

A Visit to Hagia Sophia—Tour packet

Name _____ Hour _____ Date _____

Introduction

How old is your house? What was in the location where your house now stands twenty-five years ago? A hundred years ago? A thousand years ago? Have any changes been made in your house since it was built—Renovations? Added rooms? Rooms changed from one purpose to another?

In this lesson, you will study and even get a chance to “visit” the Hagia Sophia (“Holy Wisdom”), a 1500 year-old building in Istanbul, Turkey that has been at various times a church for two different Christian denominations, a mosque, and a museum. This important building will help you learn about the history and culture of the Byzantine Empire.

Part One: Constantine’s City

Imagine it is the year 330 CE. You are accompanying the Roman Emperor Constantine on a sea voyage the length of the Mediterranean Sea from Rome, the old capital city of the Roman Empire on the Italian Peninsula, to the new capital city that Constantine has had built over the last six years in the eastern part of the Empire. This city will be named after him as Constantinople, the “city of Constantine.”

Constantine is a truly remarkable Leader who has made not just one, but two Major changes in the Roman Empire during his reign. In addition to moving the capital from Rome, where it had been for over 800 years, he has also legalized the religion of Christianity. Although 300 years have passed since Jesus of Nazareth, the founder of the Christian religion, was alive, up until the time of Constantine it remained illegal to practice Christianity in the Roman Empire. Many Christians during the preceding three centuries had been imprisoned or even **martyred**^{*}, that is, killed for practicing their religion.



Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Constantine_multiple_CdM_Beistegui_233.jpg

**Roman coin showing
the emperor Constantine**

^{*} Record bold words and definitions on separate vocabulary sheet.



Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a9/Roman_Empire_AD_306_24.jpg

Map of the Roman Empire in the time of Constantine

Constantine, however, has changed all that. In 312, just before fighting the Battle of the Milvian Bridge against a rival for the position of Roman Emperor, Constantine is said to have had a vision that told him he would conquer his enemy under the sign of the Christian cross. He instructed his troops to decorate their shields with the Christian symbol, and after winning the battle, the next year he issued the Edict of Milan that has now made the practice of Christianity legal within the Empire.

As you near the end of your voyage, passing from the Mediterranean Sea through the strait known as the Hellespont and into the Sea of Marmara, you think of what you know about the city of Constantinople, which Constantine has labeled the “New Rome”. You know that much of the city has been newly built at Constantine’s order in only six years. You also know, however, that what will now be known as Constantinople sits on the site of a much older city, Byzantium, that is itself nearly a thousand years old, older even than the ancient city of Rome from which you have come on this voyage.

You recall how Byzantium was originally founded by travelers sailing in ships like you are now, Greek traders from the city of Megara seeking a site for a new trading **colony**, or

settlement. Before setting out, Byzas, the leader of the traders had consulted the **oracle** of Apollo at Delphi for guidance on the voyage. The oracle's prophecy instructed Byzas to settle "opposite the city of the blind," a statement that, like much advice from the oracle, probably didn't make much sense at first. It was only when Byzas and his fellow colonists approached the point, as you are now, where the Sea of Marmara meets the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn, that the meaning of the oracle's statement became clear. On the eastern, or Asian side of the Bosphorus, lay the Greek trading colony of Chalcedon. Byzas and his companions realized that the Chalcedonians must be the "blind" for failing to recognize the advantages of the location on the opposite, or European side, where Byzas and his companions now landed to establish their colony—advantages that included a fine harbor (the Golden Horn) next to an easy to defend peninsula topped by seven hills to build upon.

You smile to yourself as you remember that Rome, too, is a city built on seven hills, but as you finally sail into view of Constantinople, you are thinking more about one very important way in which this new capital is different from the old one you have left behind. In Constantinople, Constantine's two major changes to the Roman empire—the moving of the capital and the legalization of Christianity—have combined to produce something never seen in Rome or any other older city in the empire—the construction within the new city of numerous churches as houses of worship for the growing Christian population.

If you were able to look into the future, you would see these churches rising from the hills of Constantinople. First will come the Hagia Eirene (pronounced *eye-ah ee-ree-nee*), the Church of the Holy Peace. Next to it over the years will rise and fall the three greatest **basilicas**, or cathedrals, of Constantinople, each named Hagia Sophia (pronounced *eye-ah sew-fee-ah*), the Church of the Holy Wisdom. Construction on the first wooden structure will begin during the reign of Constantine himself, and be completed in 360, only thirty years in the future, by his son, Constantius II. When this structure is destroyed by fire after only 45 years, it will be replaced by a larger church, but one that in its turn will last only a little more than a century before it, too, is destroyed, this time in the Nike riots of 532.

Fortunately, when it is time to rebuild the Hagia Sophia for the third (and final) time, this will happen during the reign of one of the empire's most capable leaders—the emperor Justinian. Within just weeks of the destruction of the second basilica, he will decide to



Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Irene2.jpg

Hagia Eirene (Church of the Holy Peace)
—showing eighth century repairs

build a third and more majestic church in its place. This structure will become one of the most famous buildings in human history, a landmark that will endure for fifteen centuries.

Questions

Instructions: Answer the questions below. Write in full sentences where appropriate.

1. Name some reasons why the Roman empire might have needed to change its capital.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

2. What were the two big changes that Constantine made in the Roman empire during his reign?

A.

B.

3. Why might Constantine have decided to make Christianity legal?

4. How were the processes by which the cities of Byzantium and Constantinople got their names similar?

Part Two: Hagia Sophia—an Istanbul Landmark

Now imagine that it is the year 2010, and you are traveling again to the city you visited with Constantine. Much has changed in the Mediterranean world in the seventeen centuries since your first voyage. The most obvious difference is that you are now probably traveling by plane rather than by boat. In addition, the Roman empire that controlled the region in the year 330 is long gone. The empire, after having been split into Eastern and Western portions by Diocletian in 285 CE, gradually shrank in size under pressure from northern European and nomadic Central Asian groups. The city of Rome itself was conquered by the Visigoths in 476 CE. Despite this, the Eastern Roman empire continued on for almost a thousand years as what we now call the Byzantine Empire, of which Constantinople remained the capital.

In 1453, however, the Byzantine Empire also came to an end when Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks. After their conquest, the Ottomans changed the name of the city once again, so that the city to which you are traveling is no longer called Constantinople, but rather Istanbul (from the Greek phrase *is tin poli*—“to the city”). In the end, the Ottomans, too, disappeared, giving way in the early twentieth century to the modern country of Turkey, of which Istanbul is the largest city. Istanbul is one of the great cities of the world, and the only one that lies in two continents—Europe and Asia. Its long and varied history continues to make it an important destination for visitors, just as it was in the time of your voyage with Constantine.

In preparing for your modern journey to Istanbul (not Constantinople), you will need to take advantage of one other thing that is different in the world since the time of Constantine—the internet. Using the internet sites below, make a list of your personal top ten places to visit while in Istanbul. List your choices in order from number 1 (favorite) to number 10, and explain your top three choices. For each place, record the date when it was first built or discovered, and one additional interesting fact.

Websites with information about places to visit in Istanbul:

<http://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g293974-Activities-Istanbul.html>

http://turkey-travel.suite101.com/article.cfm/top_ten_things_to_do_in_istanbul_turkey

[http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Middle East/Turkey/Istanbul Ili/Istanbul-1837624/Things To Do-Istanbul-TG-C-1.html](http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Middle_East/Turkey/Istanbul_Ili/Istanbul-1837624/Things_To_Do-Istanbul-TG-C-1.html)

<http://www.toptenturkey.com/Thingstodo.htm>

<http://www.guideistanbul.net/aboutistanbul/highlights/>

<http://www.istanbulguide.net/istguide/anglais/generalites/visit.htm>

My Top Ten Places to Visit in Istanbul

(Place)

(Date)

#1 _____ Why? _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____
#2 _____ Why? _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____
#3 _____ Why? _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____
#4 _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____
#5 _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____
#6 _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____
#7 _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____
#8 _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____
#9 _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____
#10 _____ Interesting fact: _____	_____

Istanbul has a long history since it was first founded as Byzantium. It has been a part of several different empires or nations during its existence, and each of these historical groups has put its mark on the city through the buildings and other structures that it left behind. Some of these buildings can still be seen in the city today. Others disappeared long ago as the city grew and changed.

To get a sense of how much each of these historical groups has contributed to the Istanbul you would see today, complete the table entitled “Historical Eras of Origin for Tourist Attractions in Istanbul” below. Using the dates from your Top Ten list above, write the name of each of the ten places you would like to visit in Istanbul in the chart next to the correct historical era.

Historical Eras of Origin for Tourist Attractions in Istanbul

Date Built/Discovered	Historical Era	Istanbul Places Built During this Era
669 - 129 BCE	Greeks	
129 BCE - 476 CE	Roman Empire	
476 - 1453 CE	Later Roman/ Byzantine Empire	
1453-1922	Ottoman Empire	
1922-present	Modern Turkey	

Questions

8. Which historical era produced the most places you would like to visit in Istanbul?

9. Why do you think you have the most places from this historical era on your list?
(Do the places from this historical era have anything in common that made them seem interesting for you to include on your list?)

10. Which era produced the fewest places you would like to visit in Istanbul?

11. Why do you think you have the least places from this historical era on your list?

12. Were the places from this historical era just less interesting to you, or is there another reason why you might have fewer places from certain eras on your list?
(Hint: Look back at the questions in the first paragraph of this packet.)

13. Was Hagia Sophia on your Top Ten list of places to visit in Istanbul? (The answer is probably "Yes" for about 99% of the people who visit Istanbul.)

14. Which historical era does the Hagia Sophia date from?

15. Is Hagia Sophia older or newer than most places you want to visit in Istanbul?

Hagia Sophia is the most recognizable cultural landmark in Turkey and one of the most famous in the world. When it was completed in 537, Hagia Sophia was the largest church in the world. It remained so for over 900 years, and if it were a church today, it would still be among the world's largest. The building took 50 **stonemasons**, skilled craftsmen trained in cutting and building with stone, and 10,000 workers five years to build. That may seem like a long time, but remember that in 537, there were no power tools or machinery—all work was done with human labor. So actually, five years to construct a building the size of Hagia Sophia was pretty quick. Some cathedrals built in Europe in the centuries after Hagia Sophia took more than a century to complete. Your trip to Istanbul would not be complete without a visit to this remarkable building.

In addition to being the most famous, Hagia Sophia is also one of the oldest buildings in Istanbul. Parts of other older structures remain in the city, but none of these is as complete or as well-preserved as the Hagia Sophia. This is not to say that Hagia Sophia appears as it did when it was first built. Like the city around it, Hagia Sophia has undergone a number of transformations over time. These changes reflect the different historical eras through which the building has survived. During your visit, you will have a chance to identify some of these changes.

Hagia Sophia is located in Istanbul's most historic neighborhood, Sultanahmet. The new basilica commissioned by Justinian as he rebuilt the Constantinople in the aftermath of the Nike riots' fires lay at the political, religious and cultural center of the new Byzantine city, adjacent to both the emperor's Bucoleon Palace and the massive Hippodrome. Of these three structures, only Hagia Sophia remains today. Your first view of the building will be as you would see if you were approaching on foot, walking through the streets of Istanbul. As you approach, what do you notice about the building? Be descriptive—use terms that tell about size, shape, color, and surroundings. Record your observations on the next page as your first entry in your Field Journal.



Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/19/Hagia_Sophia_Cathedral.jpg

Hagia Sophia

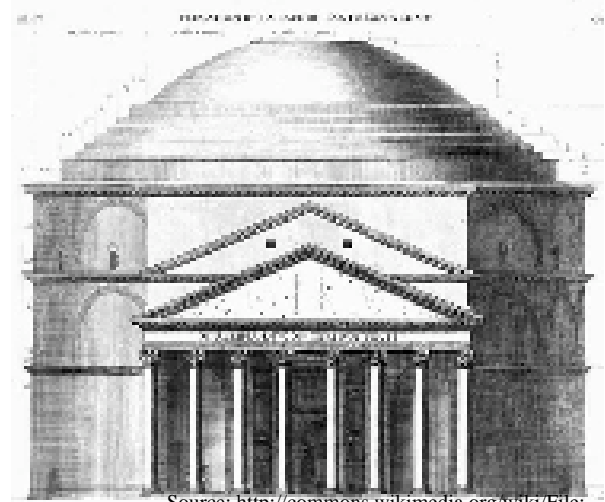
_____ 'S FIELD JOURNAL

LOCATION: _____

OBSERVATIONS: _____

One feature of Hagia Sophia that you may have noticed is its many domes. The Romans, from whom the Byzantines were descended, were famous for their use of domes (see the sketch of the Pantheon in Rome below). When Justinian had Hagia Sophia built, it was no surprise that domes became an important part of the structure. The building's main dome is over 55 meters high, high enough to fit the Statue of Liberty inside.

If you look carefully, you can see that some of the domes are actually just half domes. The designers of Hagia Sophia used these half domes to support the main dome and make the inside of the building even bigger and more open feeling. In fact, Hagia Sophia was the largest enclosed space in the world for over 1000 years. The construction of such a large dome was a major accomplishment at the time when Hagia Sophia was first built. In fact, it took a couple of attempts to get it right. The original dome for the building collapsed in 556 after a series of earthquakes. The current and, we hope, stronger dome was built to replace it.



Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DesgodetzPantheon.jpg>

Sketch of the Pantheon, Rome

Another feature that you probably noticed in your first look at the Hagia Sophia are the four pointed towers that surround the dome. These towers are called **minarets**, and their presence marks a building as a **mosque**, or Islamic house of worship. Five times each day, a **muezzin**, who is an official of the mosque, would climb the minaret to call Muslims in to the mosque to pray. Muslims, or followers of the religion of Islam, pray five times each day as part of their religious practices. In the days before electricity, the high balcony of the minaret gave the muezzin a place to stand where his voice could carry throughout the neighborhood around the mosque. Now, many mosques have loudspeakers mounted on their minarets, so the muezzin does not actually need to climb to the top. (To hear the muezzin giving the *adhan*, or call to prayer, at the Sultanahmet Mosque in Istanbul, adjacent to Hagia Sophia, go to <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-9151680295003316228#>.)

16. How are the terms “minaret,” “mosque,” and “muezzin” connected to each other?

The minarets of Hagia Sophia are a visible sign of one of the most important ways in which the use of the building has changed over its history. Perhaps you recall that Justinian had Hagia Sophia constructed as a church, or Christian house of worship. Look at the picture below, which shows how Hagia Sophia might have looked in the time of Justinian. Remember that this is not an actual photograph, but an artist's sketch of how the building might have looked at that time. Compare this view of the Hagia Sophia with the one on the previous page, then answer the questions that follow the sketch.



Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Sophia_BW.jpg

Artist's sketch of how Hagia Sophia might have looked during the Byzantine era

17. What difference do you notice between this picture and your first view of the Hagia Sophia?

18. What important change in the use of the Hagia Sophia does this indicate?

This important change occurred in 1453, when after nearly a thousand years of ruling various parts of Europe, Asia and Africa from its capital in Constantinople, the Byzantine Empire was conquered for good by another rising power in the region, the Ottoman Turks.

In addition to the fact that there are no minarets, notice in the artist's sketch of Hagia Sophia that the main dome is topped by a cross, symbolizing Christianity. Unlike the Byzantines, however, who were Orthodox Christians, the Ottomans were Muslims, followers of Islam. In 1453, when the Ottomans conquered Constantinople, making it their capital and changing its name to Istanbul, they also converted the Hagia Sophia and other Christian houses of worship in the city from churches to mosques. As part of this process, minarets were added to these buildings. The addition of minarets was not the only change made to Hagia Sophia when it was converted to a mosque, but you will have to wait to see the other changes until you go inside. Are you ready? Okay, let's go.

Please turn to the next page

Part Three: Touring Hagia Sophia

General Instructions

The instructions below will prepare you for your tour. Check off each box as you complete that step in the instructions.

1. ☐ Open Safari and type the following into the address bar at the top of the window:
http://www.360tr.com/34_istanbul/ayasofya_eski/
2. ☐ You will first see an introductory page with the Turkish words “Ayasofya Musezi” (*Ayasofya* is “Hagia Sophia” in modern Turkish, while *Musezi* is “museum.”). After a few seconds, a close-up view of the Hagia Sophia will appear. If a grid of white lines on black background appears, please wait patiently and allow the image to finish loading.

You may notice right away that your view of the Hagia Sophia is moving. You can use your mouse to control this movement and “look around” from this spot:

- Click and hold the mouse to make the picture stop moving (the cursor will appear as a bullseye).
- Click and drag the mouse to move in any direction (the cursor will appear as an arrow). You can move left, right, up or down—the arrow will indicate the direction in which you are moving.
- As you move around, the cursor may occasionally change to a pointing finger icon. By clicking the mouse at that point, you can “walk” in the direction shown and then look around from that new spot. Again, if a white on black grid appears, please wait for the image to finish loading.

Practice looking around. Try looking left without tilting up or down. Then try looking right. Next try looking down, then up, without spinning around. Be careful not to make yourself dizzy—click and hold the mouse to stop moving, and look away from the screen for a minute if necessary.

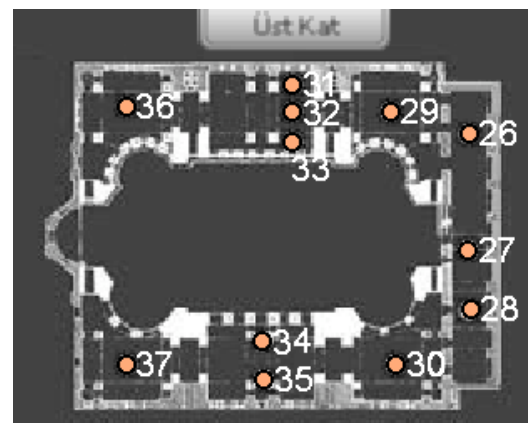
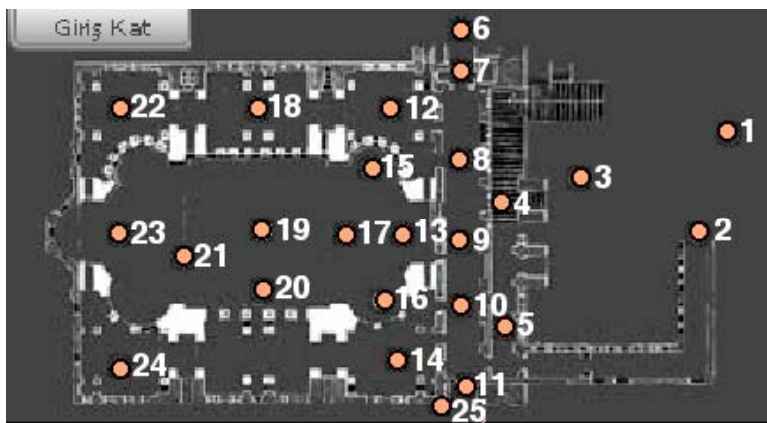
3. ☐ Now look down at the lower right part of the window to find the interactive floor map of Hagia Sophia. Don’t worry that the writing is in Turkish—you don’t need to read much Turkish to go on your tour, and what you do need you will learn along the way. As you look at the map, notice the large number of glowing dots. Each of these dots marks a location in or around Hagia Sophia. Clicking on a dot will allow you to “move” to that location. At each location, you can look around as you just practiced above, and just as in the real Hagia Sophia, each location will give you a different view.

Hagia Sophia has two main levels, labeled on the map as *Giris Kat* and *Ust Kat*. Click on the labeled tabs in the upper left corner of the map to see the map for each level. Which do you think is the first floor and which do you think is the second? Write “First floor” and “Second floor” in the proper spaces below.

Giris Kat = _____ **Ust Kat** = _____

In Turkish, *giris* means “entry,” *ust* means “second” and *kat* means “floor,” so *giris kat* is the entry, or first, level, and *ust kat* is the second level. You will visit both levels during your tour, so remember which label means what.

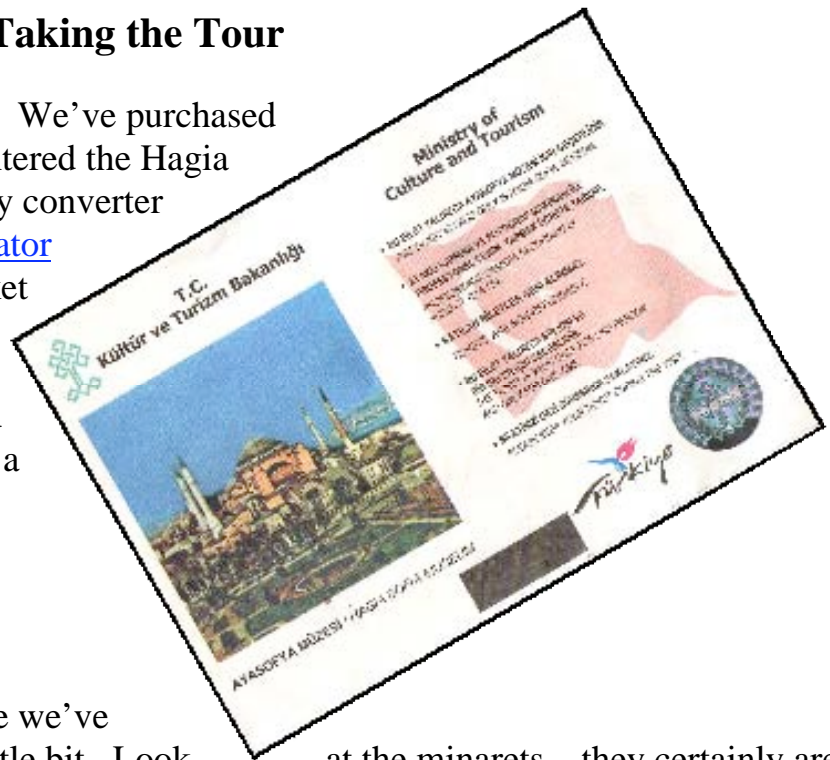
Although you are welcome to come back and explore more on your own, your first tour of the Hagia Sophia will be a guided tour. You will make various stops in and around the building, following instructions to move from stop to another either by clicking on the dot for that location on the interactive floor map, or by clicking on the screen where the pointing finger icon appears. Use the maps below to identify the correct dots on the interactive floor map. These maps are identical to those on your computer screen, but with numbers added to make it easier for you to identify the stops on your tour.



