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The island of Skyros from Late Roman to Early Modern times : an archaeological survey

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Appendix C

Catalogue of Churches (Chora & suburbs)

In this register a brief presentation in standardised form is provided of all churches in Chora (49 in number) and 8 churches in its suburbs, i.e. 57 in total.¹ The 8 churches of the suburbs included in the catalogue were selected on the grounds of particular historical and/or archaeological significance, rendering their inclusion worthwhile (e.g. *katholika* of monasteries, noteworthy architectural types or decoration etc.). The inclusion of all churches on the island was of course an impossible task, since their total number is estimated at approx. 176 (Atesis 1961, 269).²

Apart from documenting each church, in itself a worthwhile endeavour, the main objective of this catalogue is to function as a source of data useful for extracting conclusions regarding the trends of ecclesiastical architecture and art on the island in the medieval and Ottoman eras, discussed in chapters 12 and 13. The assemblage of Chora and its suburbs was the most representative case study for this exercise, as it includes all types of church occurring on the island and all perspectives (functional, architectural, decorative etc.); there are *katholika* of monasteries, episcopal church(es), parish churches or even simple chapels like those occurring in the countryside. In fact, all countryside chapels (*exoklisia*) belong to the simplest architectural types occurring on the island (small single-nave barrel-vaulted or mainly flat roofed buildings), lacking any luxury decorative element (e.g. wall paintings, noteworthy *templa* and icons). Consequently their exclusion from the catalogue did not affect the typological representation, which is discussed in chapters 12 and 13. Table C.1 is a long-term typological summary of the following catalogue of churches.

The problems arising while studying the churches of Skyros are mainly related to dating; a common problem in provincial areas which are lacking monumentality and modest constructions is usually the norm. In fact the majority of the churches of Skyros (both in Chora and in the countryside) are generally considered to be of Ottoman times, although nobody could deny the medieval origin of some (in their present condition or after renovation). Precise dating is an even more difficult task, and archaeology has little to say here without the contribution of an historical source. The key-point in that respect, at least in the case of the Post-Byzantine monuments, is the locally known *Theseis* of the churches, i.e. their founding books (*Codicis*) (Faltaits 1972f, 3-6; Atesis 1961, 244-5). Today very few have survived, and this is not unrelated to the special status of the churches of Skyros presented briefly below.

Until the creation of the Greek State and the Hellenic Church, all the churches of Skyros, with the exception of the episcopal and monastic churches, were private. In his reply to the newly-founded Nomarchia (prefecture) of Euboea, the Bishopric Commissioner, Archimandrite Serafim Koutsoupis, writes in 1833 regarding the churches of the island that “οὐδεμία εὐρίσκεται εἰς τὴν ἐπαρχίαν ταύτην κοινή, ἀλλ’ εἰσι πᾶσαι ιδιόκτητοι.” The same statement was made by the last bishop of Skyros, Gregorios, in the following year (Atesis 1961, 244). This was the case even for the parish churches; the priest of every parish was appointed and paid by the owners of the church and not by the bishop. Owners were single persons, families, or more commonly ecclesiastical fraternities.³ The churches, or the fraternities as we should say, have received land ownership through dedications by the faithful-members of the fraternity, or the family-owners of the church. Actually the churches/fraternities, together with the bishopric, the monasteries and the noblemen of Skyros, were the biggest landowners of the island (Faltaits 1972f, 6). It has been suggested

1 Two are triple and four are twins, each counted as one. Further subdivision is made through alphabetical letters.

2 Their number can be less or more than 176, depending on whether we count the twin or triple churches separately or as one, and on whether we include in this number ruined churches or even churches founded recently, i.e. after 1961 (see indicatively Zarkia 1995, 122, n. 2).

3 For the ecclesiastical fraternities of Skyros see Zarkia 1995; Faltaits 1972f.

Type	Brief Description	Examples
Type 1: Cross-in-square		
1a	The so-called 'transitional' type of early Middle-Byzantine times; combination of the free cross and the three-aisle domed basilica. The main difference between the transitional type and the Cross-in-square church, is that the corner bays are divided from the cross arms with wall-pillars. Later, these wall-pillars would be replaced with columns or pillars.	C01.
1b	The well known complex four-columned type with dome.	C05.
1c	Combination of the cross-in-square church and the triple-aisle basilica.	C25.
Type 2: Cross-vaulted		
	The simple version of the type, namely the orthogonal single-nave (type A1 according to Orlandos).	C22, C50, C51, C53.
Type 3: Single-nave barrel-vaulted		
3a	The bema is inset in plan and section to the orthogonal form of the building and covered with a uniform barrel-vault.	C03a, C20, C30b, C31, C40a, C45a-c, C56.
3b	The bema is smaller in height and width and 'attached' to the orthogonal main church; consequently the building is covered with two barrel vaults of different height, one for the bema and another for the main church.	C03b, C07 (original phase), C10, C11, C26a, C29, C32, C34a, C52, C57.
3c	The church internally is of the preceding type but externally in plan the bema is set into the orthogonal main church, maintaining however its lower level.	C13, C21, C30c, C38, C45b, C48, C46 (original phase).
Type 4: Single-nave flat-roofed		
4a	The bema is inset in plan and section to the orthogonal form of the building.	C02, C04, C08, C17, C26b, C30a, C34b, C40b, C41, C43.
4b	Internally and externally the bema is narrower (and sometimes lower) than the main church, giving the impression of being 'attached' to the latter.	C14, C15, C27, C49.
Type 5: Single-nave timber-roofed		
	The common single-nave (basilica plan) church.	C39.
Type 6: Single-nave domed		
6a	A cubic main church, upon which is erected a pendentive dome, and to which is 'added' on the eastern side a notable wide apse reaching in width the lateral walls of the building - actually the bema of the church.	C28
6b	A cubic main church upon which is erected a pendentive dome, and to which is 'added' on the eastern side a lower and narrower barrel-vaulted bema.	C16

Type	Brief Description	Examples
6c	A cubic main church upon which is erected a pendentive dome, and to which is 'added', to the eastern side, a barrel-vaulted bema set into the orthogonal form of the building.	C12, C19, C44.
6d	A central cube upon which is erected a pendentive dome (main church), and to which are 'attached', at the eastern and western sides, two barrel-vaulted spaces for the bema and a similar to a narthex respectively.	C33, C35 (original phase), C36, C37, C55.
6e	A high cube upon which is erected a pendentive dome (the main church), and to which is 'added', to the eastern side, the bema, that is lower but set into the orthogonal plan of the church. The Eastern arch of the main church is supported by two robust pillars, from which there begin two small arches with east-west direction dividing the large bema into three parts, the <i>prothesis</i> , the <i>diakonikon</i> and the central bema. In the central bema there is a free-standing altar in the centre; in the central conch the bishop's throne.	C23, C42.

Table C.1: Long-term typological summary of the churches of Skyros.

that the great number of land dedications to churches was due to Ottoman policy towards religious possessions: the tax-free status of ecclesiastical lands on the island resulted in the dedication of land to the churches by the locals, who in reality continued to benefit financially from the dedicated lands even after the dedication (without however, being correspondingly taxed) (Zarkia 1995, 126).

Clearly, all this 'logistic' activity of the churches/fraternities had to be recorded somewhere; this place was found in the *Theseis*. Thus, apart from serving as a chronicle of the foundation of the churches, the *theseis* included (and diligently updated) their property, the dedications of the faithful, the rent yield of the fields, payments to priests in case of parish churches, and so on. For that reason, in case of loss or damage of a *thesis* it was replaced by a new one in which the text of the lost *thesis* was reiterated; it was then signed by all brothers of the fraternity and usually also by the bishop (Faltaits 1972f, 3-6).

With the creation of the Greek State and the Hellenic Church, the episcopal seat and the monasteries of Christos Mavrouna (C52) and of Ayios Dimitrios (C55) were abolished and their lands were confiscated and auctioned (Atesis 1961; Papanikolaou-Petrioli *et al.* 2013, 208; Faltaits 1972f, 7). This fact created fear to the brothers of the church fraternities regarding the future of the fraternities' lands. Thus, the brothers

shared (unofficially) the lands possessed by the brotherhood among them. Many of the brothers died without heirs; this way, through the death or indifference of some of the brothers, their number diminished, with the result that over time formerly ecclesiastical land devolved to one family only, and was ultimately seized. Clearly, the only proof of the former situation regarding to land ownership is in the *theseis* of the churches, which for this reason were carefully hidden or destroyed.

Below follows the presentation of the 57 monuments by geographical order, starting from the castle, moving down to the extramural settlement, and ending with the selected monuments of the suburbs. For every church a number is given, preceded by the letter C (for church). The exact location of every church can be easily identified in the map of Fig. 9.2, by their numbering label. After the number follows the common name of the church used on the island; in parenthesis is given the name of the saint to whom the church is dedicated. Then there is a presentation of the church data, given under the headings of *architecture*, *wall paintings*, *templon*, *icons*, *architectural sculptures/spolia*, *inscriptions*, *historical evidence*, *chronology* and possible *references*. Evidence not included in any of the aforementioned fields is provided in the insert under the heading *comments*.

Castle

C01. Episkopi (The Dormition of the Virgin Mary)

Note: the church was under restoration at the time of writing. The restoration was led by the 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, Hellenic Ministry of Culture.

Architecture: The church is now dilapidated, only its eastern part (area of the bema), the lateral walls and traces of the western part of the monument and the narthex (at the height of the foundations) being preserved. The church first collapsed due to an earthquake in 1841, and sustained further damage in the earthquakes of 1981 and 2001. The restoration led by Prof. Bouras in 1960 did not manage to protect the building from the later earthquakes. In fact the present appearance of the monument has deteriorated significantly since 1960; at that time the church preserved its south-western part at full height; now it has collapsed (Fig. C.1). However, the restoration programme of 1960 resulted in a detailed study of the monument, published in the next year by Bouras in the *Deltion Christianikis Archaeologikis Etaireias*, used as the basis for this description.

The church is built in inclined terrain at the western edge of the castle (originally the building was not so close to the edge; the present situation has come about through successive collapses of the nat-



Fig. C.1: C01, the church after the 1960 restoration (archive-courtesy 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities).

ural rock). The three sides of the church, excepting the western side, are below the level of the inclined terrain. The masonry is simple, made of undressed or semi-dressed stones and bricks placed at random. The narthex has collapsed completely. The main church is almost square and bears traces of the original(?) marble floor. The three-part bema of the church, covered with barrel-vaults erected on robust wall-pillars which leave small arcaded openings, is preserved in full. The vaults of the *prothesis* and *diakonikon* are lower and narrower than those of the bema. In the central conch of the bema is located the *synthronon* and the episcopal throne (Fig. C.2). Above that is set a triple-light window. The south cross arm and the south-western barrel vaulted corner bay of the building were also standing in 1960. The opening between the south-western corner bay and the nave was bridged with a pointed arch. The northern and southern walls of the main church preserved in 1960



Fig. C.2: C01, the *synthronon* of the church in 1960 (I. Venardis; archive-courtesy Benaki museum, Ar. Eis. 34260).

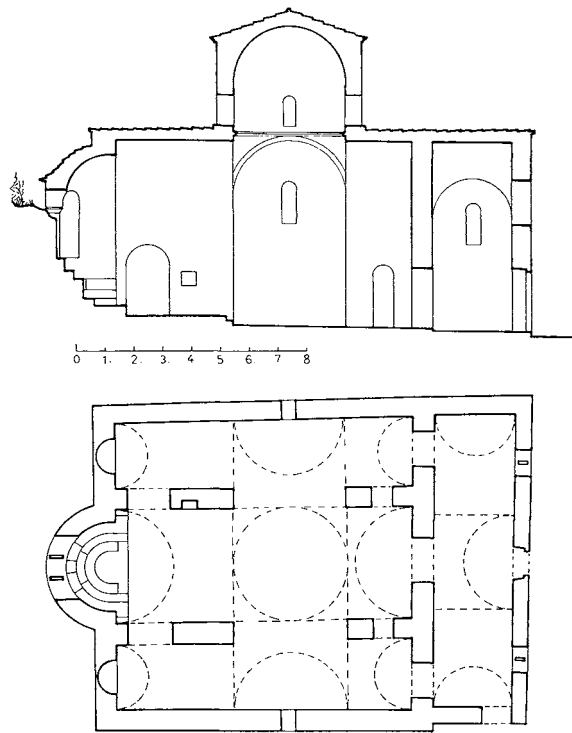


Fig. C.3: C01, longitudinal section and plan of the original form of the church, that of the 'transitional' cross-in-square with dome (after Bouras 1960-61, 65, fig. 5).

a single-lobed window. Today only the genesis of the windows is discernible. The entrance to the narthex and the main church was made through successive openings in the western walls.

The original type of the church was that of the cross-in-square with dome, in its archaic form of the early Middle-Byzantine period (type 1a) (Fig. C.3). According to this, instead of the four pillars or columns of the proper 'Hellenic' type, four wall-pillars are erected which leave small openings among the nave of the church and its corner bays, giving in plan the impression of a three-aisled basilica. This is why this type of churches has been characterised as 'transitional', from the Early Byzantine basilica to the characteristic Byzantine type of the cross-in-square with dome (Kalopisi & Panayotidi 2010, 382-3).

At a later time, probably during the Frankish-Venetian period, the church acquired the form of a three-aisled basilica. This was effected by an eastward expansion of the western pillars and re-direction of the vaults in the north and south arms of the

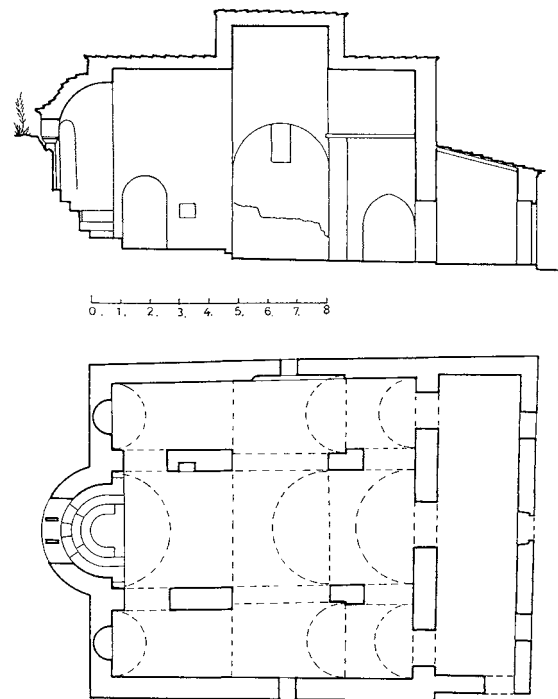


Fig. C.4: C01, longitudinal section and plan of the later form of the church, probably during the Frankish-Venetian period (after Bouras 1960-61, 68, fig. 7).

original cross-shaped roof, to an east-west axis. The dome was replaced by a raised central bay. The vaults of the church were now built with dressed tufa stones (Fig. C.4). Later (probably during the Ottoman period) a rectangular room was erected above the south cross arm. This was easily accessed from outside, as the ground level at this spot reaches almost the height of the roof.

After the collapse of the church in 1841, the *prothesis* and *diakonikon* were converted into chapels dedicated to the Birth of Christ and the Dormition of the Virgin Mary. The western sides of the aforementioned *prothesis* and *diakonikon* were closed with walls (today demolished), while their conchs were invested with walls which have covered the old wall paintings. All the internal surfaces were whitewashed.

Wall paintings: very badly preserved in the area of the bema, attesting that the church was once fully decorated. At least three layers of different date can be distinguished. The earliest phase visible today is located in the conch of the *prothesis*. Three unidenti-

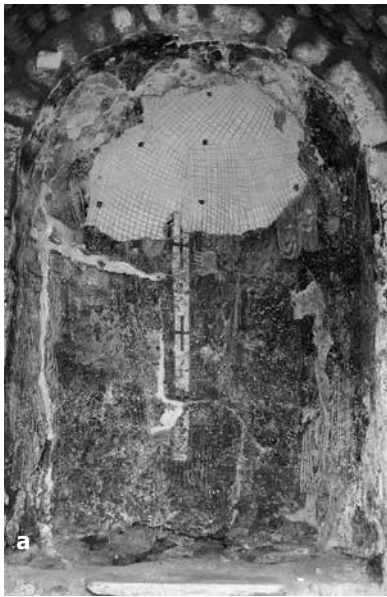


Fig. C.5: C01, the prelate and deacons of the conch of the *prothesis*, dated probably in the 11th – 12th c. (**a**: general view; **b**: detail of the southern deacon).



Fig. C.6: C01, the mullion and mullion-capitals of the triple-lobe window of the bema.

fied full-length male figures bearing a Codex in their hands are depicted. Unfortunately, their upper part is lost. The central figure blesses with the right hand and bears wears the stole. This and the right-hand figure are depicted frontally, while the left figure is depicted at an angle of $\frac{3}{4}$ towards the one in the centre. Apparently the scene depicts a Prelate in the middle flanked by two other saints, probably deacons (Fig. C.5). In this group of figures with their linear characteristics we can identify elements of 11th - 12th c. painting, like those attested in the third and fourth layer of paintings in Panayia Protothrone of Naxos, or even in the paintings of Osios Loukas in Boeotia (see Acheimas-tou-Potamianou 1994, 16-23). The wall painting examples attested in mainland Greece and the Peloponnese have favoured the hypothesis of the existence of local workshops active in the aforementioned areas (Pallas 2007, 238). One of these regional workshops is probably responsible for the decoration of the episcopal church of Skyros.

Wall paintings are also preserved in the lower part of the semi-cylindrical wall of the apse above the *synthronon*. The paintings are very badly preserved and it appears that there are at least two layers. At the back of the episcopal throne are discernible traces of *Christ the High Priest*; lower, traces of Officiating

Prelates. This group of paintings must date from the Late Byzantine or Post-Byzantine period.

The paintings of the conch of the *diakonikon* are completely worn. The southern wall of the *diakonikon* and the northern wall of the *prothesis* are whitewashed, but tests conducted by the conservators indicate that there are paintings below the whitewash layer.

Templon: -

Icons: -

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: The triple-lobe window of the central conch preserves its original mullion and mullion-capitals (Fig. C.6). The front (internal) side of the latter are decorated with foliated and free-standing crosses. Moreover, in the middle lobe is located in secondary use a pier-capital decorated with free standing crosses and acanthus leaves, while at the north lobe an oblique fragment of the architrave of the *templon* was identified, decorated in the front side with vine leaves and at the bottom with a Greek cross with broadened arms and “tear-drops”. The pieces can be easily identified on the grounds of their style with a group of *spolia* found in the adjacent *katholikon* of Ayios Georgios (C05) and the church of Melikarou (C39), all consisting of fragments of the architectural decoration (the marbled screen in-

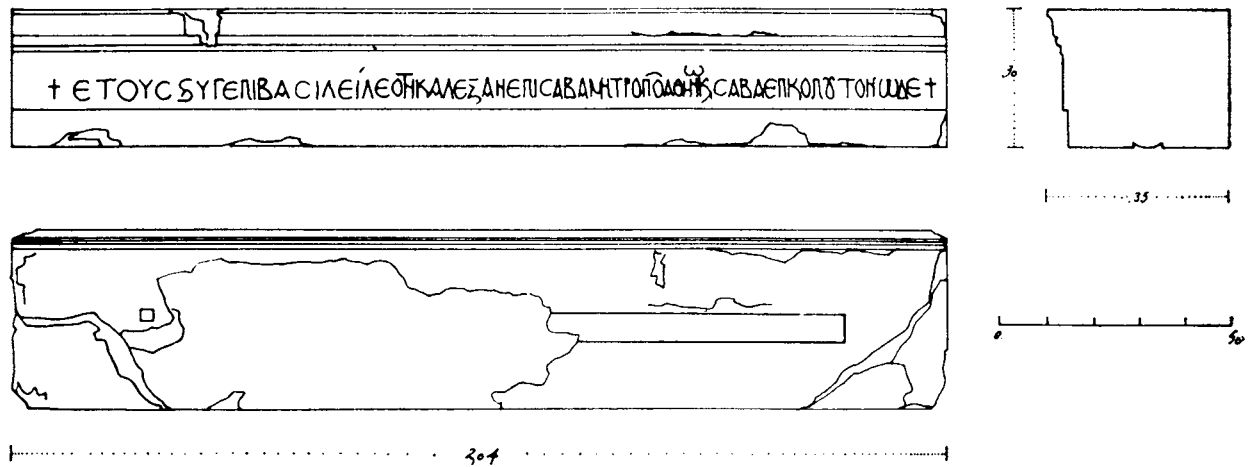


Fig. C.7: C01, the founding inscription of the church (after Bouras 1960-61, table 29.B).

cluded) of the Mid-Byzantine phase of the episcopal church. (see Chapter 12.2.3).

In the masonry behind the bishop's throne is incorporated an Early Christian pier-capital decorated with crosses. Early Christian screen-posts have also been used as arms of the episcopal throne. Further, there are stone piles gathered in the ruined church; 76 pieces were examined in July of 2008, and many definitely belong to an Early Christian basilica(s) (e.g. mullions, screen-posts, capitals, imposts, impost-capitals etc; the large number of the pieces does not permit an analytical presentation here).

Inscriptions: Among the stone piles of the ruined monument lies an architrave, length 2.04 m., which bears the founding inscription of the church. According to this, the church was founded at the time of the kingship of emperor Leo and his son Alexander, when the archbishop of Athens was Savas and the bishop of Skyros was another Savas: “Ἐτους ΣΥΓΓ’ ἐπὶ βασιλείας Λέοντος καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἐπὶ Σάβα μητροπολίτου Ἀθηνῶν καὶ Σάβα ἐπισκόπου τὸν ὧδε” (6403=895) (Fig. C.7).

Historical evidence: The church of Episkopi was the bishopric seat of the island from the time of its foundation in 895 until its collapse in April, 1841, and the final abolishment of the seat in December of the same year by the newly-established Hellenic Church. The local tradition attests that during the Frankish period a catholic bishop was based in the church and that the orthodox bishop moved to the church of Ayios Ioannis at *Kochilia* (C42) (Antoniadis 1995d, 111).

This tradition rests on historical sources: a letter by Pope Innocent III to the new Archbishop of Athens Berard dated February 13, 1209, indicates that Skyros remained a bishopric under the jurisdiction of the Latin Archbishop of Athens. In the sources there also survives the name of the catholic bishop of Skyros, *Ugolinus de Auximo episc. Yscyrensis* (1315-1320) (Chapter 2). It is reasonable to assume that if a Latin bishop had indeed been appointed to the island, he would have certainly established himself within the area of the castle and presumably in the ancient bishopric church of the Dormition of Mary. Further, an active restoration of the building is attested during this period, as mentioned above (see more in Chapter 9).

