

For other uses, see Fatih Mosque (disambiguation).

Coordinates: 41°1′11″N 28°56′59″E﻿ / ﻿

The Fatih Mosque (Turkish: Fatih Camii, "Conqueror's Mosque" in English) is an Ottoman mosque in the Fatih district of Istanbul, Turkey. The original mosque on the site was constructed between 1463 and 1470 on the site of the Church of the Holy Apostles. It was seriously damaged in the 1766 earthquake and was rebuilt in 1771 to a different design. It is one of the largest examples of Ottoman-Islamic architecture in Istanbul and represents an important stage in the development of classic Ottoman architecture. It is named after Ottoman sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, known in Turkish as Fatih Sultan Mehmed, the Ottoman sultan who conquered Constantinople in 1453.

Sahn-ı Seman Medrese, a main center for the study of various traditional Islamic sciences such as theology, law, medicine, astronomy, physics and mathematics, was part of the Fatih Mosque and was founded by the Turkic astronomer Ali Qushji who was invited by Mehmed to his court in Istanbul.

Contents

1 History

2 Architecture

2.1 Exterior

2.2 Interior

2.3 Complex

3 Influences

4 See also

5 Notes

6 References

7 External links

History[edit]

The Fatih mosque complex was a religious and social building of unprecedented size and complexity built in Istanbul between 1463-1470 by the order of Fatih Sultan Mehmed.[1] The mosque was built on the site of the former Byzantine Church of the Holy Apostles, which had been in poor condition since the Fourth Crusade, and was demolished in order for the Fatih mosque to be constructed.[1] The Church was the burial place of the Roman Emperor Constantine — prior to the construction of the mosque, Constantine's sarcophagus was placed in the center of 12 sarchophagi representing the 12 apostles, in "the symbolic place of Christ.[2]

It was built by the Greek architect Atik Sinan.[1][3] The Fatih mosque was the first monumental project in the Ottoman imperial architectural tradition.[1]

The original complex included a set of well-planned buildings constructed around the mosque. They include eight medrese, library, hospital, hospice, caravanserai,[4] market, hamam, primary school and public kitchen (imaret) which served food to the poor. Various türbe were added at a later dates. The original complex covered an almost square area 325 metres (1,066 feet) on a side, extending along the Golden Horn side of Fevzipasa Street. The original mosque was badly damaged in the 1509 earthquake,[5] after that it was repaired, but was then damaged again by earthquakes in 1557 and 1754 and repaired yet

again. It was then completely destroyed by an earthquake on 22 May 1766 when the main dome collapsed and the walls were irreparably damaged. The current mosque (designed on a completely different plan) was completed in 1771[4] under Sultan Mustafa III by the architect, Mimar Mehmet Tahir.[5]

Architecture[edit]

Exterior[edit]

The first Fatih mosque had one central dome supported by a single semi-dome of the same diameter on the qibla side and suspended on four arches, its dome was 26 meter in diameter.[1] The second mosque which was built (1771) by Sultan Mustafa III after the 1766 earthquake, was built on a square plan. It has one central dome supported by four semi-domes.[1] The courtyard, main entrance portal and lower portions of the minarets remain from the original construction, with the remainder consisting of the 1771 Baroque reconstruction.

Interior[edit]

The present interior of the Fatih Mosque is essentially a copy of earlier designs invented by Sinan re-used repeatedly by himself and his successors throughout Istanbul (this technique is emulative of the Hagia Sophia). The 26 meter diameter center dome is supported by four semi-domes on each axis supported by four large marble columns. There are two minarets each with twin galleries. The calligraphy within the mosque and the mimbar exhibit a Baroque influence, but the white tiles of inferior quality are a poor comparison with the İznik tiled splendor of mosques such as the Rüstem Pasha Mosque. The mihrab dates from the original construction.[1]

Complex[edit]

As with other imperial mosques in Istanbul, the Fatih Mosque was designed as a kulliye, or complex with adjacent structures to service both religious and cultural needs.

To the north and south of the mosque are the Sahn-ı Seman, eight great medrese, four to each side. These buildings are symmetrical, and each contains 18 cells for students (each housing four youths) and a dersane. Behind each was an annex, about half as large as the medrese itself, all of which have been destroyed as a result of road construction. The medreses provided for about a thousand students, making it a large university for its time. The Hospice (taphane) is outside the southeast corner of the mosque precincts. The building has a beautiful courtyard supported by 16 exceptional columns of verd antique and granite, which were probably salvaged from the Church of the Holy Apostles. Opposite the hospice is the large türbe of Sultan Mahmud II's mother, Naksh-i Dil Sultana.

In the graveyard on the kiblah side behind the mosque are the türbe of Sultan Mehmet II and his wife Gulbahar Hatun. Both were reconstructed after the earthquake. The türbe of the Conqueror is very baroque with a lavishly decorated interior. The türbe of Gulbahar is simple, with classic lines, and may closely resemble the original. In addition, the graveyard has a large number of graves belonging to leading state officials, including Osman Nuri Pasha. The distinguished Ottoman scholar and university professor Halil İnalcık was buried here in 2016.

On the kiblah side of the mosque, connected to it, is a domed library which was built in 1724. One of its doors opens onto the street, while the two other open onto the inner

courtyard of the mosque. The library is undergoing repairs, and the books are under protection at the Suleymaniye Library.

The caravanserai in the complex was repaired in the 1980s and combined with new shops to begin functioning as a workplace. The hospital, market, kitchens and hammam belonging to the original complex no longer exist.

Fatih Mosque west side

Fatih Mosque interior

Fatih Mosque ceiling

Fatih Mosque interior

Fatih Mosque Domes

Fatih Mosque decoration

Fatih Sultan Mosque fish eye

Fatih Mosque group

Fatih Mosque courtyard

Influences[edit]

According to the Turkish historian Mehmet Aga-Oglu, the mosque is a representation of Islamic Persian medresse architecture and not Byzantine church architecture.[6] This opinion is supported by other Turkish academics that state Ottoman architecture is an extension of "Near Eastern architectural tradition".[6]

See also[edit]

List of mosques

Ottoman architecture

Notes[edit]