

Before the Corpus: Byzantine Mosaics in Istanbul in Nineteenth-Century French Guide-Books

Korpus Öncesi: 19. Yüzyıl Fransız Rehber Kitaplarında İstanbul Bizans Mozaikleri

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Abstract

The study of a series of nineteenth-century French guide-books shows the evolution of the art of travel: guide-books were first based on the experience of travellers and the documentation summarized by writers. Little by little, guide-books became more detailed and gave more accurate descriptions of the ornamentation of buildings: art history replaced general impressions. Guide-books also witnessed the changes of mentalities on both sides: foreign visitors and local citizens.

Keywords: *Istanbul, guide-books, nineteenth-century travel, Byzantine church, art history.*

Öz

19. yüzyıla ait bir dizi Fransız rehber kitapları çalışması, seyahat sanatının gelişimini göstermektedir. Rehber kitaplar ilk olarak, seyahatçıların deneyimlerine ve yazarlarca özetlenen belgelere dayanmaktadır. Zaman geçtikçe rehber kitaplar daha detaylı olmuş ve yapıların süslemeleri hakkında daha doğru tanımlamalar vermiştir. Sanat tarihi, genel izlenimlerin yerini almıştır. Rehber kitaplar aynı zamanda her iki tarafta yani yabancı ziyaretçiler ve yerli vatandaşlar arasında zihniyet değişimlerine de tanık olmuştur

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İstanbul, rehber kitaplar, 19. yüzyıl seyahati, Bizans kilisesi, sanat tarihi.*

How did nineteenth-century guide-books pay attention to mosaics? What was written about them? How were they considered? The table (Fig. 1) recapitulates the publications of the main series of guide-books published during the nineteenth-century in the three main European languages used by travellers (French, English and German). As guide-books are too numerous to be studied comprehensively in this paper, I will focus on a forgotten series of guide-books published in French from the end of the eighteenth century up to the end of the First World War which included the Joanne guide-books. After 1919 they were turned into the famous series of the “Guides Bleus” (Blue Guides) that every educated French-speaking traveller used.

Most of the nineteenth-century travellers in the Orient were looking for what I may call the “Oriental Dream” described by the first European travellers and most of the writers who tried to embellish their own experience. Travelogues and literature are full of odalisques, harems, slave markets, dervishes, and Karagöz shows etc.: picturesque topics that could not be left aside by the guide-book writers; nevertheless some places like the slave market in Constantinople had closed many years earlier but a description was still provided.

In this paper, I will consider what was written about the mosaics of Hagia Sophia and of other Byzantine churches in these guide-books. We must keep in mind that the early traveller could see very few mosaics, even if he was

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interested in them. In Anatolia, the scholar or erudite traveller could see ruins of ancient cities, sometimes understand the main lines of the streets, identify some important monuments like temples, theatres or baths, but their wall decoration had fallen down and the mosaic floors were to remain unexcavated for a long time. These people could remember the Classical texts they had studied at school, college or university; the Joanne guide-books encouraged the travellers to copy the inscriptions they found on the spot (Joanne – Isambert 1873: XXXVI-XXXVII) and gave information for making plaster moulds in order to get an exact copy of the Greek and Latin inscriptions they saw (Zapata-Aubé 2013). The collected material was intended to be transmitted to museums and antiquarian societies.

Most of the guide-book writers did not see for themselves what they described. They quoted other travellers or compiled information from various publications. It was difficult to get inside a mosque: all guide-books explained how to get a *firman*, i.e. a special authorization bought from the Ottoman authorities and obtained through foreign embassies. From 1861, such a permit was not required to enter Hagia Sophia (Joanne – Isambert 1861: 368-369). Guide-books paid attention to architecture, and mostly to Islamic cultural furniture which usually was new for them (*mimber*, *mirhab*, pew for ladies, etc.). In Byzantine churches

Figure 1
Table of the different guide-books published from 1805 to 1921. Figures between brackets (2) indicate the number of editions of the same guide-book.

that had been turned into mosques, guide-books and writers noted the change of orientation of the shrine and the carpets or mats, used alternately in winter and summer. These carpets covered the whole floor and prevented the visitor from seeing the original pavements: marble slabs or *opus sectile*. Did anyone even think of such hidden decorations?

I. Hagia Sophia

This church, turned into a mosque by Mehmet II, was obviously the most famous church to be visited in the Orient.

I.1. Before the Fossati brothers' works, what could be seen by the European traveller?

During the seventeenth century, Guillaume Joseph Grelot, an intrepid French traveller, stayed overnight in this mosque (Kelly 2004: 70-74) and included engravings of some of his drawings in his book *Relation nouvelle d'un voyage de Constantinople* (Grelot 1680). The main figures of the interior of the church showed the cupola and the seraphs in the pendentives. He tried to give the details of the patterns of the marble wall revetment, but he was mainly impressed by the church's size; and he had some difficulties with perspective.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, H. A. O. Reichard wrote in his *Guide des Voyageurs en Europe* that:

The main [mosque] is Hagia Sophia, richer and more magnificent than all the rest. It was originally built by Emperor Justinian. Thanks to its massive solidity, it has withstood the ordeal of several earthquakes. It has more than three hundred columns of Egyptian green marble. A few fragments of its mosaics left in the corners have escaped the Turks' iconoclastic fury (Reichard 1805: 577).

This text was reprinted in the later editions (until 1821) without any change. Reichard, who did not visit Turkey but read many books on the subject, pointed out the main characteristics of the church: enormous, strongly built, richly decorated with marble columns and mosaics, and Muslim iconoclasm, topics that were to be found in the later guide-books. This description did not help the traveller to imagine what the building looked like.

In 1839, Lacroix wrote this strange account in his *Guide du voyageur à Constantinople et dans ses environs*:

The dome of Hagia Sophia is lined with glass tesserae affixed to gilded metal plates. When the sun's rays strike these rich mosaics, they shine with a radiance that calls the mighty basilica to the reverent attention of the faithful. There was a period in which the Turks destroyed the church's reputation by covering this resplendent surface with plaster. Yet it is not long before that shroud cast over a place of worship of dazzling splendor was removed, once again exposing the gold and the colors of the great basilica of Hagia Sophia to the admiration of the curious and the light of the sun (Lacroix 1839: 41).