After the collapse of the church in 1841, the icon of the Dormition of Mary, the gospel and other objects were moved to the church of Melikarou (C39), while the (wooden) *templon*, the (wooden) bishop's throne, the ambo and the chandelier went to the church of Ayios Ioannis at *Kochilia* (C42) (Atesis 1961, 239-40).

Chronology: 895 AD

Comments: The ecclesiastical dependence of the island to the Archbishopric seat of Athens, leads one to suspect that there was similarly an artisanal connection between Skyros and Athens, or generally central Greece, one visibly expressed through the wall paintings, the sculptures, or even the architecture of the episcopal church of Skyros discussed above.

References: Atesis 1961, 234-45; Bouras 1960-61 (and therein the rest of the bibliography).

C02. Ayioi Anargiroi

Architecture: a small single-nave flat-roofed church (type 4a). Internally it preserves its traditional roof consisting of uprights and bamboo but externally it is covered with cement, which apparently replaced the soil of the original construction. Because of the inclined terrain on which the church is erected, its shape is irregular. There is no indication of the apse externally, and the conch of the bema is set into the eastern wall. The entrance is located in the western wall and its sole window looks to the south.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden modern.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: outside the church a fragment of monolithic column.

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The church is mentioned in a dowry document of 1800 (Antoniadis 1990, 148/1800).

Chronology: of Ottoman times; 1800 *terminus ante quem*.

References: -

C03a-b. Ayios Gregorios Theologos (a) and Ayios Ioannis Chrisostomos (b)

Architecture: double single-nave barrel-vaulted church (a: type 3a; b: type 3b). Externally the roofs of both churches are now flat and covered with cement, apparently a later transformation of their original saddleback roofs. Their apses are semicircular, preserving traces of the original covering of the roof made by stone-slabs. The entrance for both churches is located in the western wall, crowned by small light-holes.

Internally an arcaded window in the partitioning wall permits visual communication between the churches. The conchs of their bema are semicircular, supplemented by smaller conchs. Along the northern and southern walls are low benches. The floors are paved with tiles of the mid-20th c. Internally the churches are plastered; externally whitewashed.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C04. Ayios Vasileios

Architecture: a small single-nave flat-roofed church (type 4a). The monument was renovated extensively some years ago (plaster internally and externally, new roof with uprights, bamboo and cement, new wooden *templon*). The eastern wall is slightly bulging, indicating the apse. The entrance is set in the western wall; south of the entrance is a small semicircular conch.

Inside the bema the central conch is semicircular and relatively big. It is flanked by small auxiliary conchs to the north and to the south. The floor is paved with cement.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, modern.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C05. Ayios Georgios (katholikon of the monastery)

Note: the entire monastery complex was under Restoration at the time of writing; led by the Direction of Restoration of Byzantine & Post-Byzantine Monuments, Hellenic Ministry of Culture.

Architecture: The church is erected upon inclined terrain. The eastern side is attached to the natural rock, and so lies outside the line of vision. Actually only the eastern part of the church is based on natural soil; the middle and western part are located on the second floor of the south-eastern wing of the monastery complex, the first consisting of ground-floor auxiliary rooms and the vaulted passage connecting the first level of the castle with the second (see Chapter 9). To the west the church is flanked by the western wing of the monastery complex. At a later time a large flat-roofed narthex was added at the northern side, situated on a slightly lower level.

Typologically the church belongs to the complex four-columned cross-in-square type with dome (type 1b) (Fig. C.8). A second smaller dome is located at the eastern arm of the cross, above the bema.

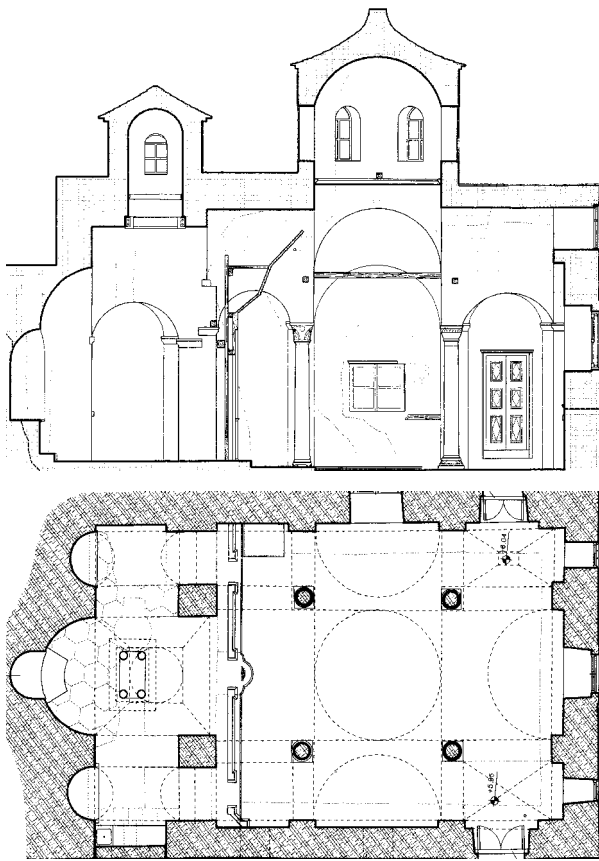


Fig. C.8: C05, longitudinal section and plan of the *katholikon* (Gounali & Kantzos, archive-courtesy 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities).

The arms of the cross are barrel-vaulted. Barrel-vaults also cover the eastern corner bays of the bema, while the respective western corner bays are covered with groin vaults (in later times the north-western groin vault was transformed into a calotte). The drum of the central dome has six windows, while that of the secondary dome has three. The roof of the church is covered with stone-slabs (cement was applied to the arms of the cross in the 20th c.; the restoration programme recovered the original situation).

The entrance to the church is located at the western end of the northern wall. A corresponding entrance in the southern wall leads to an auxiliary room and to the roof of the western monastery buildings. Three windows are set in the western wall, the central one being significantly larger than the others. Another window is set at approximately the middle of the southern wall. Finally three more windows (closed

today) have been identified in the northern wall: one is rectangular with marbled frame and located in the face of the northern arm of the cross (it is visible from the side of the narthex; inside, the wall is covered with wall paintings); the second is pointed and located at the north-eastern side of the main church (behind the wooden *templon*); and the third is double-lobed pointed and set in the northern wall of the *prothesis*. The existence of several apertures in the northern wall signifies that formerly the church was free of buildings on that side. Their presence was useless after the addition of the narthex in the 17th c., and it was necessary to close them in order to allow for the satisfactory wall painting of the church in the 18th c. (see below).

The floor of the church is paved with marble-slabs. Above the north-western corner bay the belfry was later added (19th c.?).

The narthex has sustained extensive alterations through interventions in the 20th c. The roof was originally covered with wooden uprights and soil (*mela-gki*); the old structure was later replaced with cement (the restoration programme recovered the wooden construction of the roof). A wall separates the main narthex from its northern part beside the bema, which is occupied by a cistern. In the northern wall of the narthex is set the main entrance, flanked by two windows.

At the level of the roof and slightly to the east of the underlying bema is located the double chapel dedicated to the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary. The chapel is barrel-vaulted and entry is through the roof of the narthex, from the northern side. Each of the two spaces bears a double conch in the eastern side. A wall with east-west direction separates the two spaces, which communicate through an arcaded opening.

A trial trench in the floor of the chapel in the summer of 2012 led to the discovery of the older *katholikon* of the monastery. Moreover, the excavation revealed part of the bema (the central conch and part of the barrel-vault with which the bema was covered) which was more or less at the same altitudinal level as the present one and slightly to the south-east thereof. The entire area of the old church was found full of rubble and barred by the eastern wall of the present church. After the rubble was removed, there were revealed the wall paintings of the old *katholikon*, in impressively good condition, probably dating from the late 13th c., which is probably also the chronology of the old *katholikon* (Fig. C.9).

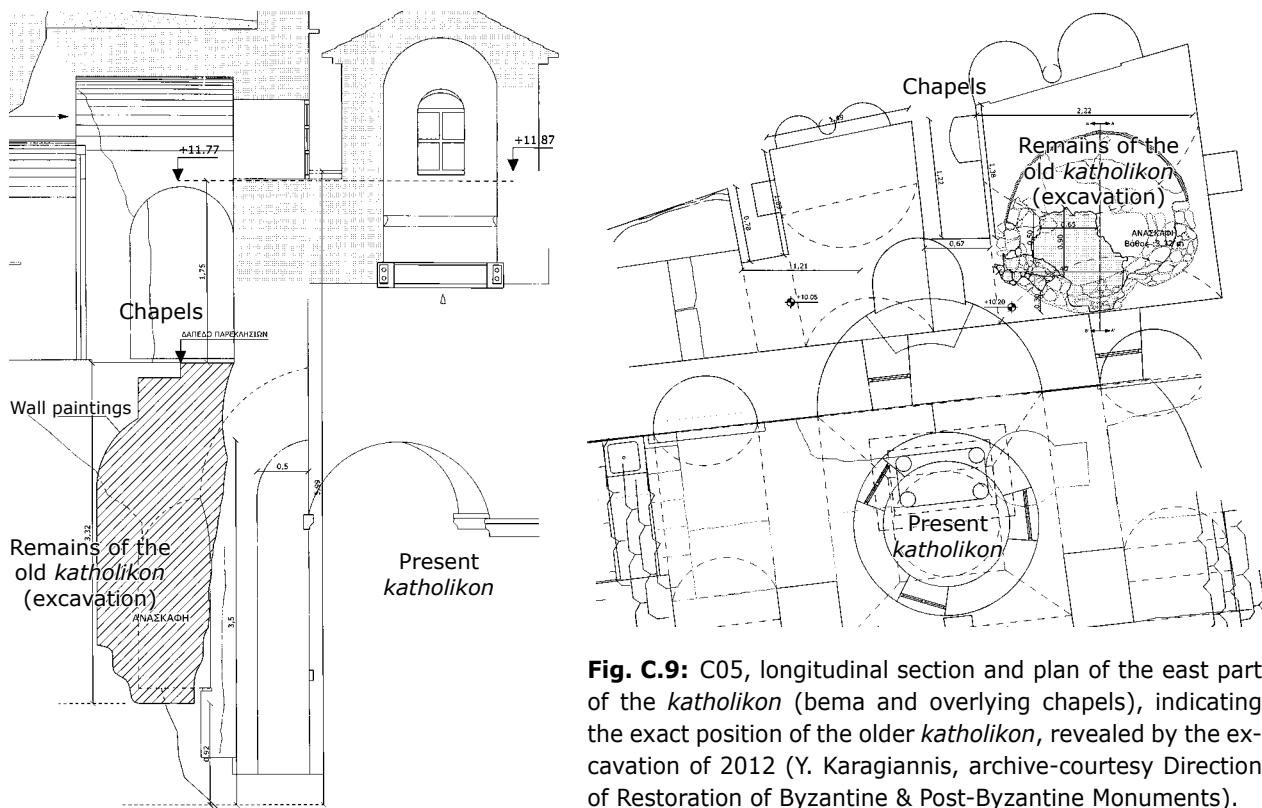


Fig. C.9: C05, longitudinal section and plan of the east part of the *katholikon* (bema and overlying chapels), indicating the exact position of the older *katholikon*, revealed by the excavation of 2012 (Y. Karagiannis, archive-courtesy Direction of Restoration of Byzantine & Post-Byzantine Monuments).

Apparently, after the damages sustained by the 13th c.-*katholikon*, perhaps due to a landslide from the overlying rock (such landslides are common in this area), the builders of the new church decided to move it slightly to the west as compared to the previous building. They removed any remnants of the old church which obstructed the construction of the new one, but the area of the old sacred bema, which apparently did not pose any problems, was left in place, full of rubble and closed-off by the eastern wall of the new church. In this way, a free space was left between the new church and the natural rock, which after the construction of the chapel was used as a ‘buttress’ against the overlying rock, protecting the new *katholikon* from possible landslides.

Wall paintings: The present *katholikon* was once fully decorated; today wall paintings are preserved in the northern and southern walls of the main church (at the lower level, frontal full-length saints and at the higher level scenes from the iconographic cycle of St. George), in some of the lower parts of the arches, and in the vault of *diakonikon*. Moreover, immediately outside the entrance, on the southern wall of the



Fig. C.10: C05, frontal full-length saint, from the painting decoration of the present *katholikon*, executed 1780.

narthex, there is large painting of St. George on his horse killing the dragon. According to an inscription (unfortunately not preserved today), the wall paintings were executed by the painter *Ralios Raliou* in 1780 (Chatzidakis-Drakopoulou 1997, 321-2) (Fig. C.10). Traces of a second, older, layer of paintings discovered in the central opening of the western wall, attest that the church was originally decorated with paintings older than the present ones, which were replaced in 1780.

As for the paintings (of the bema) of the old *katholikon*, the iconographical programme can be reconstructed -for now- as follows (the paintings were under Restoration at the time of writing): in the semi-dome is depicted the Virgin Mary, half-figured in medallion, her hands forming a gesture of praying; Christ (child) is on her chest, offering blessings with both hands. The central figures are flanked by the Archangels Michael and Gabriel. Below, in the semi-cylinder, are depicted four Officiating Prelates flanking the scene of *Melismos* (partitioning or fraction) in the middle. In the face of the conch the paintings are quite worn; however, there can be discerned the scene of the Ascension of Christ (Christ in medallion held by two angels from the right and left). At the top of the vault the paintings have collapsed; in the southern half is depicted the *Anastasis*; in the northern half an unidentified scene.

The surviving paintings of the old *katholikon* are clearly a provincial work, dated probably in the late 13th c. The depiction of the scene of *Melismos* flanked by officiating prelates does not leave any possibility for the date of the paintings to be earlier than the late 12th c. (Konstantinidi 2008, 49). Moreover, the plasticity of the figures, especially of the angels, their fluid drapery and the quality of the shiny colours connect to the artistic elaborations occurring during the Palaeologan period. The free painted manner in which the Archangel Michael is depicted would place it chronologically in the 14th c., a date which, however, would not be consistent with the figure of the (more archaic) Virgin Mary, unless this difference was due to the conservatism of the provincial artist (Fig. C.11).

Templon: wood-carved and gilded; not a local product. From an inscription at the low-right side of the *templon* we learn that the gilding was done in 1806 and was sponsored by the ex-abbot of Megisti Lavra, Timotheos: “Ἐχρησόθι τὸ παρὸν τέμπλον διὰ ἐξόδων



Fig. C.11: C05, Decoration of the semi-dome of the old *katholikon*, at the time of its discovery; **a:** general view, the Virgin Mary flanked by the Archangels Michael and Gabriel; **b:** detail of the Archangel Michael.

τοῦ πανοσιωτάτου ἁγίου προηγουμένου τῆς βασιλικῆς μεγίστις λάβρας κυρίου Τιμοθέου ψάλτου 1806 Ἀπριλίου 2”.

Icons: of high quality post-Byzantine icons of Christ, Virgin Mary and St George, today located at the church of Ayios Georgios *metochi* (C50); not examined at the time of the writing.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: Three of the four columns of the main church are made of marble, crowned with simplified Corinthian capitals and bases of similar decoration. Both the capitals and the bases could date from the Late Byzantine period (Fig. C.12). The fourth column is of granite, crowned with an Early Christian two-zone Corinthian capital (Fig. C.13). Another Early Christian capital, lies in the courtyard of the monastery (Fig. C.14).

Of later date are the two *spolia* found as a lintel of the south-western door of the *katholikon* for

the first, and a fragment of a screen-post lying in the courtyard of the monastery for the second (Fig. C.15). Both pieces belong to the Mid-Byzantine marbled *templon* of the church of Episkopi (C01). In the same group seem to belong three more pieces identified in the church of Melikarou (C39) (see Chapter 12.2.3).

Inscriptions: In the external side of the western wall of the *katholikon*, above the central opening, is located the founding inscription of the *katholikon*, according to which the building was started in 1599 and finished in 1602, and was sponsored by the abbot Sosipetros “*Ἀνγέρθη ὁ θεὸς κ(αὶ) ἱερὸς κ(αὶ) πάνσεπτος ναὸς οὗτος τοῦ πανενδόξου μεγαλομάρτυρος Γεωργίου ἐκ βάθρων διὰ συνδρομῆς κ(αὶ) ἐξόδου κόπου τε καὶ μόχθου παρὰ τοῦ ἐπιστάτου ἐν μοναχοῖς κυρίου Σωσιπέτρου κ(αὶ) οἰκονόμου ἐπὶ ἔτους ζρζ´ (7107=1599) μηνὶ Ἰουλίου κ(αὶ) ἐτελιώθη ἐν τῷ ζρι´ (7110=1602) μηνὶ Σεπτεμβρίου*” (Fig. C.16). Moreover, in the external side of the northern wall of the narthex is located an inscription attesting that the northward expansion of the narthex was undertaken in 1734 by the abbot Daniel (a first smaller narthex was probably in existence since 1641; see below). The inscription states “[...] *Ἀνγέρθη τὸ παρὸν τιχῆον ἐκ βάθρων κὲ θεμελίον διὰ συνδρομῆς κὲ ἐξόδου τοῦ ὀσιτάτου κυρίου Δανὺλ ἐκ τῆς νίσου [Ἀ]νδρου 1734 Ἰουλίου 14*” (Fig. C.17).

Historical evidence: According to local oral tradition, the monastery of St. George was founded by the emperor Nikiforos Fokas and Ayios Athanasios Athonitis, the legendary founder of Megisti Lavra on Mount Athos. However, historical research has shown that this tradition is not based on fact but was probably created after the conversion of Ayios Georgios into a *metochi* of the Athonite great monastery, showcasing the connection of the ‘parent’ monastery with its *metochi* (Oikonomou 2002, 30-32). Indeed, in 1289, after an intercession by the Archbishop of Thessalonica (his name is unknown), the Patriarch of Constantinople Athanasios I, conceded Ayios Georgios as a *metochi* of Megisti Lavra (*Actes de Lavra IV*, 149). Thus, the year 1289 can be used as *terminus ante quem* for the founding of the monastery of Ayios Georgios and apparently of its original *katholikon*.

The Codex of Ayios Georgios, published by Konstantinidis in 1981-82, provides us with much information for the years from 1494 onwards; if we limit ourselves to the building activity of the *katholikon*, we are informed of an ‘expansion of the church’

undertaken in 1641 by the *oikonomos* of the monastery, Ignatios. To obtain the necessary space, Ignatios bought some adjacent houses which apparently flanked the church from the northern side (Konstantinidis 1981-82, 53; Oikonomou 2002, 48). Gounali & Kantzos quite correctly see in this reference the first phase of instituting the narthex to the north of the church, which possibly occupied the southern part of the present narthex (Gounali & Kantzos 2003, 11). **Chronology:** old *katholikon*: 13th c. (immediately after 1289 AD?); present *katholikon*: 1602; first (small) narthex: 1641; second (large) present narthex: 1734; first layer of wall paintings: 1602-1780; second layer of wall paintings (visible today): 1780; marble floor: 1788; gilding (and probably the construction) of the *templon*: 1806.

Comments: The conversion of economically decayed Patriarchal monasteries to *metochia* of other thriving monasteries like that of Megisti Lavra, was a common practice in the Late Byzantine period. The chronology of the wall paintings of the old *katholikon* in the 13th c. is close to the date of the conversion of Ayios Georgios into a *metochi* of Megisti Lavra. It could be supposed then that the old *katholikon* was built immediately after the transformation of Ayios Georgios into a *metochi* of Lavra, part of the revival which the Skyrian monastery enjoyed through the economically powerful Athonite monastery of Great Lavra. If the old *katholikon* is dated immediately after 1289, and given that at that time Ayios Georgios was already in existence, then it must be assumed that the old *katholikon* which was discovered recently is not the original one, but replaced an even older *katholikon*, probably collapsed or decayed, which could date from the Middle Byzantine period. The historically assumed Mid-Byzantine date of Ayios Georgios, a fortified monastery established at the entrance of the medieval castle of Skyros, is perhaps not unconnected to the extensive fortification programme which was undertaken in this period on the castle of the island by a Byzantine official, the *sevastos* Georgios Chameas (see Chapter 9).

References: Gounali & Kantzos 2003; Oikonomou 2002; Chatzidakis 1987, 321-2; Konstantinidis 1981-82, 5-121; *Actes de Lavra IV*, 149; Atesis 1961, 132-95.



Fig. C.12: C05, One of the three Corinthian (probably Late Byzantine) capitals of the *katholikon*.



Fig. C.13: C05, The Early Christian Corinthian capital, reused in the *katholikon* of Ayios Georgios.



Fig. C.14: C05, Early Christian fold capital, in the courtyard of the monastery.



Fig. C.15: C05, **a:** Door lintel above the south entrance of the *katholikon*, and **b:** fragment of *templon* post lying in the yard of the monastery; both pieces belong to the 9th c. marbled *templon* of Episkopi (C01).



Fig. C.16: C05 the inscription of abbot Sosipetros (1599-1602), attesting the founding of the present *katholikon*.



Fig. C.17: C05, the inscription of abbot Daniel, attesting the expansion of the narthex in 1734.

Extramural settlement

C06. Panayia Tou Douka (in ruins)

Immediately outside the central gate of the castle lies in ruins the church of Panayia Tou Douka. The church is today completely covered by modern rubble; the robust tufa doorposts of the entrance at the west side are just discernible.

The church must have collapsed at least a century ago: older residents remember it in ruins. However, they confirm the existence of the church according to oral tradition. No trace of it has been identified in the historical sources.

C07. Ayios Ioannis Spasokaroutis

Architecture: a small single-nave church, with a timber saddleback roof covered with tiles. The church consists of an orthogonal main church to which is 'added' from the eastern side a lower and narrower bema. The typological similarity of the church with many others in Chora, and the fact that the timber saddleback roof appears rarely and very late on the island, could suggest that the present roof is a result of a late repair of the church which originally must have been barrel-vaulted (type 3b).

Externally the eastern wall is straight, with no indication of the apse. On the top of the roof above the entrance stands the belfry, decorated with a *baccino* of late Kütahya production (19th c.). A rectangular



Fig. C.18: C07, view of the church from the north-west.

lar window is set in the northern wall, and a second, smaller one above the entrance. Internally the roof is invested with a wooden ceiling. The floor is paved with modern tiles. The church is plastered internally and externally. The monument was completely restored in 2012 (Fig. C.18).

Wall paintings: -

Templon: wooden, modern.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: three fragments of monolithic columns built into the eastern wall.

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C08. Ayios Nikolaos

Architecture: a small single-nave flat roofed church (type 4a). The apse is semicircular. The monument suffered a destructive renovation in 2006. Before this 'renovation', the church maintained its original *templon*, roof (consisting of uprights and bamboo), and floor (of natural rock covered with sand according to the traditional manner).

