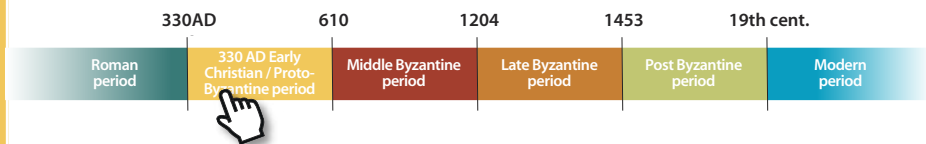


Gallery 1 - Early Christian Church



Plaque (thorakio)

Information

Square colonettes (pessiskoi) in combination with marble plaques (thorakia), formed the chancel screen, separating the Presbytery (Sanctuary) from the rest of the church. On the plaques, a curtain was placed so the church attendants could not see inside the sanctuary.

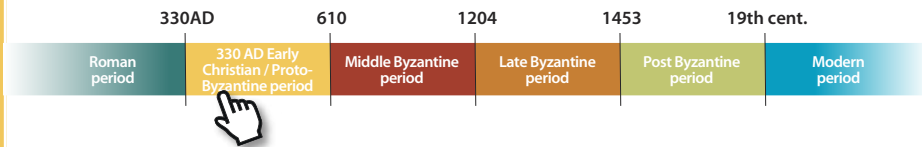
Instructions

- ▶ Find the plaque (thorakio) with colonettes (pessiskoi) and take a photo.
- ▶ What is it made of?
- ▶ What decorations does it have?
- ▶ Nowadays, how is the sanctuary separated from the rest of the church?
- ▶ Take a photo of an exhibit using the same material.
- ▶ How is it called?





Gallery 2 - Early Christian city and Dwelling



Gold coin of Justinian I

Information

This coin is called a *solidus*. The solidus was the most important coin of the Byzantine Empire and formed the basis of the coinage system. This coin was used for both state and international transactions. On its front face, it depicts the emperor Justinian I and on its back an angel wearing a long chiton.

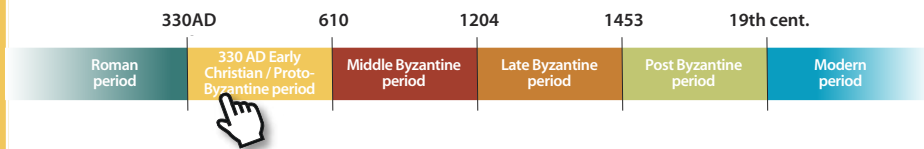
The blue glass object next to the coin is called an *exagium* and has the same weight as the gold solidus. It was used to weigh the coins to verify their authenticity.

Instructions

- ▶ Find the coin and take a photo.
- ▶ What is Justinian I wearing on his head? What is he holding in his hand?
- ▶ Find the glass object (exagium) next to the coin and take a photo.
- ▶ Find the small scale used for weighing coins and take a photo.
- ▶ Can you describe how it works?



Gallery 3 - From the Elysian fields to the Christian paradise



Funerary plaque

Information

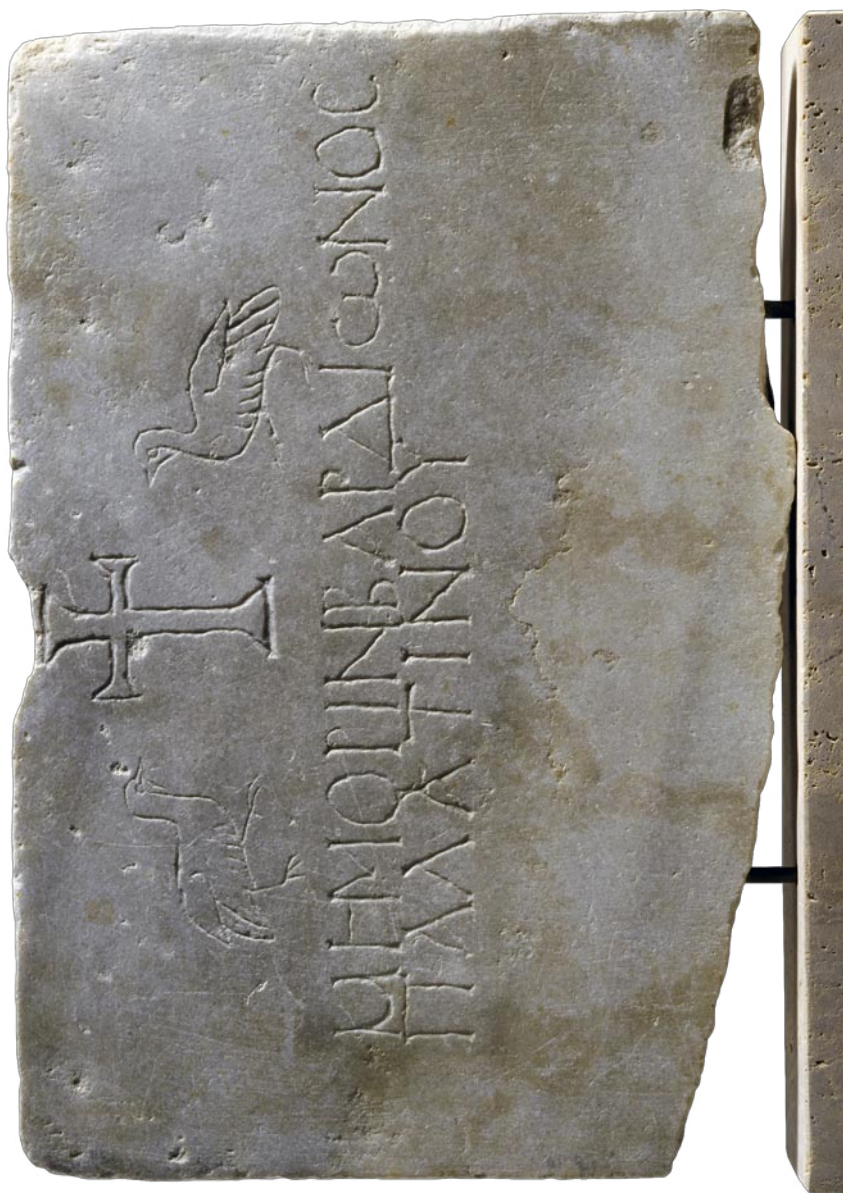
Funerary plaques were placed on tombs. They provide a great deal of information about the names and professions of the deceased, the benefices and beliefs of each period.

