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Αθηνών

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# ΔΕΛΤΙΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΙΚΗΣ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗΣ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑΣ

The Soteira Lykodemou at Athens. Architecture

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## THE SOTEIRA LYKODEMOU AT ATHENS. ARCHITECTURE\*

The architecture of the church of the Soteira Lykodemou at Athens, now known also as the Russian church (Fig. 1), has never been the subject of systematic scholarly investigation. The reason for this is clear: the damage it suffered during the Greek War of Independence and the drastic repair it underwent just after 1850 gave rise to serious doubts as to whether it was an authentic Byzantine monument and deterred scholars from turning their attention to the question. It was in any case regarded as a published monument, since five drawings of the church, made, moreover, before 1840, appeared in A. Couchaud's now inaccessible book on the Byzantine monuments of Greece<sup>1</sup>. Nothing published since that time is based on primary research<sup>2</sup>, with only a few exceptions: the two drawings of the modern condition of the church made by Schultz and Barnsley<sup>3</sup> and a few observations by A.H.S. Megaw seventy years ago<sup>4</sup>.

The monument is, however, the largest church in Byzantine Athens and deserves to take its place in the history of Middle Byzantine Helladic architecture, the first step being to verify its disputed authenticity in terms both of the general design and of individual parts and architectural forms. The

fairly recent publication of old drawings made before the damage and repair to the church of the Soteira provides an opportunity for a preliminary approach to this question.

A few points of clarification and references to more or less well-known matters may be useful, if not indispensable, at this point.

First, the name. The name Hagios Nikodemos once used of the church is of modern origins. The church, probably the katholikon of a monastery, honours the name of the Virgin as the Saviour (Soteira) of the World<sup>5</sup>. The name of Lykodemos is probably to be associated with one of the founders of the monastery. Surnames compounded with Lykos are known in the small aristocracy of Byzantine Athens<sup>6</sup>. Amongst the *akidographimata*, or graffiti, of the church copied before it was damaged and published by Antonin<sup>7</sup>, the name is mentioned of the *protoktitor*, Stephanos, who died in 1044 and is believed<sup>8</sup> to have born the name Lykos. The word *protoktitor* possibly implies that there was a second founder of the Soteira, before 1044.

The *akidographimata*-recollection notes of the church were valuable in dating the monument, since the earliest of them

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\* This paper was first presented in Greek language to the Annual Conference of the Christian Archaeological Society, on May 16, 2003. I would like to thank the Library of the Copenhagen's Academy of Fine Arts and the Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive (ELIA) for the permission to reproduce the drawings, Figs. 4, 5, 6, and 7. I feel also indebted to Hel. Tsopoulou-Ghini, Ephor of Byzantine Antiquities, A. Papanicolaou-Christensen, M. Charitatos and the architects M. Vournous, C. Koliopoulos and Cl. Aslanides for their help. The paper was translated by David Hardy.

1. A. Couchaud, *Choix d'églises byzantines en Grèce*, Paris 1842, 18, pl. 11-13.

2. Like the A. Xyngopoulos extensive entry on the monument and the previous bibliography, in the *Eureterion* (*EMME* 1, 2, Athens 1928, 80-83). See also R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins*, Paris 1975, 320-322. R. Krautheimer, *Παλαιοχριστιανική και βυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική*, Athens 1991, 500, 519, 613, 621. C. Mango, *Byzantine Architecture*, New York 1976, 222, 224, 252. Ch. Bouras, *Bv-*

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*ζαντινή και μεταβυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική στην Ελλάδα*, Athens, 2001, 92, 124, fig. 120.

3. R.W. Schultz - S.H. Barnsley, *The Monastery of Saint Luke of Stiris*, London 1901, 15, fig. 8.

4. A.H.S. Megaw, *The Chronology of Some Middle Byzantine Churches in Greece*, *BSA* 32 (1931-32), 95-96, 102-104, 115, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124, 126, pl. 31.

5. The name Sotera is common in Greece for churches also dedicated to the Transfiguration of the Saviour.

6. E. Granstrem - I. Medvedev - D. Papachrysanthou, *Fragment d'un Praktikon de la région d'Athènes*, *REB* 34 (1976), 5-44, Λυκοπόδης (p. 30) and Λυκόπουλος (p. 36).

7. Antonin, *O Drevnikh Kristianskikh Nadpis' ach u Afinakh*, St. Petersburg 1874, 4 and facsimile, pl. III, no. 4. The same were published by K. Pittakis in *AEphem* 1853, 936-938, nos. 1574-1589.

8. D. Kambourglou, *Μνημεία της ιστορίας τῶν Ἀθηναίων*, B', Athens 1890, 282-285. M. Chatzidakis, *Athènes byzantines*, Athens 1958, 11.

