



Hagia Sophia (saint Sophia, Constantinople)

by *Professor Eleni Phufas*

She smiles wisely
as befits her name.
Officially subservient
to her master
She bides her time.
Burned and broken
Transformed and terrorized,
She rests unfazed and unrequited
on a hill between Topkapi and the mosque
Unthreatened:
Floating in her chains.
Twain was drawn here
blasting her filth and decay,
dismayed like the enduring fatalists of the Orient.
Her aged fertility compressed by her conquerors
He saw a crone – marked and painted like a whore.
Minarets piercing her majesty
A lover torn between passion and fear.
The urchins flit about her

unrelentingly pecking at the visitors,
curious but troubled inquisitors.
The guides blabber insistently of her life
that lies dormant
a frozen wisdom like Phoenix awaiting her birth.
If you have a moment let me tell you of a city,
forgotten by most.
Let me tell you of a glory
once bathed in Light
once admired and beguiled
the Saint which transforms those who touch her.
Image, courtesy [Wikipedia](#)

Article by Theodore Karakostas: [UNESCO and Hagia Sophia](#)
