

The Evolution of ‘Hagia Sophia’: A Historical Analysis

Md. Nurul Amin*

Abstract

Hagia Sophia, an iconic architectural wonder, has stood as a testament to the passage of time and the amalgamation of diverse cultural influences. The journey of Hagia Sophia begins in 537 AD when it was constructed in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) during the reign of Emperor Justinian I. As the grandest cathedral of the Byzantine Empire, it showcased remarkable architectural innovations. In 1453, the city fell to the Ottomans, marking a turning point for Hagia Sophia. Under the rule of Sultan Mehmed II, the cathedral was converted into a mosque, and several modifications were made. During the 20th century, Turkey underwent a period of significant political and social reforms under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. As part of his efforts to modernize the nation, Hagia Sophia was transformed into a secular museum in 1935. This transition aimed to embrace the structure's historical and cultural significance while promoting Turkey's secular identity. However, in recent years, Hagia Sophia has faced controversy and debate over its status. In 2020, it was reverted to a mosque by a decree from the Turkish government, igniting international reactions and raising questions about the delicate balance between cultural heritage and religious symbolism. This historical analysis delves into the evolution of Hagia Sophia as a remarkable architectural marvel that has witnessed the rise and fall of empires and served as a potent symbol of religious and cultural harmony. This study employed qualitative method of historical research mainly based on the secondary sources. By examining its transformation from a Byzantine cathedral to an Ottoman mosque and eventually a museum, this study sheds light on the complex interplay of historical, political, and religious forces that have shaped the destiny of this extraordinary monument.

Key Words: Byzantine, City of Istanbul, Mosque, Christian, Muslim, Museum

Introduction

Istanbul, an ancient city on the continents of Asia and Europe. It is known as the capital of the world. Previously, it was also known as the City of Byzantium or Constantinople. In history, this unstable land was also described as Anatolia or Asia Minor. Located in the heart of this city, on the west bank of the Bosphorus Strait, at the Golden Horn of Constantinople, the ancient architecture of "Hagiya Sophia" is one of the world's historical and architectural marvels. For a long time, this architecture was synonymous with the status of the Byzantine Empire.

* Professor, Islamic History and Culture, University of Dhaka. E-mail: naminhistory@yahoo.com

Similarly, even today, it carries importance as an example of Roman, Christian, Byzantine, and Muslim architecture. Along with the changes in history and dynasties, its identity and nature of use have changed over time. As a result, the building is renowned for its architecture and is also known for its diverse uses. It has a long history: first as a Christian church for about 1000 years, then as a Muslim mosque for about 500 years, then as a museum for 86 years, and finally converted into a mosque. The objective of this study is to analyze the evolution and transformation of "Hagia Sophia" in different phases of history. This is pure qualitative research based on secondary sources of information. Descriptive method is used to analyze the data collected through secondary sources. Books, periodicals, and newspapers are used to gather the data. Content analysis method is used to examine the collected data.

A Brief History of Istanbul

Istanbul is one of the oldest and most prosperous cities in the world. For thousands of years, this city has attracted the people of the world and has introduced itself as the center of world civilization and culture. Geographically, it is located at the melting point of two continents and was the capital of the ancient Byzantine civilization and the Ottoman Empire. The most significant monument of this city is "Hagia Sophia", which the then Christians thought of as the 'paradise of the world', the 'throne of God's dignity', or the 'house of the angels' (Qasim, 2015: 24). It was founded by the famous Emperor Byzas in the 7th century AD. and was named Byzantium, or Byzantine, after his name. The city attracted importance through development and prosperity within a short span of time. On September 18, 324 AD, the Christian emperor Constantius I (306-337) of the Eastern Roman Empire captured the city and brought some important elements from several places, including Rome, and re-founded it on May 11, 330 AD, as "New Rome", which was declared the Roman capital. Later, the name of the city was changed from Byzantine to Constantinople after the founder of the new capital, Constantius (Cohen, 2011: 20; Fahmi, 1993: 11).