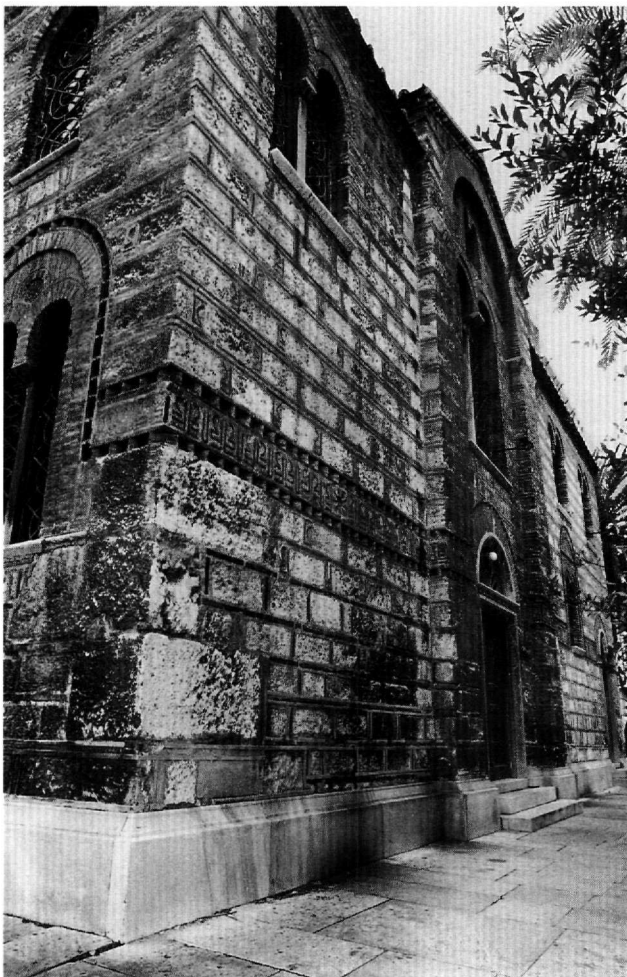


Fig. 1. The north façade looking west.

9. Chatzidakis, *ibid.* N. Gioles, *Βυζαντινή ναοδομία*, Athens 1987, 167 and Xyngopoulos, *op.cit.*

10. G. Millet, *L'école grecque dans l'architecture byzantine*, Paris 1916, 7, n. 1. Megaw, *The Chronology*, *op.cit.*, 99. Unfortunately I did not examine the under dispute no. 8 graffiti, in the Antonin's fascimile publication.

11. M. Chatzidakis, À propos de la date et du fondateur de Saint Luc, *CahArch* 19 (1969), 129, 140, 141.

12. A. Frantz, *The Church of the Holy Apostles*, *The Athenian Agora* XX, Princeton, N.J. 1971, 22, n. 25. See also p. 23, 25, n. 11 and p. 26.

13. Kampouroglou, *op.cit.*, A', Athens 1891, 45.

14. As of the east wall of the Athenian Acropolis. M. Korres, *Seismic Damage to the Monuments of the Athenian Acropolis*, *Archaeoseismology* (S. Stiros, R.E. Jones, eds), Athens 1996, 73.

15. N.N. Ambraseys, *Material for the Investigation of the Seismicity of Central Greece*, *ibid.*, 26-27.

16. S. Kalantzopoulou, *Μεσαιωνικοί ναοί της Αθήνας από σωζόμε-*

να σχέδια και σημειώσεις του Paul Durand (Ph.D.), Athens 2000, A', 250-251 (hereafter: *Μεσαιωνικοί ναοί*).

provides a *terminus ante quem* for its erection of 1031<sup>9</sup> or 1044<sup>10</sup>. The fact that the Soteira is a copy of the katholikon of Hosios Loukas, whose erection was already completed by 1011<sup>11</sup>, also furnishes a *terminus post quem*, and makes it almost certain that the monument under examination was erected between 1011 and 1031 (or 1044). Alison Frantz<sup>12</sup> dates it between 1000 and 1044.

Apart from the *akidographimata*, no other Byzantine literary sources survive for the Soteira. The earliest information is to be found in the *Anargyreia Apospasmata*, and is unconnected with the architecture of the church<sup>13</sup>. The earthquake in the early nineteenth century that damaged the monument<sup>14</sup> is known to have occurred on 3rd September 1705<sup>15</sup>. It is conjectured that just after this there was extensive repair work and the church was given new wall-painted decoration<sup>16</sup>, though according to the statements of Antonin<sup>17</sup> it had already been abandoned in the seventeenth century and was situated in a deserted part of Athens; this is also confirmed by the depictions of the east part of the city by foreign travellers in the seventeenth and eighteenth century<sup>18</sup>.