The inscription states: "ΜΝΗΜΟΡΙΝ ΒΑΡΔΙΩΝΟΣ ΠΑΛΑΤΙΝΟΥ" (Mnimorin Vardionos Palatinou), meaning "In memory of Vardion Palatinos". Palatinos means that the deceased was an employee of the Palace.

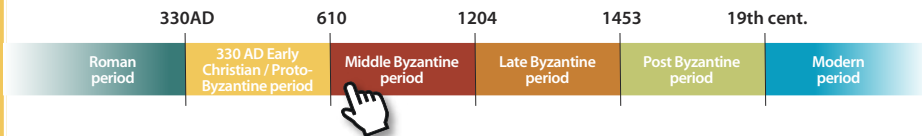
Instructions

- ▶ Find the funerary plaque and take a photo.
- ▶ Try to read it. What is the name of the deceased?
- ▶ Find another funerary plaque which can provide you with information.
- ▶ Take a photo.
- ▶ Briefly present the information you have collected to your classmates.





Gallery 4 - From iconoclasm to the splendor of the Macedonian and Komnenian dynasties



Plaque (thorakio) with griffin

Information

A griffin was a legendary creature with the body of a lion and the head and wings of an eagle. The legend comes from the East, from Mesopotamia. It seems that in that period, there was an Eastern influence in the field of decoration. In front of the griffin there is a tree, probably a cypress.

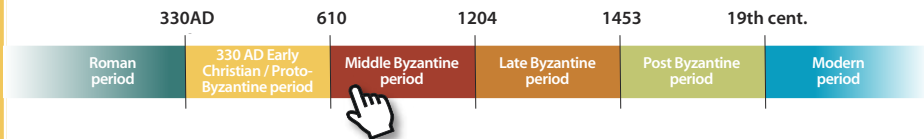
Instructions

- ▶ Find the plaque and take a photo.
- ▶ Recall the decoration of the plaques in Gallery 1.
- ▶ Find at least one more plaque and take a photo. What is its theme?





Gallery 6 - The Byzantine Castle



Scissor, pincer

Information

Due to the hostile invasions from the 8th century onwards, people were forced to abandon their cities and build new smaller, fortified castle-cities. These cities were built in strategic locations, usually on hills, so they could control nearby passages in order to provide protection to their inhabitants. The financial circumstances were particularly difficult in that period.

The exhibits provide information about the occupations and activities in a castle-city.

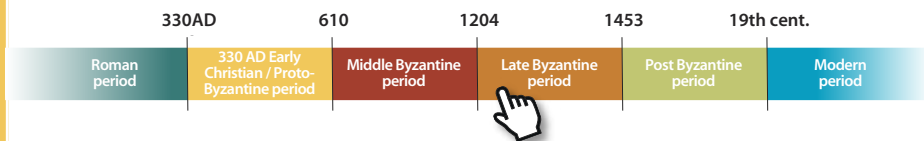
Instructions

- ▶ Find the two exhibits and take a photo.
- ▶ How are they called?
- ▶ Think about their use.
- ▶ Think about the professions related with these exhibits.





Gallery 7 - The twilight of Byzantium



Lead seal

Information

Lead seals (*bullae*) were used to verify the signature on documents people had signed or to ensure the confidentiality of the correspondence. They were made of lead (metal).

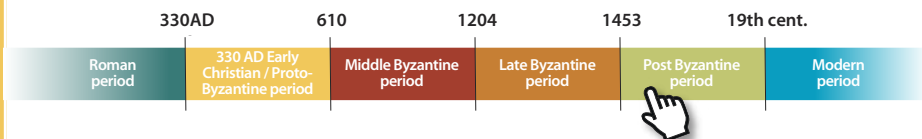
Instructions

- Find the lead seal and take a photo.
- Try to read the text on it: «ΣΦΡΑΓΙΣΜΑ ΓΡΑΦΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΦΙΛΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ» (Sfragisma grafon tou Theofilopoulou), meaning "Theophilopoulos' letter seal".
- Nowadays, how do we secure the confidentiality of correspondence?





Gallery 10 - Byzantium after Byzantium



Representation of a templon

Information

The templon is the evolution of the plaques seen in Galleries 1 and 4. It separated the church attendants from the Sanctuary. During this period, it was high and made of wood. In this templon you can see the “vema” doors leading to the Sanctuary as well as the icons to its right and left. It ends with a cross on the top and the “lypira” (meaning sad), the icons of the Virgin and John the Theologian on the right and left of the cross. This is the form of the templon in the churches nowadays.

Instructions

- ▶ Find the templon and take a photo.
- ▶ Do you remember from what material the plaques were made in the previous periods?
- ▶ Take of photo of the "vema" doors and the cross with the “lypira” icons.
- ▶ Who is depicted on the right and who on the left of the vema doors?
- ▶ Remember to observe the templon the next time you visit a church.
- ▶ Present the information you have collected to your classmates.

At school:

- ▶ Think about and write a story including all the exhibits you observed.

