Philipp Niewöhner

Saint Benoît at Galata or the Survival of the Unfittest. The Exceptional Perseverance of a Byzantine Monastery in Ottoman Istanbul

Overall, the fate of Byzantine churches and monasteries in Ottoman Istanbul was grim. Once the pride and fame of Byzantine Constantinople and numbering in their hundreds[1], all Orthodox churches were eventually abolished, the only notable exception being the tiny Panagia Mouchliotissa close to Fener, a traditionally Greek quarter of Ottoman Istanbul[2]. Some churches were converted into mosques and thus survived, but monastic estates were disbanded and are lost entirely. Exceptionally, the Byzantine church and monastery of Saint Benoît at Galata survives intact, if not as an Orthodox, but as a Christian institution, including one of the largest estates of the city, certainly the largest in Galata (**figs 1-2**)[3]. In modern times, the monastery was divided between Lazarists and Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, who put the vast estate to use as a school, originally with two separate courtyards for boys (since 1783) and girls (since 1839), but more recently united (in 1988), with nearly 1000 pupils[4].

This paper asks how Saint Benoît survived as a church and monastery from the Byzantine period through Ottoman times, when all comparable institutions perished. Starting from the seventeenth century, the later part of the answer is already provided by the annals of the French embassy that adopted Saint Benoît as an ambassadorial chapel. Thus, French ambassadors provided for the upkeep of the church, protected the estate, and arranged for French monks to come and occupy the monastery, first Jesuits and – after that order was abolished in 1773 – the Lazarists[5]. The earlier history of Saint Benoît before and until the French involvement is less well attested and forms the starting point and descriptive first part of this paper. As we shall see, the sixteenth century was a particularly disruptive period for Saint Benoît, which makes it anything but obvious why this institution fared better than so many others that did not survive.

The second, more argumentative part of the paper seeks the answer by first turning to other churches that were abolished in or before the sixteenth century. The abolishment was often due to one of three reasons: because a church was in disrepair, for political reasons, or because a building was required to house a mosque. Returning to the case of Saint Benoît, the paper finally argues that the aforesaid three reasons for abolishment did not apply and asks why. As a result, Saint Benoît appears to have survived partly because the original Byzantine complex was particularly well-built and solid, but mainly because it was not politically significant and not wanted for a mosque, as other buildings were better suited to that purpose. As the Ottoman authorities did not allow a church to be abolished for any other reason, being solid but insignificant and unfit seems to have saved Saint Benoît until the French ambassador took the church under his protection.

Saint Benoît from the Byzantine Period through the Sixteenth Century

Most of today's church building dates from 1686 and after, when Saint Benoît was repeatedly destroyed by fire and subsequently rebuilt (**figs 3-4**)[6]. However, various earlier seventeenth-century descriptions show that the original, Byzantine church building had survived until the fire of 1686, i. e. throughout the sixteenth century. Archdeacon Paul of Aleppo, who accompanied Macarius, patriarch of Antioch, on a visit to Istanbul in the 1650s, described St Benoît as »a very large church, which was one of the most magnificent churches belonging to the Orthodox religion in the Grecian empire, and is at present in the hands of the Frank Jesuits. It is very ancient and lofty, and is painted all over, in mosaic, with the festivals of Our Lord, explained in Greek characters. The belfry is high, and of ancient structure«[7].

The *Relations inédites des missions de la Compagnie de Jésus à Constantinople* date from the 1610s, when the Jesuits had been newly established at Saint Benoît[8]. At that point in time, the church still contained what the Jesuit report de-

1 Janin, Églises et monastères; Kidonopoulos, Urban Physiognomy; Magdalino, Medieval Constantinople 27-31.
2 Schneider, Byzanz 38-47; Kırımtayıf, Converted Byzantine Churches.
3 Niewöhner, St. Benoît.
4 Belin, Histoire de la latinité 428-436; Roche, Éducation 13 f. 99-101. 105-109. 171-174. 177-180.
5 Belin, Histoire de la latinité 232-270.
6 Niewöhner, St. Benoît, including references to extensive earlier literature, most of which is not listed in this paper and much of which is grey and rife with misleading rumours. Some of these have more recently been summarized by Coşkun, St. Benoît.
7 Paul of Aleppo, Travels of Macarius 27. Cf. Paul d'Alep, Voyage du patriarche Macaire 1, 105; Seewann/Stoy, Bücherkunde Südosteuropa 152 f. cat. 423.
8 Ruiu, Conflicting Visions.

Fig. 1 Galata. Satellite image of the Genoese possessions. The arrow indicates the northern corner of St Benoît's estate (cf. **fig. 2**). – (Photo Googlemaps with addition).
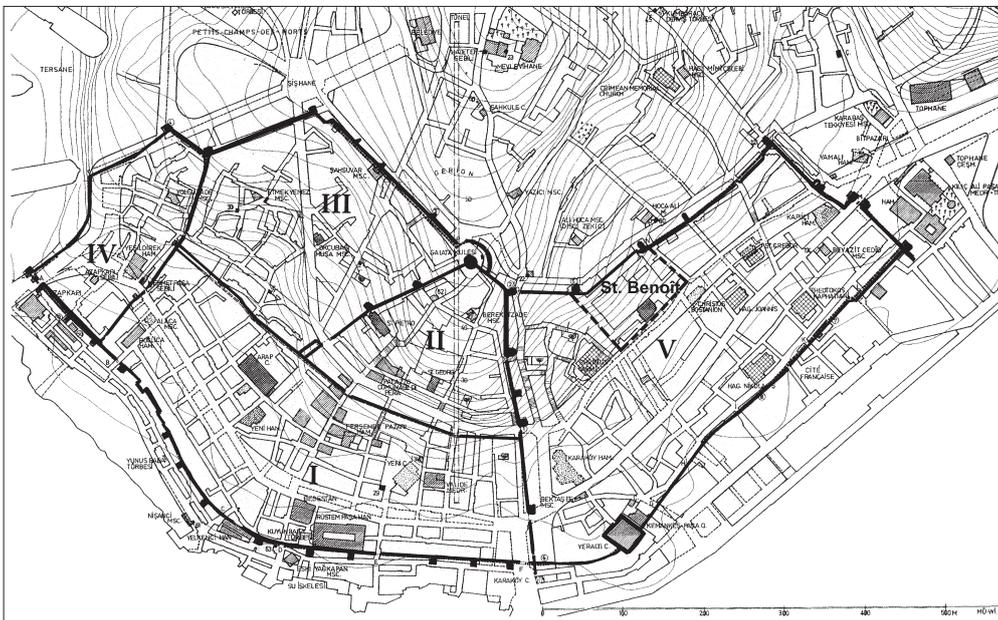

Fig. 2 Galata. Map of the Genoese possessions and their fortifications. The numbers indicate the order of fortification. The eastern quarter no. V was called Lagirio, fortified last, around the turn of the 15th c., and contains the large rectangular estate of St Benoît. – (After Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon 321 with additions).

scribes as »un théâtre, en demy rond de degrés sur l'autel« and what must have been the semi-circular stepped bench or *synthronon* in the apse of the Byzantine church, where the Orthodox clergy used to sit and face the altar[9]. The same *Relations* also detail that the Christological mosaics were arranged in registers on the walls, as was common in Late Byzantine churches.

The French ambassador, who arranged for the Jesuits to come to Istanbul and occupy Saint Benoît, was Jean de Gontaut Biron, Baron de Salignac. His ambassadorship lasted from 1605 to 1610, and he reported extensively and proudly on Saint Benoît, comparing the mosaics with those in the Hagia

Sophia and providing some iconographic detail: »L'église de Staint-Benoist ne se puis assez louanger, pour estre de toutes celles de Galata, la plus magnifique, pour ce qu'elle contient remplie, par le dedans, haut et bas des parois ou murailles, d'excellantes pintures ou figures de mosaïque, si dextremant et artificieusemant élabourées, que toutes celles de Sainte-So-phie n'a aucun avantage sur cellecy. Où se voit naifvement représentées l'entrée de Notre Seigneure en Hiérusalem, la re-surrection de Lazare, la guérison du paralitique et tant d'autres signalés miracles du Seigneur en sa Passion, que la diversité de l'ouvrage et beauté des figures et couleurs, sy bien et naturel-lement raportées, raporte aussy à la veue des spectateurs plesir

---

9 Carayon, Relations inédites 42 f. For other examples of later Byzantine synthrona, see Talbot Rice, Church of Haghia Sophia 18 pl. 5 a; Altripp, Beobachtungen zu Synthronoi 385. 393 fig. 19 a. b; 405; Mylonas, Bildlexikon des Heiligen Berges,

foldout 101, 4; Tekinalp, Hagios Ioannes in Prusa 169. 174 fig. 14; Alp, Middle Byzantine Churches 18 f. fig. 11.

