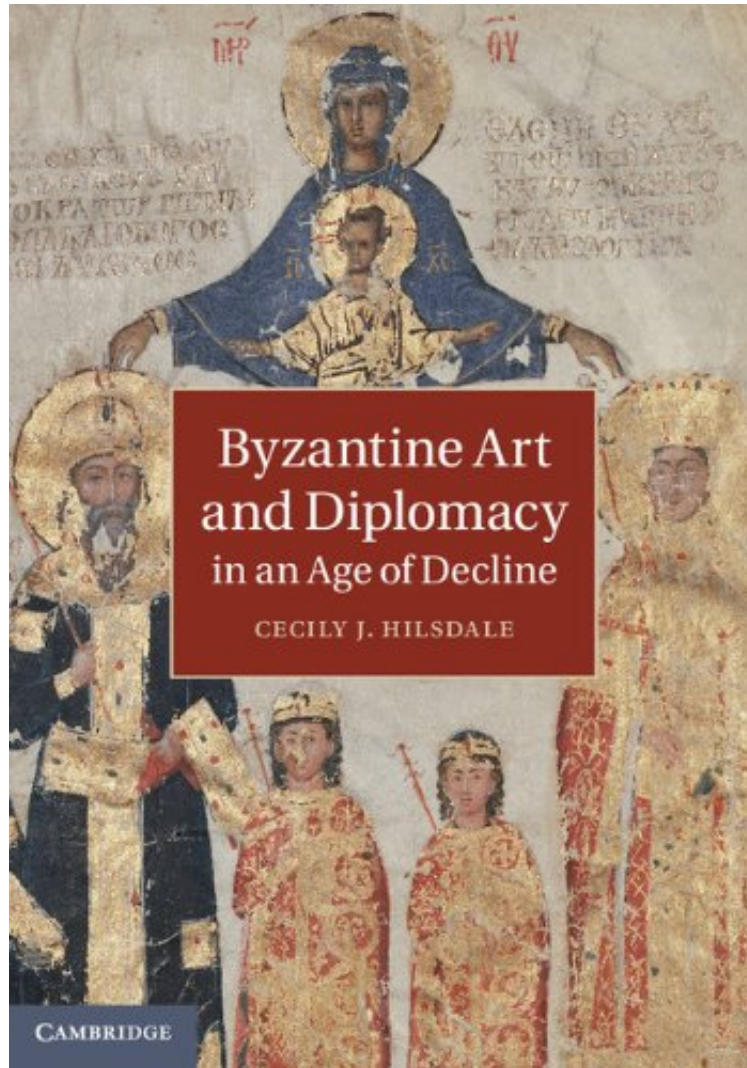


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Byzantine Art and Diplomacy in an Age of Decline

Cecily J. Hilsdale

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The Late Byzantine period (1261–1453) is marked by a paradoxical discrepancy between economic weakness and cultural strength. The apparent enigma can be resolved by recognizing that later Byzantine diplomatic strategies, despite or because of diminishing political advantage, relied on an increasingly desirable cultural and artistic heritage. This book reassesses the role of the visual arts in this era by examining the imperial image and the gift as reconceived in the final two centuries of the Byzantine Empire. In particular it traces a series of luxury objects created specifically

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About the Author Cecily J. Hilsdale is Associate Professor in the Department of Art History and Communication Studies at McGill University, Montreal. Her research concerns cultural exchange in the medieval Mediterranean, in particular the circulation of Byzantine luxury objects as diplomatic gifts as well as the related dissemination of eastern styles, techniques, and iconographies and ideologies of imperium.