

Fate of 12th century Church of the Holy Savior of Chora, today a museum, in Erdogan's hands



The fate of the iconic Church of the Holy Savior of Chora now apparently rests with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, following a Turkish high court decision opening the way for the 12th Byzantine Church to revert into a mosque, from its current status as a museum.

The increasingly authoritarian and Islamist-leaning Turkish leader is expected to announce if and when the museum will be reconverted into a mosque – a prospect that will have a direct repercussions on the fate of the emblematic Hagia Sophia – the pre-eminent cathedral in Christendom for a millennium before being converted into a mosque by the Ottoman Turks.

The early 12th century Church of the Holy Savior of Chora, part of an eponymous monastic complex during the Byzantine era, was converted into a mosque roughly a half century after Constantinople was overrun by the Muslim Ottomans.

The Church of the Holy Savior, known as Kariye Camii during the Ottoman era and

in modern-day Turkey, is one of the finest examples of the middle Byzantine-era ecclesiastical architecture and art, with its splendid mosaics at one time covered with plaster by the Ottoman. The structure was turned into a museum in the 1940s.







