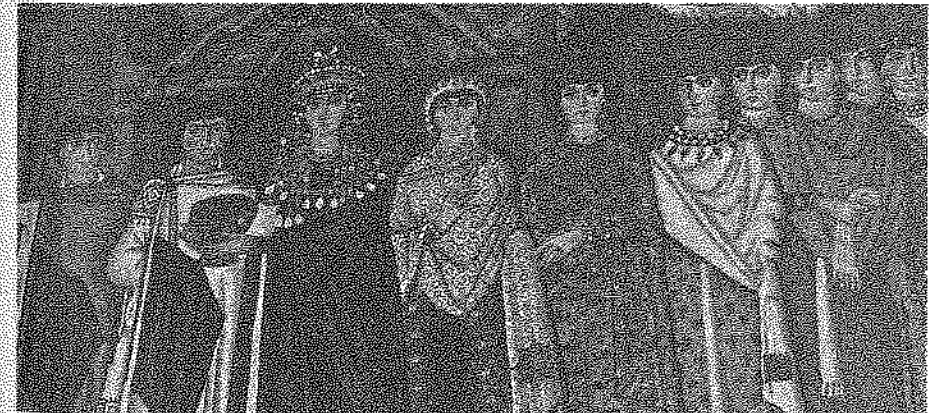


Source: Thinkstock



Source: The Walters Art Museum

Three neighboring faiths developed various traditions about the portrayal of people in art. Fearful that people would worship art as a false idol, many Islamic artists portrayed no people at all (above, left). In contrast, Roman Catholics art often portrayed Jesus (above, right). Orthodox artists showed the influence of both traditions, while some focused on non-religious figures, such as Queen Theodora (below).



Source: Dreamstime

Leo III's greatest impact was on religion. He instituted a controversial policy of *iconoclasm*, the practice of opposing the veneration of religious images and icons. In this policy, he may have been influenced by Islam, which had a strong tradition against realistic renderings of religious figures such as Jesus and the prophet Muhammad. Leo III ordered all images and paintings in churches be either covered or destroyed. Opposition to his policy was strongest among monks in the Byzantine Empire, and it was not accepted by the popes.

Basil II Ruling from 976 to 1025, Basil II resumed the successful expansion of the Byzantine Empire started by Justinian four centuries earlier. In the Balkans, Byzantine forces defeated the Bulgars at the *Battle of Kleidion* in 1014. He also conquered some territory in eastern Asia Minor.

Religion The Byzantine Empire was a *theocracy*, meaning that there was no separation between the state and the church. The religious leaders were essentially a department of the government. The emperor appointed the head of the church (the *patriarch*) and sometimes even dictated what sermons should be delivered to local congregations. (Test Prep: Write a paragraph comparing the role of religion in Byzantium and in China. See page 182.)

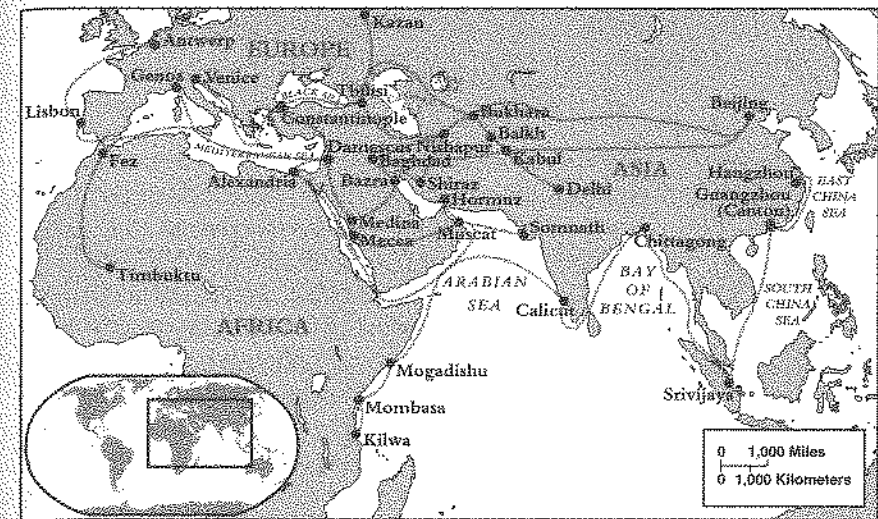
Many *monasteries* and other religious communities were founded throughout the Byzantine Empire during the 300s and 400s. Monks and nuns lived in these centers of prayer and work. They provided aid to the people in times of natural disasters. The monasteries did not become centers of scholarship and education, however, as those in Western Europe did. As mentioned earlier, most monks and nuns opposed iconoclasm; they wanted to keep the icons in churches and monasteries.