A new era in the city's history began with the victory of Constantius. The cycle of repeated power changes came to an end. After that, it was operated as the capital of the orthodox Byzantines until the capture of Constantinople by the Turks. On May 29, 1453, Constantine XI Palaiologus (1449–1453) was defeated by Sultan Muhammad Fatih. Sultan established the Muslim Empire by conquering Constantinople, and the capital of the Byzantine (Rome) Empire, Muslims' long-dreamed city, was renamed Islambul (Madinatul Islam), which later became known as Istambul (As-Salabi, 2006: 120). It was used as the capital of Muslim rulers from the time of the Muslim occupation until the end of Ottoman rule. During Sultan Fatih's time in post-war Constantinople, the Muslim population increased and the Christian population declined. So, some churches were converted into mosques, while others remained churches (Beck, 1981: 165).

He also preserved much of Byzantine art by making necessary reforms and adding Islamic elements (Fahmi, 1993: 164). In 1923, after the defeat of Sultan Abdul Majid, the last Turkish Sultan, the Secular Turkish Republic was established, and the capital was moved from Istanbul to Ankara to keep Turkey free from the religious influence of Istanbul. As a result, the political importance and religious influence of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires declined. (Erkal, 1995: 87; Ozlu, 2015: 13; Cohen, 2011: 54).

Constantinople, or Istanbul, has nurtured many civilizations and cultures since archaic times, and many churches and places of worship have been built in this city. Yanku bin Madyan first built a shrine, which was destroyed by the attack of external enemies. The Temple of Helios was later built during the reign of the emperor Septimius Severus (145–211 BC). It was also known as the “Mother Goddess and Artemis Temples”. Originally, “Hagia Sophia” was later built on the site of this shrine (Nur and Ozer, 2017: 61). In the 4th century AD, the Christian emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, Constantius I (324–337 AD), came to power. Within three weeks of assuming power over the Byzantine Empire, he overemphasized all the ancient traditions of the Romans and designed and planned the city as a New Roman City to rebuild the capital of the state. He collected many important elements from Rome, Athens, Antioch, and Sicily to use in this construction. In continuation, he started the construction of the first Orthodox cathedral on the high hill, called the “Golden Horn”, in the historical capital of Constantinople. When its construction was completed in AD 360, the emperor Constantius II (AD 337–361) opened it as a church for Christian worshippers and named it “Megale Ecclesia”, or Great Church, on February 15 (Abel et al., 2013: 7; Sahin, 2019: 72; Emre, 2014: 297; Nur and Ozer, 2017: 68; Taraz, 2014: 35). At first, the church had a basilica¹ shape with a wooden roof. But only 44 years after the first construction, in 404 AD, several parts of the church, along with the senate house and the roof, were destroyed by fire during a riot caused by the political strife of the royal family of Constantinople (Ozlu, 2015: 13; Sahin, 2019: 73; Freely, 1998: 65). Then Emperor Theodosius II (408–450 AD) rebuilt the church on the foundations of the first one under the architect Rufinus (344/345–411 AD). The construction started in 408 AD and was completed in 415 AD. After that, the church was renamed Dromikos and opened for worship. Like the first one, this structure had stone walls and a wooden roof. Again, there was a revolt by the subjects (Nika Riot) against Justinian I on January 13–14, 532 AD, and the church was destroyed by fire. (Ozlu, 2015: 13; Sahin, 2019: 73; Nur and Ozer, 2017: 61). After rebuilding, it was named after the Greek mythological goddess of wisdom, “Hagia Sophia”, or The Holy Church of Wisdom.

The Journey of Hagia Sophia

A few weeks after the aforementioned destruction, the emperor Justinian I (527–565 AD) decided to build a large, attractive and durable church on the same site in a completely new form as a symbol of his victory and power. Accordingly, on February 23, 532 AD, the emperor instructed the two famous architects of the time, Isidore (442–537)² and Anthemius³, on the construction process. They assembled Christian mysticism, Roman Royal architecture, and Byzantine art to develop the new structure (LeMaitre and Milton, 2007: 408). Emperor Justinian ordered the governors and kings of different cities to send precious stones and various materials located in their cities to Istanbul. As a result of the Emperor's wishes and instruction, His subordinates sent the keystones and other elements of the ancient churches located in different regions of the empire to Istanbul (Sahin, 2019: 74). With all these materials—marble stones and mosaics—at a cost of about 360 million gold coins, the architecture was opened to the public with the status of a church on December 27, 537 AD, after a long five-year and 10-month construction work of about 10,000 workers. This time, the church was completely different in terms of structure. However, the use of wood was ignored in this construction to protect it from rapid destruction (Freely and Cakmak, 2004: 98; Cimok, 1996; Nur and Ozer, 2017: 68-69). During the Byzantine Empire, this church was known as the largest and most spectacular structure in Constantinople. It was considered the largest church in the world until the construction of the "Paul and Maria of Art" church in Milan in 1469 AD (Sahin, 2019: 75). According to another account, it was the largest cathedral in the world until the construction of Seville Cathedral in 1520 AD. It is a very rare, large, and ancient structure. Thus, the leading Byzantine historian of the 6th century was quite impressed:

So the church has become a spectacle of marvellous beauty, overwhelming to those who see it but altogether incredible to those who know it by hearsay. For it proudly reveals its mass and harmony of its proportions, heaving neither excess nor deficiency, since it is more pretentious than the buildings to which we are accustomed and considerably more noble than buildings that are merely huge, and it abounds exceedingly in sunlight and the reflection of the sun's rays from the marble. Indeed, one might say that its interior is not illuminated from without by the sun but that its radiance comes into being from within it, such that an abundance of light bathes the shrine (Freely and Cakmak, 2004: 99).

From the time of Emperor Justinian, the building became the main church and religious center of the Eastern Orthodox Christians, as well as the ideological,

royal, and administrative center for a long time (Plachy et al., 2016: 2260; Cohen, 2011: 3). In this place, various royal ceremonies were held, including the preservation of the crowns of the Byzantine emperors and the coronation of the emperors after the first crown. It remained under Orthodox control from the 13th century until the Fourth Crusade between Muslims and Christians in 1204 AD. After the Crusades, the Roman Catholics under the Latin Empire (European Roman Catholics) captured Constantinople and the church became a cathedral of the Roman Catholic faith. This establishment remained under their control for 57 years, until the defeat of the Catholics in 1261 AD. When Michael VIII (1261–1281) recaptured Constantinople in 1261, it was again converted into an Orthodox church (Alice-Mary, 1993: 251). During Roman Catholic rule (1204–1261), the church faced various challenges and was even destroyed (Emre, 2014: 300).

Conversion of Hagia Sophia into a Mosque

After the period of Christian occupation and counter-occupation, the architecture became the royal property of the Ottoman Sultan Muhammad II (1451–1481). Considering the geopolitical condition and importance of Constantinople, Sultan Muhammad II, who conquered Istanbul in 1453, made it as the capital of the Ottoman Caliphate (As-Salaabi, 2006: 120). After the conquest, Sultan converted the church into the first Imperial Mosque, but the name “Hagia Sophia” was not changed. Much of Constantinople was destroyed in Sultan Muhammad's invasion, but Hagia Sophia remained intact under his orders. He ordered his soldiers to convert the church into a mosque and preserve the building's ancient religious mosaics and archaeological artefacts. As a sign of the victory of Islam over the Christians, the mosaics of Hagia Sophia were covered with white plaster up to the line of sight to make them suitable for prayer, and the other half was left as Byzantine artefacts to preserve the past. The conversion of Hagia Sophia into a royal mosque marked the end of 1123 years of Christian history in the city (Ozlu, 2015: 16-17; Necipoglu, 1992: 204). After its conversion as a mosque, the first Friday prayer was offered on June 1, 1453, under the imamate of Al-Fatih's teacher, Shaykh Shamsuddin. Hagia Sophia's new chapter began in front of the world through Friday prayers and sermons. After that, Muslims prayed in it as a mosque for 481 years. In addition to repairing the fragile⁴ architecture, Sultan Muhammad Fatih removed the church's partisan elements and images of crosses, saints, and nuns and added various elements of Muslim culture (in non-harmonic elements), notably a small wooden minaret (he later built it with bricks) and a madrasa. (Plachy et al., 2016: 2261; Nur and Ozer, 2017: 70) Later, during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II (1481–1512), a minaret was added to its southeast corner. In 1573, Sultan Selim II (1566–1574) took the initiative to beautify the mosque. At this time, a stone minaret was added to the northeast corner on the advice of the famous Ottoman architect “MimarSinan”⁵. Finally, on his advice,