Fig. 3 St Benoît. The church building seen from the south, photographed in 2007 from a tall window of an office building on the other side of Kemeraltı Caddesi. Note the western belfry and the south-eastern chapel. Street access is provided by the angled stairs on the left side. – (Photo Ph. Niewöhner).

Fig. 4 St Benoît. Plan of the main church floor one storey above street level. The various hatchings indicate the different building phases. – (Plan Ph. Niewöhner).

before 1427
1687
1697
1732
20th century
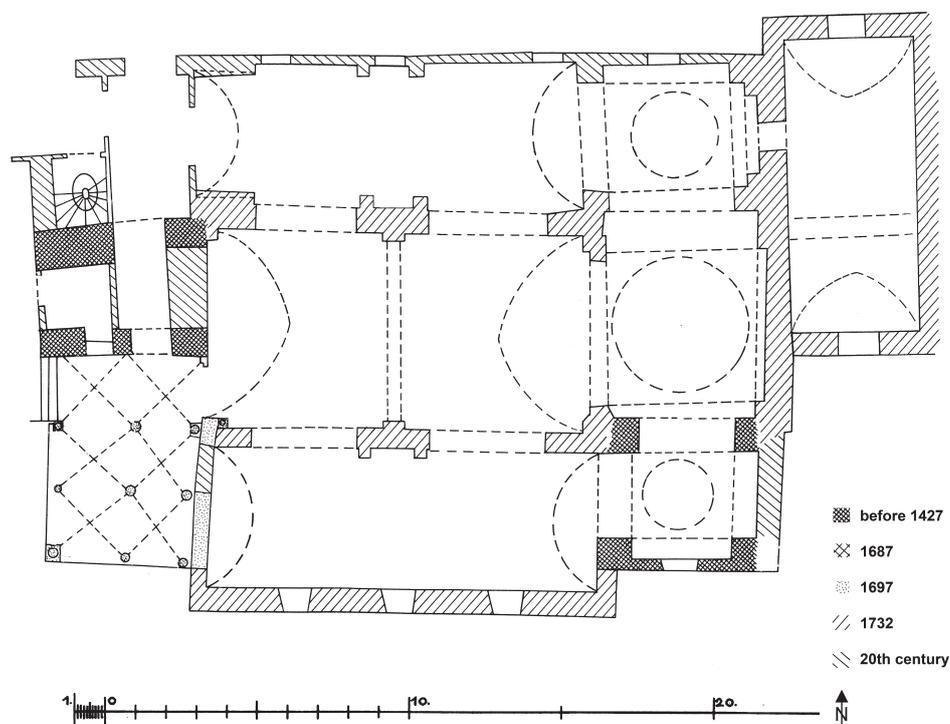
et devotion ensemble«[10]. The Christological scenes identified by the ambassador, the entrance into Jerusalem, the raising of Lazarus, and the healing of the paralytic, were common in Late Byzantine churches of any dedication and are understood to refer to the major feasts on the liturgical calendar[11].

The ambassador also wrote about a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary that he renovated and that still exists today. The chapel forms the south-eastern corner compartment of the church, and its narrow and steep proportions, tambour, melon dome, and lead roof outlining the contours of the

10   De Gontaut-Biron, Ambassade en Turquie 83 f.

11   Demus, Byzantine Mosaic Decoration 14-16; Mathews, Sequel to Nicaea II; Maguire, Mosaics of Nea Moni.

Fig. 5 St Benoît. South-eastern chapel, seen from the south, photographed in 2007. The south façade is of fine ashlar masonry. The tambour, the melon dome, and the lead roof, outlining the contours of the window arches, are clearly Byzantine. – (Photo Ph. Niewöhner).

Fig. 6 St Benoît. Belfry seen from the south, photographed in 2007. – (Photo Ph. Niewöhner).

window arches are blatantly Byzantine (**fig. 5**)[12]. Until the twentieth century, the chapel also had an outwardly polygonal apse[13], another typical feature of Byzantine church building[14]. The southern façade of the chapel is built with fine ashlar masonry, same as the belfry and the gate of the monastery (**figs 6-7**). The gate was pulled down in 1958 to make space for an enlargement of Kemeraltı Caddesi, but is documented through earlier photographs and drawings[15]. The gate was typical of Byzantine monasteries[16], and bell towers were common in Late Byzantine church building, apparently following Western examples and the Latin occupation of Constantinople (1204-1261)[17]. However, fine ashlar masonry is not otherwise attested in Late Byzantine Constantinople, suggesting that the chapel, bell tower, and gate, and thus

presumably the whole church and monastery, were built on a single occasion by an itinerant workshop.

The Late Byzantine church must have been placed in-between the southeast chapel and the bell tower that likely marked and bridged the centre of a narthex. The church may thus be reconstructed as a cross-in-square (**fig. 8**) or, alternatively, as a domed nave with ambulatories[18]. The modern school buildings and yards to the north of the church used to be extensive gardens that were repeatedly mentioned throughout the history of the complex and depicted as late as c. 1800 (**fig. 9**)[19]. The monastery and gardens occupied what used to be a large Early Byzantine cistern. According to the French traveller and antiquarian Pierre Gilles (1490-1555), the cistern should once have been vaulted with 300 columns[20],

12 Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon 100 f.; Ousterhout, Constantinople 78.
13 Gurlitt, Baukunst Konstantinopels pl. 62 bottom right.
14 Ousterhout, Eastern Medieval Architecture.
15 Beylié, L'habitation byzantine pl. 11, left; Gurlitt, Baukunst Konstantinopels 42 pl. 62 top right; Sauvaget, Notes 260 f. pls 28, 4; 30, 1. See also various photographs and drawings, including the inside of the gatehouse, that were made in 1958, as the gate was dismantled; they are archived at Salt Galata and available online: https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/74672.
16 Cf. Orlandos, Monastiriaki Architektoniki 17-26.
17 Bouras, Impact of Frankish Architecture 257; Berger, Glockenturm; Ousterhout, Pantokrator Monastery 751 f. 762; Ćurčić, Architecture in the Balkans 831-833; Miljković, Semantra and Bells.

18 For similar surviving churches, see for example the Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii and Koca Mustafa Paşa Camii in Istanbul or the Theotokos Kosmosoteira in Pherai in nearby Thrace: Eyice, Remarques 184-190; Hawkins/Mathews, Notes; Sinos, Klosterkirche der Kosmosoteira; Ćurčić, Architecture in the Balkans 272 f. 408 f.; Ousterhout, Eastern Medieval Architecture 255-261. 375-377.
19 Carayon, Relations inédites 42 f.; Kömürciyan, Istanbul Tarihi ed. Andreasyan 40; Kömürciyan, Istanbul Tarihi ed. Pamukciyan 36; Ruggieri, Costantinopoli 123-125; Laporte, voyage à Constantinople 37, fig. 20. On **fig. 9**, see Schiffer, Oriental Panorama 146.
20 Gyllius, Topographia Constantinopoleos 228.

but an open cistern appears equally and maybe more likely[21]. As late as the eighteenth century, Kosmaz Gornidas Kömürciyan alias Cosimo Comidas De Carbognano described the high and extremely thick walls of the cistern surrounding the monastery and gardens[22]. In the Galata image of the seventeenth-century Khalili Portolan Atlas[23], Saint Benoît may thus be identifiable by the bell tower, the domed chapel, as well as large grounds with mighty walls and a gate to the southwest of the church (**fig. 10**).

Until the sixteenth century, Saint Benoît was also known as Santa Maria della Cisterna, the latter attribute obviously referring to the Early Byzantine cistern, whilst the dedication to the Virgin Mary seems to go back to the Late Byzantine church. The modern dedication to Saint Benoît was secondary and is first attested in the foundation inscription of the Benedictine monastery from 1427[24]: + *ad honorem Dei et santissimae uisitacionis Uirgini' Marie et beatissimi patris nostri Benedicti hoc monasteriū fundatū fuit M CCCC XX VII die XII Madii tp̄r beatissī d d nr̄i Pape M V +*.

