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movement as well



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The Byzantine Empire was a continuation of the Eastern Roman Empire that had separated itself from the western part of Rome during the 8th century. The Empire was based on Greek mythologies that were oriented around Constantinople and the Byzantines were remembered for the preservation of Greek philosophy and art forms that would connect Europe to the rest of Rome. The Byzantine Empire was therefore a Greek state with Greek being the most common language in use instead of Latin which was the official language of the Eastern Roman Empire. The Empire was also a Christian state as many of its citizens believed in the life of Jesus Christ and they practiced Christianity in their day-to-day activities (Spielvogel 206).

Religion was an important part of Byzantine and it had a major influence in most of the citizen's lives. The Byzantine architecture mostly had its influence from artistic talents that existed amongst the Empire's citizens where spiritual principles were used to create art forms in churches and church decorations. The architecture also incorporated the use of religious images in the form of sacred icons and pictures which were used for worship.

The most well known Byzantine piece of architecture is the St. Sophia Byzantine Church that was built in 530 A. D. Religion also played an important role in the selection of the emperor who occupied an important position in the Byzantine Empire. The emperor had the authority and power to select a patriarch for the church within the Empire as well as to preserve the true faith of the Byzantines which was Orthodox Christianity. Religion, spiritual values and beliefs played an important role in the governorship of the Byzantine Empire (Spielvogel 206). In 620 AD, a new religious and political group begun to emerge in the Middle East that threatened the

fundamental laws and religion of the Byzantine Empire. This group was the Islamic civilization which was founded by Prophet Muhammad in 610AD.

Muhammad first preached in Mecca where he convinced the people there to abandon their gods and idols and submit to the one God. He went round to the various states that made up Saudi Arabia converting people into Islamism that was mostly based on the writings of the Quran which was written in Medina. Muhammad became the spiritual leader of the Islamic movement as well as the legal and military leader of Medina. He established his empire in Medina where his house was used as the first communal gathering place for prayer (Cunnigham and Reich 35). The Islamic faith was different from that of the Byzantine Empire as it was focused on the teachings of the Qur'an which formed the cornerstone of the Islamic faith. The Qur'an provided guidelines that would be used in deciding the social welfare of the citizens in medina as well as the family and inheritance laws.

With regards to idols, the Qur'an did not speak against the creation of images and idols rather it spoke against the creation of idols which was a similar practice in the Byzantine Empire. The Islamic religion focused on worshipping God which was also similar for the Byzantines but the Muslims worshipped God five times a day. Islamic art forms were devoid of any decorations or ornaments which were mostly common in Byzantine art forms and architecture. They were instead focused on elaborate calligraphy that was derived from passages from the Qur'an as well as from geometric patterns. When the Islamic movement gained more prominence during the 8th century, Emperor Leo of the Byzantine Emperor began to incorporate Islamic art into Byzantine art forms (Grant 225)

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