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Elements in the History of Constantinople

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THE CHORA MONASTERY OF CONSTANTINOPLE

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Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-48680-4 — The Chora Monastery of Constantinople
Emmanuel S. Moutafov
Frontmatter
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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

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www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009486804

DOI: 10.1017/9781108946476

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When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI 10.1017/9781108946476

First published 2024

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-009-48680-4 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-108-93113-7 Paperback
ISSN 2514-3891 (online)
ISSN 2514-3883 (print)

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The Chora Monastery of Constantinople

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DOI: 10.1017/9781108946476
First published online: December 2024

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Abstract: The Chora is one of the most celebrated churches built in Constantinople during the Byzantine era (330–1453). It is particularly famous for its glorious mosaics and frescoes, mostly dating to the fourteenth century, which are a particularly fine example of Late Byzantine art. After the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the church was repurposed as a mosque, known as the Kariye Camii.

Between 1945 and 2020, it had another incarnation, as the Kariye Museum, but then in 2020, in line with changing Turkish governmental policies, it again became a mosque. This Element sets out the history of the building, presents its artwork, and considers how best to interpret its construction, significance, and meaning. Above all, it offers an insight into images and words that are currently inaccessible to the general public.

Keywords: Chora, Byzantine art, Palaiologan art, Constantinople, Byzantine epigraphy

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ISBNs: 9781009486804 (HB), 9781108931137 (PB), 9781108946476 (OC)
ISSNs: 2514-3891 (online), 2514-3883 (print)

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