

Hum 201

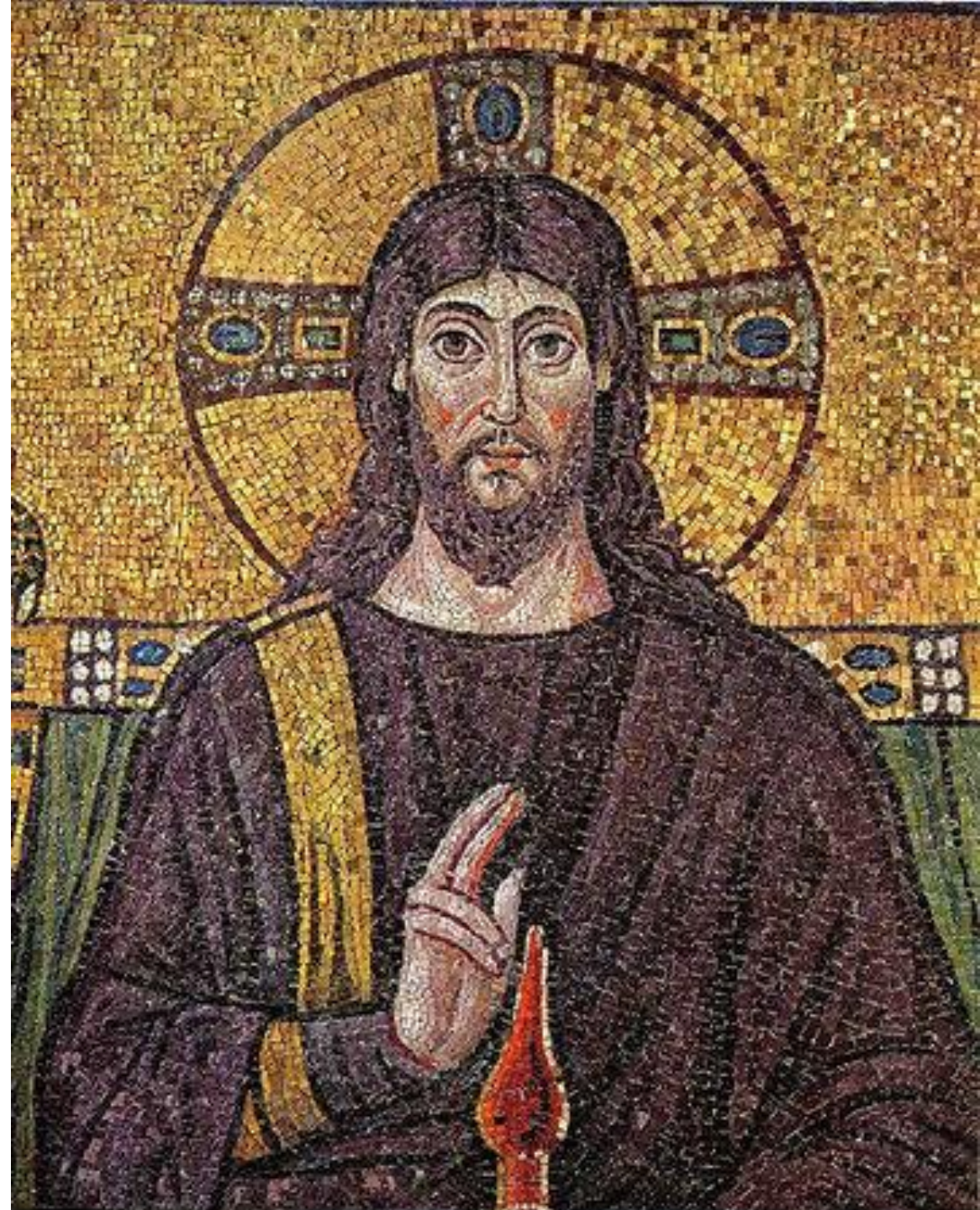
Philosophy

of Medieval Period

- Philosophy of Byzantine Period
- Philosophy of Romanesque Period
 - Philosophy of Gothic Period

Philosophy of Byzantine Period

- A central feature of Byzantine culture was **Orthodox Christianity**. Byzantine society was **very religious**, and it held certain values in high esteem, including a respect for order and traditional hierarchies.
- This influenced developments such as the **conversion of the secular basilica into a magnificent church** with an impressive domed ceiling.