The Byzantine Empire believed strongly in proselytizing, spreading their faith to others. They sent Christian missionaries abroad in hopes of converting nonbelievers such as the Bulgars and Moravians in Central Europe.

The Missionary Cyril The most famous and successful missionary was named Cyril. In about 863, Cyril created his own alphabet, which was loosely based on Greek, to help him spread not only the word of God but also literacy in general. This Cyrillic alphabet was adopted by Russians and people who spoke many of the Slavic languages—the family of languages used in Eastern Europe. The tradition of Christianity practiced in the Byzantine Empire, which later became known as the Eastern Orthodox tradition, continues to be practiced in much of Eastern Europe today, even though the empire dissolved centuries ago.

Conflict with Rome Over time, tensions increased between the Eastern wing of the church in the Byzantine Empire and the Western wing, centered in Rome. The controversy over Leo III's iconoclastic policy was just one point of contention between the two branches. There was also disagreement over the authority of the Pope, and over whether Rome was the central city of Christendom. Tensions came to a head in 1054, when a *schism*, or separation, split the Roman Catholic Church in Western Europe and the *Eastern Orthodox Church* in Southeastern Europe and Russia. (Test Prep: Write an outline comparing the schism of 1054 with the Reformation. See page 278.)

AFRO-EURASIAN TRADE NETWORKS



Trade and Prosperity A major reason the Byzantine Empire endured for almost a thousand years was its strong economy. Due to the location of Constantinople, trade flourished with lands bordering the Mediterranean, with Northern Europe, and with China and India via the Silk Roads. There was so much Byzantine trade that people around the Mediterranean used a Byzantine gold coin as a common currency.

In addition, silk weaving developed as an important industry in the empire as early as 550, again adding fuel to Byzantium's economy. The government regulated this industry in order to prevent the formation of business monopolies.

The Byzantine economy also had a strong agricultural component. The labor was provided by peasants, most of whom were not free. They could not leave the land of their landowner because of either laws that prohibited it or debts that they could not pay to their landlord. From time to time, the Byzantine government tried to break this bond. The government's *theme system* offered peasants their freedom if they agreed to join the imperial military service. Also, the emperors mandated limits as to how much land any one landlord could own.

Concentration of Wealth Imperial efforts to create an agricultural economy with many small landowners were not successful. Land became concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people, which led to increasing peasant revolts. In addition, as landowners became more powerful, they were able to resist tax collections more easily than could small landowners. As a result, tax income declined, weakening the Byzantine government.

Free Peasant Revolts Free peasants were one step above peasants in the economic hierarchy. They were "free" in that they contracted with landowners and paid rent for the land they worked. They were one of the main sources of taxes and recruits for the government. Periodically, the nobility tried to force free peasants into peasant status to increase their income or land holdings. Predictably, such tactics sparked revolts, including one led by Basil the Copper Hand (928–932) and one led by Ivaylo (1277–1280).

Afro-Eurasian Trade Goods

Trade Center	Imports	Exports
Novgorod (Russia)	Spices, silk, steel, horses, jewels	Furs, honey, wax, wool, linens, slaves
Timbuktu (Africa)	Textiles, horses	Salt, gold, slaves
Swahili city-states (Africa)	Porcelain, jewelry, glass, textiles	Ivory, exotic animals, gold, slaves, cotton, glass beads
Hangzhou (China)	Cotton, wool, ivory, gold, silver	Silk, rice, spices, porcelain, tea, paper
Calicut (India)	Horses, glassware, porcelain, satin	Spices, jewels, gold, cotton, silk
Baghdad (Arabia)	Textiles, slaves, porcelain	Textiles, leather, paper, books
Melaka (Indonesia)	Porcelain, paper, textiles, sugar, salt	Rice, pepper, spices, tin, aromatic woods
Venice (Italy)	Spices, silk, jewels	Metals, salt, wheat, wines, oils