Wall paintings: -

Templon: wooden, modern.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The church is referred to in a sale document of 1661 “Επούλησα τὸ σπίτι μου εἰς τὸν Ἀγ. Νικόλαο εἰς τὸν Μπόριο...” (Antoniadis 1990, doc. 31/1661).

Chronology: 1661 *terminus ante quem*.

References: -

C09. Ayia Triada (in ruins)

Some metres above the church of Evangelistria (C11) and attached to the north-eastern side of the rock of the castle, lies in ruins the church of Ayia Triada. The date of its collapse is unknown; older residents remember it in ruins, and this was its situation in 1961 (Atesis 1961, 269).

The wild vegetation at the time of my visit at the site did not permit the extraction of conclusions regarding its architectural type. Only the doorstep of the entrance, of white marble, was discernible.

C10. Evangelistria (The Annunciation of Virgin Mary)

A small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3b). Externally the church has sustained considerable alterations and today is flat-roofed, covered with cement. Access to the interior of the monument was not possible at the time of the survey.

C11. Ayios Georgios

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3b). Externally the upper part of the church has sustained considerable alterations and appears to be flat-roofed, covered with cement. However, this is a result of a later intervention. Originally the roof of the church was saddleback covered with stone-slabs; the traces of the original slabs are discernible in the northern, southern and eastern walls of the church. The apse is indicated through a rectangular protrusion in the eastern wall. The entrance is set in the northern wall.

Internally, the central semicircular conch of the bema is set in the eastern wall, flanked by two auxiliary rectangulars, the *prothesis* and *diakonikon*. The genesis of the barrel-vault of the main church features a step, indication of the timber centring for its construction. The floor is paved with modern tiles.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, modern. The painted cross of Post-Byzantine times belong to a different, older *templon*.

Icons: among the modern items, three notable *templon*-icons of Post-Byzantine times (Christ, Virgin Mary and Ayios Georgios).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C12. Ayios Athanasios Athonitis

Note: the church was restored in 2009 by the personnel of the 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities.

Architecture: The church is built in a cavity of the natural rock. The structure of the church is a cube on which is erected the low pendentive dome (the main

church) and to which is ‘added’ a barrel-vaulted bema set into the orthogonal form of the building (type 6c). Stone-slabs must have covered the roof of the church (as in other cases), but are now lost.

The entrance is located in the northern wall. Four windows symmetrically located in the eastern wall (three are now blocked), originally provided light to the interior of the church. One window (the only one now open) is located in front of the altar and is rectangular. A second one, large and pointed, is located above the first, flanked by two small ogee windows (Fig. C.19).

Internally the dome is formed as a semi-cylindrical vault, low and wide as compared to the building’s volume. It is based directly on the pendentives. The radius of the dome is slightly larger as compared to its circular base.

The blind arches start from pilaster(like)-capitals. In the eastern wall of the bema are set three semi-circular conchs, of the bema, *prothesis* and *diakonikon*. The central conch bears the built altar. In the northern wall is set an auxiliary conch.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, simple modern.

Icons: In 2009 only modern icons were visible. However, the archive of the Archaeological Service refers to three *templon*-icons (Christ, Virgin Mary and Ayios Athanasios) of Post-Byzantine times.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: drums of columns built in the masonry.

Inscriptions: On the lintel of the entrance there is an inscription referring to the founding of the church by the monks of Megisti Lavra (of the monastery of Ay-



Fig. C.19: C12, view of the church from the east.

ios Georgios), specifically by the abbot Athanasios, in 1662. The inscription states that the church was transferred (after its apparent collapse) to its present location from the northern side of the cave, where it was originally located: “ὁ θεῖος ναὸς οὗτος τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀθανασίου εἰς τὸ σπήλαιον (ὕ)πάρ) χ(ε)ῖ τοῦτο. Μετετέθη πρὸς τὸ βόρ(ε)ιον ἐκ λα(υριω) τῶν (ἀ)δε(λφῶν) μερί(μνη) δι’ ὀβολοῦ καὶ κόπου τοῦ ὁσιωτάτου ἐν μοναχοῖς κυροῦ Ἀθανασίου ἐπὶ ἔτους 1662” (Fig. C.20).

Historical evidence: Osios Athanasios, the founder of the monastery of Megisti Lavra in Mount Athos, and according to the local tradition, the founder of the monastery of Ayios Georgios in Skyros as well (C05; *metochi* of Megisti Lavra since 1289), spent some time in this cave. Even if the information regarding the stay of Osios Athanasios on the island and his founding of Ayios Georgios is probably untrue (see C05), the connection of the church of Ayios Athanasios with the monks of Lavra and Ayios Georgios is undoubtedly based on the aforementioned inscription. Even today the small church is under the custody of the monk of Ayios Georgios.

Chronology: 1662.

References: Skouras 1979, 23-32; Georgopoulou-Meladini 1972, 373; Atesis 1961, 262.

C13. Ayios Nikolaos (on the south-east tower of the classical wall)

Architecture: a small single-nave flat-roofed church (type 4b). Internally the roof maintains its original form, consisting of uprights and bamboo, but externally it is covered with cement, which apparently re-

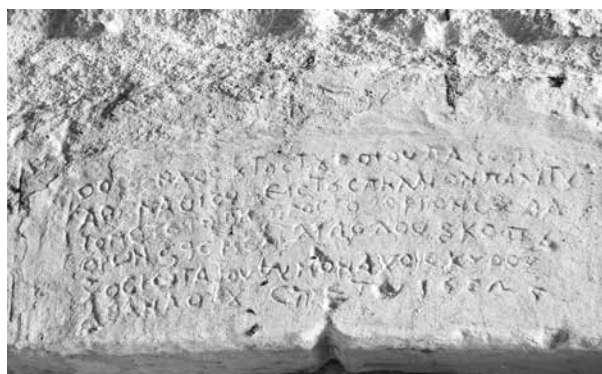


Fig. C.20: C12, the founding inscription of the church.

placed the soil of the original construction. The conch of the bema is semicircular, sheltering the built altar. A second rectangular conch is located in the northern wall of the bema. The floor of the church is natural soil. The building has been plastered in its entirety. The monument is dilapidated, having sustained grave damages in the earthquake of 2001.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The member of the *Filiki Etaireia* Manouel Venardos spent some time in isolation here, during his short visit on the island in 1833 (Antoniadis 1995g, 204).

Chronology: of Ottoman times (1833 *terminus ante quem*).

References: -

C14. Ayia Paraskevi (on the north-east tower of the classical wall).

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3c). The roof of the church is covered with stone-slabs. The eastern wall is bulging indicating the apse (today partially collapsed). Internally the central conch of the bema is semicircular, sheltering the built altar; a second smaller conch is located in the northern side of the eastern wall. Along the lateral walls are low-built benches. The monument is dilapidated, having sustained grave damages in the earthquake of 2001.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: -

Icons: -

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C15. Ayios Konstantinos & Eleni

Architecture: a small single-nave flat-roofed church (type 4b). The apse is semicircular, while due to the highly inclined terrain in which the church is erected, the eastern side is supported by robust buttress walls. The roof of the church was originally wooden with

local soil (*melagki*) at the top; today there survives only the wooden construction consisting of cedar up-rights and branches covered with seaweed; the soil was replaced after the 1960s by cement, which was in turn replaced ten years ago with stone slabs by the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities.

In the eastern wall is set the central conch, which shelters the built altar. The conch bears a light-hole. Three more rectangular conchs are set in the northern and southern walls. Another is located in the southern wall of the main church, immediately outside the *templon*. The floor is paved with large stone slabs.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden modern of local production, with minimal carved decoration.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: outside the church three fragments of monolithic columns: 1) [h: 0.43, d: 0.27], 2) [0.43, d: 0.27], 3) [h: 0.18, d: 0.27].

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The church is referred to in a dowry document of 1581 (Antoniadis 1990, doc. 10/1581).

Chronology: 1581 *terminus ante quem*.

References: -

C16. Ayia Triada

Architecture: a small single-nave domed church with blind arches and barrel-vaulted bema. The structure of the church is a cube on which is erected the low pendentive dome (the main church) and to which is 'added' a lower and narrower barrel-vaulted space



Fig. C.21: C16, view of the church south-east.

from the eastern side (the bema) (type 6b). Externally the low drum of the dome is cylindrical with no openings. Both the dome and the rest of the roof are covered with stone-slabs. The apse is rectangular. Above the entrance of the western wall there is a stone-emblem bearing a cross.

Internally the dome is shaped as a semi-spherical vault, low and wide as compared to the size of the church, erected directly on the pendentives. In the eastern wall is set the central conch which shelters the built altar. Two more conchs are set in the northern wall. In the southern wall of the main church is set a rectangular window. The floor is paved with glazed tiles of the mid-20th c. (Figs. C.21-22).

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, modern.

Icons: Among a few modern icons, there is an icon of the Holy Trinity in the bema, dating from late Post-Byzantine times.

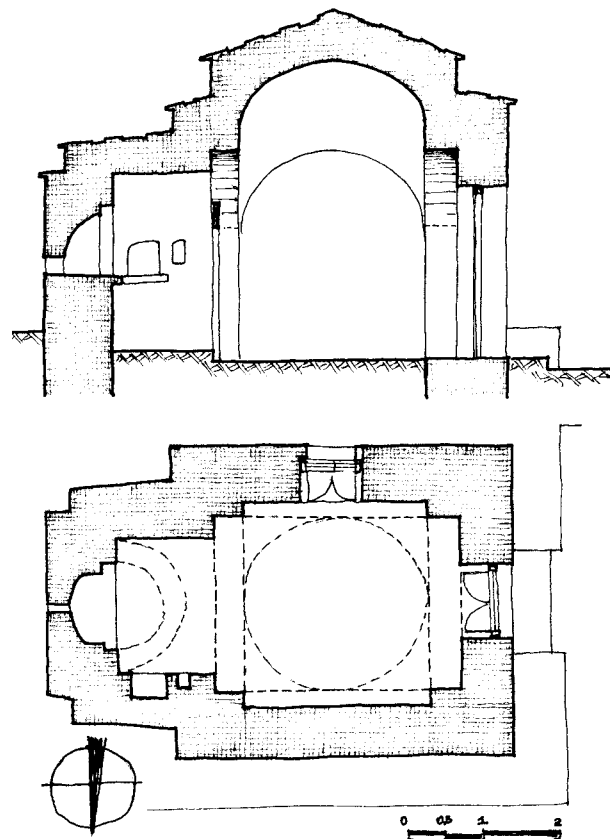


Fig. C.22: C16, longitudinal section and plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: The upper part of the altar is from an Early Christian mullion.

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C17. Ayios Georgios

Architecture: a single-nave flat-roofed church (type 4a). The apse is semicircular and has a small light-hole. The entrance is set in the western side. The roof of the church was originally wooden with local soil (*melagki*) at the top; today there survives only the wooden construction consisting of uprights and ceiling; the soil was replaced by cement.

Internally, the bema occupies almost half of the church. The central conch is relatively small and shelters the built altar. At the northern wall is set a second conch. In the main church a low-built bench runs along the southern wall. The floor is paved with cement. The building is plastered internally and externally.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, local modern.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C18. Evangelistria (The Annunciation of Virgin Mary)

A single-nave flat-roofed church. The monument is located in the private plot of the Varlamidi family and it was not possible to access it at the time of the survey.

C19. Pente Martires

Architecture: a small single-nave domed church with blind arches and barrel-vaulted bema. The structure of the church is a cube on which is erected the low pendentive dome (the main church) and to which is 'added' a barrel-vaulted bema set into the orthogonal plan of the building (type 6c). Externally, the low drum of the pendentive dome is cylindrical with no

openings. A rectangular protrusion on the eastern wall attests the apse of the bema, which is in any case set into the wall. The only opening of the building is the entrance of the church in the western wall. Two barely discernible geneises of arches flanking the entrance and having an east-west direction probably indicate a supplementary construction which originally stood by the church.

Internally the dome is shaped as a semi-spherical vault, low and wide in comparison to the volume of the church, erected directly on the pendentives. The radius of the dome is slightly larger in respect to its aforementioned circular base. The four pendentives are ribbed and start from pilaster(like)-capitals at the four corners of the main church.

In the eastern wall are set three semicircular conchs of the same size, for the bema, the *prothesis* and the *diakonikon*; a fourth rectangular conch is set in the northern wall. The floor of the church is the natural rock, covered with whitewash, as is most of the external and internal surface of the building (Figs. C.23-24).

Wall paintings: They are preserved at several points, where the whitewash has not covered them. In the dome, in medallion, is depicted Christ Pantokrator surrounded by the Heavenly Powers; in the pendentives Evangelists; on the eastern front of the Bema is a series of medallions with half-figured prophets; the vault of the bema depicts two scenes, the Nativity of Christ and His Baptism; on the southern wall Prelates;



Fig. C.23:
C19, view of the church from the north-west.

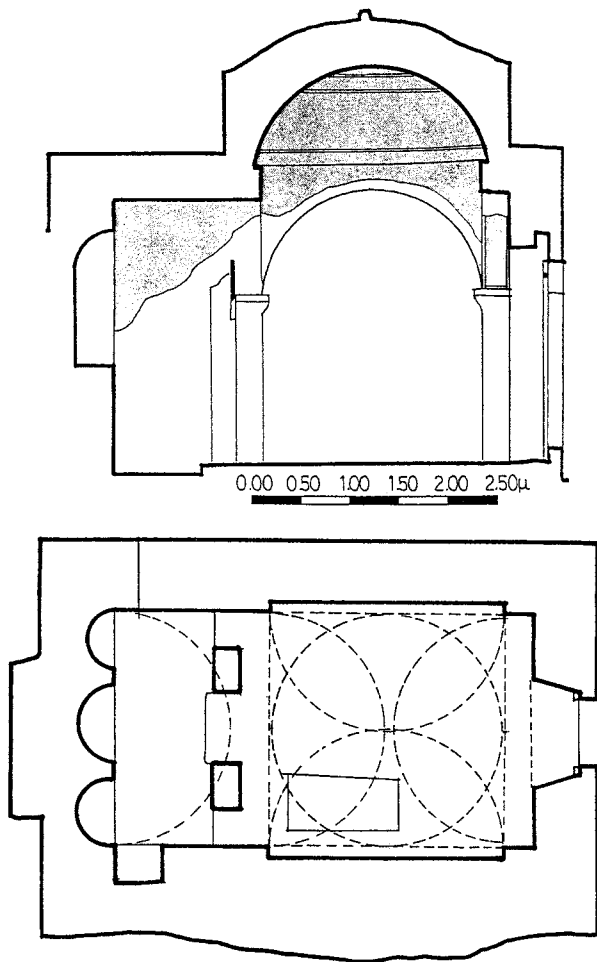


Fig. C.24: C19, longitudinal section and plan of the church (Argyros & Apostolou, archive-courtesy of the 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities).

the front of the central conch of the bema depicts the Hospitality of Abraham. Fragments of paintings are also preserved on the western and northern wall of the main church. Based on style, the paintings can be roughly dated to the 17th-18th century (Fig. C.25).

Templon: built, with a wooden element overlying the central entrance.

Icons: few, modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: a fragment of monolithic column in front of the southern half of the *templon* [h: 0.71, d: 0.20].

Inscriptions: not related to the church.

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: 17th-18th century?



Fig. C.25: C19, half-figured prophets, from the painted decoration of the church.

Comments: Outside the church in front of the entrance is a cist grave. A second smaller cist grave is located internally. Above the entrance is a Classical funerary inscription mentioning “*Ἀπολλωνία Μοιραζαμένους ἐξ (Ση)μαχιδῶν*” (initially published by Girard 1879, 65).

References: -

C20. Christos Lipari (Nativity of Christ)

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3a). Externally the roof is saddleback covered with stone slabs (restored in 2009 by the personnel of the 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities). The east wall is bulging and it is partially thicker than the others in order to shelter the apse.

Internally, in the eastern wall of the bema is set the central semicircular conch which shelters the built altar. To the south there is a smaller rectangular conch and one more is located in the northern wall of the bema. In the main church there is a window set in the southern wall. The floor is paved with modern glazed tiles (Fig. C.26).

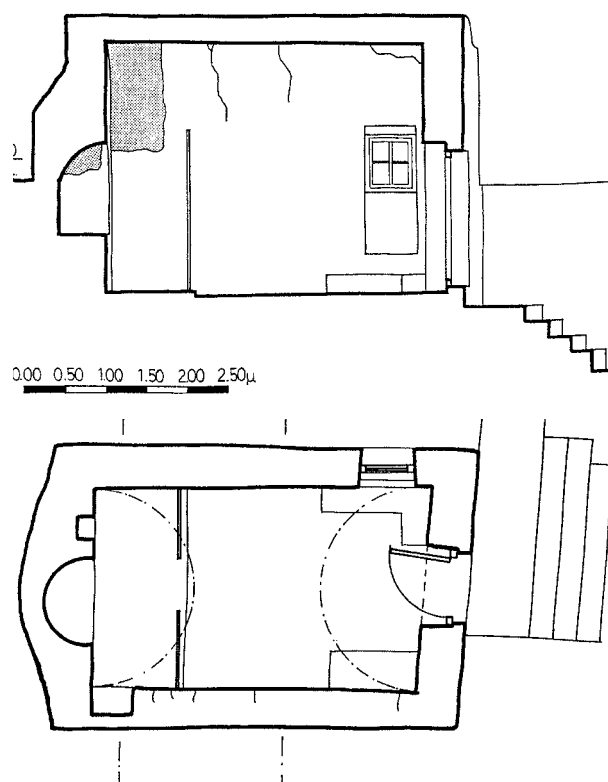


Fig. C.26: C20, longitudinal section and plan of the church (Argyros & Apostolou, archive-courtesy 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities).

Wall paintings: They are preserved in the area of the bema. The upper part of the eastern wall depicts the Hospitality of Abraham; lower, the Holy Handkerchief and a band with half-figured Prelates in medallions; in the central conch the Virgin Mary; on the key of the vault a decorative band flanked by medallions of half-figured saints; on the lower part of the vault scenes of *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle): on the southern half the Annunciation and on the northern half the Dormition of the Mother of God; in the upper zone of the lateral walls of the bema medallions with half-figured saints and Prelates and lower Officiating Prelates. The paintings are of good quality and could be roughly dated to the 17th - 18th c. (Fig. C.27).

Templon: simple, wooden, of modern times; but its architrave is older, carved in low relief decorated with vines; of local production.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: Outside the church lies a fragment of a column base of *breccia di setteba-*



Fig. C.27: C20, the Hospitality of Abraham (eastern wall of the church).

si (apparently Roman) [h: 0.55, 0.28x0.28] and a fragment of a column [h: 0.24, d: 0.17]. Inside the church there is a fragment of spiral column [h: 0.43, d: 0.23].

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: In 1767 the bishop of Skyros Ioasaf wrote (or copied) the Codex (*thesis*) of the church (Atesis 1961, 71). The last attested entry in the Codex is from 1788 (Antoniadis 1990, 57, n.1). In a document of 1667 there appears the family surname Liparis; a member of the family must have been the founder of the church (Antoniadis 1990, doc. 33). Antoniadis states that the church stands on a location bearing the toponym 'Akamatria' (Antoniadis 1990, 57, n.1).

Chronology: Based on the Codex of the church, the year 1767 is suggested as a *terminus ante quem*.

References: Antoniadis 1990, 57, n.1; Atesis 1961, 262-3.

C21. Profitis Ilias

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3c). The roof is now flat, covered with cement, apparently a result of repair work on the original saddleback. The protruding apse is semi-cylindrical. Above the entrance is inserted as *baccino*, a dish of Polychrome Italian Maiolica Ware, decorated with a two-headed eagle with hooked nails and open wings (mid 18th - early 19th c.). Inside, in the eastern wall of the bema, are three semicircular conchs. Two more rectangular conchs are constructed along the lateral walls. The altar is set into the central conch. In

the main church a small window is set in the northern wall. The floor of the church is natural rock, covered with sand according to the traditional manner.

Wall paintings: not discernible. The church is completely covered with whitewash internally and externally.

Templon: wooden, modern.

Icons: Among the few modern icons, a notable one is that of Profitis Ilias, of Post-Byzantine times.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: in front of the northern half of the *templon*, a base of a phiale [h: 0.38, max d: 0.24]. To the south of the entrance is an Early Christian Ionic impost capital, bearing on one of its narrow sides a Latin cross (6th c.) [h: 0.17, l: 0.60, w: 0.35, d: 0.20].

Inscriptions: Above the entrance (externally) and under the whitewash is discernible in capital letters the word “*Ἡλίας*”.

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: Based on the *baccino* I would suggest the mid-18th century as *terminus ante quem*.

References: -

C22. *Ayios Ioannis sta Dromania*

Architecture: a small single-nave cross-vaulted church (type 2). Externally, the roof is flat, and has sustained modern repair with cement. The eastern wall is bulging in the middle in order to inset the semicircular apse of the bema. A rectangular window is set in the southern wall of the main church. The floor of the church is paved with cement. All surfaces internally and externally are whitewashed (Fig. C.28).

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built, with a wooden, modern upper part.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: According to the Codex (*Thesis*) of the church, the building was constructed in 1574 (Zarkia 1991, 206 n.3, 216). However, Zarkia does not clarify if she examined the Codex herself; she does not provide any other historical data retrieved from the Codex.

Chronology: 1574? The architectural type of the church does not contradict this date.

References: -

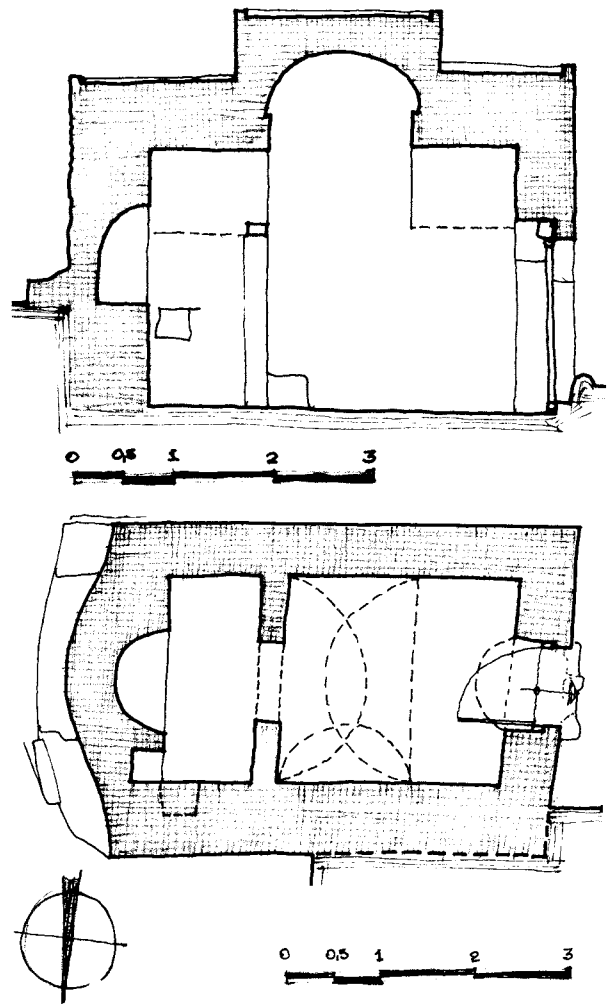


Fig. C.28: C22, longitudinal section and plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).