It is obvious that Lacroix did not visit the mosque and that he had tried to write something following Procopius, but misunderstood the meaning of his description:

“You might say that the interior space is not illuminated by the sun from the outside, but that the radiance is generated within, so great an abundance of light bathes this shrine all round. *De aedificiis* I.i.23ff” (Kostenec 2007: 109).

I. 2. The restoration works

After finding the mosque in bad condition, and discovering the main mosaics by chance, the Fossati brothers, Swiss architects working for the Sultan Abdul Mecid (Nelson 2004: 30), had to hide the Christian designs by new designs, mainly geometric, inspired by Justinianic mosaics (Teteriatnikov 1998: 18). Hagia Sophia was inaugurated by the Sultan on July 13th 1849. The French magazine *L'Illustration* and later Adolphe Joanne (Joanne s. d.: fig. 226), published a general exterior view of the mosque with the official procession. No view of the interior was published in this book. Fortunately the Fossati brothers had shown the mosaics to the Sultan before their covering with whitewash and had made drawings of internal views in order to publish an album (Fossati 1852). Thanks to this album containing 15 engravings of the inside of the mosque, we can understand what it looked like before (Fig. 2) and after the works (Fig. 3). The interior was shabby and the thousands of oil lamps burning for ages had covered the wall marble decorations and vault mosaics with soot. Figure 2 (before) shows a blackened view of the interior. Of course, after the work, light and gold were back as well as worshippers. The album was some kind of propaganda to glorify the Sultan, commissioners and architects, but it is obvious that the restoration works brought back some of the mosque's original magnificence.

Figure 2
Haghia Sophia's interior
before the restoration works
(Fossati 1852: pl. 24).

Figure 3
Haghia Sophia's interior
after the restoration works
(Fossati 1852: pl. 3).



The album showed the concept of restoration works of the time. The architects had understood the beauty of the building but they were influenced by the Sultan's etiquette: the mosque looked as magnificent as a palace, and more a place of luxury and power than a Muslim place of worship (Teteriatnikov 1998: 29). There was a hint of the changing Turkey through the different garments people wore: traditional worshippers wore caftans, ladies hid themselves behind white head veils, modern civil servants wore the Nizam jacket, officers and servicemen showed their new Europeanized uniforms from the newly created military schools (Moreau 2003: § 8), and at last Western clad visitors were represented.

I. 3. What did travellers see after the restoration works?

We might imagine that all travellers would be impressed by the newly restored building, but Gustave Flaubert wrote very little about his visit in 1850:

The overpowering height of the nave is exceeded only by that of the dome, which is covered with mosaics. [...] In the four corners of the dome are giant cherubim (Flaubert 2006: 370).

It seemed that nothing happened since Reichard's short account and Lacroix' strange description. The next important guide-book published by Richard and Quéting in 1851 did not pay more attention to the mosque; this very short and general note showed that the authors did not visit it, but that they had to provide an obligatory note about this famous building:

Of all these ruins, Hagia Sophia, the wonder of the East, is the only one still standing today, as magnificent and majestic as ever, as if to demonstrate the kind of solidity that was required to withstand all the revolutions over the centuries (Richard et Quéting 1851: 493).

Fortunately, not all visitors were blind and Théophile Gautier, French writer, fine art connoisseur and art critic wrote this beautiful description when he saw the mosaics in 1852:

Although Islam, a foe to plastic art, has stripped Saint Sophia of a large portion of its ornaments, it is still a magnificent temple. The mosaics with gold backgrounds, representing biblical subjects, like those of San Marco, have disappeared under a layer of whitewash; the four giant cherubim of the pendentives alone have been preserved, and their six multi-coloured wings still shimmer upon the scintillating cubes of gilded crystal. But the heads which form the centre of the whirlwinds of feathers have been concealed under large gold roses; the reproduction of the human face being abhorrent to Muslims. At the very end of the sanctuary, under the vaulting, the lines of a colossal figure which the layer of whitewash could not completely hide, are vaguely perceived. The figure is that of the patroness of the church, the image of Divine Wisdom, or more accurately, of Holy Wisdom, *Agia Sophia*, which under the semi-transparent veil witnesses with impassibility the ceremonies of a strange ritual (Gautier 1912: 208-209; Gautier 2008: 316).

This description showed that despite the plaster layer and paintings imitating geometric designs, it was possible to detect the presence of original mosaic deities, as could be seen on a photograph taken in 1935: the Virgin enthroned with the Christ child could be distinguished behind the Fossatis' geometric designs (Teteriatnikov 1998: 24-25). Gautier's sharp eyes saw them. It is still possible

to see today big Christian crosses behind the golden painting with geometric designs (Fig. 4a).

In 1855, Blanchard was more interested in the number of marble columns than in mosaics. He did not mention the recent restoration works carried out by the Fossati brothers and gave wrong information about the evangelists supposed to have been represented in the pendentives:

The dome is subdivided into curved segments decorated with mosaics. At one time, the pendentives were also decorated with mosaics representing the four Evangelists, but these were later replaced by the *tughra* or ciphers of the four caliphs. [...] The beauty of Hagia Sophia's mosaics is proverbial. Unfortunately, the requirements of the Mohammedan religion made it necessary to hide every representation of the human body beneath a coat of whitewash. However that may be, enough has survived that we can still appreciate the original magnificence of this marvelous type of Byzantine architecture (Blanchard 1855: 385-386).

Surprisingly Blanchard was interested in other Byzantine churches and mentioned them in his guide-book: *Küçük Aya Sophia* (Blanchard 1855: 390), without describing any mosaic decorations, and at last *Kilise Cami* (p. 391) mentioning its pavement, without saying what it looked like:

The pavement of precious marble is still fairly well preserved.