The Arts Arts, literature, and education flourished during the Byzantine Empire. They were nearly all religious in nature. Literature of the period focused on the importance of seeking salvation by obeying God's will. Books and songs were written detailing the lives of Jesus and Mary, as well as a large number of Christian saints. Fine artists were likewise focused on devotional work, such as icons and mosaics depicting Christian themes and *illuminated manuscripts* of the Bible, which were elaborately decorated with colored illustrations and flecked with silver and gold. Byzantine art proved highly influential on later generations, both in Europe and in Islamic cultures.

Education Education during the Byzantine Empire was likewise dominated by religion. Schools run by the Eastern Orthodox Church taught a wide variety of subjects, including philosophy, math, medicine, and law—all with a religious point of view. The *University of Constantinople* was founded in 850; many of its students were trained for service in the vast Byzantine bureaucracy, while others focused on copying the classical writings from Ancient Greece and Rome.

Life in the City The city of Constantinople, wealthy from its position as a trade center, became known for the lavish homes of its aristocrats, its beautiful churches, and the impressive imperial palace. Like Rome, even the common people went to public baths. Other gathering spots were restaurants, taverns, and the *Hippodrome*, a large stadium like the Coliseum in the Rome. The other large cities of the Byzantine Empire, such as Antioch, Thessalonica, and Trebizond, had similar attractions, but none had an imperial palace and none rivaled Constantinople in grandeur.

Decline and Fall The expenses of constant conflict on both its eastern and western borders, combined with the reluctance of the wealthy to pay taxes and the unrest among the common people, slowly undermined the strength of the Byzantine Empire. The declining strength can be seen in a series of military defeats spread out over four centuries. In 1071, a group that originated in the steppes of central Asia known as the Seljuk Turks defeated Byzantine forces in the *Battle of Manzikert*. After this defeat, the Turks gradually took more and more territory in Asia Minor.

Around that same time, Byzantine forces clashed with a new power in the Mediterranean—the *Normans* from northern France. The Normans took control of Sicily and southern Italy from the Byzantines in 1071. (For more about the Normans and their invasion of England in 1066, see Chapter 12.)

Another major setback for the Byzantines came in the early 1200s. As you will read later, in 1095, the Byzantine Emperor Alexius I asked the pope to call upon Roman Catholics in Western Europe to help fight against the Turks in the region of the Middle East called the Levant, an area many Christians called the “Holy Land.” The result was a series of military expeditions, called the *Crusades*, in which knights and commoners from Western Europe traveled to the Levant with hopes of seizing control for Christianity. During the Fourth Crusade (1202–1204), soldiers from Western Europe gathered in the Italian city of Venice to prepare to sail to the Levant. However, the Venetians persuaded, or possibly coerced, crusading European knights to sack their trading rivals in Constantinople first.

The Byzantine Empire continued to shrink. By the fifteenth century, the remnant of the empire was concentrated solely in Europe. In 1453, the Ottoman Turks, who had replaced the Seljuk Turks in western Asia Minor, conquered Constantinople, marking the end of the Byzantine Empire.

Slavic Peoples and the Origins of Russia

Historians know little about the earliest history of the Slavs. They originally populated the steppes to the northeast of the Black Sea. By about 500 B.C.E., three identifiable Slavic-language groups began to emerge:

- East Slavic, which evolved into Ukrainian and Russian
- West Slavic, which evolved into Polish, Slovak, and Czech
- South Slavic, which evolved into Serbian, Croatian, and Slovenian