C23. *Archontopanyasia or Panayia tou Tselepi (The Birth of the Virgin Mary)*

Architecture: a single-nave domed church with blind arches and a three-part barrel-vaulted bema (type 6e). This core was supplemented at a later time by a barrel-vaulted narthex at the western side, with a Π-shaped gallery (Figs. C.29-30).

Externally, the dome is cylindrical and relatively high. It has four arched windows and it is covered with tiles. The rest of the main church is covered with stone-slabs, except the narthex which is covered with cement. On the top of the southern wall of the narthex, above the entrance to the church, is located the



Fig. C.29: C23, view of the church from the north.

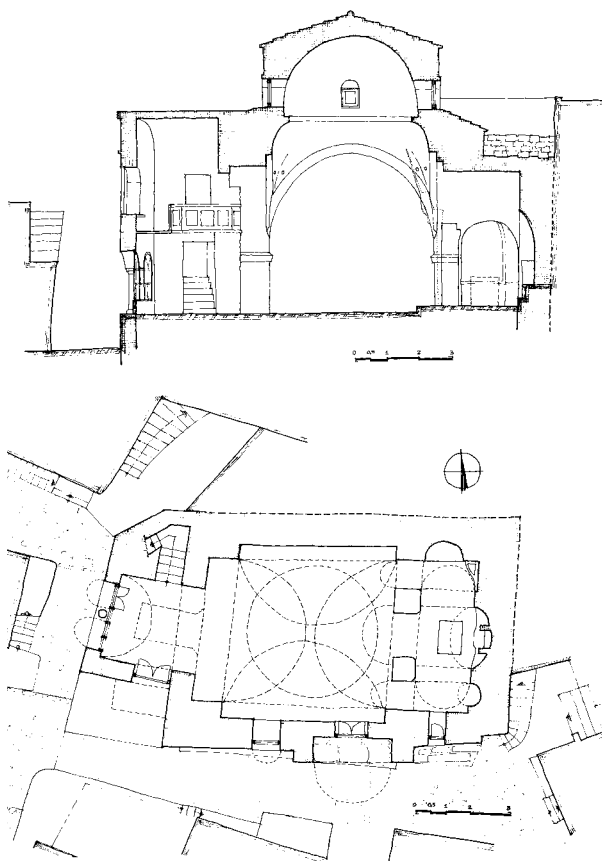


Fig. C.30: C23, longitudinal section and plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).

belfry (repaired after the earthquake of 1981). It is adorned with modern local ceramics, copies of the Polychrome Italian Maiolica. In the western wall of the narthex is set a large double-light window. On the southern side a monumental deep arch crowns the biggest window of the church. Two more windows flank this monumental opening, one to the westward and a second to the eastward, looking to the bema. The eastern and northern sides of the church are attached to adjacent houses.

Internally the dome is low and wide in comparison to the volume of the church. The pendentives are ribbed. The large eastern arch which divides the main church from the bema is supported by two robust pillars. From these there begin two smaller arches with east-west direction which divide the bema in three parts (*bema*, *prothesis*, *diakonikon*). The central one is higher and bears a large semicircular conch equipped with a built episcopal throne. The altar is free-standing in the middle of the bema. Undoubtedly the bema has a monumental appearance (for Skyros); the only parallels are the church of Ayios Ioannis (C42) and the *katholikon* of Ayios Georgios (C05).

The floor of the church is paved with glazed tiles of the 1950s. The building is plastered internally and externally, except the tiles and slabs of the roof which are only whitewashed.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wood-carved. It is probably unfinished as no overlying gilded and/or painted decoration has been added. In the Codex of *Christos tou Miga* (C39) there is reference to a certain Frangkoulis from the island of Chios who came to Skyros in 1824 to finish the *templon* of *Archontopanayia*, which had been started but never completed (*ἀρχευόμενον καὶ μὴ τελειούμενον*) by an artisan, one Ioannis from Crete, probably in the early 19th century (Atesis 1969, 19) (Fig. C.31).

Icons: numerous, of good quality. All are of Post-Byzantine date. Apart from thirteen small icons decorating the upper part of the *templon* with scenes from the *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle) there are the four central icons of the *templon* (Christ, Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist -the latter bearing the date 1771 at the back-and of the birth of the Mother of God). A second icon of the Birth of the Virgin Mary is located beside the entrance, while two more, the Lamentation and the Crucifixion (the latter Russian), are located inside the bema.



Fig. C.31: C23, the Annunciation of Virgin Mary; detail from the *templon* of the church.

Architectural sculptures/*Spolia*: The monumental arch at the southern side of the church is made of dressed tufa stones and it is decorated with low-relief motifs of western influence. The upper part of the arch is traversed by a dentil cornice. On the vertical edges it bears double Latin crosses and above them half rosettes; on the curved part, shoots adorned with foils and flowers. At the top of the arch is an emblem decorated with a cross. Below the arch lay an ancient column base [h: 0.16, d: 0.29] and immediately outside the window of the bema three fragments of monolithic columns and an Early Christian screen post [h: 1.27, w: 0.16x0.16] (all whitewashed).

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: a parish church to this day. From a report of the owner Georgios Avlonitis to the bishopric commissioner Serafim Koutsoupis in 1833, we learn that the church was private, had a capacity of 40 people, and owned fields and vineyards at several sites on the island. The annual income they yielded amounted to 32 kuruş, of which 25 represented the annual salary of the priest (Atesis 1961, 248).

Chronology: The oral tradition refers to the 17th century as the date of construction. The archaeological evidence does not contradict this suggestion.

References: Atesis 1961, 248-50.

C24. Ai Stratis (Taxiarchs Michael and Gabriel)

Architecture: a single-nave calotte church with blind arches and elongated barrel-vaulted spaces the east and west for the bema and a similar to a narthex respectively. In plan the structure of the church can be described as a central cube on which is erected the calotte (the main church) and to which are ‘added’ from the eastern and western sides the two aforementioned barrel-vaulted spaces. Externally the situation is quite different and the church appears as an orthogonal structure with a saddleback roof covered with tiles. The apse is invisible, attached to the wall of the adjacent house. The western wall of the building is crowned by an ogee belfry. The entrance is flanked by two rectangular windows (Figs. C.32-34).

Internally the church is dominated by the large and shallow calotte which covers all the main church (Fig. C.36). The blind arches are notably low. The bema has four conchs, of which the central is bigger and semicircular, bearing the built altar. The floor is paved with glazed tiles of the 1950s-70s.

Wall paintings: The church is fully decorated. On the calotte is depicted the *Christ Pantokrator* surrounded by the Heavenly Powers; on the pendentives Evangelists; on the central conch of the bema the Virgin Mary. On the northern and southern walls, scenes from the *Dodekaorton* (the Nativity, the Raising of Lazarus, the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, the Betrayal, the Crucifixion); the lower parts of the wall resemble a marble effect (c. 17th-18th c.).



Fig. C.32: C24-C25, view of the churches from the north-west.

Templon: built and wall painted, in front of which a later wooden templon is erected, bearing a simple wood-curved and painted decoration.

Icons: The church preserves relatively numerous noteworthy icons of Post-Byzantine times. The most significant are the icon of Christ Pantokrator and of Panayia Odigitria (c. 17th c.), the miracle of the Archangel Michael at Chonae, the Archangel Michael leading the souls (both of c. 17th c.), the icon of the *Sinaxis ton Asomaton* (with a dedicatory inscription of the 16th-17th c.), the wood-curved and painted Cross of the church, and the *templon* door with the scene of the Annunciation.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The Codex (*Thesis*) of the church attests that in 1714 the monument was already in existence. At that time the brothers of the fraternity appointed as priest of the church a certain papa-Dimitrakis.⁴ Moreover, from a report of the priests Dimitrios Oikonomou, Konstantinos Aulonitis and Georgios Dimitrakis in August of 1833 to the bishopric commissioner, Archimandrite Serafim Koutsoupis, we learn that the church was private but not parochial. Also, that at that time it had among its possessions the islet of Skyropoula and one half of the islet of Rinia (Atesis 1961, 262; Faltaitis 1972f, 6).

Chronology: 1714 *terminus ante quem*.

References: Atesis 1961, 262.

C25. Panayia Ktsou or Tou Thodori (The presentation of the Virgin Mary to the Church)

Architecture: combination of the cross-in-square – complex four-columned type and the three-aisled basilica (type 1c). From the western side it is flanked by an arcaded portico, added at a later time; a second one, unfinished, flanks the building from the southern side. Externally the roof is saddleback covered with tiles. The apse is three-sided. The entrance of the western wall is crowned by a semicircular conch (now located above the portico), and flanked by two rectangular windows. At the top of the roof is located the pointed belfry (Figs. C.32-33, 35).

4 The Codex was originally studied by Kostas Faltaitis in 1939, but his effort remained unpublished. The information was copied and published by his son Manos Faltaitis (1972f, 5), and from there copied by Zarkia, who however, does not refer to her source (Zarkia 1991, 209, n.8).

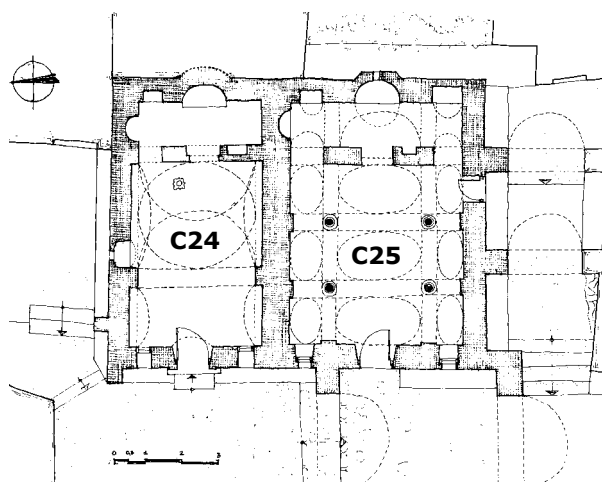


Fig. C.33: C24-C25, plan of the churches (S. Papa-zoglou).

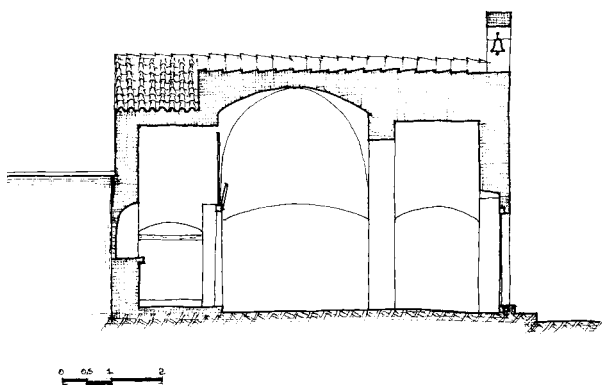


Fig. C.34: C24, longitudinal section of the church (S. Papazoglou).

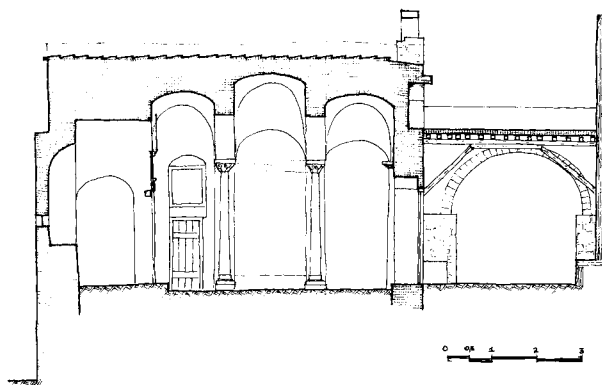


Fig. C.35: C25, longitudinal section of the church (S. Papazoglou).



Fig. C.36: C24, internal view of the church.



Fig. C.37: C25, internal view of the church.

Internally the church is covered with vaults. The central vault, standing on four columns, has the form of a raised central bay (Fig. C.37). The bema is barrel-vaulted and divided in three parts (*bema*, *prothesis*, *diakonikon*), through two arches with east-west direction connecting the eastern pillars with the eastern wall. The central conch is high, semicircular with a small light-hole and the built altar. In the *prothesis* and *diakonikon* are three smaller conchs. At the eastern end of the southern wall there is another aperture. The floor of the church is the natural rock.

Wall paintings: The church is fully decorated. The eastern vault depicts Christ Pantokrator surrounded by the Heavenly Powers (Fig. C.38); the pendentives depict Evangelists; the central raised bay depicts *Ainoi* (hymns); and the northern wall of the main church depicts the Last Judgment. On the rest of the surfaces are depicted scenes from the *Dodekaorton*, the cycle of the Passion and the miracles of Christ, without an organised iconographical programme. Based on the style of execution, the paintings could be possibly dated to the 17th c. More than one painter can be discerned.

Templon: wood-carved in low relief with painted decoration; not a local product.

Icons: a significant number of Post-Byzantine date. Most significant are the icons of the presentation of the Virgin Mary to the Church, the Panayia Odigitria, Christ as *Megas Archiereus*, the Nativity of Christ and the *templon* door with the scene of the Annunciation.



Fig. C.38: C25, Christ *Pantokrator* on the eastern vault of the church.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: Capitals with spear-leaves in the corners and double spirals in the faces crown the four columns of the main church (*in situ*, most probably contemporaneous to the church).

Inscriptions: Above the entrance is a dedicatory inscription of the *archon* Theodoros Bozikis who built the church in 1560: “ὁ θεῖος οὗτος κ(αὶ) πάνσεπτος ναὸς τῆς Θεοτόκου τῶν Εἰσοδίων ἀνοικοδομήθη ἐκ βάθρων δι’ ἐξόδου κ(αὶ) συνδρομῆς τοῦ εὐλαβεστάτου ἄρχοντος κυρίου Θεοδωρῆ Μποζίκη ἐν ἔτει ζζη’ (7068=1560) Μαῖω ιε’ (15)” (Fig. C.39).



Fig. C.39: C25, the dedicatory inscription of the *archon* Bozikis.

Historical evidence: In August 11, 1833, the owner of the church Ioannis D. Aulonitis submitted a report to the bishopric commissioner, Archimandrite Serafim Koutsoupis, according to which the church is parochial, has a capacity of 40 people, owns “several fields in different locations” and enjoys an annual income of 90 kuruş. Given that the expenses were higher than the revenue, he and his brothers maintained the church “which [they] have inherited from their parents” (Atesis 1961, 254).

Chronology: 1560 AD

References: Atesis 1961, 252-4.

C26a-b. Ai Stratis (Taxiarchs Michael and Gabriel)

Architecture: twin church in its present form; consisting of a single-nave barrel-vaulted church with a lower and narrower bema at the northern side (a: type 3b), and a single-nave flat-roofed church at the southern side (b: type 4a). The latter is probably a later addition. This is attested by the irregular plan of the southern church which seems to take into account the adjacent road, and by some further architectural anomalies: i.e. the north-eastern alcove in the bema of the southern church - originally it was the corner of the southern external wall of the northern main church, by reason of the smaller width of its bema (the corresponding corner is at the northern side; today it stands inside the adjacent house). The entrance to the churches is located at the northern side of the northern church, while communication between the two is through a large arcaded opening at their western side. Both churches are internally (and partially externally) plastered (Fig. C.40).

Externally the roof of the northern church is saddleback covered with whitewashed stone-slabs, while that of the southern is flat covered with cement (cement is also applied above the stones-slabs of the

bema of the northern church; however, the slabs are clearly visible in the eastern facade of the church). Apparently the cement in the southern church has replaced the soil of the original construction. The rest of the traditional roof (uprights and bamboo) is still preserved. It seems that the church was designed as flat-roofed from the beginning. In fact the walls of the southern church are thinner in comparison to those of the northern. The apse of the southern church is semicircular while that of the northern church is rectangular (the conch of the bema of the northern church is set into the wall). At the top of the western side of the roof of the northern church is the belfry, crowning a rectangular window.

Internally the bema of the northern church bears a semicircular central conch supplemented by a second rectangular one. The floor of the church is paved with modern cement slabs. The southern church has three conchs in the eastern wall of the bema, regularly distributed. Its floor is slightly higher than that of the northern church and it is paved with cement.

Wall paintings: traces of an unidentified figure (probably Christ), on the southern half of the original built *templon* of the northern church (behind the present wooden icon of Christ). Another trace of a full-length figure was preserved until some years ago on the northern wall of the bema of the northern church.

Templon: The original *templon* of the northern church was built and wall-painted, probably including some wooden elements. After its paintings had worn-off, sometime in the late 19th-early 20th century, a second wooden *templon* was erected in front of the original,

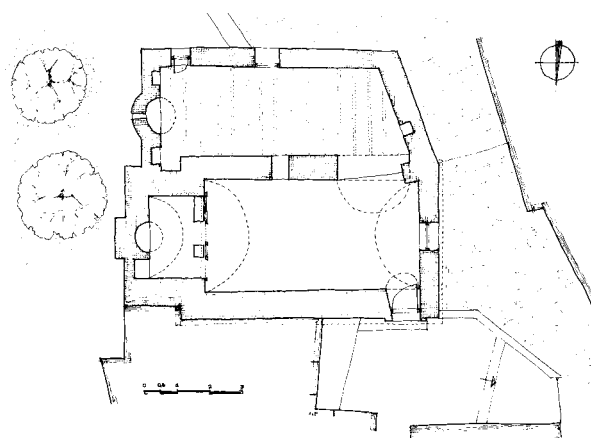


Fig. C.40: C26, plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).

incorporating some wooden elements of the built *templon*, i.e. the architrave (*apostolikon*), and the *templon* door. This is clearly visible in the completely different style of the two aforementioned elements of Post-Byzantine date, in comparison to the simple style of the wooden *templon* with decorative elements inspired by neoclassicism (Fig. C.41). The southern church lacks both *templon* and icons.

Icons: in the northern church only; three *templon*-icons of Christ, Virgin Mary and the Archangels Michael and Gabriel (the first two by the same artist). In the architrave of the *templon* are fourteen icons (*Deisis* in the centre, flanked by the twelve Apostles). The *templon* door bears the scene of the Annunciation; all are of good quality and of Post-Byzantine date. Another naïf icon of the Archangel Michael is located on the northern wall, bearing an inscription of the date 1847.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: fragment of a solid column inside the northern church [h: 0.45, d: 0.15].

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: In the historical sources there is confusion with the adjacent church of the Taxiarchs (C25), some metres to the north. In any case, it seems that the report of Dimitrios Tzikouris to the bishopric commissioner, Archimandrite Serafim Koutsoupis, in 1833, must be related to this church. According to this report, the church was parochial and had a capacity of 80 people. The annual income of the church was 60 kuruş, while the respective expenses (the priest's salary included) amounted to 160 kuruş, thus leaving the church in debt. Moreover, Dimitrios Tzikouris attests



Fig. C.41: C26, internal view of the northern church, and its *templon*.

that he made a new *templon* for the church (the wooden one of the northern church?), which cost 1,200 kuruş (Atesis 1961, 261).

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: Georgopoulou-Meladini 1972, 372; Atesis 1961, 261.

C27. *Ayioi Apostoloi*

Architecture: a single-nave flat-roofed church, with a (probably later) longitudinal flat-roofed narthex (type 4b). The roof is now covered with cement, which apparently has replaced the soil (*melagki*) of the original construction; inside, the uprights and bamboo of the original structure are still preserved. The entrance to the church is set in the northern wall of the narthex. Above the entrance is located the belfry (probably modern).

Internally, in the eastern wall is set a central semicircular conch which bears the built altar. The floor is paved with modern glazed tiles.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, much worn.

Icons: Among the modern icons some are of late Post-Byzantine date: icons of the *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle), the principal icon of the *templon* with enthroned Christ, two shrines of the Holy Apostles, a painted cross at the top of the *templon* and the *templon* door with the scene of the Annunciation.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The church is referred to in a document of 1706 "...τὸ σπῖτι εἰς τὸ Κρόκο εἰς τοὺς Ἁγίους Ἀποστόλους..." (Antoniadis 1990, doc. 53/1706). The 'brother' of the fraternity Dimitrios Antonakis in his report to the bishopric commissioner, Serafim Koutsoupis, in 1833, writes that the church is private, and that it owns some field possessions (including one half of the islet of Rinia) providing to the fraternity an income of 50 kuruş. He also states that the annual instalment paid by the members of the fraternity is 120 or 140 kuruş. The church is referred to as being ex-parochial by Atesis (1960, 251).

Chronology: 1706 *terminus ante quem*.

References: Atesis 1961, 251.

C28. *Ayia Triada*

Architecture: a single-nave domed church with blind arches (type 6a). The semicircular apse is notably wide, reaching the lateral walls and constituting the bema of the church. The structure of the church is a cubic main church on which is erected the pendentive dome and to which a wide apse from the eastern side is ‘added’, actually the bema of the church. The type is unique among the churches of Skyros. Externally the drum of the dome is cylindrical, having a small opening on its western side. Both the dome and the rest of the roof are covered with stone-slabs (restored in 2007 by the personnel of the 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities). The western facade of the church is crowned by a belfry, its posts decorated with Iznik tiles II & III (16th - 17th c.) (Figs. C.42-44).

Internally the dome is shaped as a semi-spherical vault, low and wide in comparison to the volume of the church, erected directly on the pendentives. The radius of the dome is slightly larger in respect to its circular base. The pendentives are ribbed. The blind arches start from pilaster(like)-capitals and are slightly pointed.

The bema-apse of the church is covered by a semi-dome. The altar stands free in the middle of the holy area. Three small rectangular conchs are set in the wall of the apse. A rectangular window in the southern wall of the main church was probably

opened after the execution of the wall paintings. The floor of the church is paved with cement.

