



## 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](#)

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

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