During the siege of the Acropolis in 1821, according to a statement by Pittakis, a bomb destroyed a large part<sup>19</sup> of the dome and the west wall, that is the façade of the church, which had been on the point of collapse «διὰ τὴν παλαιότητα...». The vaults roofing the narthex, both on the ground floor and the upper storey, probably collapsed completely or partly.

It thus seems that the church was in a ruined state when it was presented in 1847 to the Russian community of Athens<sup>20</sup> on condition that its old form should not be changed during the repairs. The very poor state of the build-

να σχέδια και σημειώσεις του Paul Durand (Ph.D.), Athens 2000, A', 250-251 (hereafter: *Μεσαιωνικοί ναοί*).

17. Antonin Archimandrite, Ὑπόμνημα περὶ τῶν ἀνασκαφῶν γενομένων ... ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Νικόδημος εἰς Ἀθήνας, *AEphem* 12-13 (1856-57), 1449, note.

18. J. Skene, *Μνημεῖα καὶ τοπία τῆς Ἑλλάδος 1838-1845*, Athens 1985, figs. 15 and 16. J. Demakopoulos, Τὸ σχέδιο τοῦ Bassano (1670), ἡ Ἀθήνα καὶ τα μνημεῖα τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως, *Ὁ Μέντωρ* 58 (2001), 60, 63. Thomas Hope, *Εἰκόνες ἀπὸ τὴν Ἑλλάδα τοῦ 18ου αἰῶνα*, Athens 1985, 87, fig. 24, p. 224. De Laborde, *Athènes au XVe, XVIe et XVIIe siècles*, Paris 1854, v. II, pl. 48. H. Omont, *Athènes au XVIIe siècle*, Paris 1898, pl. XXXIV and XXXV.

19. After Couchaud, *Choix*, *op.cit.*, the two thirds of the dome were destroyed.

20. C. Biris, *Αἱ Ἀθήναι ἀπὸ τοῦ 19ου εἰς τὸν 20όν αἰῶνα*, Athens 1966, 142, 143. Xyngopoulos, *EMME* (n. 1), 82.

ing is confirmed by the reports submitted by a committee of technical experts (Smolens, Riedl, Kaftantzoglou and Schiodel (?) on 12th April 1847) and also by Kaftantzoglou himself, to the effect that “...the church, being in a very ruined state, must be razed to the foundations and erected anew...”. This information is recorded for us forty years later by G. Lambakis<sup>21</sup>, who appears to have derived it from the military architect responsible for the work, Telemachos Vlasopoulos<sup>22</sup>, who was still alive in 1894 at least<sup>23</sup>. In the end, the church was fortunately not demolished but radically repaired, with parts of it being reconstructed. Lambakis, who was not even born at this time<sup>24</sup>, knew the plans that had been drawn up by Vlasopoulos, one of which – the section of the dome – he published (Fig. 2)<sup>25</sup>. The work was carried out between 1850 and 1855.

The series of drawings, presumably based on measurements taken of the Soteira, has been destroyed or mislaid. It was handed over to the Christian Archaeological Society, received into the collection assembled by Lambakis during his travels<sup>26</sup>, and displayed in the Zappeion in 1891<sup>27</sup>. It is not known whether the collection, or even a list of the drawings, was ever published<sup>28</sup>. A. Xyngopoulos was presumably unaware of their existence in 1929. Questions about the restoration of the Soteira were first raised during the 1890s, after the restoration of the dome of the Daphni monastery. This was severely criticised by Lambakis<sup>29</sup>, who contrasted it with the restoration of the Soteira, which he regarded as successful. In fact, only the parts in danger of imminent collapse – the west side and almost all the vaults – seem to have been re-

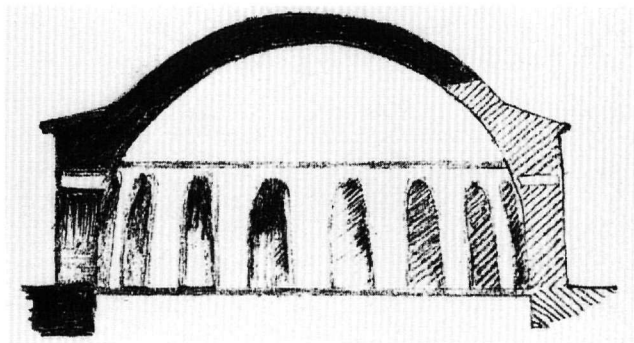


Fig. 2. Section of the original dome by T. Vlasopoulos, after Lambakis.