Wall paintings: The church is fully decorated. The dome depicts Christ Pantokrator surrounded by the Heavenly Powers (Fig. C.45). In the pendentives Evangelists; in the eastern halves of the north-eastern and south-eastern pendentives the scene of the Annunciation. In the semi-dome of the bema, the Mother of God in the scene of *Anothen oi Profitai* (the Virgin Mary in Glory, enthroned with Christ in her lap, attended by archangels and below full-length prophets in arcades); lower, a band with half-figured saints in medallions in the guise of the fruit of a tree. In the semi-cylindrical wall, Officiating Prelates. On the

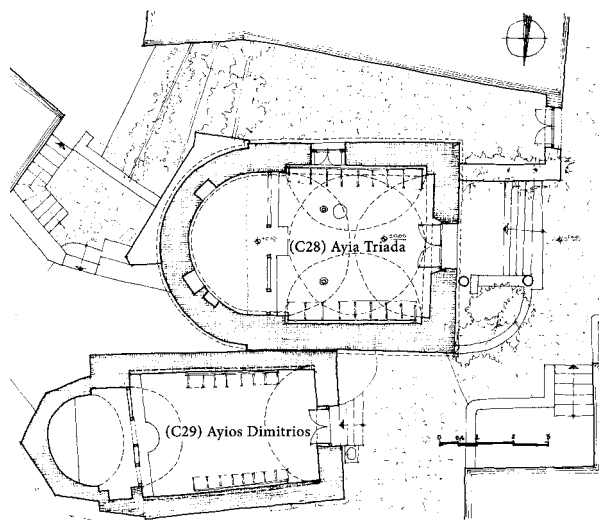


Fig. C.43: C28-C29, plan of the churches (S. Papazoglou).



Fig. C.42:
C28, view of the church from the west.

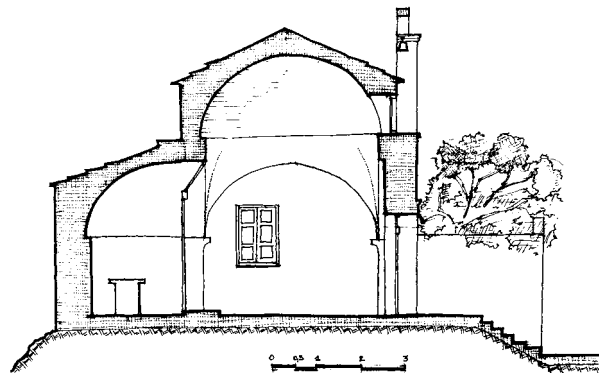


Fig. C.44: C28, longitudinal section of the church (S. Papazoglou).

north wall of the main church, the Last Judgment, and in the south the Pentecost, the Baptism, the beheading of St. John the Baptist, etc.

According to a painted inscription on the northern wall, the decoration of the church was executed by the painter Michael in the 17th c.

Templon: wooden, with many elements bearing carved decoration in low relief (i.e. the architrave); almost certainly of local production (Fig. C.46).

Icons: of late Post-Byzantine times (18th-19th c.); eight small icons of the *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle) in the architrave, two principal icons of the *templon* (the Virgin Mary enthroned with Christ in her lap, and the Hospitality of Abraham), a fragment of an icon with a



Fig. C.45: C28, painted decoration of the pendentive dome.



Fig. C.46: C28, the *templon* of the church; the work of local workshop.

scene from the life of St. George, and a *templon* cross with carved and painted decoration.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: outside, two monolithic marbled columns: 1) [h: 2.05, d: 0.30] 2) [h: 1.51, d: 0.24]. Inside the main church, the base of a phiale [h: 0.54, max d: 0.41].

Inscriptions: At the northern edge of the semi-cylindrical wall of the bema close to the *templon*, there is a dedicatory inscription referring to the wall paintings of the church, made by the painter Michael in the 17th c.: “ἀγνωρήθει ὁ [πάνσε]πτος ναὸς τῆ[ς] ... ἀδελφίτου τριάδ[ος] [...] κόπου τὸν [...] τῆς τι[...] σικοπητὸν τὸν ἀδελφ[ῶν] κ(αὶ) δηὰ χηρὸς [...] μου Μιχαὴλ ἀγιογράφου [ἐ]ν ἔτη ,αχ[...](=16...) μηνὶ Σεπτεμβρίου κε' (25)”.

Historical evidence: In his report to the bishopric commissioner, Archimandrite Serafim Koutsoupis, in 1833, the ‘brother’ of the fraternity Nikolaos Ioannou writes that the church is private; it has a capacity of 30 people and has an annual income of 15 kuruş, derived from ‘some’ fields. Moreover, that the church is cared for by the brothers of the fraternity, through an annual instalment of 129 kuruş. The church is referred to by Atesis as being ex-parochial.

Chronology: 17th c. *terminus ante quem*.

References: Atesis 1961, 250-51.

C29. Ayios Dimitrios

Architecture: The architectural type is the common on the island single-nave barrel-vaulted church, which however, bears a noteworthy large apse, almost equal to the width of the entire bema (type 3b). This last element is clearly an influence of the adjacent and apparently older church of Ayia Triada (C28) with the large apse-bema, which the builders of Ayios Dimitrios have tried to imitate (Fig. C.43).

The roof of the church is now flat covered with cement but must have been saddleback originally. The entrance is set in the western side of the church.

Inside the bema, apart from the large semicircular conch which bears the equally large built altar, a secondary conch is set in the northern wall. Above the entrance is set the only window of the church. The floor is paved with glazed tiles of the mid-20th c. The building is internally and externally plastered.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: local, simple wooden.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/*Spolia*: outside the entrance: a column base [h: 0.20, d: 0.21], column fragment [h:1.00], and pier column [h:0.15, l:0.42x0.42]; as lintel of the entrance, a column fragment (all *spolia* are whitewashed).

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times; probably later than the adjacent Ayia Triada (based on the topographical plan of the area).

References: -

C30a-b-c. Christos, Panayia Katapoliani, Ayios Ioannis (triple church)

a. Christos (The birth of Christ)

Architecture: a small single-nave flat-roofed church (type 4a). The monument sustained a destructive renovation some years ago with new plaster inside and outside, new floor etc.). Externally the roof is covered with cement, which apparently has replaced the soil of the original construction; internally it preserves the (restored) wooden structure. The entrance is located at the western side.

Internally, the central conch of the bema is semi-circular, flanked by a smaller conch in the northern wall. Along the northern wall of the main church is a low bench. The floor is paved with modern stone-slabs.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/*Spolia*: 1) The northern post of the *templon* is a robust granite column, apparently of Roman times [h: 2.00, d: 0.35]; 2) in front of the southern part of the *templon* in the main church, a fragment of a solid column of local polychrome marble [h: 0.35, d: 0.25]; 3) in the yard a marble block [0.31x0.34x0.15]; 4) in the yard a fragment of solid column [h: 0.39, d: 0.35].

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times?

References: -

b. Panayia Katapoliani

(The birth of the Mother of God)

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church with flat roofed narthex at the western side (type 3a) (Fig. C.47). The narthex is probably a later addition; originally there was a flat-roofed portico attached to the church, with arcaded openings on the northern, southern and western sides, blocked-off in later times. The original arch outside the western wall and the blind (today) arch inside the southern wall are still discernible.

Externally the roof of the narthex is covered with cement, which apparently has replaced the soil of the original construction. Above the entrance on the western side is located a pointed belfry. In the main church is visible the external side of the vault, deprived of its original covering, apparently of stone-slabs or tiles. The eastern wall bears the semicircular apse.

Internally, the narthex preserves its original roof consisting of uprights and bamboo. The entrance to the main church is crowned by an ogee arch. In the main church an arcaded opening in the western side of the northern wall allows communication between the church and the adjacent Ayios Ioannis (C30c). The only window of the church is set in the southern wall of the main church. The bema is dominated by a large semicircular conch in which is built the altar. Smaller and rectangular conchs are set in the northern and southern sides. A second free-standing altar is located in the north-eastern corner of the bema. The floor is paved with modern tiles.



Fig. C.47: C30b, view of the church from the north-west.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wood-carved; not a local product.

Icons: among the modern icons, two *templon*-icons of Christ and the Virgin Mary, of late Post-Byzantine times.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: The secondary altar is erected on a fragment of monolithic column.

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times?

References: -

c. Ayios Ioannis (St. John the Baptist)

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3c). Externally the roof is covered with cement, but it is thought that originally it was saddle-back. The apse in the eastern wall is rectangular. The entrance is located in the western wall.

Internally the central conch is semicircular, supplemented by two small rectangular conchs on the northern side. A rectangular window is set in the northern wall of the main church. The church is internally and externally plastered. The floor is paved with modern tiles.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, Early Modern, with minimal carved decoration; a Skyrian product.

Icons: among the modern icons, a *templon*-icon of the beheading of St. John, of Post-Byzantine times.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: outside the entrance a fragment of monolithic column [1:1.40].

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times?

References: -

C31. Ayia Theofano

Architecture: a single-nave barrel-vaulted church, with longitudinal barrel-vaulted narthex at the western side (type 3a). The church is built on the edge of a cliff. From the northern and southern sides it is flanked by houses. Externally the roof is flat covered with cement, but originally must have been saddle-back covered with stone-slabs. The apse is semicircular. Above the entrance is a semicircular conch.

Internally the conch of the bema is semicircular and relatively wide. Auxiliary rectangular conchs are

found on the northern and southern sides. The floor of the church is natural rock covered with sand, according to the traditional manner (Figs. C.48-49).

Wall paintings: badly preserved, only on the western side and mainly on the lateral walls of the narthex, including a composition of the Last Judgment (Fig. C.50). Hell is depicted on the northern wall and Paradise on the southern wall. The depiction of Christ on the western wall is very badly preserved. Based on their style and in comparison to the context of the

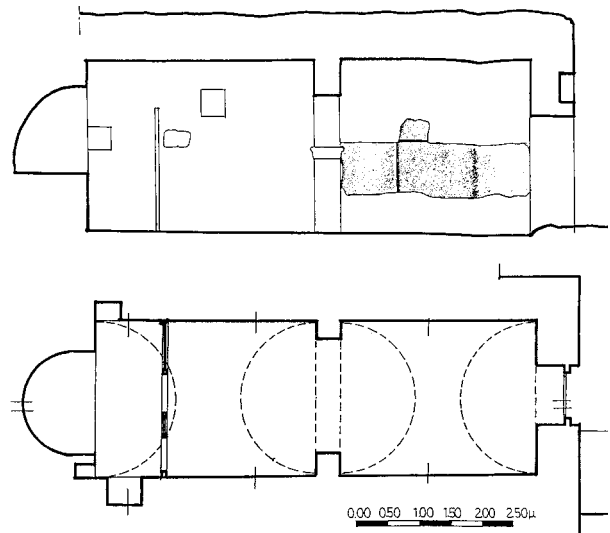


Fig. C.48: C31, longitudinal section and plan of the church (Argyros & Apostolou, archive-courtesy 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities).



Fig. C.49: C31, internal view of the church.



Fig. C.50: C31, part of the composition of the Last Judgment, on the north wall of the church's narthex.

churches of Chora, the wall paintings could be roughly dated to the 17th-18th c.

Templon: simple wooden, with painted *templon* door.

Icons: noteworthy icons of late Post-Byzantine times: *templon*-icons of Christ, Ayia Theofano and the Virgin Mary, the latter bearing the inscription “*Δέησις τοῦ δούλου τοῦ Θεοῦ Δημητρίου προσκυνητοῦ τοῦ Παναγίου Τάφου*”. In addition, 15 naïf icons of the *Apostolikon* (*Deisis* in the centre flanked by the twelve Apostles), a painted cross which crowns the *templon* and a high-quality icon of the Annunciation on the *templon* door, with the inscription “*Δέησις τοῦ δούλου τοῦ Θεοῦ Μανουὴλ καὶ Μαρίας καὶ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῶν*” in the lower part. In the central conch of the bema, a high-quality Post-Byzantine icon of Christ (quite worn).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: 17th-18th c. (based on the wall paintings)

References: -

C32. *Ayios Ioannis of Fragkos*

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church with a precinct courtyard at the western side (type 3b) (Fig. C.51). Externally the saddleback roof is covered with stone slabs. The eastern wall is bulging, indicating the apse. The entrance is located on the western side. The only window of the church is set in the southern side. Internally the conch of the bema is semicircular, sheltering the built altar. The floor is paved with glazed tiles of the mid-20th c.

Wall paintings: not discernible.



Fig. C.51:

C32, view of the church from the west.

Templon: wooden. The architrave is carved in low relief, gilded and painted. The other parts bear only painted decoration.

Icons: two of Post-Byzantine times in the *templon*: The Mother of God and Christ as *Megas Archiereus*.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C33. *Panayia Kyra Psomou (The Birth of the Mother of God)*

Architecture: a single-nave domed church with blind arches and elongated barrel-vaulted spaces eastward and westward (type 6d) (Figs. C.52-53). Due to the inclined terrain the eastern side of the church is attached to the natural rock and thus not visible. To the northern there is attached an auxiliary building. Both the church and the adjacent building were restored by the Direction of Restoration of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine monuments and by the 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, during the years 2002-2009.

Externally the drum of the dome is cylindrical with four arcaded windows. The roof of the church (the dome included) was covered with cement before the restoration. The Archaeological Service restored the apparently original stone-slabs of the construction. The entrance to the church is located on the western side. Originally it was covered by a kind of



Fig. C.52: C33, view of the church from the south-east.

portico (now demolished) covered with the traditional flat roof, consisting of uprights, bamboo and local soil.

Internally the bema is very regular. It consists of a wide semicircular conch and two smaller conchs set in the northern and southern walls (for the *prothesis* and the *diakonikon* respectively). Outside the bema in the northern wall there is a blocked opening, which originally enabled communication of the church with the auxiliary building. The floor is paved with marble slabs.

The interior of the church bears a stucco 'Baroque style' relief decoration. This is identified on the dome (oval medallions adorned with floral patterns) and on the cornice of its base, on the pendentives (oval medallions adorned with floral patterns), on the top of the western piers of the main church (Corinthian style pier(like)-capitals), and on the drums of the blind arches (oval medallions adorned with floral patterns). Apparently the relief decoration was prepared to receive painted decoration (i.e. the empty medallions on the dome, pendentives and the drums); this was never executed, except for some coloured backgrounds identified on the walls of the narthex, imitating a marble effect. This example of relief architectural decoration in Kyra Psomou is a unique case in Skyros.

Wall paintings: not discernible, except for the coloured backgrounds imitating a marble effect of the relief decoration (see immediately above).

Templon: wood-carved, of high quality. It bears gilded and painted decoration; definitely not a local product (Fig. C.54).

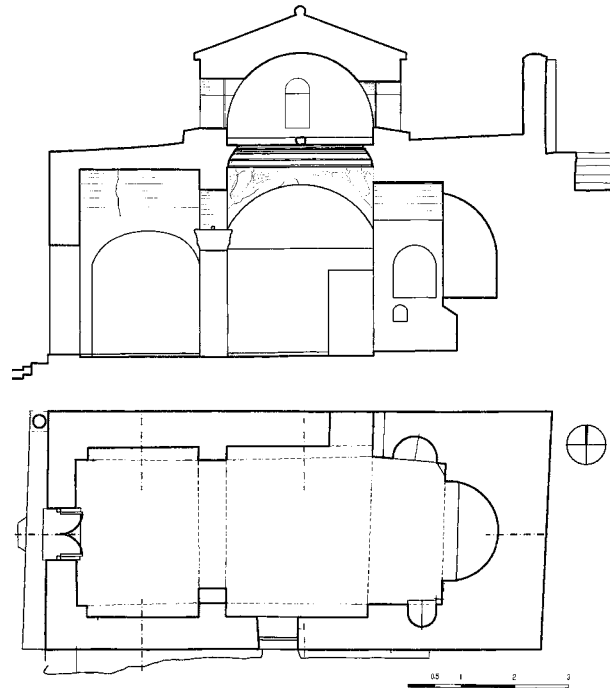


Fig. C.53: C33, longitudinal section and plan of the church (Petrioli, Koutsi, Salemi & Chandrinos; archive-courtesy 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities).



Fig. C.54: C33, the *templon*-door of the church; definitely not a local product.

Icons: in the *templon*, of late Post-Byzantine times: thirteen icons of the *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle) in the architrave, an icon of Christ Pantokrator, a *templon* door with a western-style Annunciation and a painted cross crowning the *templon*.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: Inside the church is an Ionic column capital of CL-HEL times [h: 0.18, w: 0.27], an Early Christian cubical capital decorated with a Latin cross [h: 0.18, w: 0.35x0.35]; outside the church is a solid marble column (originally the post of the western portico) [h: 1.53, d: c. 0.26].

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The church is referred to by Atesis as being ex-parochial (1961: 251).

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

Comments: Oral tradition refers to the church as 'Catholic'. No evidence supports this hypothesis.

References: Atesis 1961, 251.

C34a-b. Ayia Paraskevi (a) and Ayios Dimitrios (b)

Architecture: twin church. The southern church, dedicated to Ayia Paraskevi, is a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3b). Its saddleback roof is covered with stone-slabs (Fig. C.55). The northern church, dedicated to Ayios Dimitrios, is also a small single-nave but flat-roofed church, constructed with uprights, bamboo and (originally) soil, according to the traditional manner (type 4a). Today the soil has been replaced with cement. Entrance to both churches, which on the western side are elevated in relation to the road, is via two ladders from the northern and southern sides of a tiny terrace, one for each church.



Fig. C.55: C34a, view of the church from the west.

Internally, the churches communicate through a rectangular opening in their common wall. It seems that originally this opening was much wider, as the traces of the initial arcaded construction attest. The bema of both churches bears a central semicircular conch, supplemented by auxiliary conchs distributed along the rest of the walls. The floor of both churches is paved with glazed tiles of the mid-20th c. The interior of Ayios Dimitrios and the western external side of both churches are plastered.

Wall paintings: a much worn small fragment in the eastern wall of Ayia Paraskevi, in which is discernible a medallion with a half-figured Prelate (Fig. C.56).

Templon: wooden modern in both churches.

Icons: in Ayia Paraskevi all are modern. In Ayios Dimitrios are three *templon*-icons depicting Christ, the Virgin Mary and Ayios Dimitrios, probably by the same artist. In the lower part of the latter the date 1836 can be discerned.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -



Fig. C.56: C34a, the last survived fragment of the painted decoration of the church.

C35. Ayia Anna

Architecture: a single-nave flat-roofed church with blind arches and elongated barrel-vaulted spaces to the eastward and westward (type 6d). It seems certain that the core of the church was originally domed; this explains the robust lateral walls and the arches.



Fig. C.57: C35, view of the church from the west.

Apparently the dome collapsed at some time and was replaced by the traditional flat roof consisting of up-rights, bamboo and soil.

On the northern and southern sides the core of the church is flanked by longitudinal rooms, originally open spaces between the church and the adjacent houses, later closed-off and incorporated into the church as auxiliary rooms. Only the western side of the church is visible, the rest being attached to the adjacent houses and natural rock (Figs. C.57-59).

Externally the roof of the church is now flat, covered with cement (which apparently replaced the original soil). The roof of the central and western part of the church is higher than that of the bema. This of course is a result of the later phase of the monument, after the collapse of the dome and probably of the western barrel-vault as well. Actually in the first phase of the church, apart from the dome which naturally should be significantly higher than the rest of the building, the western part should be of the same altitudinal level as the eastern part (see the section of the same church-type C36). In fact, inside the church in the (fortunately) non-plastered western vault, there is clearly discernible in the masonry a joint of the lateral arches, attesting that the present vault (built with dressed tufa stones) is a later repair, making the vault more vertical in comparison to the original. This was apparently done in order for the vault to reach in height the pendentives of the collapsed dome and thus be easily roofed with a flat (external) construction.

Internally the communication of the church with the lateral auxiliary rooms is via two arcaded openings at the western side of the building. A window on the north-east side of the main church communicates

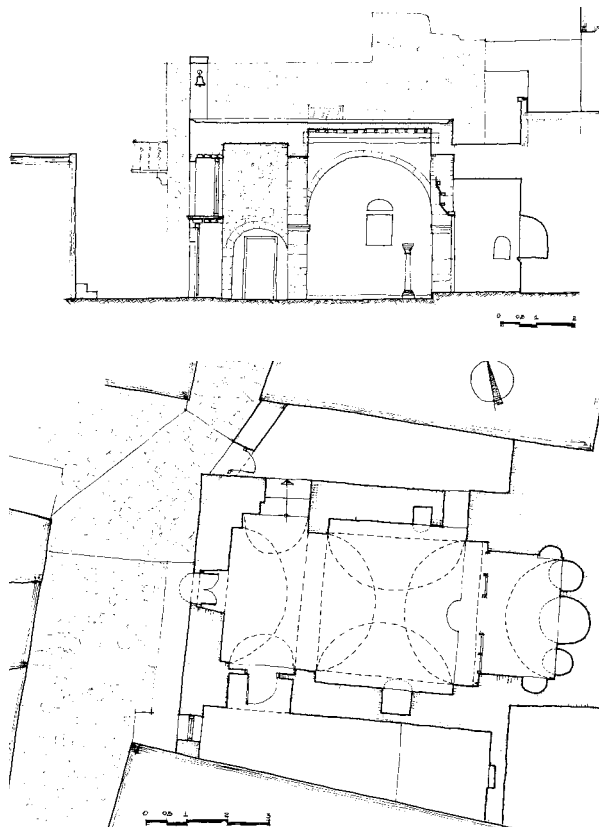


Fig. C.58: C35, longitudinal section and plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).



Fig. C.59: C35, internal view of the church.

with the northern auxiliary room. The barrel-vaulted bema bears five semicircular conchs regularly distributed (five in the eastern wall and two more in the northern and southern walls). The central one is bigger and bears the built altar. Two more rectangular conchs are set in the northern and southern walls of the main church. The floor is paved with stone-slabs, while that of the lateral rooms with cement (cement repairs are also identified in the bema).

Wall paintings: Worn traces were preserved until some decades ago.

Templon: wood-carved in low relief and with painted decoration. On the architrave the large inscription “ἐν ἐκκλησίαις εὐλογεῖτε τὸν Θεόν”. Definitely not a local product.

Icons: of good quality and Post-Byzantine date: 12 icons of the *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle) in the architrave and three *templon*-icons of Christ, the Virgin Mary and the Dormition of St. Anna. The icon of Christ bears an inscription on its front side: “Ἐπὶ Ἦτι 1744”. Two more naïf icons of the late 19th c. (of St. John the Baptist and Prophet Elias), products of the same artist, are located in front of the *templon*. The latter has a written inscription at the back: “1873”.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia:-

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The church was parochial. The brother of the fraternity Dimitrios Kosmas, in his report to the bishopric commissioner, Archimandrite Serafim Koutsoupis, in 1833, mentions that the church is private, has a capacity of 60 people and that the annual instalment of the members of the fraternity for the needs of the church amounts to 157 kuruş (Atesis 1961, 252).

Chronology: of Ottoman times (17th c.?)

References: Atesis 1961, 252.

C36. *Christos Miga (The Birth of Christ)*

Architecture: a single-nave domed church with blind arches and elongated barrel-vaulted spaces to the east and west (type 6d). In the 19th century a separate room was added to the west, now the narthex of the church (Fig. C.60). The 19th c. narthex was roofed with the traditional flat construction consisting of uprights and bamboo overlaid by local soil (*melagki*); today the soil has been replaced with cement. The rest of the roof of the church (the dome included) is covered with stone slabs. Externally the drum of the dome is cylindri-

cal and relatively low; it bears a small window on the western side. The eastern wall of the church is quite thick and slightly bulging, an indication of the apse. At the top of the western wall of the main church is located the belfry.

