Description: Constantinople was the capital of the Byzantine Empire for over a thousand years, from 330, when it was dedicated as the City of Constantine, until 1453, when it was conquered by the Ottomans. This class will examine the Byzantine art and architecture of the city, including well-known monuments, such as Hagia Sophia, and smaller works of art, such as icons and manuscripts. We shall examine how politics, imperial aspirations, and religious interests both shaped and were shaped by the city’s art and architecture.

Writing assignments, class presentations, and exam: Students will submit two response papers related to the monuments we visit on our class excursions. Each student will also give an on-site presentation during the final class meeting. A final exam will be given at the end of the term.

Textbook: Robin Cormack, Byzantine Art. Oxford History of Art Series, 2000. Short primary source readings will be handed out during class. Readings should be completed before the class session for which they are assigned.

Week 1

1. Constantine’s New Capital (Tues)
   Reading: Cormack, preface
   This class period will begin at the Hippodrome. During this meeting we shall view monuments of the early Byzantine emperors and discuss the topography of Byzantine Constantinople, as it related to the city’s architecture and its rituals.

2. Continuing the Classical Tradition (Thurs)
   Reading: Cormack, chapter 1
   During this class period, we shall discuss basilica architecture and Roman engineering. We’ll visit the Basilica Cistern, the Valens Aqueduct, and the Golden Gate of the Theodosian Wall.

Week 2

3. Justinian’s Capital (Tues)
   Reading: Cormack, chapter 2
   In this class period, we shall examine the art and architecture made during the reign of Justinian, beginning at the Church of Ss. Sergius Bacchus and ending at the Archaeological Museum.

   ***First writing assignment due: Response paper/visual analysis of one of the monuments we visited in week one.

4. Hagia Sophia (Thurs)
   Reading: Cormack, chapter 3
   In this meeting, we shall visit Hagia Sophia and discuss its construction by Justinian, made in reaction to the political situation of the mid-6th century. We shall examine its alterations over time and discuss how they related to various aspects of Byzantine history.
Week 3

5. **The Cult of Images and the Iconoclastic Controversy (Tues)**
   **Reading: Cormack, chapters 4 and 5**
   In this class, we’ll discuss the effects of the iconoclastic controversy on the art and monuments of the Byzantine Empire. We’ll arrange for an optional visit to Hagia Eirene, to view its iconoclastic-era decoration on another day.

   ***Second writing assignment due: Response paper/visual analysis discussing the experience of visiting Hagia Sophia.

6. **The Triumph of the Image (Thurs)**
   **Reading: Cormack, chapters 6**
   This final class will focus on Byzantine art after iconoclasm. We’ll visit the Church of Saint Savior in Chora. If there is time, we will visit the Fethiye Camii (Theotokos Pammakaristos).

   ***Students will present on a topic related to the church and will provide handouts to class members.

**Optional visits: time and date TBA**

Theodosian Walls

Hagia Eirene