We can observe a lack of interest in mosaics, and ornaments or architecture in general, but these very short and general notes were a first step towards organised descriptions printed in the next guide-books of the series. Around 1860 with the growing number of travellers going to Turkey, the Holy Land and Egypt, the knowledge of local arts slowly improved, giving way to better descriptions and a real interest in art history. Joanne guide-books listed important studies to read before leaving, like Louis Batissier's book *Histoire de l'art monumental dans l'Antiquité et au Moyen Âge*, with numerous ground plans and comparisons between different buildings; finally a scientific study of architectural styles, with a long study of Hagia Sophia (Batissier 1860: 395-403). This is a process that we are going to follow.

Adolphe Joanne was one of founders of the famous weekly *L'Illustration* in 1843, before giving his name to the Joanne Guide-book series. He was still

Figure 4
Haghia Sophia's interior:
(a) Christian crosses appearing under the painted geometric designs;
(b) the Virgin Mary in the apse (2004).



in touch with many journalists and men of letters including artists and writers like Adalbert de Beaumont, correspondent of *L'Illustration*, who drew many of the views of Constantinople printed in Joanne's book, *Voyages illustrés...* (Joanne s.d.: fig. 198-226; Nelson 2004: 29) and also wrote the French text of the Fossatis' album. In 1855 Joanne managed the guide-book series published by Louis Hachette which around 1860 became the "Guides Joanne". He was the right knowledgeable person to improve the editorial content because he was interested in arts, culture and everything concerning foreign countries and their civilisation. He had been travelling a lot on his own, mainly on foot: he knew what to read before leaving home and what documents were necessary when on the spot and far away from libraries.

The new guide-book about the Orient (Joanne - Isambert 1861) contained very rich essays about the Ottoman Empire. The bibliography had 152 entries, within which were 15 of general interest and 28 about Turkey. It showed what books were known at the time by Joanne and his co-author Émile Isambert. He was a doctor and also an erudite traveller (Morlier 2013: 275-277), who owned a very rich private library. The contents of this first enlarged guide-book showed the diminishing influence of travelogues and the increasing use of the first scientific publications in art history, which were referred to.

The description of the mosque was much longer than in Blanchard's previous guide-book (1855: 2 pages [384-385] and 1861: 4 pages [366-370] now in smaller block letters), and the account about mosaics gave the main guidelines, especially some information about the works:

Under the reigning Sultan (1847-1849), the large-scale restoration of Hagia Sophia was entrusted to G. Fossati, an architect from Ticino. He successfully used iron armatures to reinforce the arcades and walls then falling into ruins, underpinning them with skillfully concealed masonry. When the work of renovation was completed (on July 13, 1849), Sultan Abdülmecid inaugurated the mosque in a solemn ceremony. [...]

Current state [...] oriented north to south, this peristyle, sixty meters long by ten meters wide, is still resplendent with its ancient mosaics (p. 368).

The mosaics that decorated Hagia Sophia, representing Biblical subjects on golden backgrounds, were covered over with whitewash wherever human figures appeared, since the Muslim religion prohibits representation of the human form. This was the fate of the whole of the ceiling over the main nave: the wings of the cherubim portrayed in the dome's pendentives were preserved, but their faces were hidden by a sort of big gilded star. The mosaics in the side aisles, especially in the upper galleries, are well preserved even today, and suffice to give us a sense of the magnificence of the ancient basilica. Fossati uncovered the dome's mosaics in the course of the renovation that he undertook a few years ago, and was able to make sketches of them before covering them back up. His sketches were engraved and have been published in Berlin. At the back of the apse, one can discern, beneath the whitewash, a colossal figure with outstretched arms (p. 369) (Joanne – Isambert 1861: 368-369).

There are two misunderstandings: the Fossatis' album was published in London and has been confused with Wilhelm Salzenberg's book published in Berlin (Salzenberg 1854) (see below) and the great human figure in the apse did not have extended arms as we can easily see now (Fig. 4b).

When the 1861 *Orient* guide-book became out of print, a new edition was released in 1873, this time in three volumes instead of one; the same text was reproduced but the mistake about the Fossatis' album date and printing place had been corrected.

As Isambert tried to educate the traveller's sight and taste for the medieval architecture of Cairo (Morlier 2013: 281-286), the first *Orient* guide-book tried to introduce the reader to the glorious magnificence of Hagia Sophia, even if many things were far from an accurate reconstruction of a Byzantine church (different types of people in modern clothes show the variety of visitors and worshippers to the mosque). The Fossatis' album rendering the atmosphere of the building with its golden vaults and its beams of light was perfect for that purpose, and then once the traveller had obtained an overall impression of the golden interior of a Byzantine church, he was ready to deal with a scientific study. This was certainly why Salzenberg's book was referred to for other churches, but not Hagia Sophia, which seemed strange at first glance: it contained architectural plans