moved, including the dome. The entire east side and parts of the north and south were preserved, all the bearing elements retained their original position, as did the lower parts of all the walls<sup>30</sup>, while the arches and vaults were restored, using as a guide their springings, which were preserved in the side walls and in the area of the sanctuary and the east wall (Fig. 3). Unfortunately, Vlasopoulos removed all the internal non-bearing walls, both original and later (which will be discussed in brief below), following the arbitrary interventions in the drawing by A. Couchaud<sup>31</sup>, and this resulted in the deterioration of the interior space and the loss of the link between function and spatial units inside the church. The new vaults, though retaining the springing of the original ones, had a different form<sup>32</sup>. The elaborate doorways, window mullions and above all the

21. G. Lampakis, 'Ο ναός τοῦ Νικοδήμου, *Ἑβδομάς*, 1885, 557 f., 575. See also A. Papageorgiou-Venetas, *Ἐδουάρδος Σάουμπερτ*, Athens 1999, 75-77, Document no. 4, «St. Nikodimos, à demolir».

22. See *Παγκόσμιο Βιογραφικό Λεξικό*, Β', Athens 1984, 314.

23. G. Lampakis, Αἱ ἐπισκευαὶ τοῦ Δαφνίου, *ΔΧΑΕ Β'* (1894), 63: «Πῶς οἰκοδομεῖται ἢ ἐπιδιορθοῦται παλαιὸς θόλος παράδειγμα ἔχομεν ἐν Ἀθήναις τὸν τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικοδήμου, περὶ τῆς κατασκευῆς τοῦ ὁποίου ἠδύνατο νὰ ἐρωτηθῆ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρμοδίων ὁ διαπρεπῆς τῶν ἐπισκευῶν τοῦ Νικοδήμου ἀρχιτέκτων κ. Βλασόπουλος».

24. G. Lampakis, 1854-1914.

25. Lampakis, 'Ο ναός τοῦ Νικοδήμου, op.cit., 475. Lampakis asserts as true that «...μόνον τὸ σκιαζόμενον διὰ πλαγίων γραμμῶν ἀποτελεῖ συμπλήρωμα...» and lets to conclude that the new existing dome is in a great part the original one.

26. G. Lampakis, *Κατάλογος τῆς ἐν Ζαππείῳ ἐκθέσεως*, Athens 1891, 41 f., 44, no. 27.

27. Ibid.

28. G. Lampakis in *Ἑβδομάς* of the year 1885, 575 notes «...ἐκ τῶν

τέως ἀνεκδότων ἀρχιτεκτονικῶν σχεδιογραφημάτων τοῦ ἀξιολύτου ταγματάρχου...». See also D. Pallas, *Κατάλογος χειρογράφων τοῦ Βυζαντινοῦ Μουσείου Ἀθηνῶν*, *ΔΧΑΕ Β'* (1936), οβ': «184 σχέδια ἀρχιτεκτονικῶν μνημείων. Τῶν σχεδίων τούτων θέλει δημοσιευθῆ κατάλογος».

29. Lampakis, Αἱ ἐπισκευαὶ τοῦ Δαφνίου, op.cit. For his involvement to the Daphni restorations debate in 1885, see also Elias Apostolidis, *Παναγία Ἀνκοδήμου*, Athens 1959, 69-71.

30. The fact is testified by the drawings of Couchaud and Lenoir, made before the intervention, as well as by the bulky blocks at the lower part of both corners of the west façade. See also Gioles, op.cit. (n. 9), 167, n. 12.

31. Couchaud, *Choix* (n. 1), 18. «Dans les dessins que je donne de cette église toutes les ouvertures actuellement murées ont été indiquées dans leur état primitif». Obviously, he could not distinguish the original from the new walls. His drawing of the longitudinal section of the church shows an evidently new wall, about which see below.

32. In fact, the existing now, new vaults do not have clear geometric forms; they are domed and defaced. Modern plasters and murals prevent the direct observation of their structure.

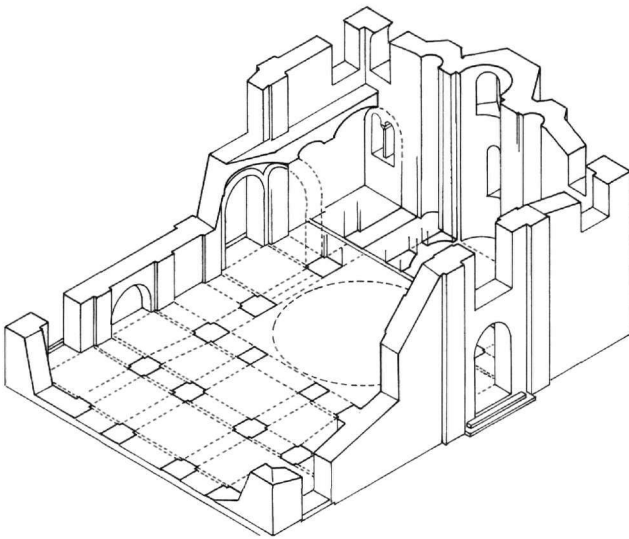


Fig. 3. Isometric section of the church, showing the existing original parts of the building, by C. Koliopoulos.