during the time of Emperor Selim's son, Emperor Murad III (1574–1555), in order to make the mosque earthquake-resistant, two more stone minarets were added to the southwest and northwest corners, and the aforementioned two minarets were renovated. All four stone minarets are still operational. During this era, the earlier mosaic images and Christian religious elements were covered with white plaster, and Islamic components were added. Through these renovations, the building was externally transformed from a Christian symbol to an Islamic emblem. Mainly because of the importance given to this structure by the Ottoman rulers, this architecture has reached us in its full form. Many sources have revealed that the building was largely neglected, abandoned, and in ruins when it came under the control of Sultan Muhammad through his conquest of Constantinople (Sahin, 2019: 76; Emre, 2014: 300; Nur and Ozer, 2017: 70–71; Plachy et al., 2016: 2262; Ozlu, n.d., 17–18).

Transformation into a Museum

Mainly in 1847–49 AD, the Swiss architect Gaspare Fossati (1809-1883) and his brother Giuseppe Fossati (1822-1891) were entrusted with the task of renovating the Hagia Sophia. A major renovation of the building was done by them. These architects carried out the renovation keeping in mind the interests of western academic circles. This renovation revealed mosaic images covered with a white coating. Later, after the First World War, the secular Turkish Republic was established in 1923 A.D., and the Ottoman Caliphate in Turkey came to an end (Ozlu, 2015: 20). The first president of the secular Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Pasha (1881–1938), vowed to modernize Turkey and became desperate to eradicate Islamic patterns under the guise of secularism. At that time, many mosques were closed, and the call to prayer in Arabic was also banned. In continuation of this, when Christians and Muslims were in conflict over "Hagia Sophia", public access to this mosque was banned in 1931 as an attempt to reconcile with the Christian world. This became more evident in 1932, when Thomas Whitmore of the Byzantine Institute and his colleagues were called upon to uncover and replace the ancient mosaics of Hagia Sophia.

Finally, the Cabinet of Kamal Pasha's government converted it into a museum by executive order (No. 2/1589) on November 24, 1934, banning prayer (Sahin,



Figure: 1 - Hagia Sophia in 1890's

Source: Gilliodts, Juan. *Impressions d'Orient, Voyage enTurquie, enBulgarieetenSerbie*, Bruksel, [1897]

2019: 76). As a result, the religious influence of the Byzantine and Ottoman periods in Hagia Sophia began to decline as this important religious structure was converted into a tourist center. Thus, Hagia Sophia was no longer a symbol of religion and politics (Cohen, 2011: 54). This point becomes clear in the following description:

A new secular future awaited Hagia Sophia, the great shrine that had successively served Christianity and Islam, God and Allah, for fourteen hundred years. Ataturk was aspiring to create in this Turkish Republic a fusion between the civilizations of East and West. The shrine of Hagia Sophia, which had long been a symbol of the conflict between them, was now to symbolize their union. Ataturk decided to convert the shrine into a Byzantine-Ottoman museum(Balfour and Kinross, 1972: 123).

After four long years of closure, it was opened to the public as a museum on February 1, 1935, after major renovations to bring it back to the original Hagia Sophia style (Nur and Ozer, 2017: 70; LeMaitre and Milton, 2007: 408; Abel et al., 2013). Although Kamal Pasha attributed the building's conversion to a museum to the contentment of the Orient, as seen in its charter:

The conversion of Hagia Sophia as an architectural masterpiece to a museum would please the Eastern world and introduce a new scientific institution to the civilized world (Kandemyr, 2004: 58).

However, this issue is political and controversial. Therefore, discussion and criticism about him in various quarters still exist today. His decision is considered very important for the modernization of Turkey. On the other hand, it was a decision imposed by the West. As this was the initial step in the conversion of Hagia Sophia into a church (Ozlu, 2015: 21). Kemal Pasha diverted a long-standing religious symbol from its purpose as part of a secular agenda to further his political agenda. Because of his conversion, the religious institution became a tourist center. As a result, signs of the victory of secularism over piety are observed (Ozlu, 2015: 21–22).