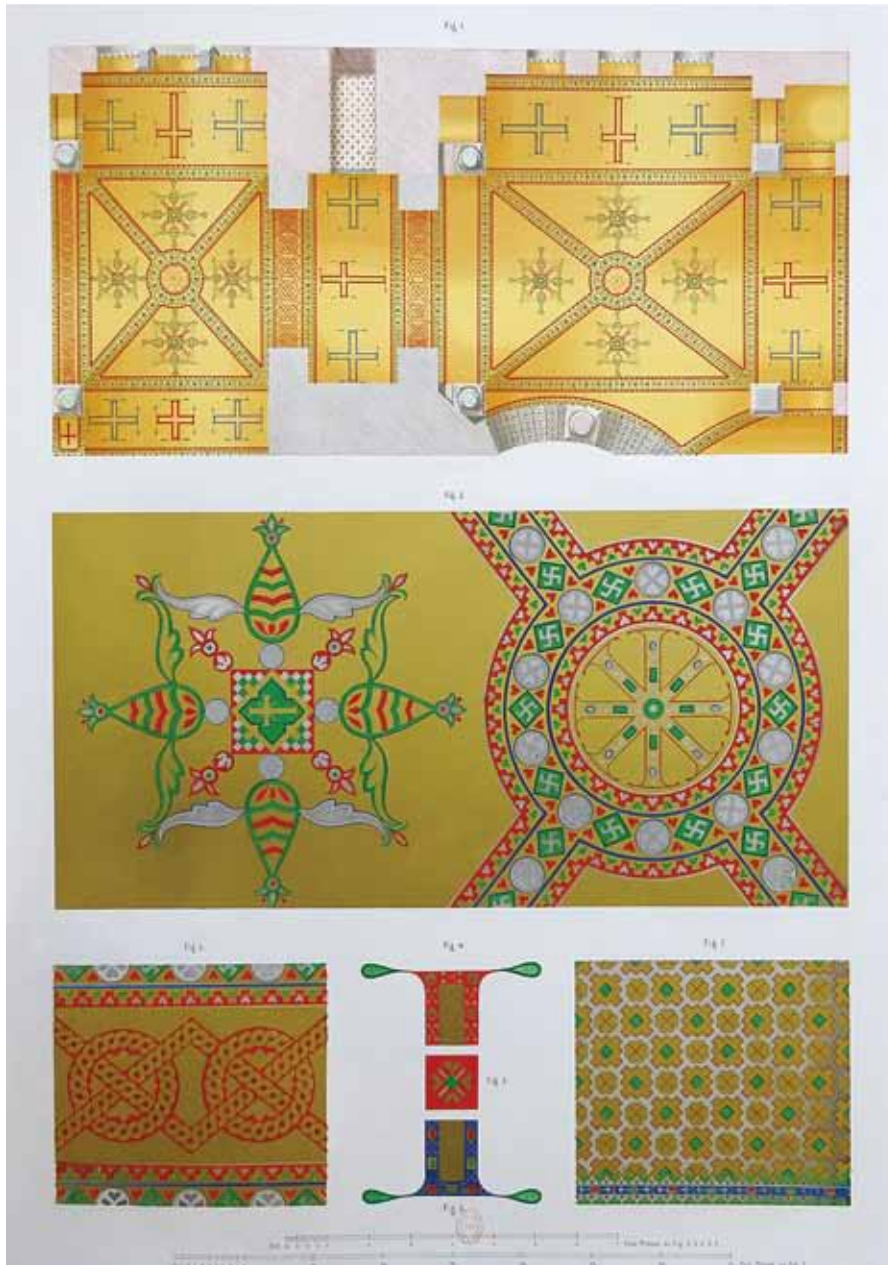


Figure 5
Hagia Sophia, details of
the golden mosaic vaulting
(Salzenberg 1854: pl. XXIV).

Figure 6
Haghia Sophia, profile
of the wall decoration
(Salzenberg 1854: pl. XXI).



and around 12 views and details of the mosaics mainly in full colours (Nelson 2004: 33) (Figs. 5-6). The architect Salzenberg, commissioned by the Emperor of Prussia, wrote a scientific study, well documented and illustrated, which did not give way to speculation or romantic spleen. Once the guide-book reader had seen Salzenberg's book about the other churches, he would be able to look at Hagia Sophia in a similar way.

This is what happened with the following editions of the guide-books, this time printed for wealthy travellers who came to Constantinople on the luxury train