At each stop, you will learn about one or more features of the Hagia Sophia that can be seen from that location. At some stops, you will be asked to make observations and develop your own ideas about what you see. You will record notes, observations and sketches in your Field Journal.

Taking the Tour

Stop #1 All right, let's get started. We've purchased our ticket for 20 Turkish lira and entered the Hagia Sophia grounds. Using the currency converter at http://coinmill.com/TRY_calculator.html, we can calculate that our ticket cost us about _____ U.S. dollars. Our ticket comes from the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism because after 900 years as a church, and over 450 years as a mosque, since 1932 Hagia Sophia has been a museum operated by the Turkish government.



Let's look around the area where we've arrived outside the building for a little bit. Look _____ at the minarets—they certainly are tall, aren't they? What else do you notice as you stand at this spot? Record your observations, plus your answers to any of the questions below in your Field Journal.

What other kinds of buildings are near Hagia Sophia? Do they seem newer or older? What season do you think it is? Why? What kinds of materials were used to construct the exterior of the building?

FIELD JOURNAL

LOCATION: _____

OBSERVATIONS: _____

What did you observe? Did you see the tall minarets in the distance? Those are part of the Sultahahmet Mosque, which you will learn more about later. Did you notice two structures standing apart from the main building, including the small open **pavilion**—the one with the crowd of men standing in front of it? Let's turn to face that building now.

This decorative structure housed the Hagia Sophia's **ablution** fountain. An ablution is a ritual washing or bath, and this fountain was used by Muslims during the time when Hagia Sophia was a mosque to wash their hands, heads, and feet before entering the mosque to pray. The crowd of men standing near the fountain makes it a little difficult to see, but the photograph at right gives a close up view. Though no longer in use, you can see the water spouts that would have allowed fifteen to twenty people at a time to wash themselves at the fountain.



Source: <http://www.pbase.com/bmcmorrow/istanbul/ayasophia&page=all>

19. Why might a Muslim think it important to wash her/his hands, head, and feet before entering a mosque?

Hagia Sophia ablution fountain

Some of you may have learned another word of Turkish while looking around. Did you see the Exit sign? What is the Turkish word for "exit?"

_____ = **exit**

Wait! If that's the exit, then we've arrived at the wrong place. To find the entrance, look for dot number 2 on the *giris kat* floor plan in this packet, then click on the dot that is located at that same place on the interactive floor map on your screen.

Stop #2 Let's look around again. There—that's better. Standing outside the building here, you can see three arches with the entry doors beneath them. We will be heading there in a minute, but first let's examine the four tall narrow structures extending out towards you from the wall, the ones that have the entry doors tucked between them. These solid, windowless masses of stone are called **buttresses**, and they represent another addition to Hagia Sophia that came long after its initial construction. Unlike the minarets, however, the buttresses do not mark a change in the religious use of the building. Instead, they were added for purely practical reasons: to help support Hagia Sophia's walls.

The dome of Hagia Sophia was an engineering marvel of its day for its great size and height. However, even with the use of special lightweight construction materials, the dome and its supporting structures were still very heavy. At some point, church officials noticed that the weight of the roof was actually pushing the walls of the building apart. These officials added the buttresses to strengthen the exterior walls and solve the problem of how to keep the walls from bulging outward, and eventually collapsing under the weight of the building's massive domed roof. The buttresses also helped to stabilize the walls during the numerous earthquakes that have hit the building. Even so, portions of the roof have collapsed and been rebuilt several times, including in 869, 986, and 1348. Earthquakes continue to be one of the biggest threats to Hagia Sophia today.

Stop #3 It looks like some people are going inside. Shall we join them? Click on the pointing finger icon by the entry door. Click again on the same icon when it appears among the group of people entering. Or you can find dot number 3 on the floor plan, and click on the dot located at that same place on the interactive floor map on your screen.

Great, we're inside. We appear to be in some kind of entry hallway. Those are sure some big doors. When Hagia Sophia was built, many of these large doors had Christian crosses on them that were removed when the building was converted to a mosque. Look around and record any interesting observations in your Field Journal. Also, try to answer some of the following questions.

What kinds of building materials have been used here inside? What are the floors like? What kind of ceiling is there—is it flat? Curved? Why does that guard keep looking at us like that?

FIELD JOURNAL

PLACE: _____

OBSERVATIONS: _____

Stop #4 Let's continue on through that large double door where the guard is standing. Either turn to face the door, then click on the pointing finger icon, or use your numbered floor plan to find dot number four and click on the corresponding dot on the floor plan on the screen. Wow — another big hallway! And a souvenir shop (sorry, no time to stop right now.) This hallway seems different from the last one. Try to identify some of the differences (go back to the other hallway to check and compare if you need to).

How is this hallway different from the last one? Size? Construction materials? Why might this hallway have a different appearance from the last one?

FIELD JOURNAL

PLACE: _____

OBSERVATIONS: _____

Did you notice as you looked around that the middle door into the **nave**, or main part of the church building, is much larger than the others? Why don't you take a look right now? This green-framed doorway is the Imperial Gate, reserved for use by Justinian and the other emperors who followed him. Its large size gave recognition to the importance of the Byzantine emperor and to his power over the Christian church in Constantinople. For example, even though every emperor had to come to the Hagia Sophia to be crowned, it was the emperor who appointed the **patriarch**, or leader of the church, who would carry out this ceremony. Perhaps to remind the emperor, that while he might rank higher than church



Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/15/yzantinischer_Mosaizist_des_9._Jahrhunderts_001.jpg

Imperial Gate mosaic

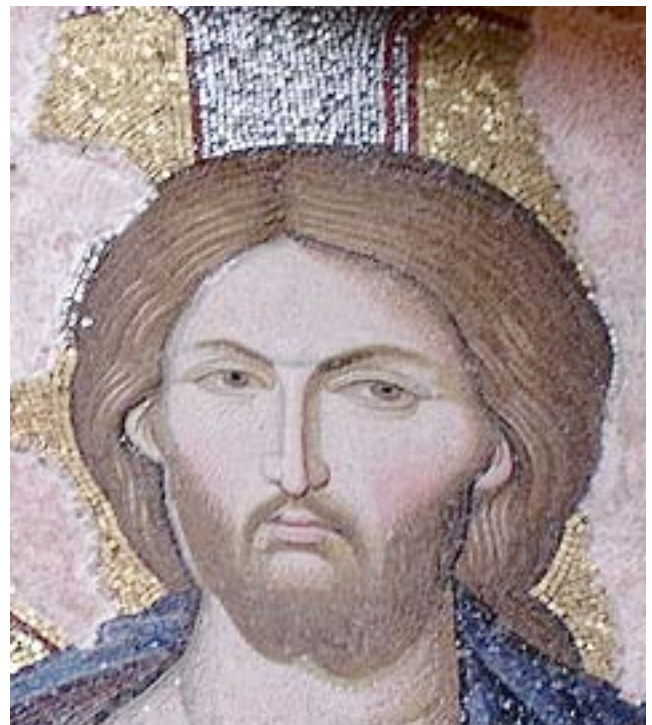
officials, he did not rank higher than God, over this doorway there is a picture showing the Byzantine Emperor Leo VI bowing before Jesus. This picture is generally taken as a reminder to the emperor of the Byzantine belief that God was the ultimate source of the emperor's power on earth.

This picture is also your first look at one of the most important types of Byzantine artwork that can be seen in the Hagia Sophia. This is not a painting, but a different type of image, the name for which is displayed on the sign just to the right of the Imperial Gate.

20. Can you read the Turkish word under the sign on the wall? What does it say? What English word does it resemble?

The Turkish word on the sign is *Mozaik*. This looks much like, and has the same meaning as, the English word “**mosaic**.” A mosaic is a picture or design made with small pieces of colored tile, stone or glass that are attached to a surface. The tiny spaces between the tiles help to give mosaics their unique appearance. The size of the pieces ranges from tiles an inch or so in diameter on down to tiny colored chips no wider than a grain of rice. The smaller the pieces used, the greater the detail in the finished work. Large tiles were used to cover big areas of a wall or ceiling in a uniform shade. Artists used the smallest pieces to produce portraits of religious figures and emperors, works characterized by extraordinary detail and subtle variations of color. The detail of a mosaic showing Jesus from the Chora Church in Istanbul shows an example of such detailed work—notice the texture in the beard, the color in the cheeks, and the shadowing on the forehead and neck.

Mosaics developed as an important form of Byzantine art and were widely used to decorate churches and other important buildings. Some Byzantine mosaic artists even used glass tiles backed with gold leaf, or **tesserae**. The tesserae reflected the light that struck them, giving the finished mosaics a beautiful golden glow (notice the tesserae behind Jesus' head at right). Hagia Sophia contains some of the best remaining mosaics of the Byzantine era.



Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Istanbul_-_S._Salvatore_in_Chora_-_Nartece_-_Cristo_-_Foto_G._Dall'Olio-26-5-2006.jpg

**Detail of a mosaic showing Jesus,
Chora Church, Istanbul**

Aside from its mosaics, the interior of Hagia Sophia is actually decorated in a fairly simple style, especially compared to other important Christian churches constructed in Europe in later centuries. One reason for this was Hagia Sophia's rapid construction. Another is probably that satisfactory lumber for the construction of elaborate carved interior work may not have been as readily available in the drier regions of the eastern Mediterranean around Istanbul as it was in northern Europe. Instead of wood, the Byzantines made heavy use of stone in decorating the building, and especially of marble. Marble is widely available in Turkey. In fact the Sea of Marmara, on which Istanbul lies, and which can be easily seen from the upper level of Hagia Sophia, derives its name from the Turkish word *mermer*, for "marble."

In decorating Hagia Sophia, the Byzantines used marble in a number of distinctive ways—in columns, as floors, and even as decorative panels. To see a couple of these decorative panels, turn to the left from the Mozaik sign until you see the pointing finger icon. Click when you see the icon to walk towards the end of the hall. When you arrive, look up at the purplish-red and white marble panels that are located on the walls just below the ceiling, but above the level of the doors. Notice how the pattern on the left half of each of these panels is a mirror image of the pattern on the right half. The Byzantines created these reflections, which highlight the natural pattern of the stone, by cutting a piece of marble in half and then matching up the pieces so the cut halves face each other. On the next page you can try your hand at the two methods used to decorate the Hagia Sophia.