Re-conversion into the Mosque

Turkey's devout Muslims and right-wing political parties have been protesting against the conversion of Hagia Sophia into a museum since the beginning and have been vocal in their demand to convert it back into a mosque. On the other hand, the pro-Kamalist secular group had the idea of maintaining it as a museum for the sake of Turkey's secularism. There was tension in Turkey's internal politics for a long time. Later, when the Islamist AK Party came to power in Turkey in 2005, an organization called “Permanent Foundation Service to Historical Artefacts and Environmental Association”, filed a lawsuit in court demanding the re-conversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque. The main basis of their claim was that Hagia Sophia was the private property of Sultan Muhammad Fatih, who made it *waqf* for the mosque. So it will not be valid to use the *waqf* building for a museum or anything else. The court dismissed the case in 2008 after three years of litigation. Thereafter, the plaintiff continued to try to create public opinion in favour of converting Hagia Sophia back into a mosque. It should be noted that the current president of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, was in favour of converting it into a mosque from the beginning. When Erdogan came to power, the organization resorted to the court again. Finally, on July 10, 2020, Turkey's highest administrative court, “The Council of State”, analysed all the evidence at Hagia Sophia and declared invalid the order made by the then Kemal Pasha government in 1935. According to the Turkish court, Hagia Sophia is not allowed to carry any other identity than that of a mosque. Therefore, in the light of the Court, the Cabinet order of the Kamal Pasha government in 1935 to convert the mosque into a museum was not done in accordance with the law. A few hours after the court's order, the current president of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, signed a decree (order) officially declaring the Hagia Sophia a mosque. As a result, the building was transformed into a mosque again. (Khan, 2020).

Analysis

As this architecture became the religious and political center of the Byzantine Empire for almost a thousand years after the Muslim conquest, it was also

established as the apex of the Ottoman Empire for about 500 years. When the city of Istanbul, especially Hagia Sophia, was decorated with Islamic civilization and culture, Hagia Sophia became an emblem of the golden victory of Islam and Muslims over Christendom. But after the establishment of the modern state of Turkey, its original history, tradition, and purpose were diverted by converting the mosque into a museum. This structure was originally built for worship. As a result, since the transformation into a museum, Muslims have had the utmost demand for a long time to cancel the unjust decision of Kamal Pasha and return this ancient mosque to its proper place in history. Even the Armenian Patriarch of Turkey, Sahak Mashalyan, said it was better to open the Hagia Sophia for Muslim worship than to take pictures of tourists. He, however, also demanded a designated place for Christian worship in it as a symbol of world peace. But he also did not claim it as their church. Mainly due to natural as well as political reasons, Constantinople occupied a very important place on the world map at that time.

As a result, the Muslim caliphs, governors, and generals continued to strive to conquer Constantinople throughout the ages after the Prophet (pbuh). About 17 or 18 expeditions were conducted by the Muslims for the purpose of conquering this city at different times. But the victory of this fortified city remained a dream. The first expedition was conducted under the leadership of Hazrat Muawiya (ra) in 650 AD, according to 32 Hijri, during the reign of AmirulMu'minin Hazrat Osman (ra). Later, two more expeditions (one on land and one on water) were conducted under the leadership of Sufyan Ibn Awf in 49 Hijri 669 AD, during the time of Hazrat Muawiyah Ibn Abu Sufyan (ra). Abdullah Ibn Abbas (ra), Abdullah Ibn Umar (ra), Abdullah Ibn Zubair (ra), and Abu Ayyub Ansari (ra) participated in this campaign led by his son Yazid. (Achir, 1993: 457–59; Zayed, 1996: 23; At-Tawiyar, 2002: 20–21; Fahmy, 1993: 65; Nadeem, 1962).

The dedication of the Muslim leadership to conquering Constantinople at various times was greatly encouraged in this regard. The Ottoman rulers also continued to try again and again. Finally, Sultan Muhammad II (1451–1481 AD) conquered Constantinople on May 29, 1453 AD, and converted Hagia Sophia into a mosque. Through this, the long dream of the Muslims came true. Muslims valued this structure as a center of worship because of religious sentiments. The Ottoman as well as the Muslim rulers also continued their renovation and beautification work with great importance considering the religious, political, and architectural aspects. But on February 1, 1935, Kamal Pasha's government converted it into a museum, causing outrage among Muslims. At different times, Muslim groups have demanded that it be converted back into a mosque. As a result of that, on July 10, 2020, Turkey's highest administrative court, "The Council of State", declared the order to turn Hagia Sophia into a museum invalid, and it was reinstated as a mosque.