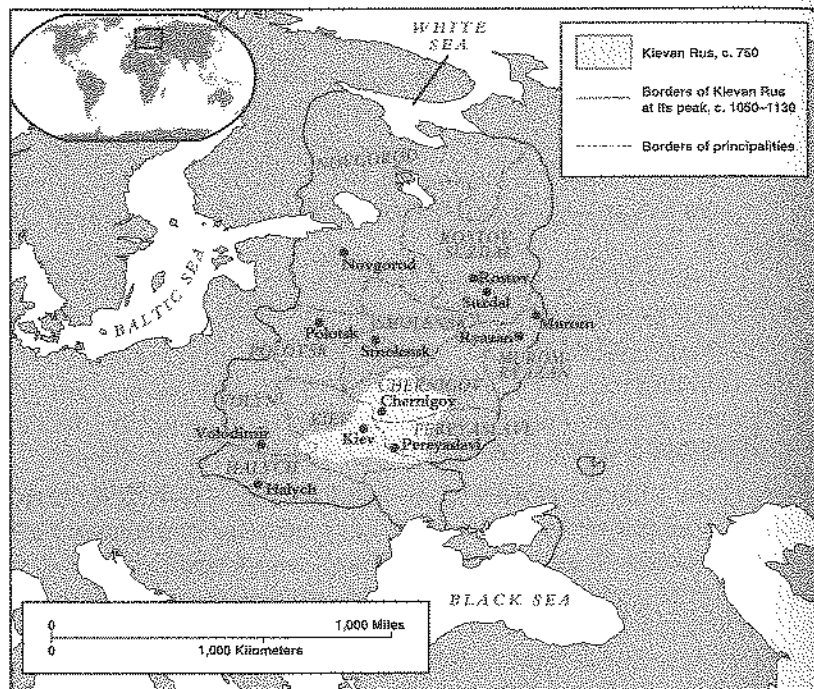
At first, the Slavs lived a hunter-forager lifestyle, which was dictated by their environment. In the forested north, the soil in the area was fertile, but the growing season was short. By contrast, the steppes to the south enjoyed a longer growing season but the land was too tough to plow with existing technology.

The Rise of Kievan Rus The East Slavs made contact with people of Northern Europe known as *Vikings* around 800. As you will read in Chapter 12, the Vikings expanded from their homeland in Scandinavia west into England, south into Western Europe, and east into Slavic territory. They moved south and east along river routes, including Europe's fourth longest river, the extensive

Dnieper River, flowing from Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine to the Black Sea. By the end of the ninth century, the Vikings had taken control of the area and ruled over the Eastern Slavs. Viking rulers were called *Rus*, a word that later became the source of the name *Russia*. In the early 900s, under the Viking ruler *Oleg*, a settlement on the Dnieper River became the Principality of Kiev (see the map), also called *Kievan Rus*.

Kievan Rus was essentially a collection of city-states, which were allowed to govern themselves as long as they paid tribute to the main ruler, the Grand Prince of Kiev. Ruling Kievan Rus was a council of *boyars*, or nobles. The boyars elected the prince of Kievan Rus when a vacancy occurred and served as a war council during times of conflict. Since the boyars represented the people they governed, the system is sometimes considered an early form of democracy. However, membership in this council was limited to Viking military leaders.

KIEVAN RUS, 750 TO 1130



Kiev Converts to Christianity As discussed above, the Byzantine Empire sent missionaries to convert the people of Kievan Rus to Orthodox Christianity. These conversion attempts were motivated not only by the basic desire to spread the religion, but also by worries that an organized, pagan Kievan Rus would present a potential political threat to the empire.

Conversion formally succeeded in 989, when Prince Vladimir I (“the Great,” ruled 980–1015) of Kievan Rus married the sister of the Byzantine emperor. As part of the agreement, Vladimir had to convert to Orthodox Christianity, as did all of his subjects. With Eastern Orthodox Christianity thus

established as its official religion, Kievan Rus became increasingly linked to the empire, both culturally and politically. Byzantine advisers, priests, and teachers were sent to Kiev. Hundreds of wooden onion-dome churches were built, in imitation of the style of Byzantine churches, and the monastic tradition came to Kievan Rus. In terms of politics, the imperial control of the church became widely accepted in Russia. Despite the conversion of the ruling elite in Kievan Rus, pagan traditions survived among the peasants for centuries.

The Golden Age of Kievan Rus The “golden age” of Kievan Rus took place during the tenth and eleventh centuries, when the civilization enjoyed both a strong government and a cohesive society. The first great leader of the Golden Age was Vladimir I, the ruler who oversaw the conversion of Kievan Rus to Christianity. He also expanded the western border of his kingdom. The second great leader was Vladimir’s son, Yaroslav I (ruled 1019–1054). He is known as Yaroslav the Wise because he promoted education, and he codified the legal system, *Russkaya Pravda* (“Russian Justice”).