high chamfered marble crepis added by Vlasopoulos (Fig. 1) detracted from the monument's authenticity, and the old marble templon, the form of which is preserved by Lenoir<sup>33</sup>, appears to have been carried off before the work began<sup>34</sup>. The almost total destruction of the wall-paintings in the church (which will be discussed below) confirms the great scale of the removal of walls and vaults during Vlasopoulos's intervention.

The excavations of Antonin brought to light the hypocausts of a room in a Roman bathhouse<sup>35</sup>. They have no connection with the Middle Byzantine church with which we are concerned. The much more recent excavations and repairs carried out by the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities<sup>36</sup> are also not relevant.

33. A. Lenoir, *Architecture Monastique*, Paris 1856, 343, no. 238. Republished in *EMME* (n. 2), 81, fig. 80.

34. The marble templon is not represented in the Durand drawings which are made some years later.

35. Antonin Archimandrite, "Υπόμνημα, op.cit. (n. 17), 1449-1456. John Travlos (*Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Athens*, London 1991, 181) suggests that this room was part of the bathing complex no. L, probably belonging to the gymnasium of the ancient Lykeion. On another adjoining bath see O. Zachariadou, Φρέαρ Ζαυπτείου, *Ἡ πόλη κάτω από τήν πόλη*, exhibition catalogue, Athens 2000, 135.

36. P. Lazaridis, Μεσαιωνικά Ἀθηνῶν-Ἀττικῆς, *ADelt* 16 (1960), 65; *ADelt* 23 (1968), *Chronika*, 114; *ADelt* 24 (1969), *Chronika*, 95.

37. Couchaud, *Choix* (n. 1), pls. 10, 11 and 12.

38. He gives as reducing scale 9 mm. per metre for the elevations and

I now turn to the visual documentation – the plans and free-hand drawings of the Soteira Lykodemou which were made before the radical intervention of 1850-55.

A. Couchaud published five drawings of the monument<sup>37</sup> (plan, section, and three elevations), four of which were republished in *EMME* in 1928. All these drawings are flawed by a general error regarding the dimensions<sup>38</sup> and the monument is shown as much smaller than it actually is. Worst of all, however, the drawings published by Couchaud were not of the condition of the church at the time, but of a reconstruction of what he believed the church would originally have been, a circumstance that makes the drawings completely unreliable. In his text, he states that he did not draw the later walls, but he obviously also omitted the original non-bearing walls. He also failed to provide in the conventional manner projections of groins and inclinations of arches of the vaults, which were removed a few years later<sup>39</sup>.

The earliest of the depictions, possibly dating from the beginning of the nineteenth century has recently been published. It was drawn by L. Fauvel and depicts the Soteira "from the side facing the Lykeion", that is, from the north-west<sup>40</sup>. The drawing is small but meticulously executed. The dome is depicted intact, covered by tiles. The west side of the church is crowned by a horizontal cornice and all the windows are shown walled up. The upper part of one two-light window on the north side remains unsealed, and a loophole has been created in the brickwork sealing the other.

The Danish architect M.G. Bindsbeil<sup>41</sup> has bequeathed us a drawing of a transverse section and two rough sketches (Fig. 4), which bear the title "Byzantine church in Athens". The church is clearly the Soteira, since the drawing shows the two squinches either side of the east arm, the wide, low dome, and the templon with its two columns in front of the sanctuary. The two sketches depict the apses of the prothesis and

the section and 4,5 mm. per metre for the plan. The general dimensions of the building differ from one drawing to another.

39. We note the different way of drawing of the west elevation of the Soteira with simple lines and no shading (Couchaud, *Choix*, pl. 11, fig. 1). This, may be an indication that Couchaud would not like to represent the original form of the façade which was already in ruins.

40. *Byzance retrouvée. Erudits et voyageurs français XVI-XVIII siècles*, Paris 2001, exhibition catalogue, 163, no. 91, fig. 96. Comments and Bibliography by N.L. Demesnil.

41. M. Bendtsen, *Sketches and Measurements, Danish Architects in Greece 1818-1862*, Copenhagen 1993, 305 no. G.B. 074 of 1835. The drawing has not reducing scale and is limited to the central square of the church, not showing the thickness of the walls and the vaults.

diakonikon and can be identified from the iconographic themes, which are known from Durand's drawings.