Internally the church is dominated by the large dome, formed as a semi-spherical vault, low and wide in comparison to the volume of the church, erected directly on the pendentives. The radius of the dome is slightly larger in respect to its circular base.

In the eastern wall of the bema are set three conchs regularly distributed amid the bema, the *prothesis* and the *diakonikon*. The central conch is bigger, semicircular and bears the built altar. One more rectangular conch is set in the northern wall of the bema.

The four blind arches in the main church start from a relatively low height. The southern wall has a rectangular opening. A window is set above the western arch of the main church. The floor of the church is paved with glazed tiles of the mid-20th century.

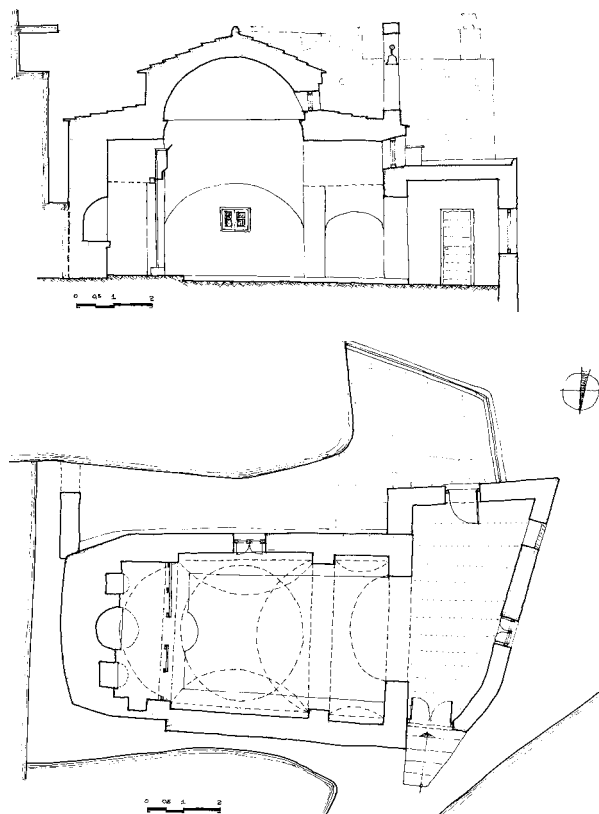


Fig. C.60: C36, longitudinal section and plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).

On the northern side of the narthex is the entrance of the church. A second door on the southern side enables communication between the church and a courtyard. The large arcaded opening between the narthex and the main church is a result of extensive works in 1820, including construction of the present narthex and enlargement of the original (apparently smaller) entrance to the church (see below in *historical evidence*). This is why the axis of the arcade does not coincide with the axis of the church. The floor of the narthex is paved with modern glazed tiles.

Wall paintings: not discernible. The church is internally and externally plastered.

Templon: wood-carved, of high quality, without additional gilded and/or painted decoration, executed in 1808. Supplementary work was undertaken in 1824 by a certain Fragkoulis from the island of Chios (see below, *historical evidence*).

Icons: The cross, the *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle) and the Nativity of the Christ are contemporaneous to the *templon* (1808) (see below *historical evidence*). The other two icons of the *templon* (Christ and the Virgin Mary) are probably of earlier date (17th - 18th c.).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: Behind the bema, Papageorgiou mentions an illegible Latin inscription (Papageorgiou 1909, 40).

Historical evidence: It is one of the few churches preserving its Codex (*Thesis*), written in 1806 by the priest Dimitrios Samiotis Oikonomou. The Codex was published by Atesis in 1969. Here the basic elements of the text are presented: According to the Codex, the church of *Christos tou Miga* was parochial and was founded by an ancestor of the writer, the priest Georgios Migas (whence the appellation). After the death of his wife Georgios became a monk, taking the new name of Gabriel (Migas). Some members of the fraternity disputed Gabriel as being the founder of the church, obliging him to seek redress from the Archbishop of Athens, Daniel (1636-1655) during his visit to Skyros between the years 1636-1638. The Archbishop confirmed the rights of Gabriel as indicated in the relevant judgment, which was inscribed into the Codex in 1638. We can thus use the year 1638 as *terminus ante quem* for the founding of the church.

From the Codex we also learn that the descendants of Gabriel created a first narthex in 1806, and in 1808 made the *templon*, adorned with the cross at the top, the icons of the *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle) and

an icon of the Nativity of Christ. Moreover, the writer of the Codex, Dimitrios Oikonomou, informs us with a new entry that in 1820 the present large narthex was built and the arcaded opening connecting the narthex with the main church created, while in the next year (1821) the present belfry was constructed. Moreover, in 1824 he employed for 15 days a certain Fragkoulis from the island of Chios (who originally came to Skyros to finish the *templon* of Archontopanayia, C23), to enrich the wood-carved decoration of the church of Christos. Lastly, in 1878 Georgios and Stamatis Oikonomidis repaired the roof of the narthex. At the end of the Codex is provided a full catalogue of the numerous land offers to the church by members of the fraternity, as well as three agreements (dated 1878, 1881 and 1885) between the owners of the church at that time -Stamatis and Georgios Oikonomidis- and the priests, regarding the rights and obligations of each party.

Chronology: 1638 *terminus ante quem* (early 17th century at the earliest). The present narthex dates from 1820; the belfry from 1821; the *templon* from 1808 and 1824.

References: Atesis 1969, 13-30; Atesis 1961, 251-2.

C37. Panayia Eleimonitria (Fountain of life Almoner)

Architecture: The core of the church is a single-nave, domed, with blind arches and elongated barrel-vaulted spaces to the east and west (type 6d). The two flat-roofed longitudinal rooms which flank the church from the northern and southern sides (or perhaps even the present barrel-vaulted narthex to the west) are possibly later additions (Figs. C.61-62).

Externally the drum of the dome is cylindrical with four windows and covered with stone-slabs, now plastered. Stone-slabs also cover the rest of the roof of the main church, while the vaults of the two western spaces are covered with cement. Cement has also been applied on the flat roofs of the lateral wings, apparently replacing the soil of the original construction (internally the rooms preserve the original wooden support). The eastern wall of the church is bulging, indicating the apse.

The church bears three entrances, all on the western side: one in the narthex and two more set in the lateral wings. The lintel of the central entrance bears the founding inscriptions of the church. It is



Fig. C.61: C37, view of the church from the northwest.

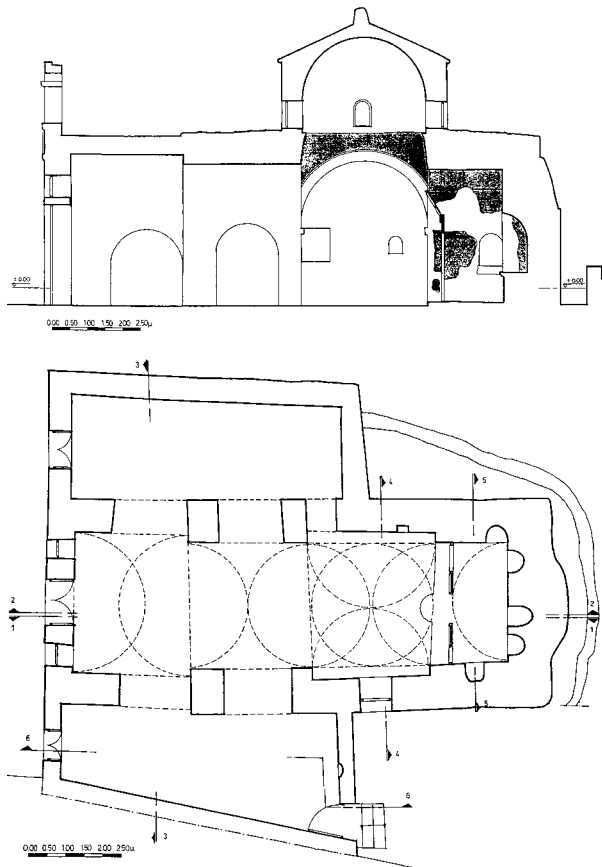


Fig. C.62: C37, longitudinal section and plan of the church (Argyros & Apostolou, archive-courtesy of the 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities).

crowned by a relieving arch, for the support of the gabled facade of the roof and the robust belfry. Both the gable and the belfry are decorated with EMOD *baccini*, local copies of the Polychrome Italian Maiolica Ware. The central entrance is flanked by two arcaded windows.

Internally, the radius of the dome is slightly larger in respect to its circular base, an indication that the timber centring for the construction of the dome was based not only on the church floor, but also on the pendentives. The communication of the lateral wings with the narthex is via arcaded openings. In the barrel-vaulted bema are set five semicircular conchs, three in the eastern wall and another two in the northern and southern walls, irregularly distributed. The floor of the church is paved with glazed tiles of the mid-20th c. The building complex is plastered externally and in the major part of its interior.

Wall paintings: preserved mainly in the upper parts of the church (dome, vaults) and the bema, but quite worn. On the dome is the *Christ Pantokrator* surrounded by the Heavenly Powers and Prophets; in the pendentives Evangelists; in the southern blind arcade scenes in three bands: on the upper part the Presentation of Christ in the Church, in the middle medallions of half-figured saints, and below full-length frontal saints. In the central conch of the bema the Virgin Mary enthroned with Christ in her lap. In the middle of the vault of the bema, band with medallions of half-figured Prophets; on the northern half of the vault the questioning of Thomas(?) and the Myrrh-bearers; on the southern half the Annunciation of the Virgin and the Birth of Christ. Lower, on the northern side, the Eucharist; on the southern wall of the bema medallions of half-figured Prelates and at lower level full-length Prelates. According to the inscription the paintings date from 1682 (see below).

Templon: wood-carved in low relief. It is equipped with double architrave; not a local product.

Icons: Among the many modern icons, some are of late Post-Byzantine date, such as the *templon*-icons of Christ and the Virgin Mary, the small icons of the *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle) and the icons of St. Nicholas and the Lamentation, both in the main church.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: On the marble lintel above the central entrance two inscriptions are found: at the lowest part of the plaque is inscribed "[...], αχπβ' (=1682) Δικ(ε) β(ρ)ήου 106 (16)". At a higher level is a second in-

scription, with smaller and shallower letters than the first, in which is written “ἡστορήθη οὗτος ὁ ναὸς τῆς Θεοτόκου ὑπὸ τὴνδὲ Θεοδούλου μοναχοῦ 1682 ἐτὶ Δεκ(ε)βρ(ι)ου 6” (Fig. C.63).

Historical evidence: The Codex (*Thesis*) of the church survives. It was donated to the local historical archive in the 1930s by Kleomenis Antoniadis. The first sheet of the Codex has the narrative of the church’s foundation, written by the Skyrian monk Serafeim in 1818. At the end of the text there is a full catalogue of the brothers of the fraternity of the church at that time, who co-sign it along with Serafeim. According to this narrative, two hundred years before the text was written (1818), a certain monk, Theodoulos, discovered an icon of the Virgin Mary hidden in a well located in the area of the present church, after a miraculous intervention by the Virgin Mary herself. After the discovery, both Theodoulos and the local clergy decided that the foundation of a church must be dedicated to Panayia, Fountain of Life Almoner (Atesis 1961, 254-8). Two hundred years elapsed before the narrative of 1818, which is roughly in accordance with the chronology of 1682 mentioned in the inscription, and the monk Theodoulos, who according to the inscription painted the church, could be the same person who played the prime role in its foundation. An interesting note in the text states that the house of the monk Theodoulos was close to the church of Ayios Minas (C38). It is not known whether the reference to Ayios Minas concerns the year in which the text was written (1818) or the time of the church’s foundation (1682). In any case, as we shall see below, the earliest historical reference to Ayios Minas is in a document of 1773 (Antoniadis 1990, doc. 104/1773).

Chronology: 1682.

References: Atesis 1961, 254-8; Faltaitis 1930.



Fig. C.63: C37, the dedicatory inscription of the church.

C38. Ayios Minas

Architecture: a single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3c). The church is built on a rocky outcrop; the southern wall is buttressed at its base. The church is completely plastered, both internally and externally. The roof is covered with stone-slabs, now plastered with cement (traces of the plaques are easily discernible in the faces of the walls). The entrance is set in the western wall, crowned by the belfry (Fig. C.64).

Internally, the altar is set into the central eastern conch. Two more conchs are set in the northern and southern walls of the bema. The floor is paved with modern tiles.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, modern, with minimal carved decoration; local product.

Icons: Among the modern icons are three *templon*-icons of Christ, the Virgin Mary and Ayios Minas dating from the 19th c.; many icons of the same style occur on the island (e.g. Ayios Antonios & Ayios Charalambos C40, Ayia Anna C35, Metamorfosis Sotiros C49, or even in private collections).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

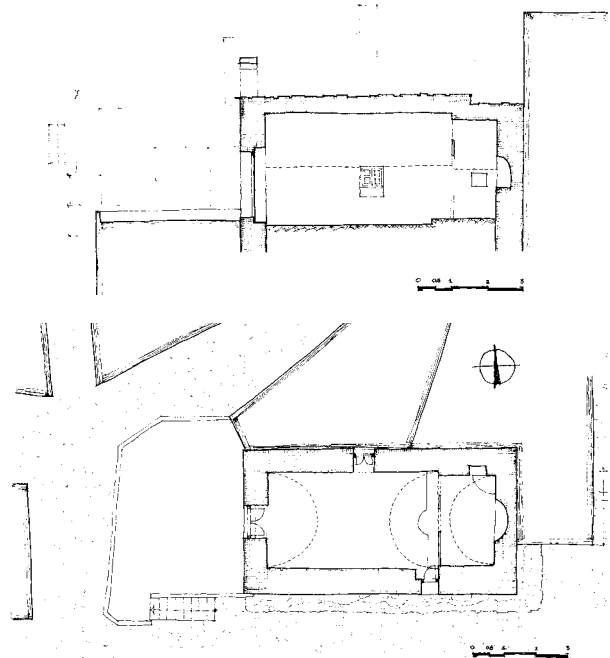


Fig. C.64: C38, longitudinal section and plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).

Historical evidence: The church is referred to in a document of 1773 (Antoniadis 1990, doc. 104/1773).

Chronology: 1773 *terminus ante quem*.

References: -

C39. Panayia Melikarou (The presentation of the Virgin Mary to the Church)

Architecture: a single-aisled timber saddleback roofed church covered with tiles (type 5) (Fig. C.65). The church was erected on highly inclined terrain, creating a two-storey building at the western side. The lower floor is the storeroom of the church. Internally and externally the building is plastered. Inside, the (wooden) roof ceiling is painted light blue, adorned with gold-painted stars and floral motifs (renovated in 2009 by the personnel of the 23rd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities). Apparently the intention was for this wooden construction to simulate the sky, according to western ecclesiastical models (i.e. the panelling of western churches in Greece). In the centre of the ceiling are western style oil-paintings of the *Christ Pantocrator* and the Evangelists. At the western side of the church is a wooden Π-shaped gallery (Fig. C.66). Large arcaded windows are set along the lateral and western walls of the church. There are two entrances to the building; the central entrance is set in the southern wall and a second auxiliary entrance is set in the northern wall and leads to a small courtyard where the modern bell-tower is located. The floor is modern and is paved with marble slabs.

Wall paintings: -

Templon: EMOD of 'neoclassical' style; not local.

Icons: Among the many modern icons are four *templon*-icons of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary to the Church, the Virgin Mary enthroned with Christ in her lap, Christ and St. John the Baptist, and thirteen *Dodekaorton* (Feast Cycle) icons on the architrave with the Last Supper in the middle, all of Early Modern times. In addition, a Post-Byzantine icon of the Dormition of the Mother of God and a *templon* door of high quality on the northern wall close to the *templon*; both probably originate from the episcopal church at the castle (see C01).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: The two supports of the gallery are undoubtedly posts from the Mid-Byzantine marbled screen of the episcopal church at the castle (C01) (Figs. C.67-68). The posts bear grooves on one side for application of the screen panels, and

one has an attached support for the fitting of the door. One of the posts bears an Early Christian fold capital, apparently incorporated into the Mid-Byzantine screen [h: 2.77, w: 0.20x0.20] (Fig. C.69). An identical Early Christian capital was identified in the courtyard of the monastery of St. George (C05).

Outside, above the northern entrance, is a white-washed oblique architrave with sculpted decoration with crosses, birds and geometrical motifs [l: 2.36] (Fig. C.70). The piece is similarly an architrave of the Mid-Byzantine marble screen of the episcopal church at the castle (C01) (for the mid-Byzantine sculptures of the Episkopi, see Chapter 12.2.3).

Inscriptions: of 1967, on the steeple.

Historical evidence: In unidentified times the church was dedicated not only to the Virgin Mary but also to Ayios Artemios (Atesis 1961, 246). The present form of the church seems to be the result of a renovation. After the death of the last bishop of Skyros, Gregorios, in 1837 and the final abolishment of the bishopric on December 20, 1841 by the Hellenic Church, the church of Panayia Melikarou gradually assumed the primary position among the other churches of Skyros, ultimately becoming the cathedral of the island (to this day). After the collapse of the episcopal church at the castle on April 9, 1841, the icon of the Dormition of the Mother of God, the Gospel and other secondary liturgical items of the Episkopi were transported to the church of Melikarou. The (wooden) episcopal throne, the *templon*, the ambo and other items were transport to Ayios Ioannis *sta Kochilia* (C42), the second most important church in Chora after Episkopi.

Chronology: the present form, 19th c. (1841 *terminus ante quem*).

Comments: The *templon* and its icons could be imported pieces from Syros (see C49).

References: Atesis 1961, 246.

C40a-b. Ayios Antonios & Ayios Charalambos

Architecture: twin church; the northern church is dedicated to Ayios Antonios (a) and the southern to Ayios Charalambos (b). This is a small single-nave barrel-vaulted construction (type 3a), to which the southern flat-roofed and greater in length church (type 4a) was attached at a later time. The western side of the added church was expanded northwards, in front of the church of Ayios Antonios, taking the form of a narthex of the old church.

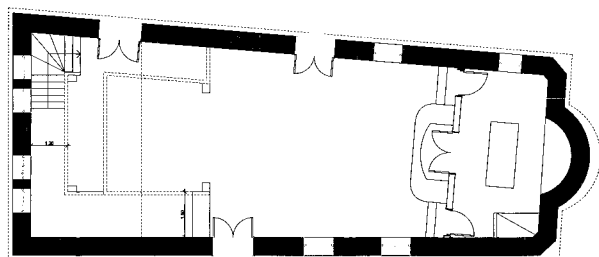


Fig. C.65: C39, plan of the church (L. Mantika; archive-courtesy 23rd of Byzantine Antiquities).



Fig. C.66: C39, internal view of the church from the east.



Fig. C.67: C39, the two marble-supports of the church's gallery; originally posts of the 9th c. *templon* of the Episkopi (C01).



Fig. C.68: C39, detail of the capital of the one of the posts.



Fig. C.69: C39, Early Christian fold capital crowning one of the posts; the piece was probably incorporated into the 9th c. screen of the Episkopi (C01).



Fig. C.70: C39, oblique architrave in second use above the northern entrance of the church; originally part of the 9th c. *templon* of the Episkopi (C01).

Externally, both churches present in form a large orthogonal construction. Both buildings are now covered with cement. However, the northern church presumably had a saddleback roof and the southern church a final covering of the local soil (*melagki*). The apse of the northern church is rectangular while that of the southern is three-sided. Both churches are externally and internally plastered.

Internally the barrel-vault of Ayios Antonios traverses the main church and the bema at the same height. In the eastern wall is set the semicircular conch of the bema, which had a small light-hole (now closed). Two more conchs, smaller and rectangular in shape, are set in the northern and southern walls of the bema. The southern conch was transformed after the addition of the southern church into a window between the churches. Another rectangular conch is set in the northern wall of the main church, immediately outside the *templon*.

The church of Ayios Charalambos preserves internally the wooden construction of the roof, consisting of uprights and bamboo (restored). In the eastern wall are set the three conchs of the bema. In the southern wall of the bema there is a rectangular window. Another is set in the southern wall of the main church, flanked by a rectangular conch to the eastward. Another rectangular conch is located in the western wall. The floor of both churches is paved with modern glazed tiles.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: Ayios Antonios: wooden. The architrave and the frame of the sanctuary door belong to the original *templon*. The rest is modern. The old pieces bear naïf champlevé decoration with vines and birds. Not a local product. Ayios Charalambos: wood-carved decorated with peacocks, lions, etc. In the arch which crowns the sanctuary gate there is a carved inscription mentioning that the *templon* was ordered by a certain Athanasios from the island of Mykonos “[...]έκοσμήθι τὸ παρὸν τέμπλο ἐξόδου τε Ἀθανασίου ἐκ νῆσου Μηκόνου” (Fig. C.71).

Icons: *Ayios Antonios*: The icons of the *templon* are modern. On the northern wall are icons of the Virgin Mary and Christ and in the arcaded opening between the two churches the icon of Ayios Antonios; all date from the 19th c. That of the Virgin Mary and Ayios Antonios are of the same style and size and originally must have belonged to the *templon*.



Fig. C.71: C40b, the dedicatory inscription on the *templon* of the church.

Ayios Charalambos: Among the modern icons, there are three *templon*-icons of Christ, the Virgin Mary and Ayios Charalambos; they are made by the same artist and certainly belong to the present *templon*. All three bear an inscription on the reverse side with the date 1797. This is probably the date of the *templon* too. In a different style but probably of the same date are the *templon* door and one more icon of Ayios Antonios in the central conch of the bema.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: Outside the church are two bases of a phiale, of which one is of Skyrian polychrome marble [h: 0.83, up d: 0.19]; [h: 0.61, up d: 0.26].

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: Georgopoulou-Meladini 1972, 373.

C41. *Ayia Marina*

Architecture: a small single-nave flat roofed church, covered with the traditional construction consisting of uprights, bamboo and soil (type 4a). The soil has now been replaced by cement. The apse is semicircular. The entrance is set in the western wall.

Internally, in the eastern wall is set the semicircular conch of the bema which bears the built altar. In the northern wall of the bema is a small rectangular window. The floor is paved with mid-20th c. tiles.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built; a wooden modern *templon* is attached over it.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C42. Ayios Ioannis (St. John the Baptist)

Architecture: a single-nave domed church with blind arches and a three-part barrel-vaulted bema (type 6e). This core was supplemented at a later time by a flat-roofed narthex on the western side, longitudinal rooms on the northern, and recently (in the 20th c.) a monumental belfry (Fig. C.72).