A sixteenth-century document that, in the nineteenth century, was archived at Monte Cassino, the home and administrative center of the Benedictine order, describes Saint Benoît as *monasterium S. Mariae Misericordiae in Pera, prope Constantinopolim, unitur congregationi a Nicolao V, anno 1449, sed possessio capta est anno 1450, cum monasterio S. Benedicti, ibidem illi unito*[25]. This description refers to a legal act, by which Saint Benoît formally joined the Benedictine Congregation of Santa Giustina at Padua (later to become the Congregatio Cassinensis) in the middle of the fifteenth century, twenty-two years after the foundation in-

Fig. 7 St Benoît, historic photograph of the gate to the monastic estate. The gate used to stand at the bottom of the angled staircase in **fig. 3**, but was demolished in 1958 to make way for the enlargement of Kemeraltı Caddesi. – (After Sauvaget, Notes pl. 30, 1).

Fig. 8 St Benoît. Reconstruction of the original Byzantine church as cross-in-square. The bell tower and the south-eastern chapel, which still stand today, are hatched. – (Plan Ph. Niewöhner).
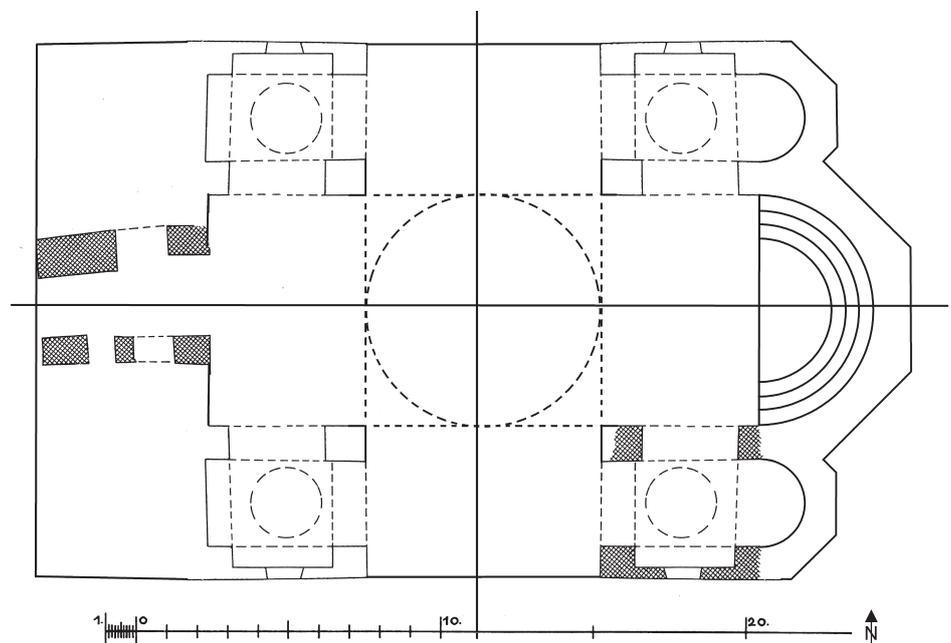
21 Janin, Églises et monastères 586. Cf. various similarly large cisterns in Istanbul, some open, some covered, and all from the Early Byzantine period: Bardill / Bayliss / Crow, Water Supply 128-142; Altuğ et al., Byzantine Cisterns.
22 De Carbognano, Descrizione topografica 60.
23 Soucek, Piri Reis pl.; Barsanti, Costantinopoli e l'Egeo 246 f., fig. 107.
24 The inscription is today lost, but was recorded twice in the 17th c.: Hasluck, Dr. Covel's Notes 58; Dalleggio D'Alessio, Relazione 61.
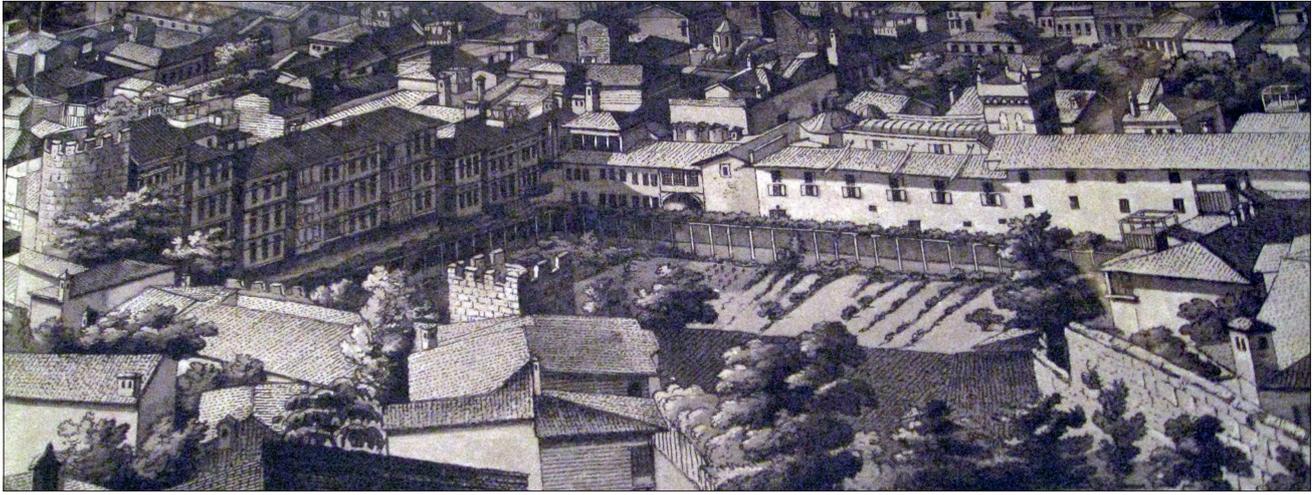25 Belin, Histoire de la latinité 234.

Fig. 9 St Benoît. Historic view of the garden and the church as seen from Galata Tower. – (After Henry Aston Barker, c. 1800).
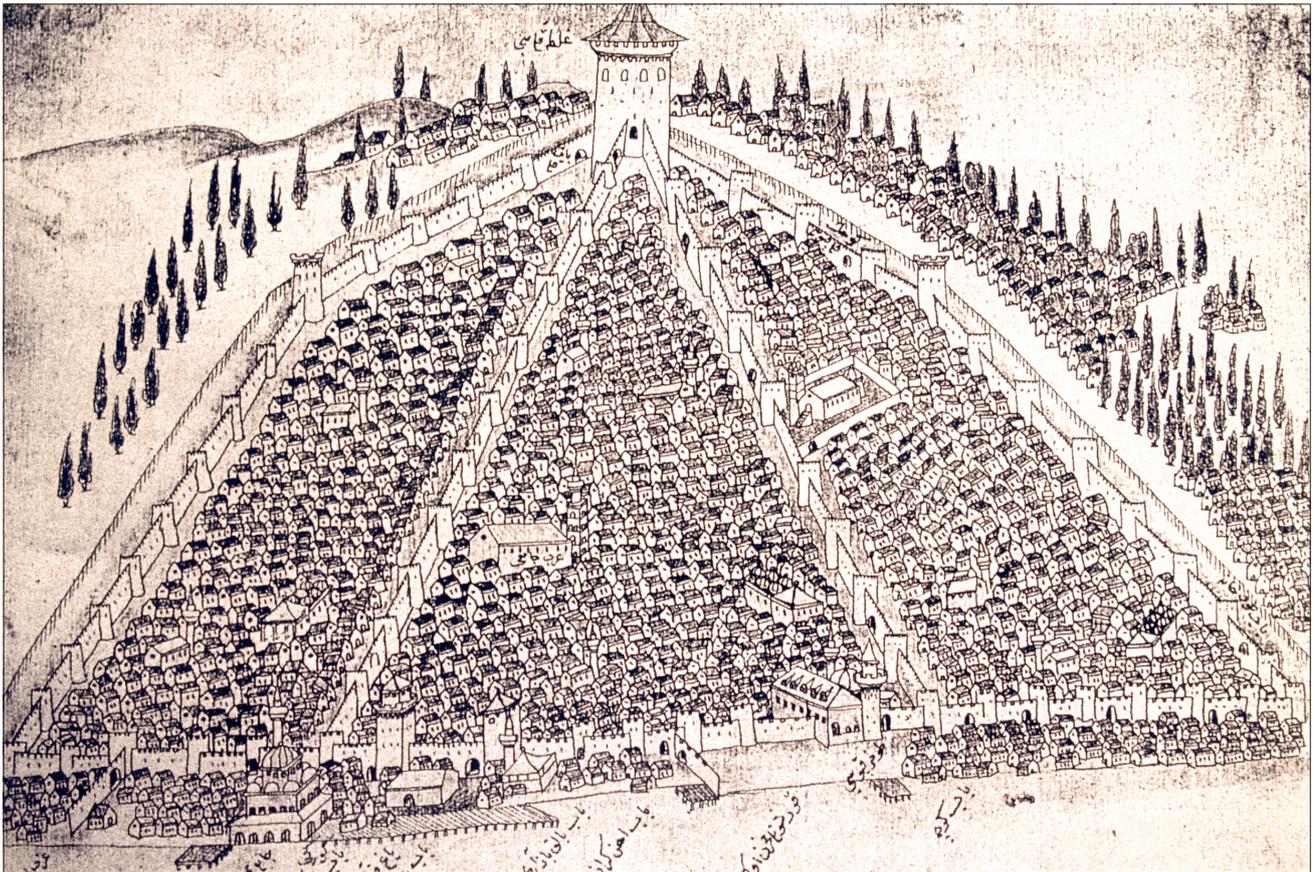

