

Byzantines, Russians, and Turks Interact**Section 1**

The Byzantine Empire

Terms and Names

Justinian Powerful ruler of Byzantine Empire

Justinian Code Body of Roman law collected and organized by Justinian around A.D. 534

Hagia Sophia Church destroyed by mobs of rioters in 532 and rebuilt by Justinian

patriarch Leader of the Eastern church

icon Religious image used in practices by eastern Christians

excommunication Formal declaration that someone is no longer a member of the Church

Cyrillic alphabet Alphabet invented by Saints Cyril and Methodius, in which most Slavic languages, including Russian, are written

Before You Read

In the last chapter, you read about the Muslim world.

In this section, you will learn about the Byzantine Empire.

As You Read

Use a diagram to show Justinian's accomplishments as emperor of the New Rome.

A NEW ROME IN A NEW SETTING

(Page 301)

How did the Roman Empire change?

In the A.D. 300s, the emperor Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire to the east. He built a great new capital city, Constantinople. It was on the site of the old port city of Byzantium. Constantinople became the center of the empire. Power moved eastward.

The Roman Empire was officially divided in 395. The western area was overrun by German tribes. It did not exist after 476. However, the Byzantine, or eastern, part remained strong. It lasted for hundreds of years.

In 527, **Justinian** became the Byzantine emperor. He sent an army to try to regain control of Italy. He hoped to restore the

Roman Empire once again. By about 550, Justinian ruled over almost all of the territory of the old Roman Empire.

1. Who was Justinian?

LIFE IN THE NEW ROME

(Pages 302–303)

What changes did Justinian bring?

Justinian directed legal experts to create a complete code of laws based on the laws of ancient Rome. This body of civil law—the **Justinian Code**—served the empire for 900 years.

Section 1, *continued*

Justinian also worked at making Constantinople a strong but also a beautiful capital. He built high, sturdy walls to protect the city from attack. The main street of the city was lined with shops and open-air markets. People bought and sold goods from Asia, Africa, and Europe there.

In 532, riots broke out against the emperor. Justinian’s troops maintained control of the city, killing thousands of rioters. A church called **Hagia Sophia** (“Holy Wisdom,” in Greek) had been destroyed by the mobs. Justinian rebuilt it to become the most beautiful church in the Christian world.

2. How did Justinian make Constantinople a strong and beautiful capital?

THE EMPIRE FALLS (Page 304)**What weakened the empire?**

The Byzantine Empire faced many dangers. A terrible disease broke out in 542. The illness killed thousands of people and returned every 8 to 12 years until about 700. This weakened the empire.

Also, the empire was forced to confront many enemies over the centuries. Constantinople remained safe during this time despite many attacks. Eventually, though, the empire shrank. By 1350, the empire included only the capital city and lands in the Balkans—part of southeastern Europe.

3. What were the two biggest problems the empire faced?

THE CHURCH DIVIDES

(Pages 304–306)

Why did the church divide?

Although it was based on the Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire had developed a culture of its own. People in the Byzantine Empire spoke Greek, not Latin. They belonged to the Eastern Orthodox Church, not the Catholic Church. The Eastern Church was led by the **patriarch**, the leading bishop. However, even the patriarch had to obey the emperor.

The feeling of separateness from Rome grew worse when one emperor banned the use of **icons**. Icons are religious images used by eastern Christians to aid their devotions. The emperor thought this was like idol worship. Iconoclasts, or “icon breakers” went into churches destroying images. The pope supported the use of icons. One pope even ordered the **excommunication** of a Byzantine emperor. That means that the pope said the emperor could no longer be a member of the Church.

Slowly the Eastern and Roman churches grew further apart. In 1054, the schism, or split, became permanent.

Some missionaries traveled from the Byzantine Empire to the north. Two missionaries, Saint Methodius and Saint Cyril developed an alphabet for the Slavic languages. Many Slavic languages, including Russian, are now written in what is called the **Cyrillic alphabet**.

4. What are two differences between the Eastern and Roman churches?

Section 1, *continued*

As you read about the history of Constantinople, the leading city of the Byzantine Empire, take notes to answer questions about the time line.

527	Justinian becomes ruler of the eastern empire.	→	1. What did Justinian accomplish during his reign?
537	Justinian completes building the Hagia Sophia.		
542	Deadly plague sweeps through Constantinople.	→	2. How did the plague affect Constantinople?
674	Arab armies attack Constantinople.		3. How did the Byzantines first try to prop up their shaky empire?
860	Russians invade Constantinople for the first of three times.	↗	
1054	Christianity splits into the Roman Catholic Church in the west and the Orthodox Church in the east.	↗	4. What factors led to the schism?
1204	Crusading knights from Europe pillage Constantinople.	→	5. What was the effect of the split?
1453	Constantinople falls to Ottoman Turks.	↗	6. What factors enabled the city to survive foreign attacks for hundreds of years before finally falling?