

# Byzantine and islamic civilizations

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A civilization can be described as the culture of a complex society, not just the society itself. Every society, civilization or not, has a specific set of ideas and customs, and a certain set of items and arts, that make it unique. Perhaps the single most salient aspect of Byzantine culture was the transmission of classical culture. While classical studies, science, and philosophy largely dissipated in the Latin west, Byzantine education and philosophy still zealously pursued these intellectual traditions.

It was in Byzantium that Plato and Aristotle continued to be studied and were eventually transmitted first into the Islamic world and then back into Western Europe. A basic education in Byzantium consisted first of the mastery of classical Greek literature, such as Homer (largely unknown in the West during this period)—almost all of the Greek literature we have today was only preserved by the Byzantines. Byzantine culture is important because of two lines of transmission.

One line of transmission involved the exporting of classical Greek and Roman culture into Islam and, to a lesser extent, the transmission of Byzantine theological speculation into Islamic theology. The second is the transmission of Byzantine culture and religion to Slavic peoples, especially to the Russians. Byzantine cultural practices and beliefs are still practiced among Slavs today. Russian religion, art, philosophy, and even literature, such as the writings of Chekhov and Dostoevsky, show profound influences from Byzantine culture.

The first flowering of ecclesiastical literature of Byzantium is Hellenistic in form and Oriental in spirit. Their works, which cover the whole field of ecclesiastical prose literature. The epigram, suited the Byzantine taste for

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the ornamental and for intellectual ingenuity. It corresponded exactly to the concept of the minor arts that attained high development in the Byzantine period . The influence of Byzantine art in Western Europe; particularly Italy was seen in ecclesiastical architecture.

The Arab-Islamic culture played its leading part in the best way possible in building world scientific renaissance. While Europe was buried in the darkness of the Middle Ages, the Islamic -civilization (the cradle of the Arab-Islamic culture) was at its apogee. Islam greatly contributed to the advancement of science, medicine and philosophy. The imprint of the Arab-Islamic culture was predominant, noticeable and effective in many scientific, intellectual and cultural fields.

Arab and Muslim scholars invented the numerical system; the figure Zero; the decimal system; the theory of evolution-one hundred years before Darwin; pulmonary circulation -three centuries before Harvey. They discovered gravity and the relationship between weight, speed and distance several centuries before Newton; they measured the speed of light, calculated the angles of reflection and refraction, computed the circumference of the earth, and determined the dimensions of heavenly bodies. Many forms of Islamic architecture have evolved in different regions of Europe.

Notable Islamic architectural types include the early Abbasid buildings, T-type mosques, and the central-dome mosques of Anatolia. The oil -wealth of the 20th century drove a great deal of mosque construction using designs from leading modern architects. Thus these two civilizations have enormously enriched this world especially Western Europe and laid a solid

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foundation for further enhancement in almost every field of activity thereby giving us so many reasons to be proud of. Bibliography: 1. Culture of Greece Wikipedia 2. Islamweb. net 3. European middle ages 4. Byzantine Civilization - Speros Vryonis