Fig. 10 Ottoman Galata as illustrated in the so-called Khalili Portolan Atlas. The easternmost quarter on the right side is Lagirio, where St Benoît may be identifiable by a large walled estate, arched gate, staircase, bell tower, and domed southeast chapel. The atlas is an edition of the Kitab-i Bahriye by Piri Re'is and must date from after 1686, when St Benoît was rebuilt without a main dome. – (After London, Nasser D. Khalili Collection, ms. 718 fol. 4 b = Soucek, Piri Reis pl.).

scription of 1427[26]. The monastery is understood first and foremost as Santa Maria, while the secondary dedication to Saint Benoît is described as if it had resulted from the union of two institutions.

All this finds an explanation in a letter that the Benedictine monk Gregorius de Corsanego wrote from Venice to the Genoese *podestà* or governor of Galata/Pera in 1426. The letter asked whether Gregorius and his brethren could estab-

---

26 Dalleggio D'Alessio, monastère de Sainte-Marie 64-70; Polonio, Santa Maria 410.

lish themselves at Pera, either in an existing monastery or in a new one, to be built with the help of God: *in Pera vivere intra monasterium aliquod iam constructum vel forsan divino suffragio costruendo, aut ecclesiam aliquam*[27]. Gregorius, who later became bishop of Trebizond, was a native of Galata / Pera and may thus have known of a vacant and available monastery there[28]. However, the timing leaves no doubt that the Benedictines did not build anew but moved into a pre-existing monastery. This explains why the foundation inscription from 1427 does not mention any building work, nor any donor, why the first dedication was to the Virgin Mary, almost certainly the original patron saint of the pre-existing monastery and church, and why the official recognition by, and integration into the Benedictine congregation, followed later.

As late as the seventeenth century, John Covel (1638-1722), who served as vicar of the English ambassador to the Sublime Porte in 1671 and 1672, noted that the Greeks referred to Saint Benoît as Ἁγια Χρυσοποιή, presumably referring to a gilded icon of the Virgin Mary[29]. In 1402, the accounts of the Genoese administration of Galata / Pera listed payments to the priest of a Greek Orthodox church of Mary in Lagirio, who had provided the Genoese with translations[30]. Lagirio was then a suburb of Galata and included Saint Benoît; the priest and church must have served the Greek residents of Lagirio who were still numerous in the fourteenth century[31]. This changed when the Genoese, around the turn of the fifteenth century, extended the fortifications of Galata to also include Lagirio (**fig. 2**)[32]. Now the Greeks appear to have left, and their church was deserted, which paved the way for Gregorius de Corsanego's initiative and the new, Latin dedication to Saint Benoît.

The Benedictine foundation seems to have taken off well enough and survived the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul in 1453 in good order. Only the church treasure was shipped to Chios, to ensure that it would not be looted[33]. The monks stayed behind at the monastery in Galata, where they remained unharmed. Trouble came later, in the second half of the fifteenth century, and it seems to have been the formal union with the Congregation of Santa Giustina that proved detrimental in the long term.

Originally, the union of 1449 may have been prompted by the impending Ottoman conquest, to serve as a safety, in case the Genoese administration of Galata should collapse and the monastic community be forced to abandon Saint Benoît. However, the union was formulated so as to give the Congregation of Santa Giustina possession and oversight of Saint Benoît. Henceforth, the congregation would rule Saint Benoît from afar, dispose of the endowment elsewhere, and install abbots who sometimes preferred not to live in Istanbul, either. This conflicted with local custom at Galata, where abbots were expected to be present, act as owners, dispose of the income as they themselves saw fit, and choose their own successors. The results were many a disagreement and legal confrontation that also involved various lay persons and the Genoese administration of Galata as well as the Vatican. The monastic community soon dwindled, as did the endowment, and by the sixteenth century Saint Benoît was mostly occupied by no more than a vicar, who may have acted on behalf of the Congregation of Santa Giustina, but could be a Dominican or a Franciscan and might reportedly sell off the church furnishings and even the lead roofing[34].

This deplorable state of affairs continued until 1582, when the Congregation of Santa Giustina elected the last Benedictine abbot. What happened thereafter is not attested, but the new abbot does not appear to have taken up office, and in 1583 a first lot of Jesuits took possession of Saint Benoît. The Jesuits were headed by P. Giulio Mancinelli S. J., who reported the following:

Monasterium Divi Benedicti, quod a multis annis a monachis dicti ordinis derelictum atque destitutum fuerat, nobis pro domicilio, ex Pontificis auctoritate consignaverunt; quod cum Turcae voluissent illud in meschitam vertere, sicut et aliis multis praestiterant ecclesiis; orator Galliarum accessit at imperatorem Turcarum exponens illam ecclesiam esse regis Galliae, id est ad usum oratorium eius, et propterea rogabat ut dimitteretur illi, cui imperator consensit et concessit illi in scriptis privilegium ut in futurum nihil aliquid simile tentaretur a Turcis, sed libere secundum pristinum modum relinqueretur et inde mox factum est ut eius ecclesia dicatur[35].

Remarkably, the Jesuit mentions the blessings of the Vatican and the commitment of the French ambassador as well as the Sublime Porte, but no agreement with the Benedictines that are criticized for negligence that could potentially result in the conversion of Saint Benoît into a mosque. It is thus not clear whether the Jesuit takeover was conducted in accordance

27 Belgrano, Prima serie 189. Cf. Dalleggio D'Alessio, Monastère de Sainte-Marie 62 f.
28 Airaldi, Libri e cultura; Polonio, Santa Maria 406-408.
29 Hasluck, Dr. Covel's Notes 58.
30 Balard, Romanie génoise 1, 196 n. 103 with reference to the state archives of Genoa in San Giorgio, hall 34/45, Peire Massaria 1402, fol. 72ʳ. Additionally on this particular source, see also Balard, Bilan 7 f. A nineteenth-century compilation of records at the Orthodox patriarchate in Istanbul also lists a church of the Virgin Mary at Sykai, as Galata used to be called in the early Byzantine period: Gedeon, Βυζαντινὸν Εορτολόγιον 210 cat. 66 s.v. Ναὸς τῆς Θεοτόκου ἐν ταῖς Συκαῖς. Unfortunately, Gedeon omitted to relate the particular records, from which he drew his information, but his compilation is considered trust-

worthy nevertheless: see Janin, Églises et monastères 231 cat. 117, s.v. Theotokos en Sykais.
31 Nomidis / Schneider, Galata 6; Balard, Romanie génoise 1, 271; Balard, Société pérote 303.
32 Nomidis / Schneider, Galata 6; Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon 320-322; Balard, Romanie génoise 1, 188-190.
33 Dalleggio D'Alessio, Monastère de Sainte-Marie 70-73; Polonio, Santa Maria 413 f.; Quirini-Popławski, Ex partibus orientalibus translata 296 f.
34 Dalleggio D'Alessio, Monastère de Sainte-Marie 73-94; Polonio, Santa Maria 413-421.
35 Ruggieri, Costantinopoli 123-125.

with the Congregation of Santa Giustina. The threat of a Muslim conversion may have been a reason as much as an excuse to act independently of the Benedictines. However, the first Jesuit initiative was short-lived, as the monks attended plague patients, contracted the disease themselves, and died within three years. They were swiftly replaced by Italian Capuchins, who arrived in 1587, but had to leave again after only two years; the Capuchin mission was to attend Christian prisoners, but included the zealous saint Joseph of Leonessa, who in 1589 tried to enter the palace and proselytise the sultan and thus got himself and his brethren expelled from the city[36].