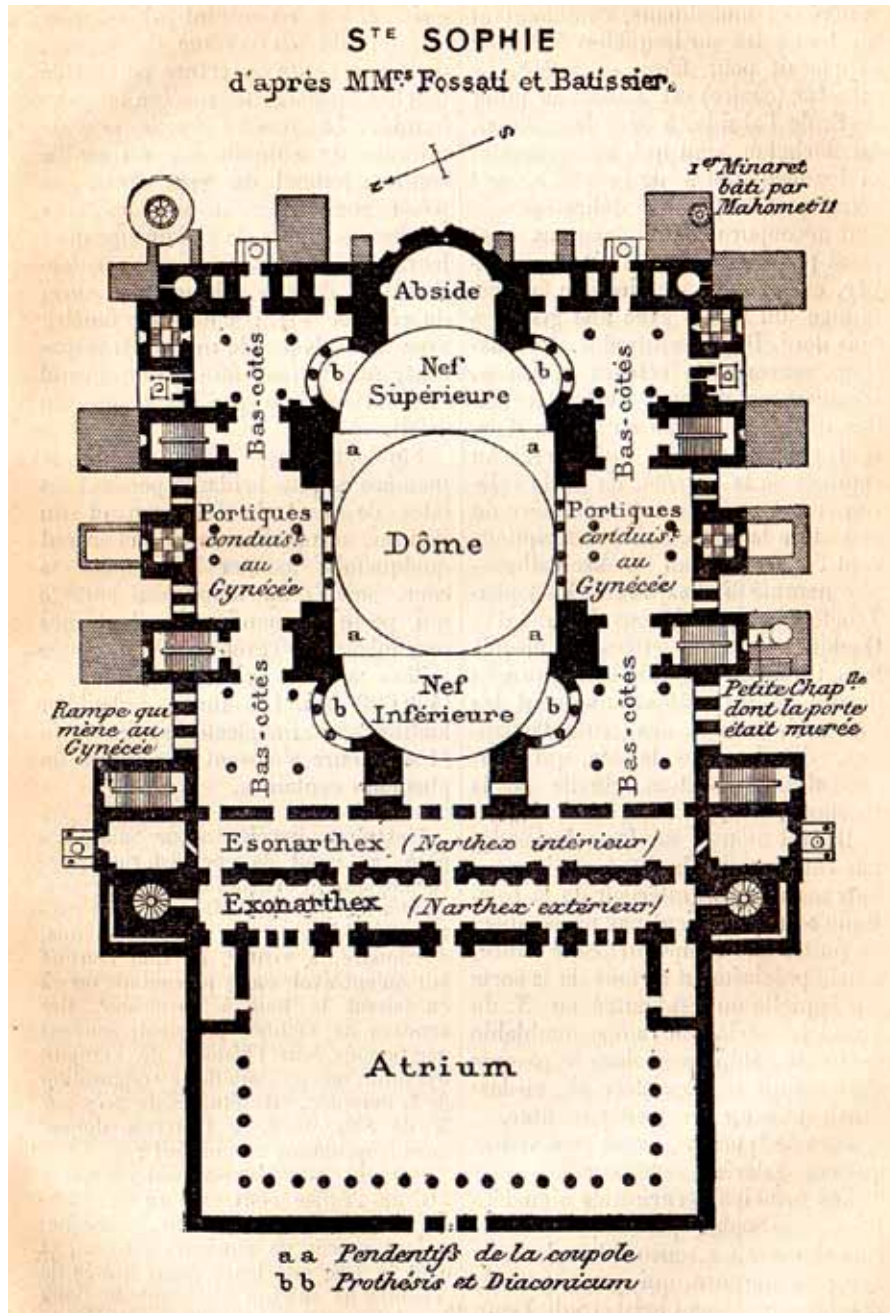


Figure 7
Hagia Sophia, ground plan published in Joanne 1886 (Joanne 1886: 213).

named the Orient Express: *De Paris à Constantinople*. In 1886, the same text was printed again with in addition a ground plan of the building after Fossati and Batissier (Joanne 1886: 212-213) (Fig. 7). This text was reprinted in the further editions.

In the last edition, in 1912, the references to the Fossatis' album and to the human figure with extended arms had been deleted. Only Salzenberg's book was used to give a detailed description of the interior ornamentation, with a chronology of the restorations and additions, an iconographic approach to the Christian figures and scenes reconstructed by Salzenberg and comparisons with manuscripts or other mediums:

The mosaics with golden backgrounds with which Justinian covered the church were undoubtedly iconographic, yet his contemporaries Procopius and Paul the Silentiary make only passing reference to them. [...]

The ornament in the apse, flowers or silver-plated fruit and green leaves on a black background, is no doubt due to Justinian, along with the human figures. Everywhere else, the broken lines, jagged squares, and rosettes evoke the mosaics of Sainte-Luce [*sic*], which date from the early eleventh century, suggesting that Basil II renovated the whole church, with the exception of the apse, after 975 (Monmarché 1912: 287-288).

We can see the evolution of the descriptions in this guide-book series: from some kind of travelogue with little detailed description, the text depended on the traveller's experience, knowledge and interests. It is obvious that some guide-book authors did not always see what they were writing about and did not try to compensate with additional research. They stuck to their own knowledge. Joanne and his collaborators were given an important annual loan by the publisher Louis Hachette to buy books, engravings and maps to improve the quality of the content of the guide-books. Expensive books like the Fossatis' album and Salzenberg's book could be read in public libraries.

Let us see the extension of interest about other Byzantine churches and the increasing importance of art history.

II. The other Byzantine churches turned into mosques

II. 1. Küçük Aya Hagia Sophia

The mosaics of this church were briefly mentioned in every edition of the series with the same sentence:

The interior of the church has, moreover, been covered with white-wash, and displays a few crude arabesques that hide the ancient mosaics (Joanne – Isambert 1861: 371; Joanne – Isambert 1873: 554-556; Joanne 1886: 206-207; Monmarché 1912: 279).

It seems obvious that nobody was able to see the mosaics to give more details.

II. 2. Aya Irene

The mosaics of this church were mentioned only once without accurate location; the church had been turned into a museum of weapons and antiquities related to war and the army:

The gilded mosaics on the vaults have been partially preserved (Joanne – Isambert 1873: 534).

II. 3. Imrahor Cami

The count de Choiseul-Gouffier wrote nothing about Hagia Sophia, but saw the church of Saint John the Studios; unfortunately he did not or could not go inside. A view of the façade was reproduced in his richly illustrated book, in the section devoted to his stay in Constantinople (Choiseul-Gouffier 1782: liv. II, engraving no. 90).

In the 1873 guide-book, more than one page of text was devoted to this church. Its architecture was described thanks to Salzenberg's study. The traveller who did not read German could have a look at the three plates showing the architecture (ground plan, profile and elevation), the ornamental decoration (capitals and mouldings) and a part of the *opus sectile* pavement (Salzenberg 1854: figs. II-IV). Unfortunately, the drawing of the pavement was not inserted into the



Figure 8
Saint John the Studios,
opus sectile pavement
(Salzenberg 1854: pl. IV).

ground plan of the church. This floor was certainly in the main nave, as we could see in 2004 during the visit organized during the first colloquium of the team working on the Corpus of the Mosaics of Turkey.

The same author [Salzenberg] succeeded in sketching a large portion of a beautiful colored marble pavement (Joanne, Isambert 1873: 553-554) (Fig. 8).

The guide-book did not give details of these geometric marble designs which at that time were not as prized as mythological or Christian figures. No scientific

standardized vocabulary existed to describe such pavements, and it was not the purpose of Salzenberg's study. It was already a big step to publish a general view and details of pavements hidden under carpets and mats. The most important fact was the reference to a scientific study in this guide-book.

In the 1886 edition, the same text appeared (Joanne 1886: 208) but in the 1912 edition, reprinted in 1921, the pavements were no longer mentioned (Monmarché 1912: 281-282).

II. 4. Zeyrek Cami

The church of the monastery of the Pantocrator, also known as Kilise Cami, was already referred to as Zeyrek Cami. The erudite 1873 guide-book contained a one-page description of the church, reprinted in the 1886 edition:



Figure 9
Monastery of the Pantocrator:
ground plan, sarcophagi,
opus sectile pavement
(Salzenberg 1854: pl. XXXVI).

The interior was once decorated with slabs of beautiful marble that, in Gylli's [Gilles's] time, could still be seen with the red granite columns, which have since been replaced by marble columns. Marble revetment is now to be found only near the central portal between the inner and outer narthex. In the south church, however, there is still a beautiful, richly designed colored marble pavement extending to the part of the church set aside for Emperor Manuel's tomb. Salzenberg was able to make a sketch of a large segment of this pavement not covered by Muslim matting. It may be found in his beautiful book (Joanne – Isambert 1873: 557-558; Joanne 1886: 218; Salzenberg 1854: fig. XXXVI) (Fig. 9).