Externally, the dome is octagonal and relatively high. It has two windows in the eastern and western sides. The roof of the church is covered with stone

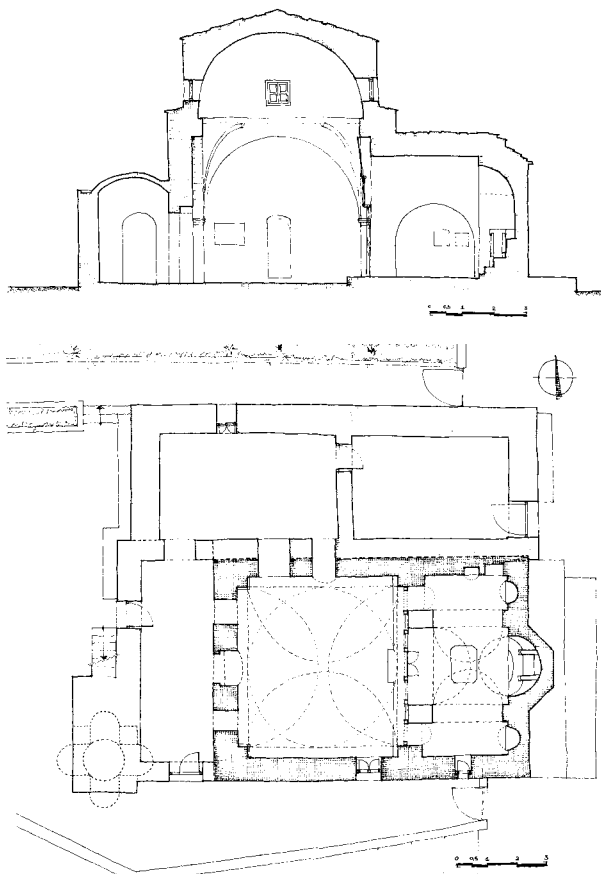


Fig. C.72: C42, longitudinal section and plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).

slabs. The narthex and the auxiliary rooms are flat-roofed and covered with cement, which apparently has replaced the original soil of the traditional construction. The apse at the eastern wall is three-sided. The entrance to the church is set in the southern wall of the narthex.

Internally the dome is low and wide as compared to the volume of the church. The eastern and western arches of the cubic main church are each supported by two robust pillars. Those of the western arch create a triple entrance to the church. From the pillars of the eastern arch begin two smaller arches with east-west direction, which divide the bema into three parts (bema, *prothesis*, *diakonikon*). The central part is higher, bears a large semicircular conch equipped with a built episcopal throne, and has in the middle a free-standing altar. Two more conchs are set in the *prothesis* and the *diakonikon* while two more rectangular conchs are set in the northern wall of the bema. Undoubtedly the bema has a 'monumental' (for Skyros) appearance, the only parallels being that of the church of Archontopanagia (C23) and of the *katholikon* of Ayios Georgios (C05).

The floor of the church is paved with glazed tiles which according to the relevant inscription were applied in 1954. The building is plastered internally and externally; the slabs of the roof are only whitewashed.

Wall paintings: A fragment of wall painting is preserved at the upper part of the northern wall of the main church. The painting is much worn and the scene of the depiction unidentified.

Templon: wood-carved in deep relief decorated with floral motifs; in the architrave and the *apostolikon* vine scrolls. In the architrave in low relief reads the inscription "ἐν ἐκκλησίαις εὐλογεῖτε τὸν Θεόν". The craftwork must be dated to the 19th c. and it is definitely not a local product. This was the last wooden *templon* of the episcopal church (C01), which after its collapse in 1841 was transported and established in Ayios Ioannis (Atesis 1961, 240). This is confirmed by the fact that the *templon* is cut along the lateral sides, so as to fit in the narrower church of Ayios Ioannis (Fig. C.73).

Icons: The cross of the *templon* is of high-quality Post-Byzantine work. At the edges of the three arms of the cross are depicted the symbols of the Evangelists. The cross is flanked by the small icons of the Virgin Mary and St. John the Theologian (*lypira*). Of similar style and date is the *templon*-icon of the Birth

of St. John the Baptist. The other three (Christ, enthroned Virgin with Christ in her lap and the Baptism of Christ) are of late Post-Byzantine period (19th c.?), and probably set with the *templon*. The *templon* door has among the carved floral motifs tiny painted scenes (the Annunciation of Virgin Mary, two full-length Prelates and between them medallions with half-figured Prophets). In the narthex are two more icons of late Post-Byzantine times (Christ and the Beheading of St. John the Baptist).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: The sides of the episcopal throne in the bema are of Early Christian mullions, probably of Proconnessian marble [0.97x0.44x0.12.5] (Fig. C.74).



Fig. C.73:
C42, internal view of the church; the *templon* was originally the 19th c. *templon* of the Episkopi (C01).



Fig. C.74:
C42, Early Christian mullions, re-used in the bishop's throne of the church.

Inscriptions: only one, referring to the floor renovation in 1954.

Historical evidence: There is a strong local tradition to the effect that during the Frankish-Venetian period a catholic bishop was based in the episcopal church at the castle (C01) and that the orthodox bishop was moved to the church of Ayios Ioannis (Antoniadis 1995d, 111; Atesis 1961, 247). Papageorgiou actually states that in his time the house of the orthodox bishop was lying in ruins beside the church of Ayios Ioannis (Papageorgiou 1909, 128). Although the typology of the church indicates a probable Ottoman date for the building, this does not necessarily contradict the oral tradition, as the present aspect of the church could be a result of later renovation or complete replacement of an older and perhaps more modest church. Further, the episcopal throne in the bema is an important element which supports the historical information. In any case the church was, and still is, parochial.

Chronology: of Ottoman times?

Comments: The church is of identical type with that of Archontopanayia (C23). The similarity extends to further morphological elements, such as the episcopal throne in the central conch of the bema, maybe because of the special character of the monuments as secondary episcopal churches.

References: Atesis 1961, 247.

C43. Zoodochos Pigi (*Fountain of life Almoner*)

Architecture: a small single-nave flat-roofed church, covered with the traditional construction consisting of uprights, bamboo and soil (type 4a). The latter has now been replaced with cement. The monument was recently plastered internally and externally. Externally are discernible the traces of the original apse. The conch of the bema is set into the eastern wall.

Along the long walls of the main church are low built benches. The floor is paved with tiles of the mid-20th c.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built, modern.

Icons: among the modern icons a high quality early Post-Byzantine *templon*-icon of the Virgin Mary with Christ in her lap.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

Comments: Some meters north of the church lies a natural spring which apparently was the reason for the dedication of the church to the Fountain of Life Almoner. The spring is rectangular and built with undressed stones set with lime mortar. The internal surface is also plastered with lime and hydraulic mortar. The date of the construction could be Ottoman or even medieval.

References: -

C44. Ayios Georgios Sirivli

Architecture: a small single-nave domed church with blind arches and barrel-vaulted bema (type 6c) (Fig. C.75). Externally the drum of the dome is cylindrical and relatively high. Neither the dome, nor the rest of the church preserves its original covering; today it is covered with cement. A rectangular protrusion in the eastern wall indicates the apse. The northern wall is supported by a buttress. In this wall is set the only window of the church. Above the entrance on the western wall is constructed a rectangular conch.

Internally the dome is shaped as a semi-spherical vault, low and wide in comparison to the volume of the church, erected directly on the pendentives. The radius of the dome is slightly larger in respect to its circular base. The four pendentives are ribbed and start from pilaster(like)-capitals.

In the eastern wall of the bema is set the central semicircular conch which bears the built altar. Two more conchs are found at its northern and southern sides, for the *prothesis* and *diakonikon* respectively.



Fig. C.75: C44, view of the church from the southwest.

Along the northern and southern walls of the main church are low-built benches. The floor of the church is paved with cement.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built, modern.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: numerous Greco-Roman *spolia* built into the masonry or lying inside the bema: 1) pedestal of Skyrian polychrome marble, built in the yard [0.25x0.18x0.16]; 2) solid column fragment of Skyrian polychrome marble, built upon the western top of the church [h:0.30, d: 0.23]; 3) fragment of monolithic column of grey marble, built upon the western top of the church [h:0.37, d: 0.17]; 4) small statue of white marble, probably classical, built upon the western top of the church [h:0.20, w: 0.16]; 5) Ionic column-capital, inside the bema [h: 0.15, d: 0.26]; 6) column-base of Skyrian polychrome marble, inside the bema [h: 0.25, w: 0.26, d: 0.19]; 7) column-base of white marble, inside the bema [h: 0.10, d: 0.16]; 8) column-base of grey-white marble, inside the bema [h: 0.14, w: 0.34, d: 0.28]; 9) column-base of grey marble, inside the bema [h: 0.15, d: 0.34]; 10) base of phiale of grey marble, inside the bema [h: 0.33, d: 0.16]; 11) pedestal of a statue of grey marble, inside the bema [h: 0.11, w: 0.30]; 12) fragment of monolithic column built into the northeast corner of the church [h: 0.78, d: 0.32]; 13) upper part of an ancient funerary stele with two human figures built above the entrance.

Inscriptions: not related to the church.

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: Georgopoulou-Meladini 1972, 373.

C45a-b-c. Atreklisa (The presentation of the Virgin Mary to the Church, the birth of Christ and St. John the Baptist) (triple church).

Architecture: a triple church; consisting of three single-nave barrel-vaulted adjoining churches (type 3); the central (b) projects slightly to the westward (Fig. C.76). The bema of the central church is lower and narrower than the main church. The entrance to all three churches is located in their western wall; above that of the central one is set a semicircular conch. The apses are semicircular. All the churches are now flat-roofed covered with cement.



Fig. C.76: C45, view of the churches from the west.

Internally, communication between the three churches is via large arcaded openings in the western side of their walls. The bema of the central church communicates with that of the northern church via an arcaded opening. The altar of the central and main church is free-standing, while those of the lateral churches are set into their central conchs. Along the long walls of the churches are low-built benches. The floor is paved with glazed tiles of the mid-20th c.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The church is referred to in a document of 1626 (Antoniadis 1990, doc. 19/1626).

Chronology: 1626 *terminus ante quem*.

References: -

C46. Panayia Katratsila (The Dormition of Virgin Mary)

Architecture: a small single-nave flat-roofed church, with barrel-vaulted bema. Externally the bema is set into the orthogonal form of the building but internally it is narrower and lower as compared to the main church. The flat roof consists of uprights, bamboo and cement (the latter has apparently replaced the soil of the traditional construction). The eastern wall is slightly bulging for the indication of the apse. The southern wall bears two buttresses; among them is set a small window. The entrance is located in the western wall. Internally, in the eastern wall of the bema

is set the semicircular central conch which bears the built altar. Two smaller rectangular conchs are set to the northward and southward of the central conch. The floor is paved with tiles of the mid-20th c. The building is internally and externally plastered.

The architectural type of the church, orthogonal with a lower and narrower internally barrel-vaulted bema, is identical with a number of churches in Chora, the only difference being that the main church of C46 is flat-roofed. We could conjecture that originally the roof of the main church was also barrel-vaulted, and after an apparent collapse it was replaced by the traditional wooden flat roof (type 3c). This hypothesis is supported by the two buttresses in the southern wall: there would be no reason for their presence if not for the barrel-vaulted roof.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, with minimal carved decoration in deep relief; not a local product; 19th c. (?).

Icons: modern. The *templon* door is decorated with a naïf Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, apparently contemporaneous with the *templon* (19th c.).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

C47. Ai Stratis (Taxiarchs Michael and Gabriel)

Architecture: a small single-nave domed church with octagonal drum and arcaded windows. Its apse is three-sided; the entrance is set in the western wall. In the northern and southern walls of the main church are set arcaded windows; the floor is modern.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The present church was built in the early 20th c. on the position of the original building which had collapsed. The old church was also dedicated to the Taxiarchs, and was parochial.

Chronology: 20th c.

References: (Atesis 1961, 254, 264).

C48. Christos (The birth of Christ)

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3c). Externally the roof is flat covered with cement, lending a cubic form to the building, but this is probably the result of a later transformation of the original saddleback roof. The eastern side of the church is not visible, being attached to the natural rock due to the inclined terrain on which the church stands. The entrance is set in the western wall, crowned by a small light-hole.

Internally the barrel-vault is slightly pointed. In the eastern wall is set the central conch of the bema, slightly pointed and shallow. It is flanked by the smaller *prothesis* conch on the northern side. Another three small and rectangular conchs are set in the northern and southern walls of the bema. Another, again rectangular, is located on the southern wall of the church, immediately outside the *templon*.

The building is internally and externally plastered. The floor is modern.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, modern.

Icons: among the modern icons two high quality Post-Byzantine *templon*-icons, one of Christ and the other of enthroned Virgin Mary with Christ in her lap.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

Comments: Next to the church (north) lies in ruins a second, unknown church, of identical size and probably of the same architectural type. The building is now full of rubble; however, there is preserved the genesis of the barrel vault which covered it. The still standing eastern side of the bema bears, like the adjacent church, an identical pointed and shallow conch. In addition, there is preserved the lower part of the western wall, in which is discernible the doorstep of the entrance. The church must have been wall-painted, as the plaster on the internal surface attests; no colour traces survive.

There is no historical information about the ruined church.

References: -

C49. Metamorfosi tou Sotiros (The transfiguration of Christ) (the church of the cemetery of Chora, founded in 1840).

Architecture: a single-aisle, flat-roofed church (type 4b). Externally, a small semicircular protrusion indicates the apse. The church has been completely renovated (plastered internally and externally, modern floor paved with marble plaques, etc.). The entrance is located in the western wall. Two arcaded windows are set in the northern and southern walls of the main church.

Internally, in the eastern wall of the bema are set three semicircular conchs, the central flanked by that of the *prothesis* and the *diakonikon*. Another rectangular conch is located in the northern wall of the bema.

Wall paintings: -

Templon: simple wooden, with neoclassical elements similar to those of the 19th c. *templon* of Melikarou (C39); not a local product.

Icons: among the modern icons, four *templon*-icons (St. John the Baptist, Virgin Mary, Christ and the Transfiguration of the Christ) made by the same artist. All bear a painted inscription stating that they were executed in Ermoupolis, Syros in 1866, and were donated by a certain Ioannis I. Skordanas, who was also the founder of the church (see below) “*Ερμούπολεις Σύρου την 12, Φεβρουαρίου 1866 Διεξόδων Ιωάννου Ι. Σκορδανάς*”. The icons were ordered to fit the present *templon*.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: Above the entrance is an inscription attesting that the church was founded by Ioannis I. Skordanas in 1866: “*Ανηγέρθη ἐκ θεμελίων ὁ ναὸς οὗτος καὶ ἐκοσμήθη δαπάνι τοῦ εὐσεβοῦς χριστιανοῦ Ἰωάννου Ι. Σκορδανά 1866*”.

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: 1866 (building, *templon*, icons).

Comments: The building, the *templon* and the icons belong to the same ‘class’ of 1866. The fact that the icons and the *templon* were probably ordered together and that the former were certainly executed in Syros, could indicate Syros as the origin of the *templon* workshop as well. The neoclassical elements of the *templon* are in line with the artistic trends prevalent in the Cycladic island during the 19th c. This in its turn could suggest that the *templon* and the icons of Melikarou (C39), which bear great similarities with

those of this church, were also produced on the island of Syros. In addition to the aforementioned churches, similar icons are also found in certain others (e.g. Ayia Anna C35) or in private collections. This indicates that during the 19th c. there was a traffic in imports of ecclesiastical items from the island of Syros to that of Skyros.

References: -

Suburbs

C50. Ayios Georgios (Metochi)

Location: 500 m. from the northern edge of Chora, at *Kambos*.

Architecture: a small single-nave cross-vaulted church (type 2) (Figs. C.77-78). Externally the apse is three-sided and bears a bi-lobe window. A similar window is set in the southern arm of the cross, in the main church. The entrance is located in the southern side of the church. The roof is covered with tiles and stone-slabs.

Internally the church is plastered and completely renovated, with a modern floor. The central conch of the bema is large and semicircular. Two small auxiliary conchs are set in the northern side of the bema.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, modern, in front of an older built templon.

Icons: not examined at the time of writing.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The church is a *metochi* of the monastery of Ayios Georgios and consequently of Megisti Lavra.

Chronology: 15th c.?

References: Küpper 1990, 231.

C51. Ayios Georgios Charilaou or sti Themis

Location: 500 m. from the northern edge of Chora, on the hill of *Themis*.

Architecture: a small single-nave cross-vaulted church (type 2) (Figs. C.79-80). Externally the roof does not preserve its original covering; now it is cov-



Fig. C.77: C50, view of the church from the south-east.

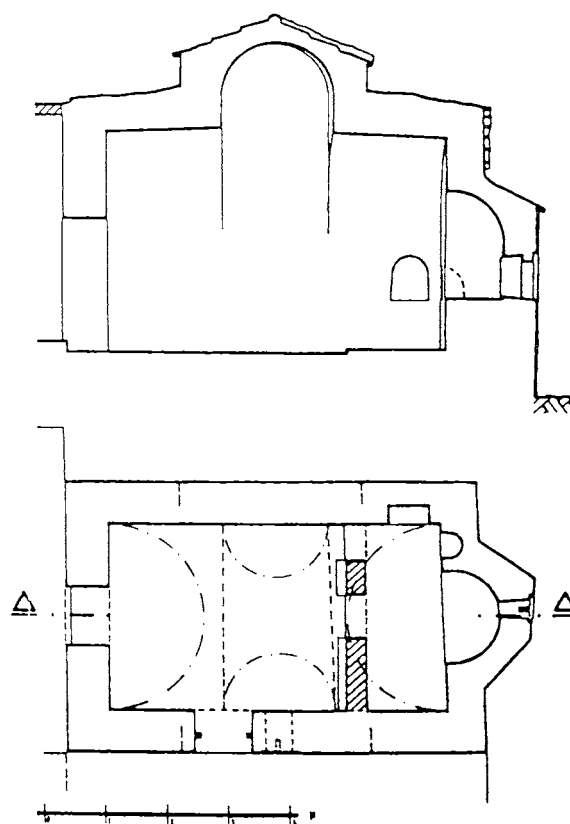


Fig. C.78: C50, longitudinal section and plan of the church (after Küpper 1989-90, 231).



Fig. C.79: C51, view of the church from the north-east.

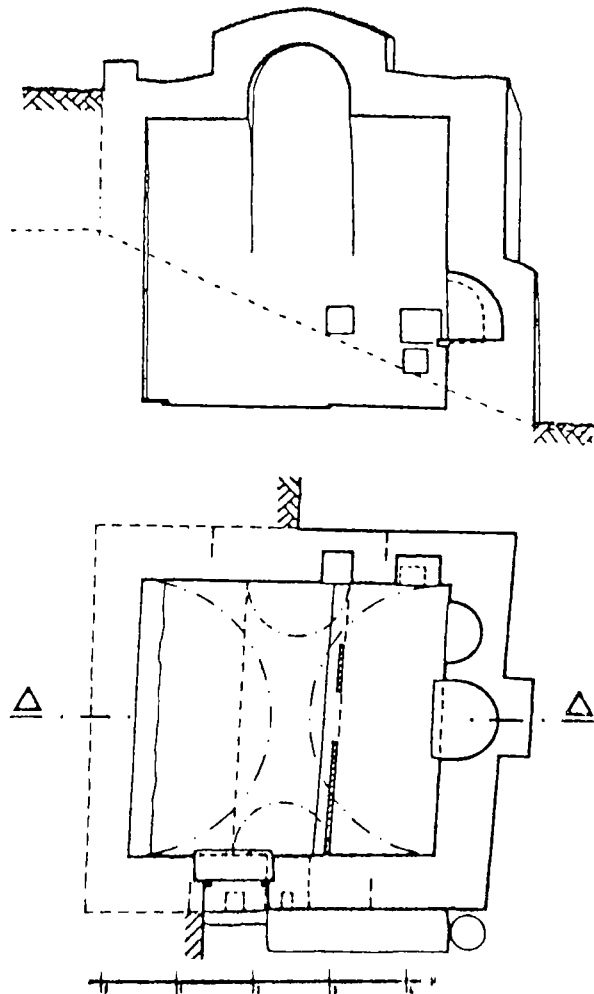


Fig. C.80: C51, longitudinal section and plan of the church (after Küpper 1989-90, 232).

ered with cement. The apse is small and rectangular. Windows are set in the southern arm of the cross and lower in the southern wall, where the entrance is located.

Internally the conch of the bema is large and semicircular, supplemented by a smaller one at the northern side. The floor is paved with cement.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, modern.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: The church is referred to in a dowry document of 1581 (Antoniadis 1990, doc. 10/1581).

Chronology: 1581 *terminus ante quem*.

References: Küpper 1990, 232.

*C52. Christos Mavrouna (The Birth of Christ)
(Katholikon of monastery).*

Location: 2 km to the west of Chora, on the mountain of Mavrounas.

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3b), with a later, lower flat-roofed narthex at the western side. Externally the whole building (the roof included) is covered with cement. The entrance to the church is located on the western side. Internally, in the eastern wall of the bema are set three semicircular conchs. A rectangular arcaded window is set in the southern wall of the main church and a second rectangular window is in the respective wall of the narthex. The narthex preserves internally its original construction, consisting of wooden uprights and bamboo. The floor of both the main church and the narthex is paved with tiles dating from the 1950s. (Figs. C.81-82).

Wall paintings: The major part of the internal surfaces is whitewashed. However, traces of paintings in the bema and the main church attest that once the church was fully decorated. The eastern wall of the bema bears traces of Officiating Prelates; the conch of the *diakonikon* an Archangel. On the northern and southern walls of the main church are full-length frontal saints and above them half-figured saints in medallions (Fig. C.83). On the western wall above the entrance the Dormition of the Mother of God; lower, the entrance is flanked by the Archangel Michael and the *Anastasis*; in the arch of the entrance the Holy

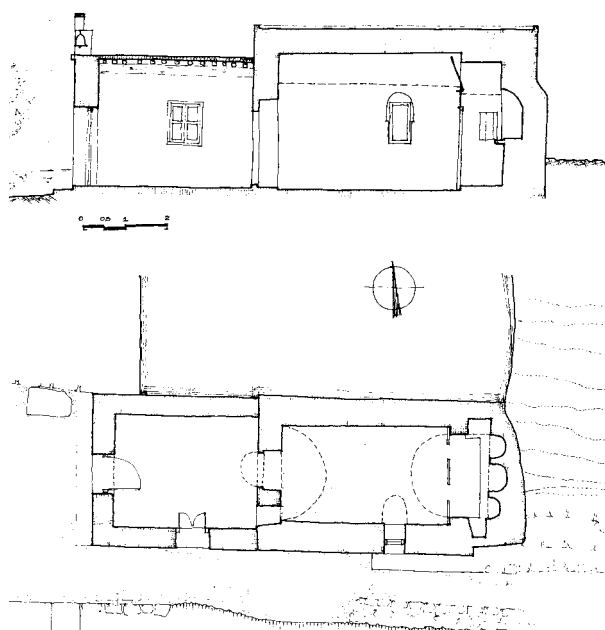


Fig. C.81: C52, longitudinal section and plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).