Two decades later, when the aforementioned French ambassador Jean de Gontaut Biron brought in the second, more fortunate contingent of Jesuits, he described Saint Benoît as run-down and for a long time inhabited by no more than two or three Greek clerics[37]:

»Mais, lorsque nous arivasmes à Constantinople (qui fut 1605), tout de lieu estoit deslabré, et n'y avoit en yceluy que deux ou trois prestres grecs […] Cette église Saint Benoist ayant esté sy grand temps en mains des quelques pauvres prestres grecs, l'avoint tellement laissé décheaoir, qu'elle estoit presque deslaissée de catholiques romains«.

Thus, short from being converted into a mosque or burnt to the ground (as happened in 1686), Saint Benoît could hardly have fared worse during the sixteenth century. How, then, did the impressive and reportedly still well-preserved church as well as the exceptionally large monastic estate escape the common fate, and how was it able to survive intact, when all other comparable institutions and buildings were dissolved and converted, in Galata most notably the Dominican church and later Arap Camii[38]?

The Abolishment of Other Churches

The decline and disappearance of Istanbul's churches and monasteries was a protracted and complex process that had started long before the Ottoman conquest of the city. Saint Polyeuktos was already ruinous when the Latins conquered and plundered Constantinople in 1204[39], and the Holy Apostles, which was repeatedly restored in the thirteenth century, was reportedly in disrepair again by 1422[40]. These large early Byzantine buildings were prone to earthquake damage,

difficult to repair, and increasingly outsized in relation to the ever-shrinking urban population of later times. Many later Byzantine donors preferred to build, repair, and add to smaller monastic foundations, where monks or nuns could be enlisted to pray for the donors' salvation[41]. Monastic foundations were notoriously unstable, all monastic communities likely victims of a Muslim victory, and most churches and monasteries reportedly deserted ahead of or during the Ottoman conquest[42].

An Ottoman survey of Istanbul in 1455 includes 26 monasteries and 42 churches, only three of which were still in Orthodox hands, one monastery and two churches[43]. Other data attests to a few more remaining Greek institutions, but they, too, were eventually converted as Istanbul developed into a Turkish city[44]. The Conqueror himself had turned Hagia Sophia into an imperial mosque and replaced the Holy Apostles with his Fatih Camii for obvious political reasons[45]. Other conversions during the later reign of Mehmed II, including Pantokrator/Zeyrek, Eski Imaret, and Kalenderhane Camii, provided the growing Muslim population with mosques, and this continued under successive sultans[46]. Genoese Galata fared better at first, because it had surrendered to, rather than been conquered by, the Turks. A *firman* or decree of Mehmed II, dating from June 1st 1453, stipulated that the Genoese were allowed to keep their churches (but not build new ones, nor sound bells)[47]. However, the case of the Dominican church and later Arap Camii that, two decades later, was converted by the same sultan, exemplifies that in the long run Galata and the Latin churches and monasteries shared the fate of the Greek Orthodox institutions on the historic peninsula[48]. Ottoman law protected a church from conversion only as long as the building was not required as a mosque. Even when that was not the case, a church could still be expropriated if the Christians failed to maintain the building in good repair[49]. Sooner or later, almost every church was thus converted or abolished in one way or another, and the question remains why not Saint Benoît?

Why Not Saint Benoît?

To start with, and in comparison with other Byzantine churches and monasteries, Saint Benoît was lucky in so far as it escaped any immediate consequences of the Ottoman conquest, because it had been incorporated into Genoese

36 Chiaretti/d'Alatri, Missione cappuccina a Costantinopoli; Busolini, Giuseppe da Leonessa; Morelli, Giuseppe da Leonessa.
37 De Gontaut-Biron, Ambassade en Turquie 83 f.
38 Leggio, Genova a Costantinopoli; Sicimoğlu Yenikler, Cultural Transformation.
39 Harrison, Excavations at Saraçhane 113.
40 Buondelmonti, Description 88; Gerola, Vedute di Costantinopoli 276; Necipoğlu, Gennadios Scholarios.
41 Kidonopoulos, Urban Physiognomy; Ousterhout, Eastern Medieval Architecture 303-331; Marinis, Church Building 187 f.
42 Kafescioğlu, Byzantium 340 f.
43 Inalcık, Survey of Istanbul 479-500.

44 Schneider, Byzanz 38-47; Kırımtayıf, Converted Byzantine Churches.
45 Inalcik, Policy of Mehmed II; Raby, Founder of Constantinople.
46 Yerasimos, Grecs d'Istanbul; Kafescioğlu, Constantinopolis/Istanbul 21 f. 99 f. 204-206. 223 f.
47 Inalcik, Ottoman Galata 17-27; Balletto/Pistarino 1453; Ganchou, Mehmed II. On the remaining bells of Ottoman Galata, including those of St Benoit, see Rodriguez Suarez, Bell Ringing.
48 Belin, Histoire de la latinité 187-346; Yerasimos, Galata; Borromeo, Catholiques à Constantinople; Leggio, Genova a Costantinopoli; Sicimoğlu Yenikler, Cultural Transformation 83-91.
49 Altınyıldız, Architectural Heritage 282.

Galata. Although that incorporation meant that the church and monastery were deserted by the Greek Orthodox long before the city fell to the Turks, Saint Benoît was lucky a second time round, because it was occupied by the Benedictines, who stayed during and after the conquest and thus ensured that the monastery was protected as a functioning Christian institution.

Later, when Galata's Dominican church, a fourteenth-century basilica in Gothic style[50], was converted into a mosque and eventually became the Arap Camii, Saint Benoît's fortune appears to have lain in being less suitable for use as a Muslim prayer house. Most Turks would have lived in more desirable quarters further uphill and closer to the Arap Camii, where the view and the air are better. Saint Benoît is perched on a terrace one storey above street level, which requires climbing steep stairs, makes access unpractical, and leaves no space for a fountain where to perform the ritual ablutions required before Muslim prayer (fig. 3). The interior of the Late Byzantine domed church of Saint Benoît was a lot smaller than that of the Gothic basilica and later Arap Camii. Saint Benoît could not have accommodated the customary long rows of many Muslims praying simultaneously. In the Byzantine monastic churches of Constantine Lips and the Pammakaristos that were converted into the Fenâri Îsâ and the Fethiye Camii, the columns under the domes were replaced by wide arches, thus creating more spacious interiors[51].

The huge estate of Saint Benoît would initially have mattered little, because Galata and all of Istanbul were underpopulated after the Ottoman conquest, a situation that prevailed well into the sixteenth century[52]. In addition, the massive outer walls of the Early Byzantine cistern that formed and surrounded the estate would have prevented any infringement through squatters or otherwise. The only remaining way of disbanding the monastic estate in accordance with Ottoman law was to allege negligence, as appears to have happened in the later part of the sixteenth century, when the French ambassador stepped in and claimed the monastery for himself and the Jesuits. However, when the Jesuits finally established a permanent presence in the early seventeenth century, the church was reportedly still in good repair. This seems remarkable, as the Benedictine monastery had all but been deserted since the late fifteenth century, with some of its sixteenth-century representatives allegedly selling off the lead roofing. The overall quality of the building must have been as good as the fine ashlar masonry of the southeast chapel, the belfry, and the gate. The original founders would seem to have been well advised, when they called in the itin-

erant workshop that appears to have built the Late Byzantine monastery.

Conclusions

The history of Saint Benoît until and beyond the sixteenth century shows that its survival as a Christian church and monastery throughout the Ottoman period was owed to a series of peculiar circumstances. The circumstances were unique to Saint Benoît and shared by no other Byzantine church, which can explain why only Saint Benoît survived. Whilst many Byzantine churches and monasteries were reportedly deserted in 1452, well ahead of the Ottoman conquest, only Saint Benoît was resettled by Latin monks; it seems odd that they should have done so as late as 1427, when, following three Ottoman sieges between 1394 and 1422[53], the Turkish takeover of Constantinople could be anticipated. The Genoese were of course expecting to come to terms with the Turks and did so in the end, but the removal of Saint Benoît's church treasure to Chios indicates that the Benedictines were preparing for a worse case. It remains to be established what prompted Gregorius de Corsanego and his brethren to come to Galata under such circumstances.