Once again, a seventeenth-century description (Gilles 1632) completed by Salzenberg's book was the right way to drive the traveller to read the best documentation. The far-sighted traveller was able to write notes and make designs from Salzenberg's book, and take his note-book with him to find what he wanted to see. Once there, he would be able to recognize the distribution of the three churches and to locate the marble geometric pavement (and perhaps discreetly lift up the carpets). The main purpose of the guide-book was to train the traveller's sight to appreciate Byzantine art through the most accurate descriptions and recent studies.

II. 5. Fetiye Cami

In 1873, the guide-book author did not see the interior of the church and had few documents at his disposal to write a note: the best scholar did not see it, depriving visitors of an accurate study; as time went on, we can see that information came to the writer, but the portrait of the church remained a rough sketch:

In a flanking dome is a reproduction in mosaic of the twelve apostles, a very pale imitation of Hagia Sophia. Salzenberg was unable to visit this church, which has been described by Hammer (Joanne – Isambert 1873: 558).

In the 1886 edition, some developments were added, and then completed by a few words in 1912 (in *italics*) showing that a collaborator visited the church and checked the guide-book description:

The Christians brought the relics it contained to the new patriarchal church in Fener, together with a mosaic that is still preserved there; it represented the church that they had been forced to abandon in this way. Yet one can still see there, *at the end of the right side aisle (curious capitals)*, in the drum closest to the minaret, portraits, in mosaic, of *twelve prophets and, in the center, a portrait of Christ* (Joanne 1886: 201-202; Monmarché 1912: 272).

In the Fethiye Cami, the Christian figures could be seen; it seems that they were not covered by any whitewash. This looks strange.

II. 6. Kariye Cami

The mosaics of the church of the Holy Saviour in Chora were discovered by chance in 1876, which is why the first description is not very detailed, but a few hints are given through the study of the German scholar (Hammer-Purgstall 1822) who saw some parts of the mosaic wall decoration:

[Joseph] de Hammer was still able to see seraphim in mosaic decorating the pendentives of the cupola and, above the entrance, a portrait of

Theodoros Metochites, who renovated the church during the reign of Andronicus II (Joanne – Isambert 1873: 558).

In 1886, the description was updated due to the recent works carried out in the church. We shall notice the emotional tribute returned to the usually despised Ottoman authorities or harshly criticized Muslim mentalities. A first commentary about their style is an introduction to art history.

Quite recently, when the whitewash covering the vaults of the outer narthex had begun to peel, it was discovered that it covered mosaics whose existence no one had suspected. Thanks to the intelligence and enlightened zeal of the head of the Ottoman government’s Fine Arts Department, this whitewash was very carefully removed, revealing, in the outer narthex and the narthex proper, a set of mosaics most of which are still intact; the liveliness and harmony of their colors is as remarkable as the purity of the drawing, the facial expressions, the realistic postures of the figures, and the skillful composition. The mosaics do not display the aridity or archaic stiffness that, ordinarily distort ancient works of Byzantine art [...] (Joanne 1886: 203-205).

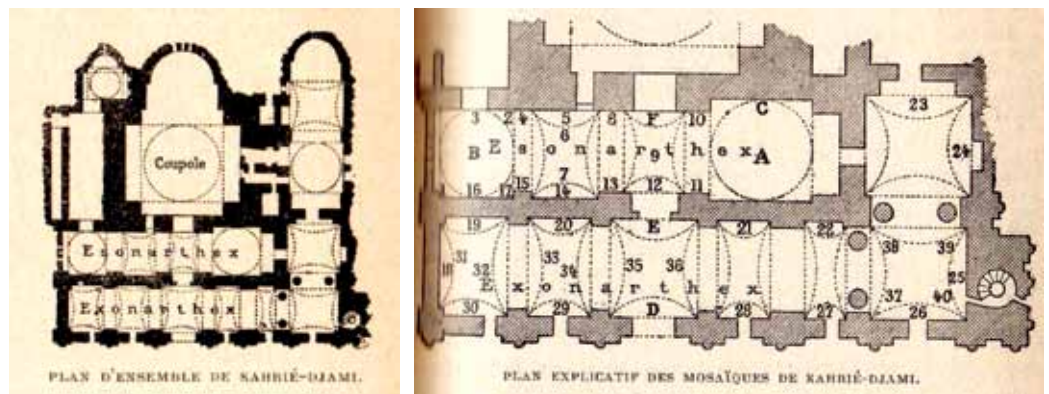
Again in 1912, the Ottoman administration was thanked for its work. Two ground plans were added: a general plan with the different churches and a detailed plan of the two narthexes, with numbers relating to the description of the Biblical scenes (Fig. 10). It is obvious, if not explicitly stated, that the following descriptions and comments were written by a specialist in art history.

The church was converted into a mosque in the late fifteenth century. Heavily damaged by the 1894 earthquake, it was subsequently restored, but the mosaics had been severely degraded. [...]

This church is above all noteworthy for its mosaics and its revetment of grey marble slabs separated by either green or red-and-green bands on a gray background. The mosaics took up the upper part of the church; there were also a few in the arched panels at the center of the marble slabs. Two such panels excepted, these mosaics are no longer extant, or, more exactly, can be seen only in the two narthexes. [...]

The mosaics in the narthex were rediscovered in 1876. The compositions in the inner narthex were thoroughly cleaned, aside from the heads and hands. In the outer narthex, a thin layer of plaster continues to lend the mosaic a grayish cast that can deceive the visitor as to its true character. We must pay tribute to the open-mindedness of the Turkish administration, which, in spite of religious prohibitions, has restored these monuments to the world of knowledge. [...]

Figure 10
Kariye Cami, (a)
general ground plan
of the church and
(b) ground plan with
number referring to
the mosaic scenes
published in
Monmarché 1912
(Monmarché 1912:
275-277).



