Chapter 9 Supplemental Notes

The Byzantine Empire (fourth century to 1453 CE)

* Continuation of the Eastern Roman Empire
* 375 CE – Roman Empire officially divided between west and east
* Architecture – distinctive domes
* Orthodox Christianity (split from Catholic Church)
* Byzantine Emperors ruled by absolute authority (especially over economy regulating trade)
* Used coined money
* Justinian (527-565) – tried unsuccessfully to reconquer Western Rome; controlled both political and religious power in Empire; replaced Latin with Greek as official language
1. Body of Civil Law (Justinian’s Code) – Based on the Roman Twelve Tables of Law (kept Roman legal principles alive)
2. Flowering of arts and sciences, evident in the construction of major buildings and churches – Hagia Sophia: cathedral (now is a mosque)
* Strong central government with a hereditary monarchy
* Emperor was head of Church – appointed the patriarch
* Efficient military
* Oversaw land distribution
* Bureaucracy that answered to the emperor
* Free peasants given land for military service
* Location on the Mediterranean Sea contributed to strong trade
* Silk worms smuggled out of China; silk industry develops
* Artisans produced glassware, linen, jewelry, gold
* Most subjects spoke Greek
* Constantinople – political, commercial, and intellectual center; libraries containing Greek, Latin, Persian and Hebrew Texts
* Byzantine and Roman Christian churches disagreements:
1. Pope – head of Catholic Church; Secular Leader – head of Byzantium church
2. Sacrament of communion
3. Whether priests should be allowed to marry
4. Use of local languages in church
5. Nature of God (God as Trinity)
6. icons
* Pope and Patriarch each excommunicated each other
* 1054 – Roman Catholic Church influences west/Eastern Orthodox Church influences east
* Eastern Orthodox forms of Christianity spreads to Slavic people and Russia