Likewise, the French commitment to Saint Benoît appears to require explanation, too. The arrival of French Jesuits at Saint Benoît in 1583, only one year after the Italian Benedictines had elected a new abbot, seems to imply a lot of diplomatic activity, the workings and motivations of which are as yet unknown, even if the alleged threat of a Muslim conversion is accepted at face value. However, the French initiative on behalf of Saint Benoît ties in with other, similar French commitments to Latin institutions at Galata, and by the seventeenth century, the entire Catholic community would refer to, and pray for, the French king as their guardian[54]. The lasting success of this guardianship distinguishes Saint Benoît from other, less fortunate institutions and is, once again, highly exceptional.

On a more general level, the history of Saint Benoît also illustrates typical features of Ottoman rule and early modern statehood, in particular the fine balance between the rule of law that protected the monastery as a Christian institution, but also threatened a Muslim takeover in case of neglect, and the influence of powerful individuals, i.e. the French ambassador, who applied for the guardianship of Saint Benoît on behalf of the French king, and the Turkish sultan, who granted that guardianship in perpetuity.

50 On the architecture of the Arap Camii, see Giordani, Arap Camii; Çetinkaya, Arap Camii; Sicimoğlu Yenikler, Cultural Transformation 79-83 (with earlier bibliography).

51 Macridy, Monastery of Lips 253 f. details that the wide arches date from a renovation of the Fenâri Îsâ Mosque, after the building had burned in 1633, and suggests that the Byzantine columns had been removed »perhaps because they were damaged by fire«. Alternatively, the columns could also have been removed, because they were wanted for other building projects. However, their

replacement with wide arches (instead of piers) required considerable extra labor and was surely owed to the requirements of Muslim prayer. Mango, St. Mary Pammakaristos; Kırımtayıf, Converted Byzantine Churches 47-50. 63-67.

52 Yerasimos, Grecs d'Istanbul; Kafescioğlu, Byzantium 340 f.

53 Bernicolas-Hatzopoulos, First Siege; Necipoğlu, Byzantium 149-232.

54 Belin, Histoire de la latinité 175-186; Mitler, Genoese in Galata 77; Frazee, Catholics and Sultans 72; De Obaldia, French Protectorate.

Another common factor in the history of Saint Benoît was the enduring quality and beauty of the monastery inside the solid walls of the early Byzantine cistern and of its Late Byzantine church. If the complex had not been laid out and built well enough to survive long periods of neglect and still attract people like Gregorius de Corsanego and later the French ambassador, it would have perished long ago. On the other hand, some of the same architectural features were ill-suited for Muslim prayer, which likely played an important part in preventing Saint Benoît from being converted into a mosque. Thus, the survival of a church that Christians of all denominations praised on a level with Hagia Sophia may ultimately have been owing to its uselessness as a Muslim prayer house.

Bibliography

Airaldi, Libri e cultura: G. Airaldi, Libri e cultura di un vescovo di Trebisonda. In: G. Airaldi, Studi e documenti su Genova e l'Oltremare. Collana storica di fonti e studi 19 (Genova 1974) 155-179.

Alp, Middle Byzantine Churches: A. O. Alp, The Newly Discovered Middle Byzantine Churches from Phrygia. In: D. D. Ëlšin (ed.), Architecture of Byzantium and Kievan Rus from the 9th to the 12th Centuries. Transactions of the State Hermitage Museum 53 (St. Petersburg 2010) 9-20.

Altınyıldız, Architectural Heritage: N. Altınyıldız, The Architectural Heritage of Istanbul and the Ideology of Preservation. Muqarnas 24, 2007, 281-305.

Altripp, Beobachtungen zu Synthronoi: M. Altripp, Beobachtungen zu Synthronoi und Kathedren in byzantinischen Kirchen Griechenlands. BCH 124, 2000, 377-412.

Altuğ et al., Byzantine Cisterns: K. Altuğ / M. Crapper / J. Crow / K. Ward, The Byzantine Cisterns of Constantinople. Water Supply 17/6, 2017, 1499-1506.

Balard, Bilan: M. Balard, Bilan des publications sur Péra-Galata à l'époque génoise. In: Première rencontre internationale sur l'Empire ottoman et la Turquie moderne. Varia Turcica 13 (Istanbul 1991) 5-15.

Romanie génoise: M. Balard, La Romanie génoise: XIIe - début du XVe siècle. Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 235 = Atti della Società ligure di storia patria N. S. 18 (Rome 1978).

Société pérote: M. Balard, La société pérote aux 14e-15e siècles: autour des Demerode et des Draperio. In: N. Necipoğlu (ed.), Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life. The Medieval Mediterranean 33 (Leiden 2001) 299-311.

Balletto/Pistarino 1453: L. Balletto / G. Pistarino, 1453: da Pera genovese a Galata turca. Archivio storico e giuridico sardo di Sassari N. S. 2, 1995, 307-320.

Bardill/Bayliss/Crow, Water Supply: J. Bardill / R. Bayliss / J. Crow, The Water Supply of Byzantine Constantinople. JRS Monograph 11 (London 2008).

Barsanti, Costantinopoli e l'Egeo: C. Barsanti, Costantinopoli e l'Egeo nei primi decenni del 15 secolo: la testimonianza di Cristoforo Buondelmonti. Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte 56 = 3. Serie 24, 2001, 83-254.

Belgrano, Prima serie: L. T. Belgrano, Prima serie di documenti riguardanti la colonia di Pera. Atti della Società ligure di storia patria 13, 1877-1884, 97-336. Reprint in: L. T. Belgrano, Documenti riguardanti la colonia genovese di Pera (Genova 1888) 97-336.

Belin, Histoire de la latinité: M. A. Belin, Histoire de la latinité de Constantinople: deuxième édition, préparée et considérablement accrue par l'auteur, revue, augmentée et continuée jusqu'à notre temps par A. de Chatel (Paris 1894).

Berger, Glockenturm: A. Berger, Der Glockenturm der Hagia Sophia. In: Metin Ahunbay'a Armağan = Sanat Tarihi Defterleri 8, 2004, 59-73.

Bernicolas-Hatzopoulos, First Siege: D. Bernicolas-Hatzopoulos, The First Siege of Constantinople by the Ottomans (1394-1402) and its Repercussions on the Civilian Population of the City. Byzantine Studies 10, 1983, 39-51.

Beylié, L'habitation byzantine: L. de Beylié, L'habitation byzantine: les anciennes maisons de Constantinople: supplément (Paris 1903).

Borromeo, Catholiques à Constantinople: E. Borromeo, Les Catholiques à Constantinople: Galata et les églises de rite latin au XVIIe siècle. Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée 107-110, 2005, 227-243.

Bouras, Impact of Frankish Architecture: Ch. Bouras, The Impact of Frankish Architecture on Thirteenth-Century Byzantine Architecture. In: A. E. Laiou / R. P. Mottahedeh (eds), The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World (Washington, D.C. 2001) 247-262.

Buondelmonti, Description: Description des îles de l'Archipel grec par Christophe Buondelmonti. Ed. É. Legrand (Paris 1897, reprint Amsterdam 1974).

Busolini, Giuseppe da Leonessa: D. Busolini: Giuseppe da Leonessa, santo. In: M. Caravale (ed.), Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani 57: Giulini – Gonzaga (Roma 2001) <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giuseppe-da-leonessa-santo_(Dizionario-Biografico)>.

Carayon, Relations inédites: A. Carayon, Relations inédites des missions de la Compagnie de Jésus à Constantinople et dans le Levant au XVIIe siècle. Documents inédits concernant la Compagnie de Jésus 11 (Poitiers 1864).

Çetinkaya, Arap Camii: H. Çetinkaya, Arap Camii in Istanbul: Its Architecture and Frescoes. Anatolia Antiqua 18, 2010, 169-188.

Chiaretti/d'Alatri, Missione cappuccino a Costantinopoli: G. Chiaretti / M. d'Alatri (eds), La missione cappuccina a Costantinopoli e il martirio di san Giuseppe da Leonessa (Leonessa 1987).

Coşkun, St. Benoît: İ. Coşkun, Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bir Fransız Misyoner Okulunun Kuruluş Süreci: Saint-Benoît (1360-1804). Erzincan University Journal of Social Sciences Institute 15/2, 2022, 200-214.

Ćurčić, Architecture in the Balkans: S. Ćurčić, Architecture in the Balkans (New Haven 2010).