From the same year, 1835, dates a drawing of a detail by Christian Hansen<sup>42</sup>, which is not particularly useful, since the cufic decoration it depicts is still well preserved. The drawings by Lenoir were probably made in 1840, though they were published only later<sup>43</sup>. They preserve the form of the original (?) marble templon, a cavetto moulding with painted cufic ornaments, decorative brickwork in the walls, and the arrangement of the wall-paintings of the dome. Lenoir's drawings are not very reliable<sup>44</sup>.

The drawings in the collection of the University of Karlsruhe, which were made between 1842 and 1845<sup>45</sup>, include a plan, longitudinal section and west elevation of the Soteira and are still unpublished<sup>46</sup>. Their anonymous compiler probably copied Couchaud's drawings and made some minor corrections<sup>47</sup> to them, after seeing the church for himself. The sketch made by L.A. Winstrup (Fig. 5)<sup>48</sup>, also of Denmark, depicts the east façade of the church, which is in a very good state of preservation, and is useful for the walled-up windows in this façade.

The most valuable of the depictions of the Soteira before the repairs are the two drawings by Paul Durand, which have recently been published<sup>49</sup>. These are two perspective line drawings showing the existing condition of the interior of the nave with unusual accuracy<sup>50</sup>. The first (32/2) was taken

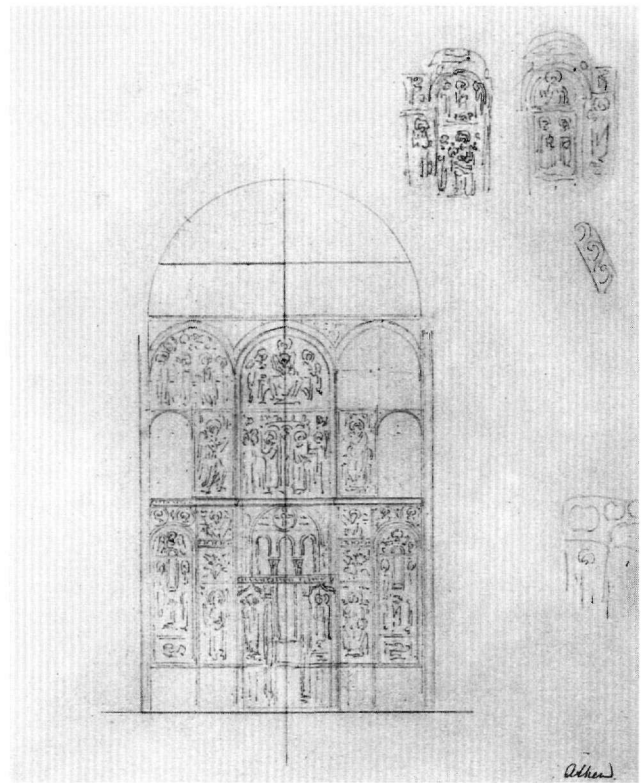


Fig. 4. M.G. Bindsbel. Athens, Byzantine Church, 1835. Library of the Copenhagen Academy of Fine Arts, G.B. 074.

42. Bendtsen, *op.cit.*, 126 no. 88, p. 247. See also A. Papanicolaou-Christensen et al., *Ἀθήνα 1818-1853. Ἔργα Δανῶν καλλιτεχνῶν*, Athens 1885, 86, fig. 93.

43. A. Lenoir, *Architecture monastique*, Paris 1856, 266, 277, 295, 329 no. 230, 343 no. 238, 369 no. 269.

44. There are some mistakes in the representation of certain elements of the sanctuary, behind the templon. Two of the Lenoir drawings are republished by Xyngopoulos in *EMME* (n. 2), 83, fig. 78 and p. 84, fig. 80).

45. S. Sinos, Die sogenannte Kirche des Hagios Elias zu Athen, *BZ* 64 (1971), 352.

46. I would like to thank prof. W. Schirmer, who kindly have sent me photo-copies of the drawings.

47. The original walls between the narthex and the central part of the church are well indicated in his plan. They are missing from the Couchaud plan.

48. Bendtsen, *op.cit.*, 126 no. 87 (LAW 094).

49. Kalantzopoulou, *Μεσαιωνικοί ναοί*, A', 35-38, 237-251 and B', pls. 54-63. T. Kalantzopoulou, *Μεσαιωνικοί ναοί τῆς Ἀθήνας ἀπό σωζόμενα σχέδια καί σημειώσεις τοῦ P. Durand*, Athens 2002 (ed. EΛΙΑ), 42-51.