Questions

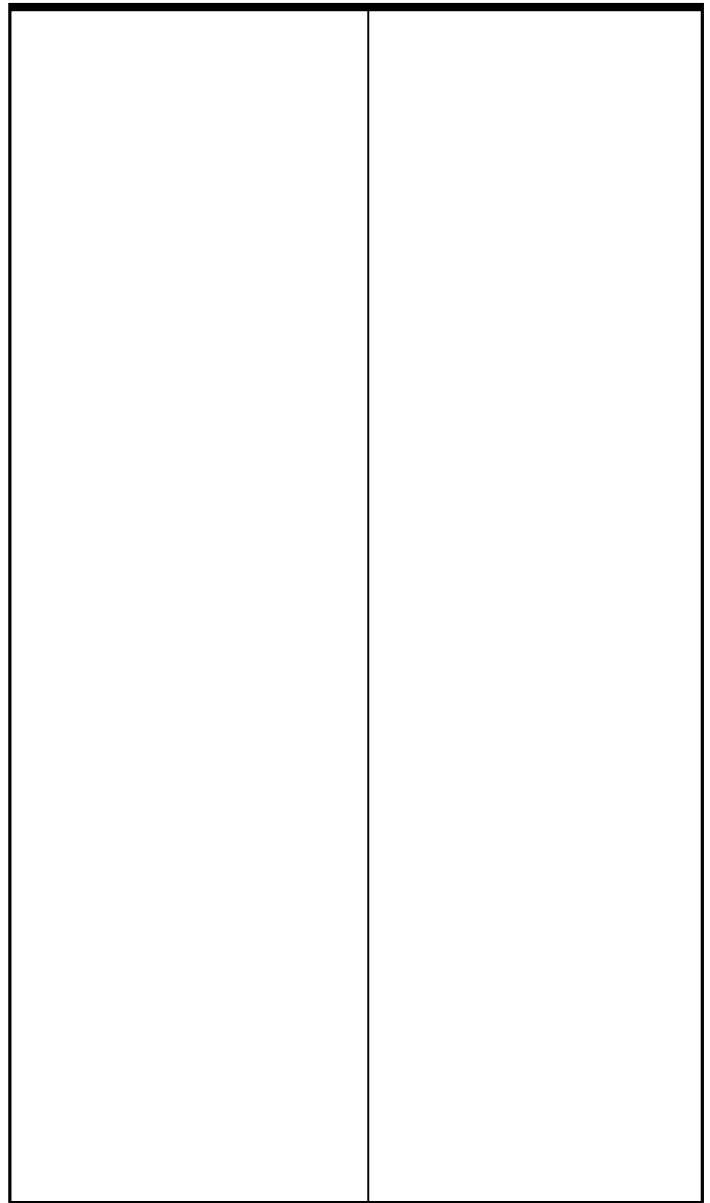
21. If you were creating a mosaic of clouds on the ceiling of your classroom, what size pieces of tile or glass would you use and why?
22. How might your choice be different if you were creating a life-sized mosaic of a favorite pet?
23. Describe the appearance and purpose of the mosaic located over the Imperial Gate of the Hagia Sophia.

Arts of the Hagia Sophia

Mosaic Draw a quick pencil sketch of yourself in the box below. Using a glue stick, spread glue over a small area of your sketch. Choose a piece of colored paper that matches the color of whatever skin, hair or clothing appears in this area. Use the eraser of a pencil to hold a corner of the paper in place in the glued area, then tear the paper off, leaving behind a small colored “tile.” Repeat this process with different colors as needed to create your mosaic.



Marble Panels Choose a colored crayon similar to one of the colors of marble you have seen in Hagia Sophia. On the left half of the box below, draw a design that resembles a marble pattern. When you have finished, switch pages and crayons with a partner. Each person should try to draw a reflection of the design on the left side of the box in the other side of the box. Take a look back at the entry hallway (Stop #4) for help if necessary.



Stop #5 Let's go back to where we were by turning around until we are facing the chandelier in the hallway, then clicking on the pointing finger icon that appears. Continue moving down the hall in this direction by clicking on the pointing finger icon again, then turn left (towards the side of the hall without the souvenir shop), and click on the same icon again to move through the doors. Don't go down the hall towards the brightly lit exit. If you get lost, simply click on dot number 5 on the interactive floor map.

What a big place this is. These ceilings are even higher than those in the last hallway. Look around and find something interesting to sketch in the space below.

FIELD JOURNAL

PLACE: _____

OBJECT SKETCHED: _____

What did you draw? Perhaps a picture of the chandelier that is hanging in the center of this room? It certainly is fancy. Or did you copy one of the designs from the ceiling thirty feet above? Maybe you drew one of the columns that separate this room from the nave. Hagia Sophia has 107 columns in all, mounted in lead brackets at top and bottom to provide flexibility during earthquakes. Some of these columns were taken from the ruins of older Greek or Roman buildings like the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus. Others, in a variety of colors, were brought to Constantinople from **quarries** throughout the empire. For example, the reddish-purple marble, or **porphyry**, that was used for the two columns you can see on either side of the large **urn**, or vase, came all the way from Egypt.

The porphyry used in these columns and elsewhere in Hagia Sophia was especially prized by the Byzantines. Purple had been a symbol of power and prestige since Roman times—purple cloth was produced using a rare shellfish dye, so only the wealthy could

afford it. Under the Byzantines, this dye could only be used to produce cloth for imperial use. The sons and daughters of a ruling emperor were even born in a special building in the palace adjacent to Hagia Sophia, the walls of which were entirely covered with porphyry. These children were given the special title of *porphyrogenitos*, or “born in the purple,” signifying that they were of the royal family and might one day rule the empire.

Like many of the columns, the large urn you can see was also brought to Hagia Sophia from its original home elsewhere. This urn, and its twin across the way, were originally made and used in the pre-Roman kingdom of Pergamon. Carved entirely from a single block of marble, it was brought here by the Ottoman **Sultan**, or ruler, Murad III. The urns were used to hold ceremonial oil or water during the period when the Hagia Sophia was a mosque. Each urn is estimated to hold about 330 gallons.

Stop #6 All right, let’s walk out past the porphyry columns into the nave. Move the cursor just to the right of the columns and click on the pointing finger icon when it appears. Then locate the same icon just to the left of the black scaffolding (construction platform), and click on it again. To take a shortcut, or if you get lost, click on dot number 6.

We’re right out in the center of the nave now. Look around and record some of your observations in your Field Journal. There is a lot to see from here, so you may find yourself writing a little more than usual.

FIELD JOURNAL

PLACE: _____

OBSERVATIONS: _____

You probably recognized some features that you have already seen—the porphyry columns and urn, for example, and the Emperor’s Gate. Across the room is the second urn between two more columns. There are, however, many new things to notice as well.

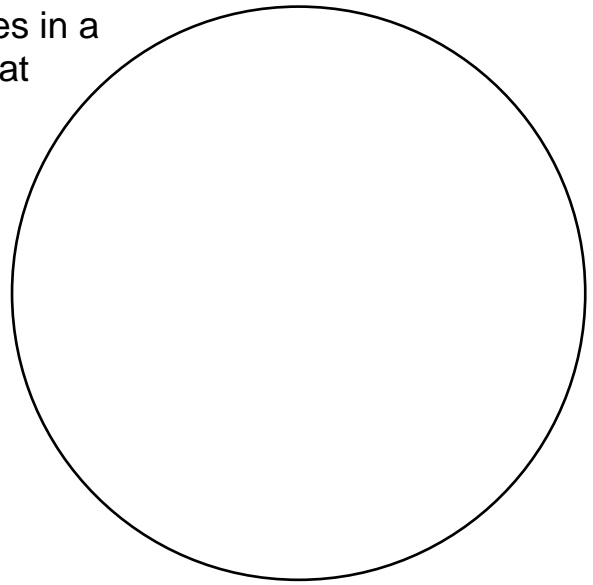
24. First, is it light or dark in here? Where does the light come from? Why would this source of light have been important when the Hagia Sophia was built? (**Hint**—how have lighting methods changed since the building’s construction?)

When Hagia Sophia was first built, its many large chandeliers would have burned candles or oil lamps, providing limited light at best. Even the current electric chandeliers cannot illuminate a space the size of this room. The most important source of interior illumination here is still the sunlight that streams through the building’s large number of windows. If you look up at the ceiling, you can see that there is even a circle of windows just below the main dome—these windows are famous for the way in which they help make the dome appear as if it is floating on top of the building. While all these windows are great for letting in light, they are not very good at carrying weight—the windows weaken the walls, and this helped contribute to the need for the buttresses we saw outside.

As you were looking around, you must have observed the four large green medallions hanging on the walls. Have you ever seen writing like this before? That’s right, what you might have thought were just designs in gold paint are actually names written in the Arabic script used by Muslims for religious purposes. These medallions, along with four more at the other end of the nave that we cannot see, are fine examples of Islamic **calligraphy**, or artistic handwriting. Each of the medallions, painted on leather stretched over a heavy wooden frame, is nearly 25 feet across.

Calligraphy is a very important Islamic art form. Over time, a belief developed among many Muslims that it is wrong to produce **figural art**, art composed of human or animal figures. This belief grew out of a concern that people might accidentally come to worship religious paintings—pictures of God, Muhammad (the founder of Islam), or other living creatures—as **idols**, or objects of worship, rather than focusing on and praying to God alone. Instead of producing such figural works, many Muslim artists focused on calligraphy as a way to express their religious beliefs. Islamic calligraphy may portray the names of religious leaders, verses from the Qu’ran, which is the holy book of Islam, or other religious statements. Calligraphy comes in a number of forms and styles, many of them very elaborate. Some artists even produce calligraphic works in the shape of birds or other animals.

25. If you were going to display people's names in a famous building like the Hagia Sophia, what kind of people would you choose? Whom do you think the Muslims who made these medallions chose? Write your answers below. Then copy one of the medallions in the circle at right.



Medallion with Islamic calligraphy
showing the name of _____

Just as you probably did, the Ottoman Muslims chose the names of some famous and respected individuals from their past to put on the medallions. From right to left, the first medallion shows the name of Ali, the nephew and son-in-law of Muhammad who was an early **caliph**, or leader of the Muslim community after Muhammad's death. Next come the names of Hussein and Hassan, Muhammad's sons. The fourth medallion shows the name of Osman, another early caliph. Write the correct name under your medallion drawing.