Dalleggio D'Alessio, Relatione: E. Dalleggio D'Alessio, Relatione dello stato della Cristianità di Pera e Costantinopoli obbediente al sommo

pontefice romano: manoscritto della prima metà del 17o secolo (Constantinople 1925).

Monastère de Sainte-Marie: E. Dalleggio D'Alessio, Le monastère de Sainte-Marie de la Miséricorde de la citerne de Péra ou de Saint-Benoît: des origines à l'occupation du monastère par les Jésuites (12 mai 1427 - 18 novembre 1583). EO 33, 1934, 59-94.

De Carbognano, Descrizione topografica: C. C. De Carbognano, Descrizione topografica dello stato presente di Constantinopoli arricchita di figure (Bassano 1794. Reprint ed. V. Ruggieri, Rome 1992).

De Gontaut-Biron, Ambassade en Turquie: T. de Gontaut-Biron (ed.), Ambassade en Turquie de Jean de Gontaut-Biron, Baron de Salignac, 1605 à 1610. Archives historiques de la Gascogne 16 (Paris 1888).

De Obaldia, French Protectorate: Vanessa R. de Obaldia, The French Protectorate Through Firmâns of the Conventual Archive of Saints Peter and Paul. In: C. Monge / S. Pedone (eds), Domenicani a Costantinopoli prima e dopo l'impero ottomano. Biblioteca di memorie domenicane 17 (Florence 2017) 69-86.

Demus, Byzantine Mosaic Decoration: O. Demus, Byzantine Mosaic Decoration (London 1948).

Eyice, Remarques: S. Eyice, Remarques sur deux anciennes églises byzantines d'Istanbul: Koca Mustafa Paşa camii et l'église du Yuşa tepesi. In: Πεπραγμένα του Διεθνούς Βυζαντινολογικού Συνεδρίου 9, 1. Hellenika suppl. 7 (Athēnai 1955) 184-195.

Frazee, Catholics and Sultans: Ch. A. Frazee, Catholics and Sultans: the Church and the Ottoman Empire 1453-1923 (London 1983).

Ganchou, Mehmed II: T. Ganchou, Mehmed II, privilèges octroyés aux habitants de Péra / Galata. In: V. Déroche / N. Vatin (eds), Constantinople 1453: des Byzantins aux Ottomans: textes et documents (Toulouse 2016) 513-518.

Gedeon, Byzantinon Eortologion: M. I. Gedeon, Βυζαντινὸν Εορτολόγιον: Μνήμαι των από του Δ΄ μέχρι του ΙΕ΄ Αιώνος Εορταζομένων Αγίων εν Κωνσταντινουπόλει (Kōnstantinoupolis 1899).

Gerola, vedute di Costantinopoli: G. Gerola, Le vedute di Costantinopoli di Cristoforo Buondelmonti. SBN 3, 1931, 247-279.

Giordani, Arap Camii: F. Giordani, L'Arap Camii o antica chiesa di S. Paolo a Galata. Opus: Quaderni di storia dell'architettura e restauro 4, 1995, 267-292.

Gurlitt, Baukunst Konstantinopels: C. Gurlitt, Die Baukunst Konstantinopels (Berlin 1912).

Gyllius, Topographia Constantinopoleos: P. Gyllius, De topographia Constantinopoleos et de illius antiquitatibus libri IV (Lyon 1561).

Harrison, Excavations at Saraçhane: M. Harrison, Excavations at Saraçhane in Istanbul 1 (Princeton 1986).

Hasluck, Dr. Covel's Notes: F. W. Hasluck, Dr. Covel's Notes on Galata. Annual of the British School at Athens 11, 1904-1905, 50-62.

Hawkins / Mathews, Notes: E. W. Hawkins / T. F. Mathews, Notes on the Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii in Istanbul and Its Frescoes. DOP 39, 1985, 125-134.

Inalcik, Policy of Mehmed II: H. Inalcik, The Policy of Mehmed II Toward the Greek Population of Istanbul and the Byzantine Buildings of the City. DOP 23/24, 1969/1970, 229-249.

Ottoman Galata: H. Inalcik, Ottoman Galata, 1453-1553. In: Première rencontre internationale sur l'Empire ottoman et la Turquie modern. Varia Turcica 13 (Istanbul 1991) 17-116.

Survey of Istanbul: H. İnalcık, The Survey of Istanbul 1455 (Istanbul 2010).

Janin, Églises et monastères: R. Janin, La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantin 1: Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat œcuménique 3: Les églises et les monastères 2 (Paris 1969).

Kafescioğlu, Constantinopolis / Istanbul: Ç. Kafescioğlu, Constantinopolis / Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital (University Park PA 2009).

Byzantium: Ç. Kafescioğlu, Byzantium in Early Modern Istanbul. In: S. Bassett (ed.), The Cambridge Companion to Constantinople (Cambridge 2022) 339-357.

Kidonopoulos, Urban Physiognomy: V. Kidonopoulos, The Urban Physiognomy of Constantinople from the Latin Conquest through the Palaiologan Era. In: S. T. Brooks (ed.), Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557): Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture (New Haven 2006) 98-117.

Kırımtayıf, Converted Byzantine Churches: S. Kırımtayıf, Converted Byzantine Churches in Istanbul: Their Transformation into Mosques and Masjids. Ege Yayınları 46 (Istanbul 2001).

Kömürciyan, Istanbul Tarihi ed. Andreasyan: Eremya Çelebi Kömürciyan, İstanbul Tarihi. 17: Asırda İstanbul. Ed. and translated by H. D. Andreasyan (Istanbul 1952).

Istanbul Tarihi ed. Pamukciyan: Eremya Çelebi Kömürciyan, İstanbul Tarihi. 17: Asırda İstanbul. Ed. K. Pamukciyan (Istanbul 1988).

Laporte, Voyage à Constantinople: J.-P. Laporte (ed.), Le voyage à Constantinople du chevalier de Clairac: archéologie et architecture en Méditerranée orientale (1724-1727) (Antibes 2009).

Leggio, Genova a Costantinopoli: S. Leggio, Genova a Costantinopoli: la colonia di Galata, la chiesa di S. Domenico e il suo »perduto« ciclo murale. Arte medievale 11, 2021, 89-140.

Macridy, Monastery of Lips: Th. Macridy, The Monastery of Lips and the Burials of the Palaeologi. DOP 18, 1964, 253-277.

Magdalino, Medieval Constantinople: P. Magdalino, Medieval Constantinople. In: id., Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople. Variorum Collected Studies 855 (Aldershot 2006) 1-111.

Maguire, Mosaics of Nea Moni: H. Maguire, The Mosaics of Nea Moni: an Imperial Reading. DOP 46, 1992, 205-214.

Mango, St. Mary Pammakaristos: C. Mango, The Monument and Its History. In: H. Belting / C. Mango / D. Mouriki (eds), The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii) at Istanbul. DOS 15 (Washington 1978) 3-42.

Marinis, Church Building: V. Marinis, Church Building and Ecclesiastical Practice. In: S. Bassett (ed.), The Cambridge Companion to Constantinople (Cambridge 2022) 180-199.

Mathews, Sequel to Nicaea II: T. F. Mathews, The Sequel to Nicaea II in Byzantine Church Decoration. Perkins Journal 41/3, 1988, 11-23.

Miljković, Semantra and Bells: B. Miljković, Semantra and Bells in Byzantium. ZRVI 55, 2018, 271-281.

Mitler, Genoese in Galata: L. Mitler, The Genoese in Galata: 1453-1682. IJMES 10/1, 1979, 71-91.

Morelli, Giuseppe da Leonessa: P. Morelli, San Giuseppe da Leonessa. In: M. Assogna / F. Bencetti / M. Idria Gurgo / P. Morelli (eds), Servire l'uomo: I volti della misericordia nella chiesa del Lazio (Roma 2016) 92-95.

Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon: W. Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls (Tübingen 1977).

Mylonas, Bildlexikon des Heiligen Berges: P. M. Mylonas, Bildlexikon des Heiligen Berges Athos 1: Atlas des Athos 1: Topographie und historische Architektur der Klöster (Tübingen 2000).

Necipoğlu, Byzantium: N. Necipoğlu, Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins (Cambridge 2009).

Gennadios Scholarios: N. Necipoğlu, Gennadios Scholarios and the Patriarchate. In: M. Mullett / R. G. Ousterhout (eds), The Holy Apostles (Washington, D.C. 2020) 237-246.