50. It is almost sure that Paul Durand used a camera obscura with lens and a transparent board. This is testified by the fact that almost all his drawings from Athens are made with pencil, on a very thin and translucent paper consequently attached to a sheet of hard paper. Besides,

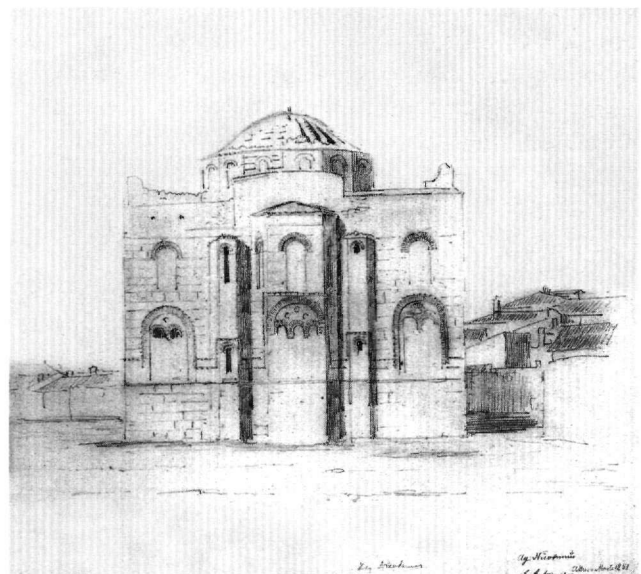


Fig. 5. L.A. Winstrup. The Byzantine Church of Sotira Likodhimou. Library of the Copenhagen Academy of Fine Arts, LAW 094.



Fig. 6. Interior of naos facing south-east. P. Durand, no. 32.2, Hellenic Literary and Historic Archive (EΛIA).

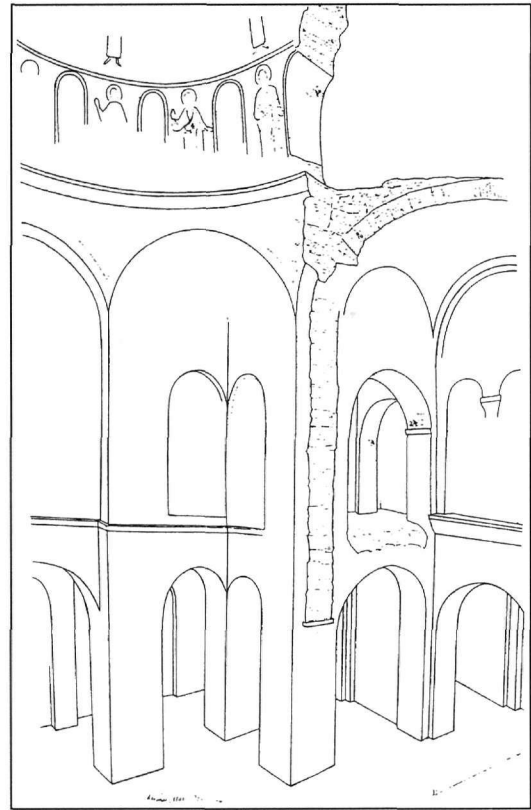


Fig. 7. Interior of naos facing north-west. P. Durand, no. 32.16, Hellenic Literary and Historic Archive (EΛIA).

from the level of an observer at the lower level, looking to the south-east (Fig. 6). It depicts the south part of the sanctuary with its shallow apse and the corner of the nave. The second (32/16) was taken from the level of the galleries (Fig. 7) and depicts the south-west corner and parts of the ruined west arm and narthex, as well as the dome, which has partly collapsed. Both these drawings, and indirectly the 22 others depicting wall-paintings<sup>51</sup>, provide a great deal of information on the form of the Soteira after the Greek Uprising, which I shall try to exploit in what follows.

The attempted restoration of the Soteira in the form it originally had (Fig. 8) and in the form it received after the 1705

earthquake is based on the assumptions that the measured drawing of the original dome by T. Vlasopoulos<sup>52</sup> was accurate and that the reconstruction followed it faithfully. It is only by making these assumptions that it is possible to use as a base the much later drawings of the plan and section of the present form of the Soteira by R. Schultz and S. Barnsley<sup>53</sup>, which, when checked, proved to have a satisfactory degree of accuracy<sup>54</sup>.

The dome, then, did not have an internal tympanum, and the sixteen windows created around the edge of it penetrated its hemisphere. There was a low tympanum only on the exterior. From Durand's drawing 32/16 it can be calculated

some of his subjects are represented in perspective, without sense (see e.g. Kalantzopoulou, *op.cit.*, 70, 85, 140, 145, 146).