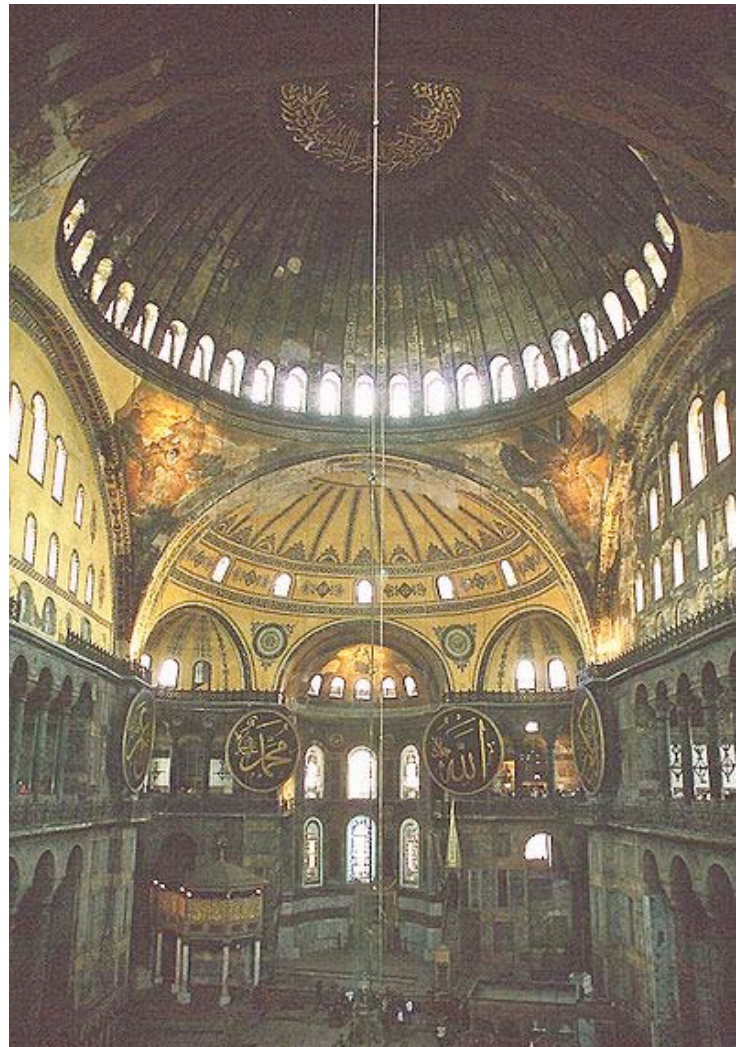
26. How would you describe the overall condition of the Hagia Sophia's interior? Good as new? Falling to pieces? Somewhere in between? What evidence do you see to support your answer?

The very fact that the Hagia Sophia remains standing after fourteen and a half centuries of war, fires and earthquakes is pretty impressive. Is any building in your neighborhood even close to being this old? There is no denying, however, that the Hagia Sophia is showing its age. If you haven't done so yet, look straight up. Notice how the paint has peeled from parts of the domes. Cracks and leaks have left water stains on other sections

of the ceiling and walls. Even the sunshine that illuminates the interior so beautifully creates problems by causing painted surfaces to discolor and fade.

From this spot, you must have noticed the tower of construction scaffolding reaching up to the ceiling beneath the main dome. This fifteen-story tall tower requires six months to take down and set back up. Workers use the tower as a platform from which to perform much-needed repairs on the dome and the rest of the building's ceiling. Progress, however, has been slow—the tower has been up since 1995 and there is no end to the work in sight. For a pre-scaffolding view, see the picture at right.

One reason why progress is slow is the tremendous expense of working on such an important historical structure—cracks, leaks and damaged areas must be examined and repaired, new supports added and windows replaced, then everything must be refinished, put back in place or repainted, and cleaned. The Turkish government currently lacks the money to fund the full project itself, and while donations have paid for some work, no one yet knows what the total cost of restoration will be.



Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ayasofya-Innenansicht.jpg>

Nave of the Hagia Sophia

Aside from financial issues, another factor that has slowed restoration is the question of what exactly to restore and what to leave alone. Because of its long history as both a church and a mosque, the walls and ceilings of the Hagia Sophia hold layer upon layer of Christian and Islamic works of art. Restoring one layer of artwork in some cases would require the destruction of another later piece of work that covers the first. Even though Hagia Sophia is now a museum operated by the **secular**, or non-religious, government of Turkey, many Christians and Muslims still have strong religious views about the building. The government must keep the feelings of both sides in mind as it makes decisions about the restoration process.

One such decision is the question of what to do with the interior of the main dome. Like other churches of its time, the dome of Hagia Sophia during the Byzantine era was decorated with a large mosaic image of Christ. From this central vantage point, the image looked down for centuries upon church ceremonies, coronations and other events in the Hagia Sophia. At some point during the later Ottoman era, however, when the building had been converted to a mosque, this mosaic disappeared. It may have been destroyed by an earthquake, removed, or just covered up—nobody seems to know for sure.

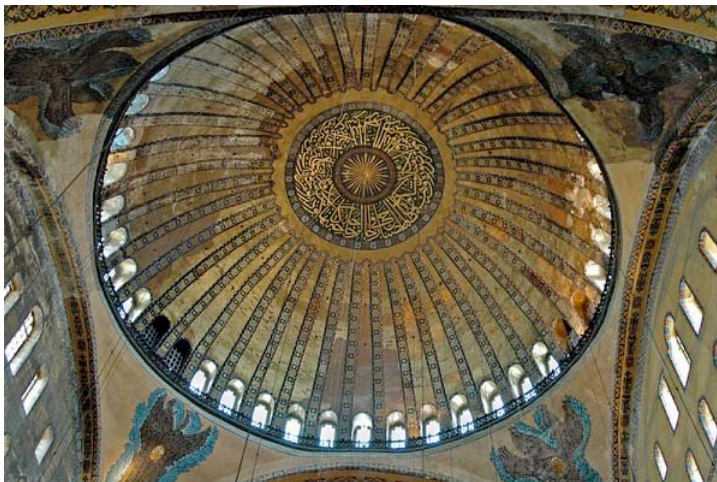


Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chora_Christ_south_coupole.jpg

Mosaic of Christ, north dome of Chora Church, Istanbul

In place of the mosaic, the center of the main dome today holds a large piece of Islamic calligraphy, a circular work that quotes verses from the Qu'ran and was painted following nineteenth century repairs to the dome.

The painted calligraphy would have to be destroyed in order to reveal and restore the earlier Christian mosaic underneath, or even to determine if it still exists.



Source: http://www.archesweb.com/images/10/Hagia_Sophia_photo.jpg

Interior, main dome of Hagia Sophia

opposed by some Muslims, who believe that figural artwork portraying Mary, Jesus, and various other prophets and rulers, goes against Islamic teachings. Despite pressure from both Muslims and Christians, for the present those working on the Hagia Sophia's restoration seem to be trying to strike a balance between the two sides.

Some people are opposed to this plan. This includes those Muslims who would like to see the Hagia Sophia returned to active use as a mosque. Other groups, including some Christians who would like to see the building turned back into a church, support efforts to restore the dome and other Byzantine mosaics. Indeed, some Christian groups would like to see all of the changes made to the building when it became a mosque reversed, including removal of the four minarets. You should be able to understand why restoring the former church's mosaics is

Questions

27. What is calligraphy, and why did it become an important Islamic art form?

28. Why are the names of Ali, Hussein, Hassan and Usman displayed on the large medallions in the Hagia Sophia?

29. Which of the two main challenges to the restoration of the Hagia Sophia do you think is the most significant: 1) the large amount of work that needs to be done on the building and its cost, or 2) decisions about which Islamic and Christian works of art and other elements of the building should be kept, restored or removed. Support your answer with evidence from your tour.

Stop #7 It is hard to see with the scaffolding in the way, but a lot of people seem to be passing by heading down to the far end of the nave. Let's join them by finding and clicking on dot number 7 on the interactive floor map. When you arrive, look around and record your observations in your Field Journal.

FIELD JOURNAL

PLACE: _____

OBSERVATIONS: _____

Wow--looking back past the scaffolding to where we started really gives you an idea of how big this place is! This end of the building looks a lot different than where we came from, too. First, there's that big recessed area with the curved wall and stained glass windows where all the people are standing. That's the **apse**, the east-facing end area of the Hagia Sophia where most religious ceremonies would have been performed when it was a church. We'll go over and see what everyone is looking at in a minute.

First, though, you probably discovered the other four calligraphic medallions that go with those we saw earlier. Over near the scaffolding is the name of Abu Bakr, the first caliph. Do you remember from earlier what a caliph is? Write the definition below:

caliph - _____

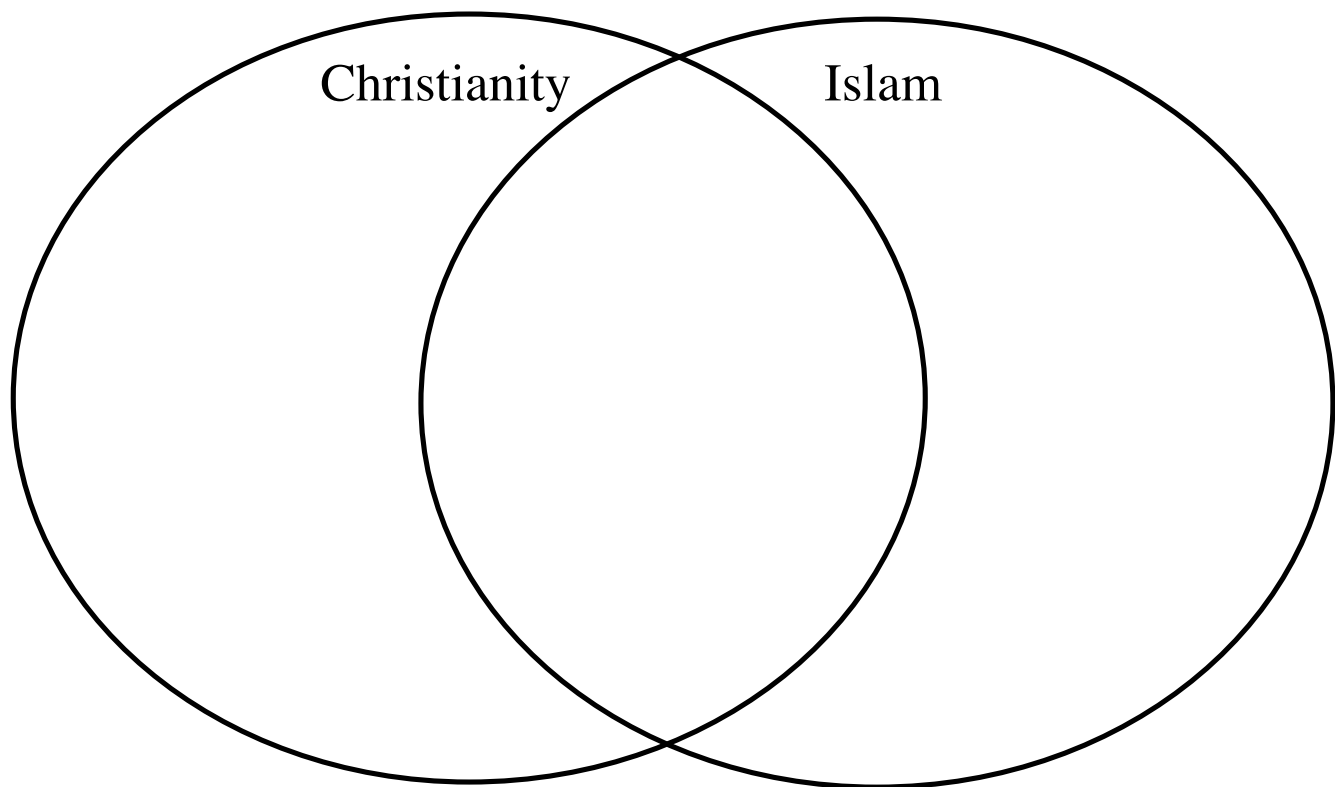
To the left of Abu Bakr is the medallion with the name of Allah, or "God" in Arabic. Although the name is different than in English, when Muslims speak of Allah, they actually mean the same **deity**, or divine being, that Christians do. Because of this,

Christians and Muslims actually share many religious beliefs. For example, Muslims, like Christians, believe that Mariamu (the Arabic name for Mary) was the mother of Issa (Arabic for Jesus), and that both were holy people. Thus after the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II* conquered Constantinople in 1453, when he ordered that Hagia Sophia be converted to a mosque and that most of the building's mosaics containing figural art be removed or plastered over, he preserved the the mosaics portraying Jesus and Mary, leaving them untouched. In later centuries, these figures, too, were covered over.