However, this order regarding Hagia Sophia has had mixed reactions inside and outside of Turkey, but the majority of Turkish people and almost all political parties welcomed the decision. However, a small section of the Turkish population thinks it is better to keep it as a museum as a symbol of Muslim and Christian unity. Turkish Nobel laureate writer Orhan Pamuk also commented in an interview that the conversion of Hagia Sophia into a mosque destroyed our long-held pride in secular Turkey. Similarly, Orthodox Christians in the United States, Greece, and Russia protested the decision. But Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Vershinin called the incident an internal matter for Turkey, so outside interference is not desirable. Turkish President Erdogan also called it an internal matter of Turkey and prohibited the outside world from meddling in it (Khan, 2020).

Basically, the issue is currently an emblem of the religious sentiments and national dignity of Muslims. Christians have little opportunity to relate to religious sentiments and national identity. Ottoman Sultan Muhammad II captured Constantinople by winning the war. And according to contemporary world policy, the conquerors are entitled to the authority of the conquered territories. Apart from that, Sultan Muhammad Fatih purchased the building from its original owner, the Christian Orthodox clergy, with private money through a treaty. In this case, he did not take any money from Baitul Mal, i.e., the state treasury. This contract of purchase and sale is preserved in the "Turkish Document and Argument Department" in Ankara to date. After being defeated in battle, the Christians sold the church by treaty to the conquerors for money. This continuation of the sale of churches and places of worship is still seen in different parts of Europe and America. All these sold churches are converted into houses or mosques (Khan, 2020). Since there was no mosque in this area at that time, Sultan Muhammad Fatih converted it into a mosque by forming a *waqf* association for Muslims to offer prayers and opening it for the public. The mosque started its activities with the Sultan and his entourage offering prayers. It served as the main royal mosque in Istanbul until the construction of the Blue Mosque, or "Sultan Ahmed Mosque", in 1617 AD. It is evident that Sultan Muhammad Fatih left the highest example of generosity. Territory conquered by war is supposed to be under the conqueror's own control, and he can exercise his will over there. But Sultan Fatih showed tolerance to the defeated Christians and bought the church from them. He also granted many rights to the defeated Christians, which was a rare achievement for the people of the war-torn region. Although the second description is doubtful in various quarters, there is no room for doubt as to the abolition of the will, ambition, and authority of the aforesaid owner by conquest. Thus, after the conquest of Sultan Muhammad Fatih, the Christian and Byzantine associations with Hagia Sophia ceased, but its association with Muslim history and tradition remained.

Conclusion

Hagia Sophia unravels the fascinating journey of one of the world's most iconic landmarks. Starting as a Byzantine cathedral built in 537 AD during Emperor Justinian I's reign, it boasted remarkable architectural innovations and adorned interiors. With the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the cathedral underwent a transformation into an imperial mosque, blending Islamic elements with its Byzantine heritage. In the 20th century, under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's reforms, it was secularized and converted into a museum, signifying Turkey's embrace of its historical and cultural significance. However, in 2020, the Turkish government's decision to revert Hagia Sophia to a mosque reignited debates on preserving cultural heritage while accommodating religious sentiments. This historical analysis provides valuable insights into the complex interplay of history, politics, and religion that have shaped the evolution of Hagia Sophia over the ages, solidifying its status as a timeless symbol of architectural brilliance and cultural heritage.

Notes

1. A basilica is a wide and long hall with two rows of columns and a dome at one end; this type of building is used as a church (Bangla Academy, Dhaka, 1993, p. 63).
2. Isidore was originally a physicist. He was born in 442 AD in Miletus, Turkey. He earned the reputation of editing the works of Archimedes. He is also most famous for building the Hagia Sophia. Its construction was completed in 537 AD under the orders of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I. Pantheon, n.d. "Isidore of Miletus". Accessed May 15, 2021. https://pantheon.world/profile/person/Isidore_of_Miletus
3. Anthemius was primarily a mathematical physicist. He became famous as a philosopher and mathematical physicist. He was born in 474 AD in Tralles, near Aden, in southwestern Turkey. He is best known as the reformer of Hagia Sophia, the pride of Istanbul. He began rebuilding it in 532 AD under the orders of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian I with the architect Isidore, but died in 534 AD before completing the project. Prabook, n.d., "Anthemius of Tralles", Accessed May 18, 2021., <https://prabook.com/web/mobile/#!/profile/3753785>
4. In its long history of about 1500 years, disasters have damaged it at various times due to political anger. Similarly, it has suffered from natural disasters. For example, from 542 to 557, it was damaged by earthquakes about five times. Then, in 558 AD, the main dome and some pillars of the church collapsed due to a strong earthquake measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale. Later in AD 869, during the reign of Emperor Basilus I (867-886), another earthquake destroyed most of its semi-domes. As a result, it needs to be reformed every time. However, in the earthquakes of 989, 1343, and 1344 AD, this temple suffered very little damage, but in the earthquake of 1346 AD, the entire temple suffered major damage. Moreover, after the occupation of the Ottomans, major renovations were carried out by the architect Sinan in 1573 and by the Swiss architect Gaspare Fossati and his brother Giuseppe Fossati in 1847 (Necipoglu 1992, 95–125).
5. "Mimar Sinan" was the first architect in history to make his buildings earthquake-resistant. Emperor Selim II entrusted him with the task of renovating Hagia Sophia, an ancient artefact

