Byzantine Art and Diplomacy in an Age of Decline

The Late Byzantine period (1261–1453) is marked by a paradoxical discrepancy between economic weakness and cultural strength. The apparent enigma can be resolved by recognizing that later Byzantine diplomatic strategies, despite or because of diminishing political advantage, relied on an increasingly desirable cultural and artistic heritage. This book reassesses the role of the visual arts in this era by examining the imperial image and the gift as reconceived in the final two centuries of the Byzantine Empire. In particular, it traces a series of luxury objects created specifically for diplomatic exchange with such courts as Genoa, Paris, and Moscow alongside key examples of imperial imagery and ritual. By questioning how political decline reconfigured the visual culture of empire, Professor Hilsdale offers a more nuanced and dynamic account of medieval cultural exchange that considers the temporal dimensions of power and the changing fates of empires.

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Byzantine Art and Diplomacy in an Age of Decline

CECILY J. HILSDALE
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### Abbreviations

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<td>ArtB</td>
<td>Art Bulletin</td>
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<td>ArtH</td>
<td>Art History</td>
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<td>BMGS</td>
<td>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</td>
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<td>BSI</td>
<td>Byzantinoslavica</td>
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<tr>
<td>ByzF</td>
<td>Byzantinische Forschungen</td>
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<td>BZ</td>
<td>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Cahiers archéologiques</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOP</td>
<td>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>ΔΧΑΕ</td>
<td>Delition tes Christianikes Archaiologikes Hetaireias</td>
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<tr>
<td>ΕΕΒΣ</td>
<td>Epeteris Hetaireias Byzannon Spoudon</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRBS</td>
<td>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JÖB</td>
<td>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOBG</td>
<td>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCP</td>
<td>Orientalia christiana periodica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLP</td>
<td>Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit, edited by E. Trapp et al. (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1976–96)</td>
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REB  Revue des études byzantines
REG  Revue des études grecques
REEEE Revue des études sud-est européennes
RN   Revue numismatique