Returning to the medallions, just to the left of the apse is the name of Muhammad, and then that of Umar, another early caliph. You will recall from earlier on the tour that Muhammad was the founder of Islam. Muslims believe that Muhammad was the last in a long series of **prophets**, or people who were believed to carry the message of God (Allah). Christians believe in these same prophets, including Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and Joseph. One important difference between Islam and Christianity, however, is that while Christians believe that Jesus was the son of God, Muslims believe that he was completely a human being, though a very special one—the last prophet sent by Allah before Muhammad.

Record the information you have learned about Christianity and Islam in the Venn diagram below.

Christianity and Islam—similarities and differences



* Also known as Mehment Fatih, or Mehmet the Conqueror

Stop #8 We're going to walk over toward the apse now by clicking on the pointing finger icon that appears in that direction. Lost? Click on dot number 8 on the floor map.

Here we are in front of the apse. Aside from the minarets outside, this is the part of Hagia Sophia that changed the most when the building became a mosque. The three main additions we can see in this area are the *minbar*, or raised pulpit, just to the right of the apse, the *mihrab*, or prayer niche, against the outer wall below the stained glass windows, and the sultan's loge to the left of apse. As with the many mosaics that were covered up, however, what disappeared from the Hagia Sophia during the transition from church to mosque was just as important as what was added.

If you had been able to stand in this same exact spot in the centuries before 1453, what you would have seen in front of you then would have been completely different from what you see in front of you now. The open and almost empty raised area behind the rope barrier in front of you would have been a busy center of religious activity. Hagia Sophia's altar was located here, making it the focal point of the church. As if to emphasize the point, stretching across the nave in front of you, and rising up nearly fifty feet to completely block the altar from view would have been a massive silver **iconostasis**. An iconostasis is a large screen or partition running across the front of a church and separating the sanctuary behind the screen where the priests perform their duties from the nave in front where worshippers gather during religious ceremonies.

In early churches, the iconostasis was just a low railing on which to display the church's **icons**, or images, of religious figures. Over time, and perhaps to save the work of putting up and taking down individual icons on a daily basis, the iconostasis grew into a permanent wall full of elaborate frames for such images. There is no visual record of Hagia Sophia's iconostasis. However, as the religious center of the Byzantine empire, and its largest and most important church, the iconostasis of Hagia Sophia must have been impressive indeed. Look at the apse and try to imagine what it might have been like. Picture three or even four rows of large, finely made gold and silver frames, each holding an image of Jesus, Mary, Gabriel, or one of the Christian saints. Among these would have been many of the empire's oldest, finest, and most important icons. Some might be removed from the iconostasis from time to time for a short period—to be paraded around Constantinople to help raise the



Iconostasis of the Upinski Orthodox Cathedral

fighting spirits of the people when the city was under attack, for example, or to accompany the emperor and the imperial army off to war. Three doors at the base of the screen, one in the center and one on each side, would have allowed Hagia Sophia's priests to reach the altar behind the screen, which then shielded them from public view as they performed the most sacred of their duties.

Being full of figural images as it was, the iconostasis could not have lasted long once Mehmet's armies took over Constantinople in 1453. Muslims, however, were not the first people to remove the icons from Hagia Sophia. Nor were they the only religious group concerned that such images might lead the religious faithful astray by taking their focus

away from God. Twice in its history, during the eighth and ninth centuries, the Byzantine empire, too, went through periods of **iconoclasm**, a word which comes from the Greek for "image-breaking." During these periods, Byzantine rulers ordered the removal and even the destruction of icons and other religious images from churches throughout the empire, including Hagia Sophia.



Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/26/Perpetual_help_original_icon.jpg

Our Mother of Perpetual Help, a 15th Century Marian Byzantine

Byzantine iconoclasm had both political and religious roots. As they tried to make sense of Islam's rapid expansion and their own losses at Muslim hands, some Byzantines may have turned to Islam's own views in search of an explanation. The Byzantines might have wondered whether Muslim beliefs about figural art were correct. If the use of icons and like images did indeed lead the faithful away from God, that could explain why the forces of Islam, who rejected such images, appeared to have Allah's favor, while the Byzantines who used such icons did not.

These worries added strength to an already existing debate about the use of icons between opposing groups within the Christian church itself. This debate centered on whether or not the true nature of Jesus could be properly portrayed in a religious painting. While the iconoclast controversy was eventually settled in favor of the use of icons, the issue reappeared in the eleventh century. The debate over icons was a contributing factor to the Great Schism of 1054, in which the Christian church split forever into two branches, the western Roman Catholic church based in Rome and the eastern Orthodox church of the Byzantines based in Constantinople. The Roman Catholic church opposed using icons.

Questions

30. What is an icon?
31. What is an iconostasis?
32. How were the views of Byzantine iconoclasts similar to those of Muslims?
How were their views different, if at all?
33. Why do you think members of these two different religions shared similar views about icons?
34. Use books and/or online sources to complete the chart below.

Sources of the Great Schism—Differences between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches

Roman Catholic Church		Eastern Orthodox Church
	Church leadership	
	Use of icons	
	Priests and marriage	
	Bread used in Eucharist	
	Mary's birth and death	
	The "filioque" clause	

In 1204, just fifty years after the Great Schism, Constantinople was conquered for the first of the two times in its history, bringing great changes to Hagia Sophia and the rest of the empire. The attackers at this time, however, were not Muslims as Mehmet's Ottomans would be, but fellow Christians—Roman Catholic crusaders from western Europe. These crusaders, like those who had passed through Byzantine territory before them, had sworn a holy vow to fight the Muslims for control of the Christian Holy Land—the city of Jerusalem and surrounding areas where Jesus had lived and where early Christianity had developed. The Holy Land had been under Byzantine control for centuries before being lost to the Muslims. Many of Hagia Sophia's most famous Christian **relics**, or objects of religious significance, had been brought to Constantinople from the Holy Land by Helena, the mother of Constantine. These relics were believed to include pieces of the True Cross, along with bits of clothing, personal items, and even body parts of early Christian saints.

The armies of the fourth crusade were diverted from their original goal by a mixture of political, economic and religious factors. These included a struggle between rivals for the Byzantine throne, disputes over trade with the powerful city of Venice, and religious hostility left over from the Great Schism. Together, these factors lead the crusaders to sail to Constantinople and attack the Byzantines, their fellow Christians, rather than continuing on to the Holy Land to fulfill their crusading vows.

At the time it fell, Constantinople was the largest and wealthiest city in the Western world. The Byzantines had used their wealth over time to amass a collection of religious and artistic treasures unlike any that the crusaders had ever seen. Following their victory, the crusader forces **sacked**, or looted, the city. Partly to pay for the costs of the crusade, and partly from greed, the victors plundered public buildings and the homes of private citizens alike. Even churches were not spared—the great silver iconostasis of Hagia Sophia was thrown down and destroyed, and the church's other icons and ceremonial vessels stolen. In just three days, the crusaders stole or destroyed much of what it had taken the Byzantines centuries to accumulate.



Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gustave_dore_crusades_entry_of_the_crusaders_into_constantinople.jpg

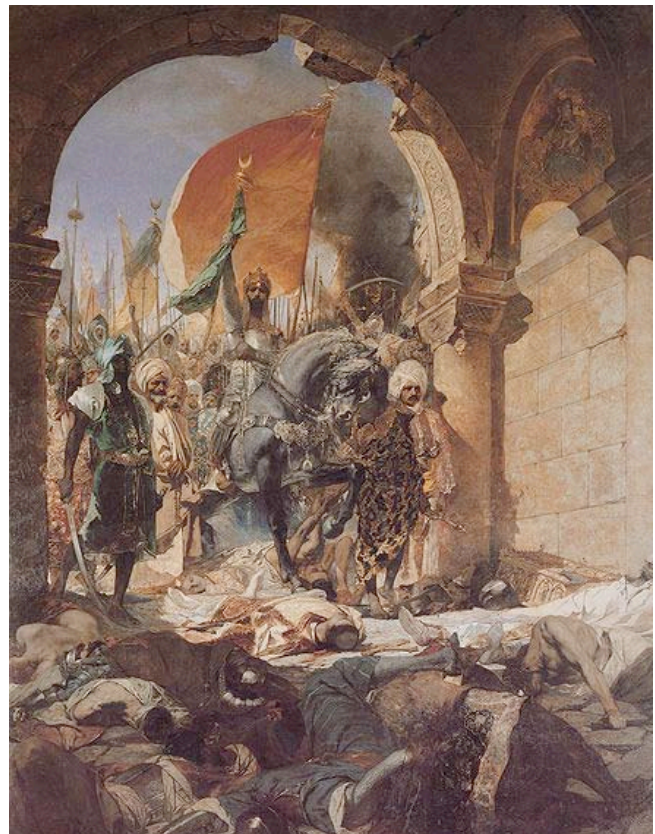
The entry of the Crusaders into Constantinople—Gustave Dore

A small number of these Byzantine artworks and holy relics survive today in churches in western Europe, received as donations from returning crusaders. Most of the treasures, however, were simply smashed, the wooden icons themselves burned and their frames melted down for the gold and silver they contained. Even some of Hagia Sophia's gold-backed mosaic tiles may have been torn from the walls and carried away. The destruction of these many great works reflecting the long and diverse history of the Byzantine Empire marks the Sack of Constantinople as one of the great cultural disasters in history.

During the Sack of Constantinople, Hagia Sophia was the scene of much **desecration**, or religiously disrespectful behavior, by the crusaders. The altar was broken into pieces, **reliquaries**, containers for religious relics, were emptied and used as drinking cups, and mules and saddle horses were ridden through the building. One of the crusaders' female followers is even reported to have danced and sang obscene songs upon the seat of the patriarch. Some order returned once the crusaders established their Latin Kingdom of Constantinople, at which point Hagia Sophia was put back into religious use, but this time as the site for the Latin Kingdom's Roman Catholic religious rites. The building's iconostasis and other Orthodox features were restored fifty-seven years later when the Byzantines recaptured Constantinople.

Ironically, when Constantinople was conquered for the second time, by the Ottomans two centuries later, Hagia Sophia seems to have received much better treatment from Mehmet and his followers than it had from the earlier Christian crusaders. Following the final battle to gain entrance to the city, Mehmet made his way to Hagia Sophia. Entering to make one of his five daily prayers as a Muslim, he ordered that the building be converted to a mosque. The rebuilt iconostasis was again removed, modifications made to the interior to fulfill the requirements for a mosque, and the first minaret added outside.