Handkerchief. According to the inscription the visible wall paintings were executed in 1586.

Templon: wooden; consisting of various parts of different chronology. Its major part is a local wood-carved product of modern times. It is crowned by a Post-Byzantine painted *Apostolikon*. The size of the piece fits exactly with the internal width of the church, indicating that it was designed specifically for it. However, this is not the case with the cross above, which is notably large as compared to the dimensions of the church, and was apparently transferred from another monument (Fig. C.82).

Icons: three *templon*-icons of early Post-Byzantine times, Christ *Archiereus*, the Virgin Mary enthroned with Christ in her lap, and the Birth of Christ. Of similar style and date must be the luxury cross at the top of the *templon*.

Architectural sculptures/*Spolia*: in the courtyard ancient and Early Christian pieces: a small pedestal [h: 0.38x0.13]; two fragments of monolithic column [h: 0.34, d: 0.18 & h: 0.23, d: 0.20]; two fragments of an Early Christian doorframe decorated with sprouting leaves and grapes [w: 0.23] (Fig. C.84); a worn Early Christian Corinthian capital (Fig. C.85).



Fig. C.82: C52, internal view of the church.

Inscriptions: To the south of the entrance of the main church is a painted inscription giving us the date of the building and of the painting, 1580 and 1593 respectively: “[οἰκοδομήθ]η ὁ θεῖος [τ]ε καὶ πάνσεπτος ναὸς [...] τοῦ Κ(υρί)ου καὶ Θ(ε)οῦ καὶ Σ(ωτῆ)ρ(ος) ἡμῶν Ἰ(ησ)οῦ Χ(ριστ)οῦ ἐκ βάθρων διὰ συνδρομῆς καὶ ἐξόδοις κόπου τε καὶ μόχθου [...] ἐπὶ ἔτους τῷ ζπη’ (7088=1580). Ἡστορίθη δὲ καὶ ἐν ἑτέροις κόπ(ο)ις τε καὶ διὰ χειρὸς ἐμοῦ Δανιὴλ μοναχοῦ τῷ ζρα (7101=1593) μηνὶ μαΐῳ”.

Historical evidence: This is identified as the small monastery of the nun Glykeria (wife of Ioannis Kouvousklisios), who in 1012-1016 AD dedicated to Eustratios, the abbot of Megisti Lavra (Mount Athos), extensive lands in the southern, mountainous part of the island (*Actes de Lavra I* nos. 16, 20; Koder 1998, 283; Atesis 1961, 214-5).

According to the report of the bishopric commissioner Serafim Koutsoupis, the monastery had one monk and 4 nuns in 1833. In the next year the monastery was dissolved by the newly-founded Greek State and its possessions were confiscated and auctioned.

Chronology: 1580 *terminus ante quem* (historically in existence since the early 11th c.).

Comments: Around the church are several buildings or traces of the auxiliary constructions of the monastery, today used as a shepherd’s *mandra*.

References: Koder 1998, 283; Georgopoulou-Meladini 1972, 373; Atesis 1961, 214-23;



Fig. C.83: C52, traces of the painted decoration of the church on its southern wall.



Fig. C.84: C52, Early Christian doorframe, in the yard of the church.



Fig. C.85: C52, Early Christian Corinthian capital, in the yard of the church.

C53. Panayia Limbiani (The Birth of the Mother of God)

Location: 4 km west of Chora, in the mountainous area of Olimbos.

Architecture: a small single-nave (pseudo) cross-vaulted church (type 2). The church is built in a cavity of the natural rock and thus presents irregularities. The southern and western 'walls' are natural rock and only the eastern (actually the semicircular apse) and the northern walls are built. The entrance is located in the northern wall. The only window of the church is set in the apse. The roof is flat, covered by cement (Fig. C.86).

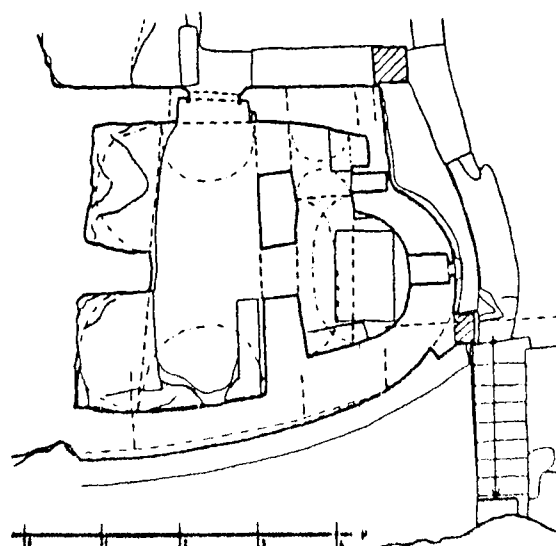
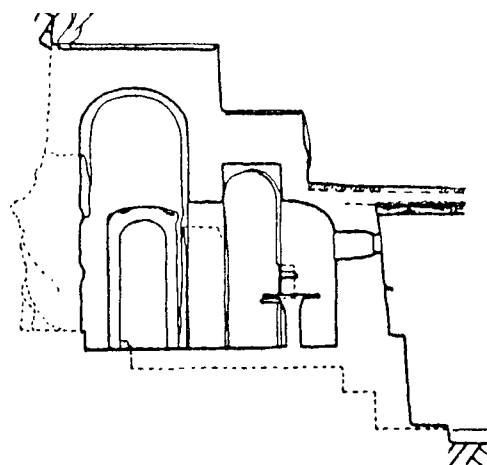


Fig. C.86: C53, longitudinal section and plan of the church (after Küpper 1989-90, 230).

Internally, the western side of the main church has a rectangular rock protrusion. The bema is barrel-vaulted and is equipped with a monumental semi-circular conch which actually frames the whole width of the bema, and an equally grand free-standing altar in the middle. The floor is paved with modern tiles.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: built.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: two open work early Christian panels, one re-used as the altar of the church and the second built in the *templon*, decorated with fish patterns [0.75x1.17x0.10] (Fig. C.87); fragment of monolithic column, where the altar is erected [h: 0.50, d: 0.17]; Ionic Early Christian(?) capital, re-used as a base where the altar is located (between the column and the altar) [h: 0.09, w: 0.29]; fragment of monolithic column, built over the roof of the church [h: 0.13, d: 0.09]; fragment of monolithic column, built over the roof of the church [h: 0.16, d: 0.12].

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: Küpper 1990, 230; Skouras 1979, 61-65.

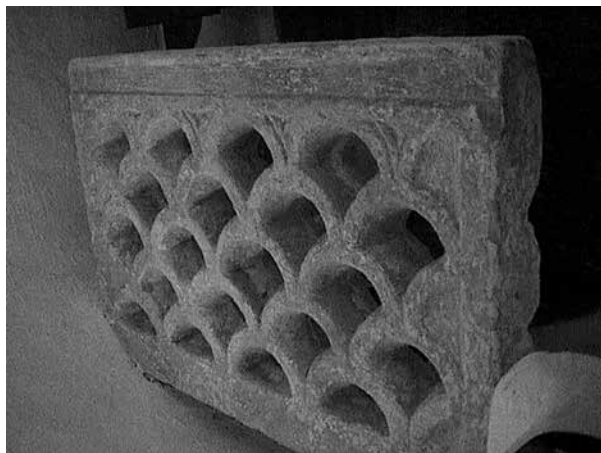


Fig. C.87: C53, one of the two Early Christian closure panels re-used as the altar of the church.

C54. *Ayios Nikolaos Achladonas*

Location: 5 km west of Chora.

Architecture: a single-nave domed church (type 6). Although the monument can be included into the known Ottoman-type church building of the island, it presents several differences and anomalies compared to the classified subtypes, which renders it distinct. Firstly, the dome is not erected directly on the pendentives, as in the other churches, but it is a 'proper' dome based on a cylindrical drum with four openings. Moreover, the church bears elongated barrel-vaulted spaces, not only to the eastward and westward (as in the subtype 6d), but to the northward as well - of smaller length in comparison to the other two. The southern wall of the main church has a blind arch but slightly deeper than the usual type. These elements identify the church as an irregular variation of the single-nave cruciform with dome. Apparently its present status is a result of the implementation of the known Ottoman single-nave domed type on an older, typologically different building (Fig. C.88).

Externally the dome is covered with stone-slabs, but the rest of the roof is now flat and covered with cement. The apse of the church is semicircular with several repairs. Along the southern wall the building is supported by a buttress. The northern side of the church is partially below ground level due to the inclined terrain. The entrance is set in the western side of the building.

Internally, in the eastern wall of the bema is set the large conch which almost reaches the lateral



Fig. C.88: C54, view of the church from the south-east.

walls, sheltering the built altar. A second conch is set in the northern wall and a third rectangular one is set beside the *templon*, in the southern wall of the main church. The floor is paved with modern tiles.

Wall paintings: not discernible.

Templon: wooden, modern, local.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/*Spolia*: in the conch of the main church an ancient Ionic capital [h: 0.16, 0.40x0.33]. The wooden *templon* is supported by two monolithic marble columns. Another is re-used as the lintel of the door and a fourth is located in the courtyard.

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

Comments: The monument definitely went through an older, medieval phase. It is located at the margins of the medieval hamlet S38.

References: Georgopoulou-Meladini 1972, 373.

C55. Ayios Dimitrios (katholikon of monastery)

Note: the monastery complex was restored in 2004-2006 by the Direction of Restoration of Byzantine & Post-Byzantine Monuments, Greek Ministry of Culture.

Location: 3 km south-west of Chora, in the valley of *Ferekambos*.

Architecture: The monastery complex is built on a hill at the western edge of the valley and consists of the *katholikon* in the middle, surrounded by the residential, storage and auxiliary buildings at the northern, western and southern sides. On the eastern side no space was available due to the steep incline of the rock on which the monastery was erected. The monastery complex is enclosed by a high precinct constructed in 1677, as the inscription located above the central gate of the monastery informs us (Fig. C.89). Both the precinct and the monastery buildings went through an older phase, prior to 1677 (Papanikolaou-Petrioli *et al.* 2013, 210-1).

The *katholikon* itself belongs to the type of the single-nave domed with blind arches and elongated barrel-vaulted spaces to the eastward and westward (type 6d) (Fig. C.90). Externally the drum of the dome is octagonal with four windows. Both the dome and the rest of the building are covered with stone-



Fig. C.89: C55, view of the monastic complex from the south-west.

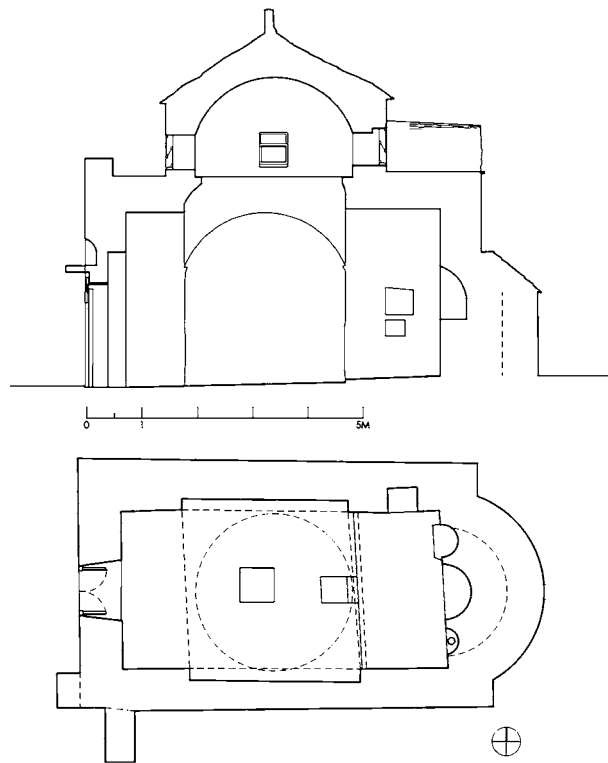


Fig. C.90: C55, longitudinal section and plan of the church (after Papanikolaou-Petrioli *et al.* 2013, figs. 4,6).

slabs. The eastern wall of the church features a wide semicircular apse, reaching in width the lateral walls of the bema. All the external surfaces of the building are simple, whitewashed without any articulation.

The entrance to the church is from the western side, through a rectangular door crowned by a semicircular conch and, at the top of the roof, by a single-lobe belfry. Three semicircular conchs are inset into the eastern wall. Another rectangular conch is set in the northern wall of the bema. The original floor was made in 1751, according to the relevant inscription, and it was paved with large slabs (restored during the 2004-2006 restoration project).

Wall paintings: The church is fully decorated with wall paintings executed, according to the painted inscription, in 1691. Traces of an older layer are preserved on the lower parts of the northern and southern walls of the main church, as well as on the northern side of the bema. A third, post-1691 layer, was probably applied during the renovation of the *katholikon* in 1831; perhaps due to the low quality of the materials used, this layer has not survived (see under historical evidence).

The iconographical programme of the 1691 layer, visible today, is as follows: on the barrel-vault of the bema the Birth of Christ, the Pentecost, the *Anastasis* and the Ascension of Christ; on the conch of the apse, the Virgin Mary; on the northern side of the bema, the vision of St. Peter of Alexandria and the deacon Stefanos; on the southern side, three Prelates. In the centre of the dome was apparently depicted the *Pantokrator*; today lost; the Prophets and Heavenly Powers surrounding Him are preserved. On the pendentives Evangelists are depicted. The northern wall of the main church is covered in its entirety by a depiction of the Second Coming. The southern wall is dedicated to St. Dimitrios; at the upper zone there are scenes of his life, while at the lower Ayios Dimitrios is depicted enthroned along with seven full length saints. The blind arch is surrounded by half-figured Prophets. On the western side, barrel-vault medallions of busted prophets, the Crucifixion, the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper and at a lower level saints (St. Minas, St. George, St. Dimitrios, Sts. Constantine and Elena). On the western wall the upper part is covered with the scene of the Dormition of the Mother of God, while to the northward and southward four saints are depicted (Antonios, Athanasios and Eythimios, Savas respectively) (Figs. C.91-92).



Fig. C.91: C55, part of the 1691 painted decoration of the northern wall.



Fig. C.92: C55, full-length frontal saint on the southern wall, from the 1691 painted decoration of the church.

Templon: wood-carved in deep relief decorated with floral and pseudo-neoclassical motifs (conchs, pseudo-Corinthian capitals on the posts, etc.). Definitely not a local product; dates from the 18th or (more probably) the 19th c.

Icons: modern. The Post-Byzantine icon of Ayios Dimitrios is now kept at the *metochi* of Ayios Georgios (C50).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: The central gate of the external precinct is flanked by two marbled monolithic columns. The internal gate of the courtyard is flanked on one side by a monolithic marbled post decorated with relief crosses, flower container, etc., a work of the Ottoman period; on the other, a reused fragment of an ancient female statue of the

classical period. Above these two pieces is a marbled plaque decorated with a resting lion in deep relief, among crosses, trees, floral motifs and human figures in smaller scale; a naïve work of the Ottoman period (Fig. C.93).

Inscriptions: On the lintel of the external gate of the monastery there is an inscription informing us that the monastery precinct was built in 1677 by the abbot Germanos: “Ἐτελειόθη διὰ χυρὸς τοῦ μαστρο-Νηκολάου μηνὸς Ὀκτωβρίου 10/+1677 ἀνηγέρθη τὸ ἐξοθεν τηχόκαστρο τοῦ μοναστηρίου διὰ ἐξόδου καὶ σην[δ]ρομῆς τοῦ πανοσουτάτου καθυγουμένου κირίου Γερμανοῦ καὶ ἔστε ἡς μνημόσινου αὐτοῦ” (Fig. C.94). Internally, the painted inscription above the entrance states that the visible decorative programme was done in 1691 by the well-known painter Damaskinos from Ioannina and his colleague Dimitrios, after an invitation by the abbot Ezekiel: “+Ἀνιστωρήθη ὁ ἱερός πάνσεπτος ναὸς τοῦ ἁγίου ἐνδόξου μεγαλομάρτυρος Δημητρίου τοῦ μυρο/βλίτου διὰ ἐξώδου [τε καὶ δαπ]άνης τοῦ [...] α[...], διὰ σινδρομεῖς δὲ τοῦ πανοσιωτάτου καθυγουμένου [κυρί]ου Ἱεζεκιήλ Παπαχαράτου τοῦ ἐκ τῆς νήσου ταύτης. Ἔτος ,αχλα’ (=1691) Νοεμβρίου ε’. Διὰ χειρὸς δὲ ζωγράφου Δαμασκηνοῦ ἱερομονάχου καὶ Δημητρίου ἐξ Ἰωαννίνων”. Lastly, a marble plaque located at the centre of the floor informs us about its construction: “Ν(ι)Κ(η)Φ(ό)Ρ(ου) Μ(ο)Ν(α)ΧΟΥ / 1751”.

Historical evidence: The first historical mention of the monastery is in 1659, in a patriarchal letter by Parthenios IV (1657-1662), where the monastery is recognised as *stavropigiako*. Pitton de Tournefort describes it as “small and poor”; however, the historical archive suggests a relatively thriving situation in the 17th and 18th centuries. The decay of the monastery must have occurred during the War of Independence; the last mention of the existence of a small monastic fraternity is in 1825. During the third decade of the 19th century the monastery was depopulated and its administration held by the *Dimogerontia*. In 1830-31 the ex-abbot of the monastery of Ayios Georgios (C05), Neofytos Skouloudakis, established himself in the monastery and renovated the *katholikon*. Lastly, in 1834 the monastery was dissolved by the newly-founded Greek Kingdom and its possessions were confiscated and then auctioned (Papanikolaou-Petriori *et al.* 2013, 207-8).



Fig. C.93: C55, the internal gate of the monastery courtyard; the lintel and the post on the left are products of the Ottoman period; the right post is part of an ancient statue.



Fig. C.94: C55, the dedicatory inscription of the monastery precinct (1977).

Chronology: monastery: 1659 *terminus ante quem*; present monastic precinct: 1677; *katholikon*: 1691 *terminus ante quem*; present wall paintings: 1691; floor: 1751.

References: Papanikolaou-Petrioli *et al.* 2013, and therein the rest of the bibliography.

C56. Ayios Ioannis Vourlos (St. John the Baptist)

Location: 5 km south-west of Chora, in the valley of *Ferekambos*.

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3a). The roof is saddleback covered with stone-slabs (restored by the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities). The apse is wide and semicircular. The entrance is set in the western side (Figs. C.95-96).

Internally, there are built benches along the long walls. The conch is small, semicircular and has a light-hole, the only opening of the building excepting the entrance.

Wall paintings: The church is fully decorated. Two layers are discernible. The older one is identified in the main church and includes mainly full-length frontal saints on a big scale, covering almost the entire height of the lateral walls: on the northern wall the saints Nestor, Dimitrios and Georgios, on the southern wall St. John the Baptist and an unidentified saint and monk, and on the western wall the Prophet Abacum and the scene of the Crucifixion. The paintings bear elements of the Palaeologan art inherited from the first centuries after the final fall of the Byzantine state, and before the full development of the various 'schools' of the Post-Byzantine period. The elegant figures of Ayios Ioannis Vourlos could date the paintings in the late 15th early 16th c., making them a precious transitional example for the chronological and stylistical sequence of the wall paintings of Skyros, from the 11th-12th c. of the Episkopi (C01) and the 13th-14th c. of Ayios Georgios (C05), to the late 16th c. onwards Post-Byzantine examples of the island (Fig. C.97).

Traces of the second layer dating from the late Post-Byzantine period (based on the style of the paintings) are identified in the bema: on the conch the Virgin Mary, in front of the conch traces of the Annunciation, and on the northern wall a trace of a Prelate.

Templon: built, with simple wooden architrave.

Icons: modern.



Fig. C.95: C56, view of the church from the south-west.

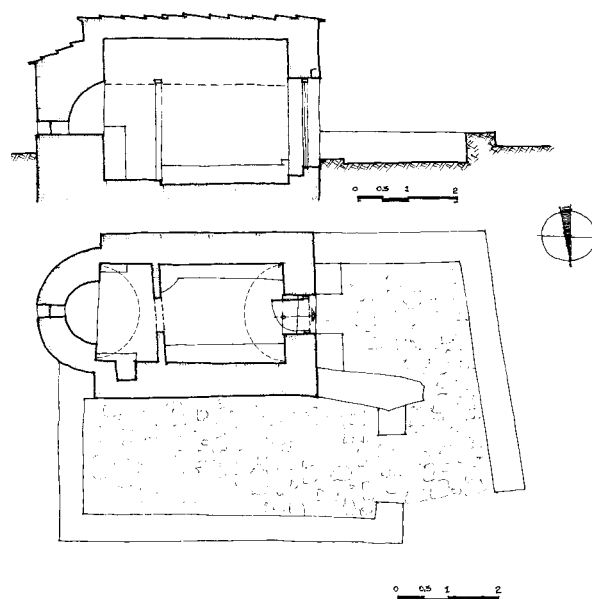


Fig. C.96: C56, longitudinal section and plan of the church (S. Papazoglou).

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: In a report of the personnel of the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities (28.07.2001) are attested a column fragment, an impost, and a base of phiale inside the church. During my visit in 2006 none of these pieces was identified.

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: Late 15th – 16th c. *terminus ante quem*.

References: -

**Fig. C.97:**

C56, Ayios Nestor and Ayios Georgios; from the late 15th – early 16th c. painted decoration of the church.

C57. Panayia (The Dormition of the Virgin Mary)

Location: in the southern outskirts of Chora, on the height of Stavros.

Architecture: a small single-nave barrel-vaulted church (type 3b), with a later, lower, flat-roofed narthex at the western side. Externally, the roof of the main church is now flat, covered with cement. Cement has also been applied to the roof of the narthex and apparently replaced the soil of the original construction. The eastern wall is slightly bulging for the indication of the apse. The entrance is set in the western wall of the narthex.

Internally, in the eastern wall of the bema, a semicircular conch is inset bearing the built altar. Three more conchs are distributed among the rest of the bema. Two rectangular windows are set in the southern walls of the main church and the bema. The floor is paved with modern glazed tiles. The narthex preserves the wooden uprights of its original roof.

Wall paintings: Traces of Post-Byzantine paintings are preserved at the south-west corner of the main church and in the southern half of the built *templon*. In the latter there is just discernible the face of Christ, an indication that the front face of the *templon* was painted with figures of Christ and the Virgin Mary in place of icons (Fig. C.98).

Templon: built.

Icons: modern.

Architectural sculptures/Spolia: -

Inscriptions: -

Historical evidence: -

Chronology: of Ottoman times.

References: -

**Fig. C.98:**

C57, Christ, depicted in the front side of the built templon of the church.