These mosaics are quite homogeneous in style. Certain works, such as the Christ Pantocrator that dominates the portal between the two narthexes, may well go back to the reign of Alexius Comnenus; overall, however, the mosaics date from the early fourteenth century. New tendencies appear in them, distinguishing them from the eleventh-century mosaics preserved in Saint Luke in Phocis, Saint Sophia in Kiev, or Daphne, near Athens (Monmarché 1912: 274-277).

Not very common yet, photographs were shot by professional studios (Pinguet 2011: 65-78) and sold to tourists in their workshops located in the Grande Rue de Pera. Here the guide-book made a discreet advertisement:

The interior of Kahrié-Djami [the Chora church] was photographed for the Imperial Museum by Pascal Sébah. The visitor may wish to know which parts were photographed. We shall indicate the numbers adopted in 1892 in the form “Seb. 1” and those added thereafter in the form “Seb. New.” (Monmarché 1912: 274-277).

In 1847-1849, the Sultan was the commissioner of the restoration works in Hagia Sophia. Fifty years later, the Imperial Museum, directed by the efficient Osman Hamdi Bey, was in charge to carry out the work of documentation. The Fossati album had failed to highlight the generosity of the sultan, but this time the diffusion of photographs was a perfect means to show the modernity of the restoration works.

We can observe that more churches were mentioned and some information, even if brief and imprecise, was given about the mosaics. Considering the different descriptions, we can notice that very little was written about the dating of the interior decoration, but comparisons with other churches were indicated about iconography and style. The knowledge of Byzantine architecture and decoration had greatly improved within few years but their chronology was still to be refined.

III. Other Byzantine churches to be compared with the churches of Constantinople

III. 1. San Marco, Venice

Comparisons were sometimes made by travellers or guide-book writers: the main comparison was with San Marco in Venice, which most of the travellers had seen before going to Constantinople. Italy had been visited for a long time: English travellers on the Grand Tour, French travellers like Montaigne followed by many writers and at the beginning of the nineteenth century by French armies during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. The San Marco horses had been brought back to Paris to adorn the triumphal arch of the Carousel by Napoleon I. This is why early guide-books in our series contain rather accurate descriptions of the mosaics which were never hidden by any whitewash but well-known by history and early art historians. The guide-book writer could collect plenty of information thanks to different travellers, scholars and artists such as John Ruskin (Newall 2014: 148-149). The famous writer George Sand wrote a novel (*Les Maîtres Mosaïstes*) published in 1838 about the mosaicists who worked in the church (Sand 1838). Sand was a friend of Adolphe Joanne and later became an admirer of the Joanne guide-books.

III. 2. Palermo, Monreale and Cefalù (Sicily)

Sicily was not easy to reach up to the middle of the nineteenth century, but the Cappella Palatina in the Palazzo Reale and the Martorana church were already wellknown and their mosaics mentioned but not described (Du Pays 1859: 740-741). There is a short account about the discussion of the supposed Greek origin of the artists working in Monreale, and a hint of the mosaics of Cefalù (Du Pays 1859: 774). At the end of the century, a full Joanne guide-book was entitled *Italie du Sud* showing that more tourists travelled to Naples and beyond. The description of the Cappella Palatina's mosaics was longer, with comparisons with the Alhambra of Granada; in Monreale other foreign influences were identified (Joanne 1893: 296, 305). The Cefalù mosaics were compared with those of Mount Athos (Joanne 1893: 336-337). The widest range of comparisons was due to a recently published study of Byzantine art (Bayet 1883: 294-296) quoted in the introduction to Sicilian medieval art in the guide-book (Joanne 1893: 278-281).

III. 3. Dafni

The damaged mosaics of Daphni church (a bust of Christ in the cupola and other mosaics in the pendentives) were already identified as Byzantine (Joanne – Isambert 1861: 121-122; Joanne – Isambert 1873: 121). Years later, when it was easier to travel to Athens and its surroundings, an architectural study of the church was published with a description of the mosaics restored in 1893. A ground map of the church with the names and locations of the scenes was published (Fougères 1906: 178-179) (Fig. 11).

III. 4. Hossios Lukas

The name of Hosios Lukas appeared in a discussion about the Valley of Muses, but nothing was said about the monastery (Joanne - Isambert 1873: 152-153). A long note was published later about the “most interesting Byzantine building of Greece” with a ground plan locating the Biblical scenes (Fougères 1909: 265-267) (Fig. 12).

The evolution of the texts about Dafni and Hossios Lukas was thanks to scholarly studies: Gustave Fougères was a member of the French School in Athens (founded in 1846) and he was in touch with other colleagues dealing with archaeology and art history, and could use their publications: Charles Diehl, a specialist of Byzantine art, fully studied the Hosios Lukas monastery and published it (Diehl 1889).

This short study has tried to show the evolution of the Joanne guide-books through the example of the Byzantine mosaics of Istanbul. We can notice the evolution of the descriptions leaving aside the picturesque traveller experience to become more and more accurate and close to the scholarly studies which were used and referred to. From 1861 art history made its entrance in this guide-book series. The same recourse to scholarly documentation happened for other subjects: in the following guide-books, numerous essays about every type of subject (society, law, customs, etc.) were handled by scholars or famous specialists. The guide-book writer turned into an editor in charge of the coherence of the publication.