We'll look at a couple of these interior modifications after one more note about Hagia Sophia and the Ottoman conquest. A story is told that when the Ottomans first entered Hagia Sophia, a priest, some say the patriarch, was leading a final mass.



Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Benjamin-Constant-The_Entry_of_Mahomet_II_into_Constantinople-1876.jpg

The entry of Mahomet II into Constantinople—Benjamin Constant

As the conquerors approached, the priest opened a door in the apse of the church and disappeared, taking the holy bread and water from the altar with him so that it could not be desecrated by the Muslims. Some people claim that the priest will return to Hagia Sophia to finish his mass when a cross is once again put back on top of the building.

35. Compare Gustave Dore's engraving "The Entry of the Crusaders into Constantinople" with Benjamin Constant's painting "The entry of Mahomet II into Constantinople." Do you think these are realistic portrayals of these events? How are the images similar? How are they different?
36. How was the way that Christian crusaders treated Hagia Sophia when they conquered Constantinople in 1204 different from the way that the Muslim Ottomans treated the building when they conquered the city? Which do you think is the better way to treat a house of worship from a religion different than your own? Support your answer with evidence from the tour.
37. If the priest who is said to have disappeared were to come back to Hagia Sophia today, what would still be most familiar to him? What would seem the most different to him?

All right, that's enough reading (or listening) for a while. Let's quickly look at a couple of other changes that came about during Hagia Sophia's conversion to a mosque. Turn and look at the area against the curved wall below the stained glass windows in the apse. Record your observations in your Field Journal.

FIELD JOURNAL

PLACE: _____

OBSERVATIONS: _____

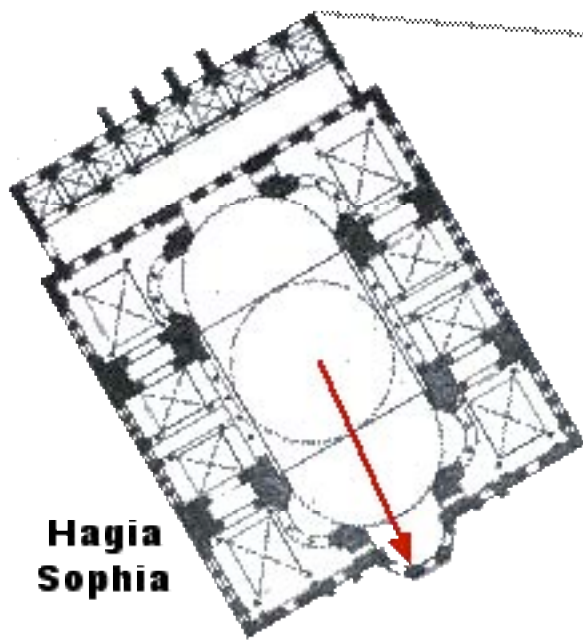
It certainly seems like this must be something important. It is pretty fancy, with those columns on the sides and that Arabic calligraphy across the top. There's something a little odd here, though. Did you notice that it doesn't line up evenly with the windows above it?

38. Why do you think this is? Do you think this fact is important?

When Mehmet ordered Hagia Sophia converted into a mosque after conquering Constantinople, the first thing to be done after the apse was cleared of its iconostasis and altar was to construct a **mihrab**, or prayer niche. The mihrab indicates the direction of the Qa'aba in Mecca, which Muslims must face as they pray. This direction is known as the **qibla**.

When Hagia Sophia was built, the apse of the church was **oriented**, or turned, to face towards Jerusalem, as was common for churches of that time. From where we are standing right now, the direction towards Jerusalem is directly through the center of the apse. From Istanbul, which you will remember is the new name given to Constantinople by the

Qibla for Hagia Sophia



Ottomans, the direction towards Mecca is just to the right of the direction towards Jerusalem, so qibla for Hagia Sophia is just to the right of the center of the apse. As you can tell from the windows behind it, this is precisely where the mihrab was built. Actually the mihrab you see is not the one that was built following the Ottoman conquest, but a replacement constructed in the nineteenth century. Though the design may be different from the original, however, the location is exactly the same. The large candlesticks on either side of the mihrab were brought back to Istanbul by the Sultan Suleiman I following the Ottomans' conquest of Hungary in the 1500s.

Turning to the right now, we see that we are standing right next to Hagia Sophia's **minbar**. The minbar is a raised pulpit used by the **imam**, a mosque official, to give his sermon during Friday prayers. Muslims pray five times each day, but Friday prayers are more public. The minbar of a mosque is always located just to the right of the mihrab.

On the opposite side of the apse, standing on four marble pillars is the sultan's **loge**, or seating box. This loge, with its elaborate screens to shield the sultan from view, was another nineteenth century addition to the mosque, and it also replaced an earlier version that had been in a different location. The sultan's loge is not a feature of all mosques as

the mihrab and minbar are. Hagia Sophia contains a loge because, being located in Istanbul, which the Ottomans made the capital of their empire as the Byzantines had made Constantinople the capital of theirs, the sultan often attended prayers in the mosque. Hagia Sophia lay just outside the walls of the sultan's Topkapi Palace, a situation much like it had occupied adjacent to the Byzantines' since-destroyed Bucoleon Palace.

Today, the Sultanahmet Mosque sits where the Byzantines' palace once did. By the time of the Ottoman conquest, the palace was already much in ruins. When the Ottomans decided to clear the palace grounds and build a new mosque in its place, the architects must have looked just a little way to the north where Hagia Sophia sat for their inspiration.



Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f2/Sultanahmet_Camii_2006.JPG

Sultanahmet (Blue) Mosque, Istanbul

Sultanahmet (also known as the Blue Mosque for the color of its interior tile work), plainly shows the influence of its neighbor. The domes and half-domes of Sultanahmet's roof now face directly back at the domes of Hagia Sophia on which they were modeled. Indeed, this multi-domed roof style became a chief identifying characteristic of the classic Ottoman style of mosque, of which Sultanahmet is an important example.



Source: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0b/Sainte-Sophie-Theotokos.jpg>

Virgin Mother and Child mosaic, Hagia Sophia

For the rest of the tour, we will not have much to say about Hagia Sophia as a mosque. We will look mainly at features of the building that come from its time as a church. To begin, look all the way up at the top of the apse. With the mihrab, the minbar and so many other things to see down around us at the floor level, some of you probably didn't notice this image way up high. This image of a seated Mary holding Jesus in her lap is the oldest mosaic in Hagia Sophia. It dates to the ninth century and was the first mosaic reconstructed in the church after the end of iconoclasm. No mosaics from the first three hundred years' of the building's history have survived.

Stop #9 We're going to go upstairs now to look at some more mosaics, but with two short stops along the way. First, we're going to walk over toward where the second of those giant urns is located by clicking on dot number 9 on the floor plan map. When you get there, take a quick look around.

Okay, I'm sure that as soon as you arrived, you noticed the line of people near the



Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special%3Asearch&search=hagia+sophia+column&go=Go>

Weeping Column

column with the metal covering around its base and the hole in the metal. This column is known as the Miracle Column or Weeping Column. Some people believe the column produces water with healing powers. They believe that when you are ill, if you stick your finger into the hole in the column and it comes out wet, you will be cured. Others believe that if you can put your thumb into the hole and turn your hand in a full 360 degree circle without removing your thumb, you will be granted a wish. Good luck if you try. I don't know about you, but I'm going to wish to come back to Hagia Sophia again some day.

One explanation for this column's supposed miraculous abilities goes back to the time of the building's construction. A story tells that workers at the site asked a young boy to watch over their tools while they took a break. While he was waiting for the workers to return, an angel appeared to the boy and asked him to go get the workers. The angel promised to take over the boy's job of watching over the tools until his return. The workers were angry, however, when the boy came to them, and because he had failed to fulfill his duties, the workers would not allow him back into the building. Because of this, the angel had to stay in the building, eventually taking up residence in the Miracle Column. The metal sheathing was put in place to protect the column from the many visitors who came hoping to be healed or to have their wishes granted.

Stop #10 Let's walk past the people waiting in front of the column, and out through the double doors into the entry hall by clicking on the pointing finger icon between the doors. You may remember this spot from when we looked at the marble decorations earlier. Turn right and follow the pointing finger icon through the small door at the end of the hall with the sign next to it. Don't walk back toward the center of the hall.

After all the marble out in the nave, this corridor is pretty plain looking. Don't worry, though, we're only staying long enough to pass through that small door on the right at the end of the hall. You can then click where the pointing finger icon appears on the ramp to

begin climbing to the *ust kat*. Be sure that you click on the ramp leading up and not on the one that leads down. If you get lost anywhere along the way to this next stop, you can catch up with us by clicking on the *Ust Kat* tab on the interactive floor map to take you to the second level, then clicking on dot number 10.

When you arrive, use your Field Journal to record anything you can see from this spot that you've seen before, and anything that is new to you.

FIELD JOURNAL

PLACE: _____

THINGS I'VE SEEN BEFORE	THINGS THAT ARE NEW TO ME

We can see more of those 107 columns from here, some of green marble and some of white. Looking out between the columns we can see Usman's medallion on the far side of the nave. Nearer to us, you may not have recognized it, but you can see a little of the wood frame on the back of Ali's medallion—look through the last arch between the columns on the left. The medallions didn't look so big from down below, but up close like this, you can really appreciate their size.

This upper level seems just as big and spacious as the first. Looking down the corridor, however, there is something a little strange about the arches. You can see a little better in the photograph at right how these arches aren't evenly curved. If you look hard, you can even tell that some of the walls supporting them are a bit slanted. This is all from the weight of the roof pushing the walls outward, and it helps us understand the need for the buttresses.



Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4b/Uppergallery_Hagia_Sophia_2007_003.jpg

Upper level corridor of Hagia Sophia

Stop #11 Turning to the right of the columns overlooking the nave, click on the pointing finger icon when it appears. Look down the hall with all the windows and click again on the icon again. You have now arrived at dot number 11 on the interactive floor map.

What a view out over the railing down the length of the nave! Can you see the red platforms on top of the scaffolding where the workers stand to work on the dome? Around the nave at the same level where we are standing, you can spot several of the calligraphy medallions. You can even see the sultan's loge lower down at the far end of the nave.

Closer at hand, the group of people near us seems to be looking at something between the two marble columns to our right. We can see a part of what they are interested in from here—the large marble circle on the floor. Instead of getting in their way, however, we'll look at a photograph from a better angle. The round green marble stone on the floor marks the location of the Loge of the Empress. This is the point from which the empress and the ladies of the Byzantine court would have watched the religious ceremonies and other events taking place on the floor of the church. The stone circle itself marks the spot where the empress' throne would have stood, between the two columns and directly above the Imperial Gate. From this vantage point, the empress would have had an excellent view of everything that happened below.



Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/44/Empress_loge_Hagia_Sophia_2007_006.jpg

Loge of the Empress

It is worth noting that women, even the empress, would generally have been observers, rather than participants in the ceremonies held in Hagia Sophia. Byzantine women did enjoy limited legal rights, and some upper class women even received a scholarly education. In general, however, the status of women was inferior to that of men.

