Byzantine Empire & Russia
300-1000AD

SOL 7
Location of Constantinople

- Capital of the Eastern Roman Empire was changed to Constantinople to provide military, political & economic advantages
- Protection of the eastern frontier
- Distance from Germanic invasions in the western empire
- Crossroads of trade
- Easily fortified site on a peninsula bordered by natural harbors
Role of Constantinople

- Seat of Byzantine Empire until the Ottoman conquest
- Preserved classical Greco-Roman culture
- Center of trade
Relocation of Constantinople
As the first to codify Roman law, Justinian provided the basis for the law codes of Western Europe.

Under his reign, the Byzantine Empire reached its height in culture & prosperity.
Byzantine Emperor Justinian

- Codification of Roman law (impact on European law codes)
- Reconquest of former Roman territories
- Expansion of trade
Byzantine Achievements in Art & Architecture

- Greek Orthodox Christianity & imperial patronage enabled the Byzantine Empire to develop a unique style of art & architecture.
- Greek & Roman traditions were preserved in the Byzantine Empire.
- Inspiration provided by Christian religion & imperial power.
- Icons (religious images).
- Mosaics in public & religious structures.
- Hagia Sophia (Byzantine domed church).
Hagia Sophia
The cultural & political differences between the Eastern & Western Roman Empire weakened the unit of the Christian Church & led to its division.
Eastern Church

- Centered in Constantinople
- Close to the seat of power after Constantinople became capital
- Use of Greek language in liturgy
Western Church

- Centered in Rome
- Farther from seat of power after Constantinople became capital
- Use of Latin language in liturgy
Divisions between Western & Eastern Churches

- Authority of the Pope eventually accepted in the West
- Authority of the Patriarch accepted in the East
- Practices such as celibacy eventually accepted in the West
Influence of Byzantine culture on Eastern Europe & Russia

- Byzantine civilization influenced Russia & Eastern European civilizations through its religion, culture & trade
- Trade routes between Black & Baltic Sea
- Adoption of Orthodox Christianity by Russia & much of Eastern Europe
- Adoption of Greek alphabet to the Slavic languages by St. Cyril (Cyrillic alphabet)
- Church architecture & religious art
Cyrillic Alphabet