Niewöhner, St. Benoît: P. Niewöhner, St. Benoît in Galata: der byzantinische Ursprungsbau. Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts 125, 2010, 155-242.

Nomidis / Schneider, Galata: M. S. Nomidis / A. M. Schneider, Galata: topographisch-archäologischer Plan (Istanbul 1944).

Orlandos, Monasteriake Architektonike: A. K. Orlandos, Μοναστηριακή Αρχιτεκτονική (Athēnai ²1958).

Ousterhout, Constantinople: R. Ousterhout, Constantinople, Bithynia, and Regional Developments in Later Palaeologan Architecture. In: S. Ćurčić / D. Mouriki (eds), The Twilight of Byzantium: Aspects of Cultural and Religious History in the Late Byzantine Empire (Princeton 1991) 75-110.

Eastern Medieval Architecture: R. G. Ousterhout, Eastern Medieval Architecture: the Building Traditions of Byzantium and Neighbouring Lands (Oxford 2019).

Pantokrator Monastery: R. Ousterhout, The Pantokrator Monastery and Architectural Interchanges in the Thirteenth Century. In: G. Ortalli / G. Ravegnani / P. Schreiner (eds), Quarta Crociata: Venezia – Bisanzio – Impero Latino 2 (Venezia 2006) 749-770.

Paul d'Alep, Voyage du patriarche Macaire: Voyage du patriarche Macaire d'Antioche [par Paul d'Alep]: texte arabe et trad. française par Basile Radu. PO 22, 1 = 107; 24, 4 = 119; 26, 5 = 129 (Paris 1930-1945).

Paul of Aleppo, Travels of Macarius: Paul of Aleppo, The Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch. Transl. F. C. Belfour (London 1829-1834. ²1836).

Polonio, Santa Maria: V. Polonio, Santa Maria della Misericordia della Cisterna a Pera di Costantinopoli. In: Liguria monastica. Italia benedettina 2 (Cesena 1979) 401-421.

Quirini-Popławski, Ex partibus orientalibus translata: R. Quirini-Popławski, Ex partibus orientalibus translata ad hanc urbem: The Evacuation of Elements of Church Decoration from Pera to Genoa in 1461. In: M. O'Doherty / F. Schmieder (eds), Travels and Mobilities in the Middle Ages. From the Atlantic to the Black Sea (Turnhout 2015) 291-312.

Raby, Founder of Constantinople: J. Raby, From the Founder of Constantinople to the Founder of Istanbul: Mehmed the Conqueror, Fatih Camii, and the Church of the Holy Apostles. In: M. Mullett / R. G. Ousterhout (eds), The Holy Apostles (Washington, D.C. 2020) 247-283.

Roche, Éducation: M. Roche, Éducation, assistance et culture françaises dans l'Empire ottoman. Les cahiers du Bosphore 1 (Istanbul 1989).

Rodriguez Suarez, Bell Ringing: A. Rodriguez Suarez, Bell Ringing in Latin Pera: Sounds and Silence. Yıllık: Annual of Istanbul Studies 4, 2022, 67-79.

Ruggieri, Costantinopoli: V. Ruggieri, Costantinopoli vista da P. Giulio Mancinelli S. J. (1583-1585). REB 60, 2002, 113-131.

Ruiu, Conflicting Visions: A. Ruiu, Conflicting Visions of the Jesuit Missions to the Ottoman Empire, 1609-1628. Journal of Jesuit Studies 1, 2014, 260-280.

Sauvaget, Notes: J. Sauvaget, Notes sur la colonie génoise de Péra. Syria 15, 1934, 252-275.

Schiffer, Oriental Panorama: R. Schiffer, Oriental Panorama. British Travellers in 19th Century Turkey (Amsterdam 1999).

Schneider, Byzanz: A. M. Schneider, Byzanz: Vorarbeiten zur Topographie und Archäologie der Stadt. Istanbuler Forschungen 8 (Berlin 1936).

Seewann / Stoy, Bücherkunde Südosteuropa: G. Seewann / M. Stoy, Historische Bücherkunde Südosteuropa (Oldenburg 2002).

Sicimoğlu Yenikler, Cultural Transformation: S. Sicimoğlu Yenikler, The Cultural Transformation of Genoese Galata From the Byzantine to the Ottoman Rule and Its Reflection on the Church of San Domenico. In: M. Folin / A. Musarra (eds), Cultures and Practices of Coexistence from the Thirteenth through the Seventeenth Centuries. Routledge Studies in Cultural History 91 = Multi-Ethnic Cities in the Mediterranean World 1 (New York 2021) 76-98.

Sinos, Klosterkirche der Kosmosoteira: S. Sinos, Die Klosterkirche der Kosmosoteira in Bera (Vira). ByzA 16 (München 1985).

Soucek, Piri Reis: S. Soucek, Piri Reis and Turkish Mapmaking after Columbus: the Khalili Portolan Atlas 2 (London 1996).

Talbot Rice, Church of Hagia Sophia: D. Talbot Rice (ed.), The Church of Haghia Sophia at Trebizond (Edinburgh 1968).

Tekinalp, Hagios Ioannes in Prusa: V. M. Tekinalp, Remodelling the Monastery of Hagios Ioannes in Prusa at Olympum. In: D. D. Ëlšin (ed.), Architecture of Byzantium and Kievan Rus from the 9th to the 12th Centuries. Transactions of the State Hermitage Museum 53 (St.-Petersburg 2010) 162-177.

Yerasimos, Galata: S. Yerasimos, Galata à travers les récits de voyage (1453-1600). In: E. Eldem (ed.), Première rencontre international sur l'Empire ottoman et la Turquie. Varia Turcica 13 (Istanbul 1991) 117-137.

Grecs d'Istanbul: S. Yerasimos, Les Grecs d'Istanbul après la conquête ottoman: le repeuplement de la ville et de ses environs (1453-1550). Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée 107-110, 2005, 375-399.

Summary / Zusammenfassung / Résumé

Saint Benoît at Galata or the Survival of the Unfittest. The Exceptional Perseverance of a Byzantine Monastery in Ottoman Istanbul

St Benoît at Galata was also known as S. Maria della Cisterna and appears to have started out as a late Byzantine monastery within a large early Byzantine cistern. The rectangular perimeter of the cistern informs the outline of St Benoît's estate until this day, and neither church nor monastery were affected by the Ottoman conquest of Istanbul and Galata, when other such Christian institutions were disbanded and eventually converted or replaced. This paper asks why not St Benoît, and describes how the church and monastery survived by a concatenation of exceptional circumstances. In particular, St Benoît appears to have profited from being ill-suited for Muslim prayer.

St. Benoît in Galata oder *Survival of the Unfittest*. Der außergewöhnliche Fortbestand eines byzantinischen Klosters im osmanischen Istanbul

St. Benoît in Galata war früher auch als Santa Maria della Cisterna bekannt und scheint als spätbyzantinisches Kloster in einer großen frühbyzantinischen Zisterne eingerichtet worden zu sein. Deren mächtige Umfassungsmauern begrenzten und schützten das Kloster, und so blieb das Anwesen während und nach der osmanischen Eroberung Istanbuls und Galatas unberührt, als andere christliche Institutionen zerfielen und Kirchen früher oder später in Moscheen umgewandelt wurden. Dieser Beitrag fragt, warum das nicht auch bei St. Benoît der Fall war, und versucht zu erklären, wie Kirche und Kloster durch eine Verkettung außergewöhnlicher Umstände erhalten blieben. Insbesondere scheint St. Benoît davon profitiert zu haben, dass das Kirchengebäude nicht als Moschee geeignet war.

Saint Benoît à Galata ou la survie du moins apte. La persévérance exceptionnelle d'un monastère byzantine dans l'Istanbul ottoman

Saint-Benoît à Galata, également connue sous le nom de S. Maria della Cisterna, semble avoir été un monastère byzantin construit dans une grande citerne du début de l'époque byzantine. Le périmètre rectangulaire de la citerne caractérise encore aujourd'hui le plan de la parcelle de Saint-Benoît, et ni l'église ni le monastère n'ont été affectés par la conquête ottomane d'Istanbul et de Galata, lorsque d'autres institutions chrétiennes de ce type ont été dissoutes et finalement transformées ou remplacées. Cet article pose la question du sort différent subi par Saint-Benoît et décrit les circonstances exceptionnelles qui ont permis à l'église et au monastère de survivre. Il semble notamment que Saint-Benoît ait bénéficié du fait qu'elle était inadaptée à la prière musulmane.