- As **Byzantium** was the **eastern half of the Roman Empire** in its early period- Roman traditions continued in architecture.
- Byzantine buildings continued to employ the **Classical orders** but became **more eclectic and irregular**, perhaps originally because **old pagan buildings were used as quarries** to provide eclectic stone pieces for new structures.
- Byzantine **urban areas** were characterized by **strong evidence of town planning, large open spaces for commercial and public use, wide regular streets** - most of which were **paved** and the **important ones were given porticoes**. They had **public monuments** such as statues of important figures and **monumental arches and city gates**.
- The staple **public buildings** such as- **hippodrome, amphitheater, and public baths** were all still present.



Hippodrome



Porticoes

- Some Roman-era buildings- **gymnasium and stadium** for athletics and **the theatre** where the bawdy pantomimes were performed were **disapproved by the church**. So these buildings, and the **pagan temples**, fell out of use. Their **materials** were **reused**, giving rise to new structures with an **eclectic mix of columns and capitals** within the **same structure**, which eventually became a defining feature of Byzantine buildings, and the **strict uniformity of classical buildings was abandoned**.
- The construction of Byzantine buildings was supervised by **two specialists: mechanikos- a sort of mathematical engineer**, and **the architekton- a master builder**. One of them supervised a large group of craftspeople skilled in masonry, carpentry, wall-painting, and making mosaics.

- As with **Byzantine artists**, **architects** were usually **anonymous**. If the construction project involved an **imperial building or a church**, then the **emperor or bishop** was **involved**, in the case of **private sponsors**, they too would have had a say in what the building looked like when finished. **Design drawings** seem to have followed **established conventions** and been **sketchy**, indicating a **great deal of on-the-spot improvisation**.
- Like Roman architects, the Byzantines employed **bricks** for many buildings, and it became the **basic element** of construction.
- An **alternative to brick** was **ashlar stone blocks**- more popular in the **eastern half** of the Byzantine Empire. Some buildings **combined the two materials**. **Marble**, an expensive material, was generally reserved for **columns, capitals, cornices, architraves, and decorative features such as door frames, window grills, and paving**.



Inside Hagia Sophia

- Some building exteriors were plastered, but this was not common. **Far more attention was paid to building interiors** where generally all the walls were covered in **plaster, stucco, thin marble plaques, paintings and mosaics**. Imperial buildings and important basilicas were given more marble than anywhere else, with **Proconnesian** from the island of Proconnesus in the Sea of Marmara being the most common



Marble columns inside Hagia Sophia

Churches

The social and political conditions during this period had dramatic effects on the church, both physically and organizationally.

The Church was growing in power and influence since its proclamation as the religion for the Empire. The Church leaders became more powerful as the bank accounts of the papacy swelled. It is important to remember that salvation for the common people came through the act of giving financially to the Church.



- Churches were built everywhere to promote the new Christian religion and impose imperial authority on places far and wide, from the capital to Jerusalem.
- Another motivation to build churches and shrines (martyria) was to mark places of significance to the Christian story and its saints, tombs of saints and martyrs or their relics, and the site where a famed ascetic may have dwelt.
- Many smaller churches and modest chapels were built to serve smaller communities.
- Brick, stone, or a mixture of both to create decorative patterns were used as materials used for Byzantine churches.
- Many churches were simply converted pagan temples or other secular buildings.

- Most early churches followed the Roman basilica design, a building used for public gatherings, especially law courts and markets.
- By the 9th century CE churches were still being built in numbers but on a smaller scale as urban populations diminished and the large basilica was no longer needed. Now a church only needed to accommodate around 100 worshippers.

Class lecture:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CRS9W7DluiPMgyYHU77ieiciRDSsU654/view?usp=sharing>

Thank you.