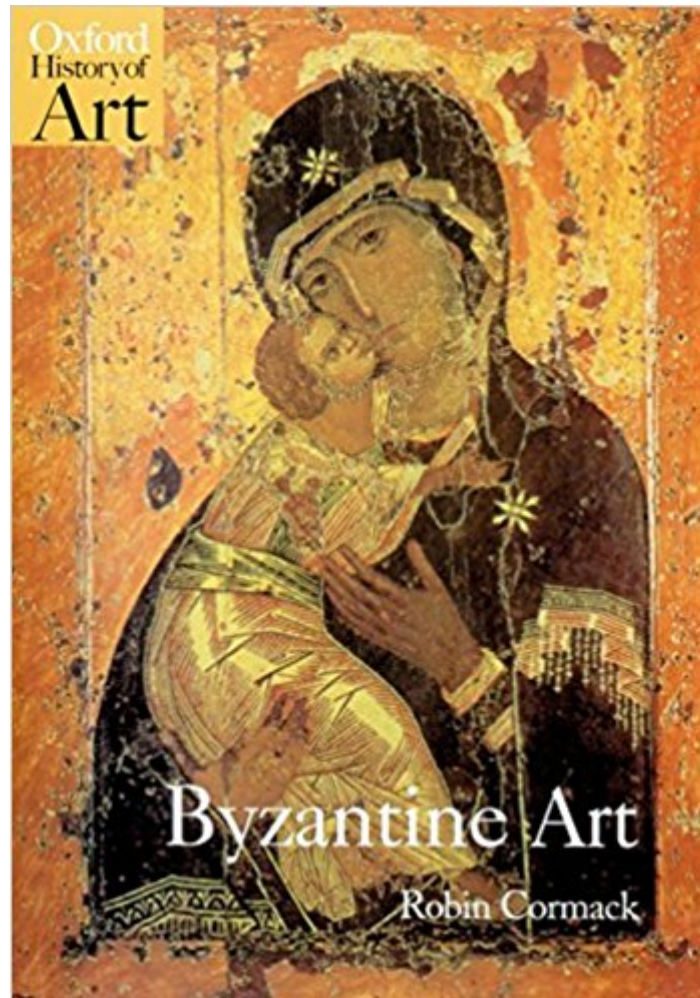


The book was found

Byzantine Art (Oxford History Of Art)



Synopsis

Mostly religious in function, but preserving the classicism of Greco-Roman art, Byzantine buildings and art objects communicate the purity and certainties of the public face of early Christian art. Focusing on the art of Constantinople between 330 and 1453, this book probes the underlying motives and attitudes of the society which produced such rich and delicate art forms. It examines the stages this art went through as the city progressed from being the Christian center of the Eastern Roman Empire, to its crisis during attack from the new religion of Islam, to its revived medieval splendor and then, after the Latin capture of 1204 and the Byzantine reoccupation after 1261, to its arrival at a period of cultural reconciliation with East and West.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Because Byzantine art portrays a society in change, defining the period and its contributions is a big undertaking. The author of several books on iconography and Byzantine art, Cormack (history of art, Univ. of London; deputy director, Courtauld Inst. of Art) only partially meets the challenge of making his subject understandable. The book's organization lends to its accessibility; Cormack breaks down the era's political and social developments, revealing their complexity, and time lines and sidebars make the topic more approachable. The trade paperback size (standard for this series) means smaller illustrations, which is a shortcoming. But the list of Internet links to museums with Byzantine art collections will be very useful for students. Despite the book's strengths, Cormack is not writing for the beginner, and some of this material will be over the heads of most readers. A

respectable but not necessary addition to public and academic libraries that need the subject coverage. Karen Ellis, Nicholson Memorial Lib. Syst., Garland, TX Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"The handbook of Byzantine art for both lay readers and specialists."--Annabel Wharton, Duke University
"The reader is left with a powerful impression of how the Byzantines themselves must have looked upon the art that surrounded them."--David Buckton, The British Museum
"Because Byzantine art portrays a society in change, defining the period is a big undertaking....The book's organization lends to its accessibility; Cormack breaks down the era's political and social developments, revealing their complexity, and time lines and sidebars make the topic more approachable....The list of Internet links to museums with Byzantine art collections will be very useful for students."--Library Journal

I bought this book as an art history textbook, and I wish I had bought the text as a physical book. The kindle images don't accompany the text referring to them, and as such it is difficult to follow. The images are all in black and white, which for an art history textbook is a major fault. It is impossible to appreciate this art with the current kindle photographs. That being said, the text itself is interesting and a good introduction to the richness of Byzantine culture as expressed in art. I recommend buying the physical text rather than the e-book.

This was a required text for an art history class. I found it to be okay as a source of information. The presentation is not very user friendly and the writing is a bit dense. Art historical texts can be dense anyway but this one is dense in areas that could have been written less dense. The author gets mired down in conjecture. I found several spelling errors, which is always a pet peeve of mine.

The back cover says that it is "The handbook of Byzantine art for lay readers and specialists." As a lay reader (though I have read rather extensively about other periods in art and history), I did find it about one level above what I would expect from an introductory text. For example, the author on numerous occasions would go into some detail to explain the dating of a particular object, rather than use that space to describe, for example, its artistic style, or how the object (or others like it) was used or experienced by the people of that period in history. In part for that reason, I did not find this "brisk" reading as one reviewer put it. The back cover also says that the author overturns the myth that Byzantine art (BA) remained constant. He does indeed go into great detail to show how

BA of a given period was the product of a variety of factors, and how a given piece of art was different. But, again for a lay person, what is salient is how so much of BA was in fact fairly consistent in style and subject matter, and for so long, due its spiritual function. For my money, I would have liked to read at least as much about its continuity as about how much it changed. There was also no map in the book, even though it is about art in many different countries. And finally, although he organized his chapters chronologically, he roamed pretty freely with the art he was discussing, such that he regularly went into things, at length, that chronologically belonged to a previous or forthcoming chapter. All that said, I did learn a lot from the book, and would recommend it to anyone with more than a beginner's knowledge of this period in art history. (You can get that beginner's knowledge by first reading Wikipedia's entries on 1) Byzantine art, 2) Icons, and 3) the Byzantine Empire.)

Knowing little about Byzantine Art, this book provided great background on the development of Byzantine art over time, placing it in historical perspective. I was concerned that it might have too much detail but it presents a nice balance between presenting necessary details without overwhelming the reader with too much information.

As an art teacher it was very helpful to my understanding of this time and style of art.

An extended history beyond description of art objects, makes understanding what art in the Byzantine Empire represented. I loved it!

i wanted more icons and less writing. robin cormack is an expert and his details about these icons is appreciated

It is an excellent book. It is very easy to read and comprehensive. I like it, I recommend this book.

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