The Slave Trade The rulers of Kievan Rus engaged in some trade with Baghdad to the southeast and Baltic ports to the northwest. The major trading partner, however, was the Byzantine Empire. The Kievan princes organized annual expeditions to Constantinople to sell honey, hides, furs, and timber, but mostly to sell slaves. Kievan Rus had no agricultural surplus; indeed, they had more people than they could support. So each fall, the princes would demand tribute from various Kievan towns and agricultural areas, calling for a certain number of peasants from each community to be sent to Kiev as slaves. The slaves were then transported to Constantinople by boats on the annual trade expedition. (Test Prep: Write a paragraph comparing slavery in Kievan Rus to slavery in Africa. See page 171.)

In return for slaves, the Kievan princes received gold coins and other riches of the Byzantine Empire. When the princes were not satisfied with these exchanges (as in 860, 907, and 1043), they sent naval expeditions to raid Constantinople.

The Decline of Kiev The increasing dependence of Kievan Rus on the Byzantine Empire proved to be its undoing. Kievan trade delegations found it hard to reach Constantinople due to the invasion of nomadic groups from central Asia, such as the Pechenegs of the steppe south of Kiev. As Byzantium’s economic fortunes declined, so too did Kiev’s. In 1169, northern Russian princes took advantage of Kiev’s weakness by sacking the city. They did so again in 1204.

Less than forty years later, in 1240, Kiev was invaded by the largest and most powerful group from Central Asia, the Mongols, who took over and stayed for almost 250 years. During this period, the so-called Khanate of the Golden Horde occupied the steppe and exacted tribute from those Russian princes living in the forests to the north. The Mongols were not interested in occupying the forests, preferring the grassy steppe for their grazing herds of horses. By the time the Mongols were finally defeated by Russian forces, the Byzantine Empire had fallen. (The Mongols are discussed in more detail on page 241.)

Novgorod One of the largest city-states in northern Kievan Rus was Novgorod. According to legend, Novgorod was founded by a Scandinavian, Rurik, in the tenth century. An influx of German merchants, Finns, Swedes, and Slavs over four centuries created a multicultural city with a population of around 400,000. Novgorod prospered through trade, connecting the Baltic Sea and Black Sea regions along the Volga and Dneiper river routes. Products traded included furs, honey, and tar produced in the north; cloth and metals from farther west in Europe; and grains from farther east in Russia. Novgorod's growth was representative of the growth of many cities between 800 and 1300. During this period, a warming climate caused agricultural productivity to increase, which resulted in greater surplus goods for trade. Novgorod became independent from Kievan Rus in the twelfth century. However, like many cities in this era, it was eventually absorbed by a growing empire. In the fifteenth century, a newly organized Russian empire would seize control of Novgorod.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: WAS JUSTINIAN NOBLE OR RUTHLESS?

One of the first writers to evaluate Justinian was Procopius, who was a top advisor to Justinian's top military leader, Belisarius. In his extensive public writings, Procopius praised Justinian as a capable and honorable leader. However, he also wrote *Secret History*, a scathing account of Justinian and his rule. This account remained hidden until long after the death of Procopius. It was finally published in 1623. The disparity between the public and private writings of Procopius leaves many questions. Was the *Secret History* the truth that Procopius was unwilling to publish because he knew it would destroy his career? Was it a work of jealousy that should not be taken seriously? Was it simply an example of how leaders appear flawed to those who know them best?

For the next several hundred years, European historians generally praised Justinian. Like him, they were living in a world in which leaders were praised for expanding their borders, especially to spread Christianity. Otto of Freising, a twelfth-century German bishop writing during the Crusades called Justinian a "most zealous and Christian monarch" who "triumphed gloriously."