famous in history. As Sinan extended to Hagia Sophia, he applied the most effective methods to fulfil this ancient tradition. Due to his advice, many changes were made to this program. Even the mosque added during Sultan Mahmud's time was removed (Ozlu 2015, 17–18).

Reference

- At-Tawiyar, Fahad bin Abis bin Muhammad, (2002). *Fathu Madinatil Qustantaniya* (857 AH/1453 AD) 1st edition Tabuk: An-Nadi al-Adabi.
- Abel, Jonathan S, Wieslaw Woszczyk, DoyuenKo, Scott Levine, Jonathan Hong, Travis Skare, Michael J. Wilson¹, Sean Coffin¹, Fernando Lopez-Lezcano,(2013). “Recreation of the acoustics of Hagia Sophia in Stanford’s Bing Concert Hall for the concert performance and recording of Cappella Romana”, *International Symposium on Room Acoustics*, Toronto, Canada, 9-11.
- Abdus Salam Abdul Aziz Fahmi (1993).*As-Sultan Muhammad al-Fatih, Fatihul Qistantiyatiwa Qahirur Rumi*, (DarulQalami: Damascus), 65.
- Alice-Mary, Talbot, (1993).*The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII*, *Dumbarton Oaks Paper* 47, 243-260.
- Al Abdul Aziz Abu Zayd, (1996). *Ad-Daulatul Umuwiyatu Daulatul Futuhatu 661–750 KH*. (Cairo: Al-Mahadul Alamilil Firril Islami), 23.
- Al-Bukhari, (n.d.).*TariqulKabir*, Volume 2, Hadith No. 81.
- Ar-Rashid, Salim, (1969). *Muhammad al-Fatih*, (Jeddah: Maktabatul Irshad).
- As-Salaabi, Ali Muhammad Muhammad, (2006).*Fatihul Kustantaniyati As-Sultan Muhammad Al-Fatih*, (Al-Qahira: DarutTawzi' wan Nashril Islami).
- Beck, Muhammad Farid, (1981). *Tariq al-Dawlah al-Aliyah al-Uthmaniyah*, 1st edition, (Beirut: Dar An-Nafais).
- Balfour, Baron Patrick and and Lord Kinross, (1972). *Hagia Sophia*. New York, Newsweek.
- Bernardine Kalti, Anu. Shukri Mahmud Nadeem, (1962). *Fathul Kustantaniyati* (Baghdad: Maqtabatun Nahdati), Alif.
- Celebi, Evliya, (1896). “Seyahatname”, *Dersaadet*, Vol. 1. (Istanbul: Ikdam Matbaas).
- Cimok, F., A Yayinlan, Yuksel Burcin Nur and Yasemen Say Ozer, (2017). “Temporality and Memory in Architecture: Hagia Sophia”, *International Journal of Architecture & Planing*, Vol: 5.
- Cohen, Andrew Jonathan, (2011). “Architecture in Religion: The History of the Hagia Sophia and Proposals for Returning it to Worship”, *A thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Religious Studies*. Florida International University.
- Emre, NilayYilmaz, (2014). “Church of Divine Wisdom: Hagia Sophia”, *Turkish Neuro-Excursion, Turk Neurosur*, Vol: 24, No: 3, 297-301.
- English-Bengali Dictionary*, (1993). (Dhaka: Bangla Academy), First Edition.