Following the conversion of Hagia Sophia to a mosque, the upper level became the place where Muslim women, too, went during daily prayers and other ceremonies. Muslims generally adhere to a practice of separating men and women within the mosque. This separation, it is believed, makes it easier for both men and women to behave in a properly modest fashion, and to focus their attention on Allah and on their religious duties, rather than on each other.

From her loge, the empress would have been able to observe not just religious ceremonies, but other important events taking place in Hagia Sophia as well. The most important of these other events would have been the coronation of a new emperor. While a number of Byzantine emperors ruled successfully for long periods of time, during other periods in the empire's history empires followed each other one after another in rapid succession. Every emperor, however, was crowned in Hagia Sophia, usually receiving his crown from the hands of the Orthodox patriarch.

The emperor's **coronation**, or crowning, took place in the **omphalion**, a series of stone circles set into the floor of the nave of Hagia Sophia. The emperor stood in the large circle in the center, his heir and other members of his household in the other circles. The more important the person was, the larger his circle. You missed the omphalion while walking around the floor of the nave earlier because it is currently covered by the scaffolding, so the picture at right will have to do for now to let you see what it looks like.



Source: http://picasaweb.google.com/naseem.ukani/TurkeyGreece2009?feat=comment_notification#5391718812924041810 Used by permission.

The omphalion of Hagia Sophia

Many walls and ceilings of the upper corridors where we now are would originally have been filled with mosaics, which the Muslim Ottomans covered with plaster when Hagia Sophia became a mosque. This did not happen all at once, but gradually most of these works of art were hidden from view. Think about how this treatment of the building's mosaics compares with their treatment at other times in its history. Complete the table below and answer the question that follows.

Treatment of Hagia Sophia's mosaics

During the periods of iconoclasm	During the Sack of Constantinople	Under Ottoman rule

39. Which group treated Hagia Sophia's mosaics the best—the Christian **iconoclasts**, that is supporters of iconoclasm, the Roman Catholic crusaders, or the Muslim Ottomans? Which group treated the mosaics the worst? Use evidence from the tour to support both your answers.

At our next stop, we are going to see one of Hagia Sophia's best-known mosaics. What do you think it might show? Actually, since you know that mosaics are figural works of art, the question should be "whom do you think it might show?" It might help if we think about the figures whose names the Ottomans put on their great works of calligraphic art in Hagia Sophia. Do you think the Byzantines would have made similar choices about whom to portray on their most important works of religious art in the building?

40. In the space below, list some people whom the Byzantines might have shown on their mosaics.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

As you thought about what names to include on your list, I wonder if you thought at all about the mosaics you have already seen during the tour. For example, think about the mosaic over the Emperor's Gate, the one that shows one of the Byzantine emperors kneeling before Jesus to receive his blessing. That mosaic illustrates a significant difference between the Ottomans' calligraphic works and the Byzantines' mosaics. While all the names on the great calligraphic medallions are those of Muslim religious figures, the mosaic over the Emperor's Gate shows the emperor as well as Jesus, a political figure as well as a religious one. Several of the remaining mosaics we see will mix religious and non-religious figures in this way.

Stop #12 We're going to hurry over to one of the side corridors on this level by clicking on dot number 12 on the interactive floor map. When you arrive, find the sign that says "Mozaik" and copy the English title and information about the mosaic from the sign into the box on this page. The sign may be a little bit easier to read if you can maneuver it into one of the lower corners of the window on your computer screen.

This mosaic is entitled "Deesis." It shows Jesus in the middle with Mary on his right and John the Baptist on his left. Jesus may be listening to Mary and John pleading for mercy for sinners on Judgment Day. This was one of the first works commissioned towards restoring Hagia Sophia's mosaics after the Byzantines had recaptured Constantinople from the

Roman Catholics of the Latin Kingdom. You can see a small picture of what the original art work might have looked like at that time on the wall just below and to the right of the actual mosaic. Despite the damage it has suffered since that time, the Deesis is widely considered the finest mosaic in Hagia Sophia based on the artist's detailed portrayals of the three figures. The highly realistic work evident here marked the evolution of a new style in Byzantine mosaics. By the way, please pay attention to the sign and if you are taking photographs, be sure to turn off your flash. This is one step that the museum is taking to try and protect this and the other mosaics in the building while they are under restoration.

MOZAIK



Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Istanbul.Hagia_Sophia068.jpg

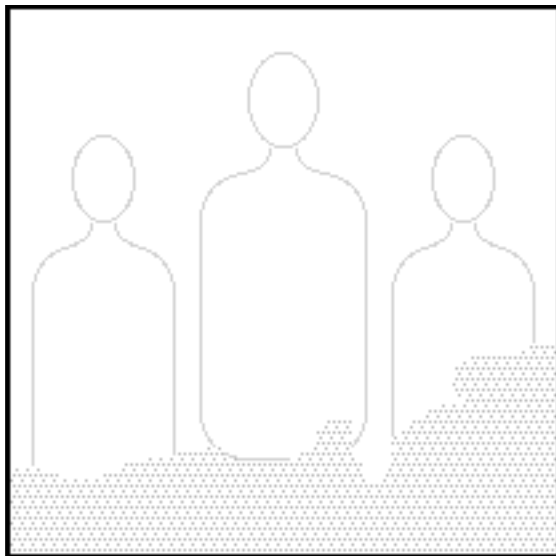
Henry Dandolo Memorial

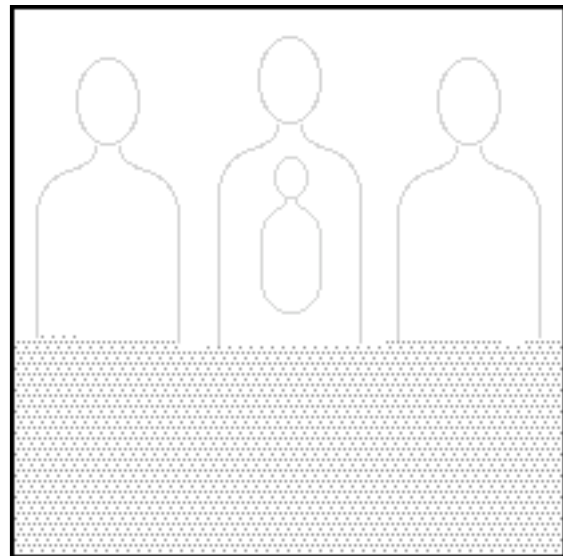
Turn around now and look at the wall at the other end of the room exactly opposite the one where the Deesis is displayed. Down past all the arches and partly hidden by the columns you can just barely see a couple of people, one in black pants, standing and looking at a small memorial by the base of the wall. Don't worry if you can't see the memorial from here—you can take a look at the photograph at left, which shows what they are looking at.

This is a memorial to Henry Dandolo, the doge, or ruler, of Venice, and one of the main leaders of the fourth crusade that sacked Constantinople. Dandolo died during the crusade, but the memorial dates from the nineteenth century, and most people no longer believe that he is actually buried here. Doesn't it seem a little odd, however, to find a memorial within Hagia Sophia to a leader whose followers desecrated the building and helped destroy its artwork?

Stop #13 Looking just to the left of the Dandolo memorial, locate and click on the pointing finger icon to move to our last stop on this level. Or click on dot number 13 on the interactive floor map.

This spot is next to the apse, and just above where the minbar is located on the ground level. The attractions here are clearly the two mosaics on either side of the window. Try sketching some of the details from one or both of these mosaics on the templates below. Underneath each template, use the spaces provided to write the names of the figures you see in each mosaic. Where you are not sure, use what you have learned about mosaics on the tour to **infer**, or make an educated guess about, who these people might be. The writing on the two mosaics may help you to figure this out, but only if you can read Greek, the language used by the Byzantines and the Orthodox church.





The mosaic on the left shows Jesus with the Byzantine Emperor Constantine IV Monomachus and the Empress Zoe. Jesus holds a Bible in his left hand and is giving his blessing with his right. The emperor holds a purse full of money, symbolizing the donations he has made to the church. Zoe holds a scroll, which symbolizes her donations. Some people suggest that Zoe's and Constantine's faces were simply added to an already existing mosaic, replacing those of an earlier emperor and empress. If you look carefully, you may notice the slight gaps where the new faces were put in. Constantine was Zoe's third husband; when they married she was 56 and he was 16. This has lead others to suggest that this mosaic was completed during the reign of Zoe's first husband, but that

each time she remarried, workers replaced the face of the previous emperor with the face of the new one.



Source: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/>

**Close-up of Jesus
from the Empress
Zoe mosaic**

Looking to the right of the window, you see a mosaic of the Virgin Mary and the baby Jesus seated between Emperor John II Comnenus and the Empress Irene. The emperor and empress again hold a purse and a scroll, symbolizing, as in the previous example, their donations to the church. This Comnenus mosaic, as it is called, was created a century later than the Zoe mosaic. Comparing the two, you can see how the style of mosaic-making changed during this period from the very idealized style used in the picture of Jesus to the more realistic portrayal of Mary. This trend towards realism would reach its height in the Deesis mosaic that we saw earlier.



Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Byzantinischer_Mosaizist_um_1020_001.jpg

**Close-up of Virgin
Mary from the
Comnenus mosaic**

Stop #13 This is just about the end of our tour, but we have one more stop to make on the way out. You are welcome to make your way back down to the souvenir booth across from the Emperor's Gate by retracing your steps through the corridors and down the ramp, or you can just click on dot number 4 on the interactive floor map.

If you want to buy a souvenir while you are here, now is your chance. When you are finished, turn left from the souvenir booth and walk towards the exit by clicking on the pointing finger icon when it appears in that direction, and then doing so again. If you get lost, click on dot number 13 on the interactive floor map.

Judging from the sunlight shining through the exit door, it looks like it's a bright sunny day outside. If you head for the exit door now, however, you'll miss one of Hagia Sophia's most important works of art. Look above the exit and you'll see part a mosaic. Actually, that's not the mosaic itself you see, but a mirror that is placed there to remind people to turn around and look behind them at the real thing. Why don't you do that now?

41. What, or whom, does this mosaic show?

Since this particular mosaic is high up and the sunlight reflecting off its golden tesserae makes it a little bit hard to see, we'll look at a photograph that gives us a better view.

Now that you have had some experience with mosaics, you probably recognized the seated figure of Mary with the baby Jesus in the center of the image. If you thought that the figures standing on either side of Mary might be Byzantine emperors, you were right about that, too. In fact, it is these two emperors that make this mosaic a particularly appropriate one for us to look at as we leave the building. Here at our final stop in Hagia Sophia, we get one last look at the two most famous emperors to have ruled in Constantinople, taking us back to the very beginning of our study unit.



Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Constantine_mosaic_Hagia_Sophia_March_2008.JPG

To Mary's left, dressed in ceremonial robes and presenting her with a model of his city is the emperor Constantine. Do you think he could have imagined back in 330 CE that the city he was making his capital would remain a capital, first of one empire and then of another, for almost sixteen hundred years? Similarly, do you think that Justinian, who is standing to Mary's right and offering her a model of Hagia Sophia, would have believed it if someone had told him that his great basilica would still be standing today? With those reminders of the long history of Hagia Sophia and of the city where it stands, our tour comes to an end.