As historians focused more on non-religious forces in history, they praised him less for expanding Christian territory and more for his reforms, such as his law code that standardized legal practice in the empire. Some historians have become more critical. For example, Peter Heather, in *The Restoration of Rome: Barbarian Popes and Imperial Pretenders*, attacks Justinian's style of rule as "authoritarianly chaotic," and his actions as brutal. "By Roman or indeed any standards, Justinian was an autocratic [ruler] of the worst kind. It worried him not a jot to slaughter his own citizens in huge numbers to keep himself in power, not to launch speculative attacks on neighboring states with much the same end in mind, no matter what the collateral damage."

KEY TERMS BY THEME

STATE-BUILDING

Byzantium
Corpus Juris Civilis
 Heraclius
 Basil II
 Battle of Kleidion
 Byzantine Empire
 Justinian I, "the Great"
 Battle of Manzikert
 Crusades
 Fourth Crusade
 Normans
 Slavs
 Vikings
 Rus

CULTURE

Leo III iconoclastic policy
 iconoclast
 Hagia Sophia
 theocracy
 patriarch
 monasteries
 Cyril
 schism
 Eastern Orthodox Church
 theme system
 Cyrillic alphabet
 illuminated manuscripts
 Bulgars

University of Constantinople

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Hippodrome
 Oleg
 Dnieper River
 Kievan Rus
 boyars
 Prince Vladimir I, "the Great"
 Yaroslav I, "the Wise"
Russkaya Pravda

ENVIRONMENT

Constantinople
 Bosphorus Strait

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

- One difference between the government in Constantinople and the government of Rome was that only the Byzantine Empire
 - was ruled by a theocracy
 - had a unified body of laws
 - traded with more regions in Asia and Eastern Europe
 - gave basic rights to women

Question 2 refers to the following excerpt.

Oh, justice! The deed of the supreme high priest! Nay, of one who claimed to be the leader of the whole world as indeed the Latins assert and believe, but this, too, is a bit of their boasting. For when the imperial seat was transferred from Rome hither to our native Queen of Cities, and the senate and the whole administration, there was also transferred the arch-hierarchical primacy.

—From "The Alexiad," written by Anna Comnena in the twelfth century.

- The transfer described in the passage probably refers to
 - a transfer in cultural leadership from Rome to the Normans
 - an increase in trade between Rome and Kievan Rus
 - a decrease in Rome's prosperity during the Crusades
 - a shift of power from Rome to Constantinople

Questions 3 and 4 refer to the following table.

Byzantine Empire Budget		
Year	Budget for Soldiers' Pay (in millions of Byzantine gold coins)	Total Budget (in millions of Byzantine gold coins)
300	5.0	9.4
450	2.2	7.8
518	3.7	8.5
540	5.1	11.3
565	5.0	8.5
641	1.5	3.7
668	0.7	2.0
775	0.6	1.9
842	1.3	3.1
959	1.9	3.9
1025	3.0	5.9

Source: Adapted from Warren Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997. Pages 145, 277, 412, 576.

- Which statement is best supported by the information in the table above?
 - Pay to soldiers usually accounted for more than half of the empire's budget.
 - The wealth of the empire reached its peak under Justinian.
 - The cost of governing the empire grew steadily between 300 and 1025.
 - The salary paid to individual soldiers was higher in 300 than in 450.
- Which statement is consistent with the evidence in the table?
 - The Byzantine government spent heavily on military actions.
 - Ivaylo led a revolt by free peasants.
 - A schism split the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Church.
 - Leo III led a campaign against icons.
- The success of both the Byzantine Empire and Kievan Rus shows
 - the value of extensive trade along water routes
 - the benefits of a powerful military for seizing new territory
 - the impact of Viking culture in this era
 - the drawbacks of selling people into slavery
- The Seljuk Turks, the Pechenegs, and the Mongols all
 - originated as identifiable groups in the steppes of Central Asia
 - adopted Orthodox Christianity through contact with the Byzantine Empire
 - fought either for or against the Byzantines at the Battle of Manzikert
 - emerged as military powers for the first time in the 900s
- What do iconoclasm, Heraclius's choice of language, and ideas about theocracy have in common?
 - All reflect differences between Rome and Constantinople.
 - All were fundamentally political rather than religious issues.
 - All were responses to invasions by outsiders.
 - All showed the influence of Greek culture.
- Which statement best explains why Constantinople became so wealthy?
 - Constantinople formed an alliance with the wealthier empire of Kievan Rus.
 - It carried out successful military conquest against the Sassanids.
 - The use of the Justinian Code protected the rich against peasant revolts.
 - The city's location on key water routes made it a center of trade.
- Which event created a long-lasting connection between the Slavic principality of Kievan Rus and the Byzantine Empire?
 - The building of a canal connecting the Danube and the Dnieper rivers
 - The Russian acceptance of the Eastern Orthodox faith
 - Invasions from the west forcing Kiev to ally with Constantinople to the south
 - The Byzantine Empire's defeat of Kiev at the Battle of Manzikert
- Justinian and Yaroslav the Wise are both famous for
 - creating a law code that was used in their empires
 - expanding their empires through conquest
 - being the first people in their lands to convert to Christianity
 - uniting separate territories into one empire