-
- Erkal, Namik Gunay, (1995). “Constantinopolis: A Study on the City of Constantinople as the Artifice of Constantine the Great’s Imperial Project”, *Master Thesis*, METU.
- Fahad bin Awish bin Muhammad at-Taayyar, (2002). *Fathu Madinatil Qustantaniya (857 AH/1453 AD)*, (Tabuk: An-Nadi al-Adabi: Tabuk), 1st ed., 20–21.
- Fahmi, Abdus Salam Abdul Aziz, (1993). *As-Sultan Muhammad al-Fatih: Fatihul Qistantiyatiwa Qahirur Rumi*, (Damascus: Darul Qalami).
- Freely, John, (1998). *Istanbul the Imperial City*, (London: Penguin Books).
- Freely, J. & A. S. Cakmak, (2004). *Byzantine Monuments of Istanbul*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 90-128.
- Hambal, Ahmad Ibn, (1998). *Al-Musnad*, (Riyadh: Baitul Afqarid Dawlati).
- Hasluck, F. W. (1929). *Christianity And Islam Under the Sultans*, Edited by Margaret Masson Hardie Hasluck, (Oxford : Clarendon Press).
- Ibn al-Achir, (1993). *al-Kamil*, vol. 3, 457–459.
- Jabid, Abdul Aziz Tawfiq, (1997). *Al-Hadaratul Byzaintaniyatu By Stephen Runciman*, (Cairo: Maktabatun Nahdatil Misriyati).
- Kandemyr, Ýsmaíl, (2004). *UluMâbed: HAGIA SOPHIA*. Ýstanbul: Grafik & Kapak: Sami KAYA.
- Kasim, Mustafa Muhammad, (2015). *Al-Qustantiyyah-al-Madinatullati Ishtahahal ‘Alam, 1453–1924*. Philip Mansell Jr., Volume 1. (Kuwait: Alimul Marifati).
- Khan, Mohammad Siddiqur Rahman (2020). *AyaSofiya O Fire Dejhaltihash* (in Bengali), The Daily Campus, July 14, accessed June 30, 2023, <https://the.dailycampus.com/muktocolumn/49028>.
- Khattab, Mahmud Shita, (1998), *Binal Aqeedati Wal Qiyadati*, (Damascus: Darul Qalami).
- LeMaitre, A., Milton, L. (2007). *Turkey*, (Prague: Ikar).
- Nadeem, Shukri Mahmud, (1962). *Fathul Kustantaniyati Bernardin Kalati*, (Baghdad: Maktabatun Nahdati).
- Necipoglu, Gulru, (1992). “The Life of an Imperial Monument: Hagia Sophia after Byzantium.” In *Hagia Sophia from the age of Justinian to the Present*, edited by Robert Mark and Ahmet S. Cakmak, 195-225, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Nur, Yuksel Burcin and Yasemen Say Ozer, (2017). “Temporality and Memory in Architecture: Hagia Sophia”, *International Journal of Architecture & Planing*, Vol: 5. 61-68.
- Ozlu, Nilay, (2015). *Hagia Sophia and the Demise of the Sacred, Design Philosophy Papers*, Vol-8, Issue-1.
- Plachý, Jan, Josef Musílek, Luboš Podolka and Monika Karková, (n.d.). *Disorders of the Building and Its Remediation- Hagia Sophia, Turkey The Most the Byzantine Building*,

World Multidisciplinary Civil Engineering-Architecture-Urban Planning Symposium, Procedia Engineering 161. 2259-2264.

Sahin, O. Erdal, (2019). "The Construction of Hagia Sophia As An Imperial Space and The Process of Change", *Balkan and Near Eastern Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 05, No.03.

Taraz, Nazh, (2014). "The Hagia Sophia in its Urban Context: An Interpretation of the Transformations of An Architectural Monument with its Changing Physical and Cultural Environment", *A Thesis for Master of Science in Architecture*, Izmir Institute of Technology.

Tibarani, (n.d.).*Al-Kabir*, 2nd volume, Hadith No. 38.

Wanders, Patrick, (n.d.).*The Hagia Sophia: From Church to Mosque*, Essay Research Seminar Roma Aeterna: Medieval Rome and Constantinople Seminar Paper, Introduction, accessed July 20, 2023.