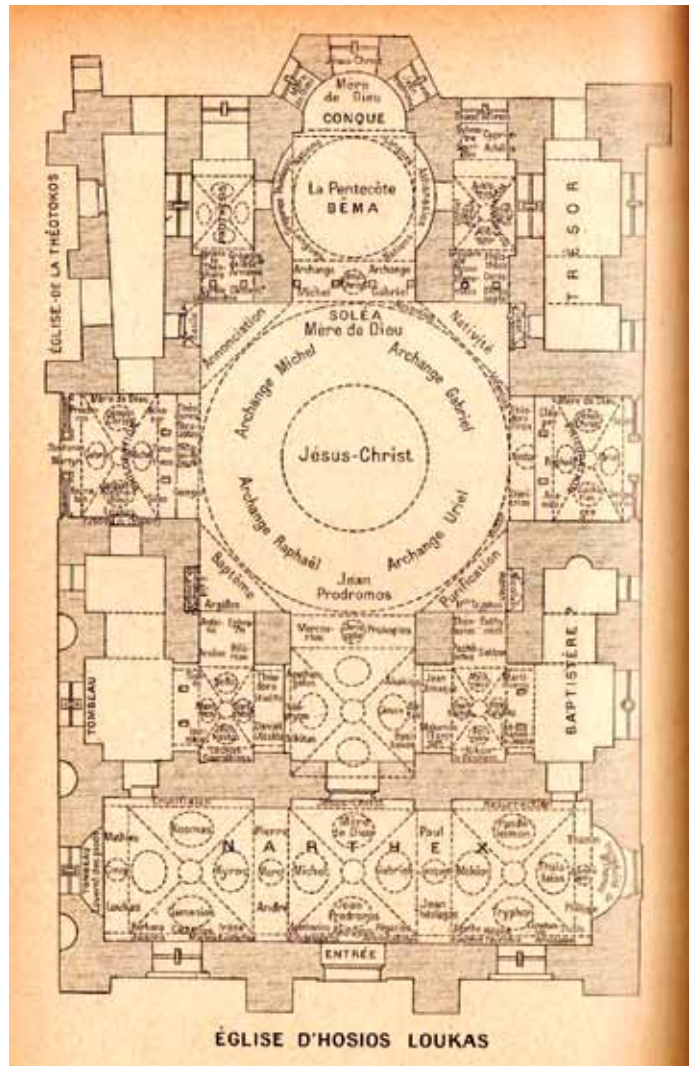
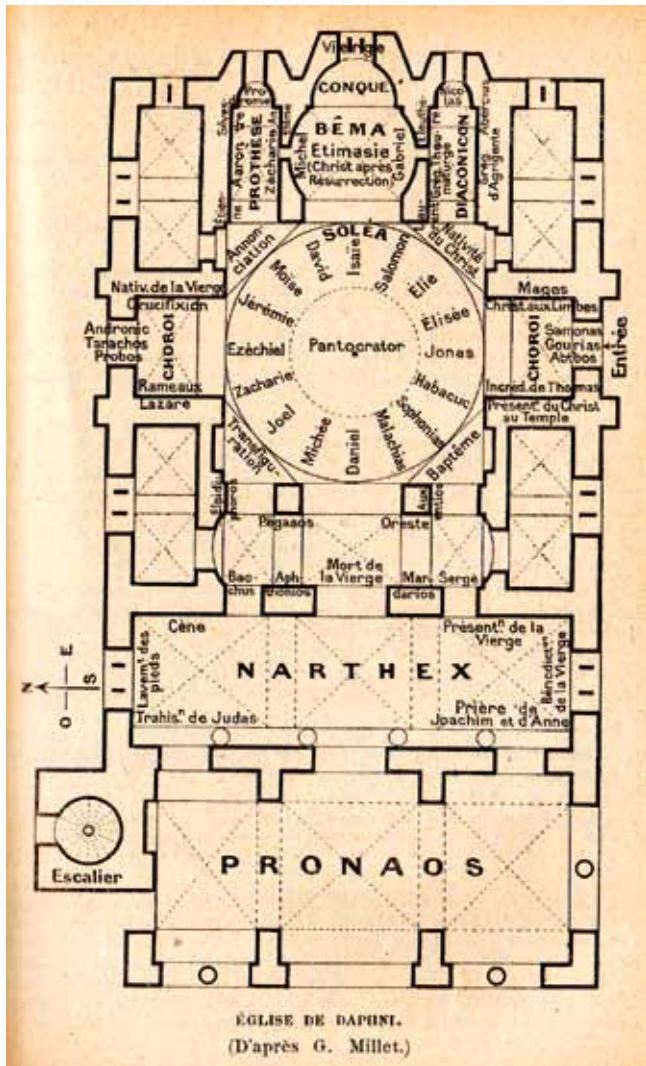


Figure 11
Daphni, ground plan
published in Fougères 1906
(Fougères 1906: 179).

Figure 12
Hosios Lukas, ground plan
published in Fougères 1909
(Fougères 1909: 266).

This particular interest in art history is typical of what the Joanne guide-books set out to be: a digest of new scientific studies, and in this very case a mirror of the various researches of French scholars into the history of Byzantine art. For example, other contemporary and famous guide-books like Murray or Baedeker did not pay much attention to mosaics and pavements. Murray's specialist Prof. van Millingen wrote more about architecture and liturgy in Hagia Sophia and briefly mentioned mosaics, as he did about Kariye Cami where he listed the main representations in mosaic (Murray 1900: 48-49, 56-57), with some brief references to Byzantine mosaics in other churches. Baedeker gave some hints about mosaics of both famous churches and ignored the others (Baedeker 1914: 159, 213-214). Generally speaking, most of the guide-books focused on "Oriental" subjects, sticking to the supposed tastes and interests of their readers.

Guide-books are also good witnesses of changing mentalities: they mirror the tastes and the interests of the travellers: privileged, educated and wealthy persons. The study of this series of French guide-books concentrated on one century helps to observe the traveller turning into a tourist. With the arrival of the Orient-Express train in Constantinople, the increasing number of tourists changed the mentalities on both sides: the Muslim behaviours were not harshly criticized any more by the French guide-books. On the other side, the Christian mosaics of Kariye Cami were left uncovered and a photographic survey was sponsored

by the Imperial Museum. In spite of the hazards of the history and the trauma of the war between France and victorious Prussia in 1870, the Joanne guide-books continued to quote the scientific works made by the enemy, like Salzenberg, only considering their scientific quality.

Then local and foreign visitors paid more attention to wall and pavement mosaics, marble decorations, and to architecture in general because they were studied and published by scholars. It was difficult to know where to see Byzantine mosaics before the first scientific studies and to understand their style and chronology. There is now a useful programme to help the erudite traveller and the scholar: it is named the Corpus of the Mosaics of Turkey.

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