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE-OVER-TIME ESSAY QUESTIONS

Directions: You are to answer the following question. You should spend 5 minutes organizing or outlining your essay. Write an essay that:

- Has a relevant thesis and supports that thesis with appropriate historical evidence.
 - Addresses all parts of the question.
 - Uses world historical context to show continuities and changes over time.
 - Analyzes the process of continuity and change over time.
1. Analyze how political transformations in the eastern Mediterranean contributed to continuities and changes in the economy and cultures of the Byzantine Empire during the period c. 500 C.E. to 1450 C.E.

Questions for Additional Practice

2. Analyze continuities and changes in Christianity in Byzantium and Constantinople between c. 200 and 1450.
3. Describe continuities and changes in the relationship between the Byzantine Empire and Kievan Rus from 1000 to 1453.

COMPARATIVE ESSAY QUESTIONS

Directions: You are to answer the following question. You should spend 5 minutes organizing or outlining your essay. Write an essay that:

- Has a relevant thesis and supports that thesis with appropriate historical evidence.
 - Addresses all parts of the question.
 - Makes direct, relevant comparisons.
 - Analyzes relevant reasons for similarities and differences.
1. Compare how the Byzantine Empire preserved Roman ideas with how Rome preserved Classical Greek ideas.

Questions for Additional Practice

2. Compare the power of the Byzantine Empire with ONE of the following:
 - Imperial Rome
 - Han China
3. Compare the development of Constantinople with Novgorod or Athens.

THINK AS A HISTORIAN: SYNTHESIS OF INFORMATION

When synthesizing, you draw together traits to create a whole. When you listen to songs by the same singer, for example, you may hear a common mood or theme that defines his or her distinctive sound. *Which ONE of the following statements is the best example of synthesis?*

1. The strength of the Byzantine Empire was based on its vigorous economy, centralized government, and strong defensive walls.
2. Agricultural labor in the Byzantine Empire was provided by peasants.
3. During the Crusades, knights and commoners from Western Europe traveled to the Levant in hopes of seizing control of the land for Christianity.
4. The Golden Age of Kievan Rus, a collection of city-states, took place during the tenth and eleventh centuries.

WRITE AS A HISTORIAN: WRITE AN EFFECTIVE THESIS

In answering an essay question, include a thesis statement in the introduction that clearly states your argument. The thesis should be stated using specific language and include only information directly relevant to the question. *In the each exercise, choose the more effective thesis statement.*

1. What made the Byzantine Empire so strong?
 - a. The Byzantine Empire, based in its capital of Constantinople, thrived because of a combination of political and economic features.
 - b. The Byzantine Empire's strong centralized government and diverse economy helped it flourish.
2. What cultures influenced Kievan Rus society?
 - a. The Byzantine Empire's religious influence on the Kievan Rus society resulted in a heavy Christian presence in the city-states.
 - b. Outside influences can be seen in the religion of Kievan Rus.
3. Compare and contrast the governmental systems of the Byzantine Empire and Kievan Rus culture.
 - a. While the Byzantine Empire was led by strong leaders who had consolidated power, Kievan Rus had a Grand Prince who, because of the boyars who ruled in the city-states, was less powerful.
 - b. The Byzantine Empire and Kievan Rus differed in their government much the same way that Sparta and Athens differed, with one focused more on its military and one more on cultural achievements.