51. Kalantzopoulou, *Μεσαιωνικοί ναοί*, A', 35-38, 237-251 and B', pls. 54-62.

52. For the section drawing of the dome, see above n. 25.

53. Schultz - Barnsley, *op.cit.* (n. 3), 15, fig. 8. The two drawings are repub-

lished by O. Wulff, *Das Katholikon von Hosios Lukas und verwandte byzantinische Kirchenbauten*, *Die Baukunst*, II, 11, 1903, 12-13, figs. 9, 10, and E. Stikas, *L'église byzantine de Christianou*, Paris 1951, fig. 71.

54. Curiously, in the Schultz - Barnsley section drawing of the church the squinches which support the dome are omitted.



that the two main axes of the nave coincided at the dome not with windows but with a section of wall between two windows. This feature further reveals the similarity of the dome of the Soteira with that of the katholikon of the monastery of Hosios Loukas. The breach created by the bomb must have been above the south-west pillar and, according to Couchaud, it destroyed two thirds of the dome. There was a painted strip above the window arches. In Durand's drawings, the thickness of the face of the arches bearing the dome can be made out, as well as that of the unified surface of the circumscribed sphere above them. Both were probably equal to the length of a brick.

The major problem in the reconstruction is the precise form taken by the rest of the vaulting of the church. From Durand's drawing 32/2 it emerges that the east arm was covered by a cross-vault and from 32/16 that the west probably also had an elevated cross-vault or low domes carried on pendentives. All the other vaults in the drawings (8 and 9 are unaccompanied by any substantial information regarding the original form.

The galleries did not extend above the west arm of the cross, as erroneously indicated in a section drawing by Couchaud<sup>55</sup>. As in Hosios Loukas, they were confined to the area above the narthex and the side aisles. This is clearly attested by the chamfered cornice-cum-stylobate in Durand's drawing 32/16. Here there was a colonnette on the axis which had been replaced in this position by Vlasopoulos (Fig. 12). Neither of the side openings of the galleries facing on to the west arm were two-light windows with mullions, but plain arches, presumably with parapets at the bottom for safety reasons. A characteristic feature is that, as at Hosios Loukas, the galleries and the chamfered cornice were recessed by about 30 m. to the right and left above the two transverse arms, so as clearly to suggest the cruciform plan<sup>56</sup>. The reconstruction of the original form of the west façade of the church presents a more difficult problem. Couchaud drew and explicitly referred to three doors, which have no function, given that another two opened on to the narthex from the sides. Windows can be seen in Fauvel's sketch, made before the destruction, though higher than the arch of

the main door. It is equally probable, therefore, that there were two windows, one either side of the door, as in the katholikon of the monastery of Hosios Loukas. The upper line of all the façades is also unknown. Both Couchaud and Winstrop and Bindesbel drew a raised part with a flat roof in the position of the arms, but it is virtually certain that the roofs were originally pitched<sup>57</sup> and covered the barrel vaults or the cross vaults over the arms.

The large openings on the lateral axis of the church<sup>58</sup> are 1.83 m. wide on the ground floor. They presumably still have the original width, though this is disproportionately large for ordinary windows<sup>59</sup>. The corresponding openings on the upper storey are narrower. These, too, have presumably not been altered perceptibly, since the poros impostes of the pilasters at either side are still *in situ*. The openings did not have sills, like ordinary windows, but extended down to the floor of the galleries. The marble columns on the axis of the upper storey at present appear to be reconstructed.

It thus seems to be a reasonable hypothesis that the architectural solution was similar to the one applied in the case of the katholikon of Hosios Loukas, with two vertically articulated windows on the sides. In this case they were two-light windows, instead of the three-light windows of Hosios Loukas. That is, the same principle was followed in the interior of the church as in the opening on the axis of the gallery inside the church. The reconstruction above the two-light windows of the galleries is uncertain; here Couchaud drew a small window, also with two lights, while in Fauvel's sketch the tympanum is solid.

Similar questions arise in the case of the side openings of the narthex, both on the ground floor and in the galleries. They have the same width: 1.41 m. The upper opening was converted by Vlasopoulos into a two-light window, while the lower one remains a disproportionately large door.

All the roofs are assumed originally to have been tiled<sup>60</sup>.

The reconstruction of the Soteira in the form it took after the repairs necessitated by the 1705 earthquake and before the Greek Uprising of 1821 (Fig. 9) is based on the same documentation, mainly on P. Durand's drawings.

Both drawings testify to the fact that all the arches opening

55. Correctly, Vlasopoulos did not repeat this fault in the restoration of the church.

56. The architectural feature of the short retreat of the galleries at both sides of the central square of the church can be connected with much older Byzantine monuments as St Sophia in Thessaloniki, St Clement in Ankara and the Dormition of the Virgin in Nicaea.

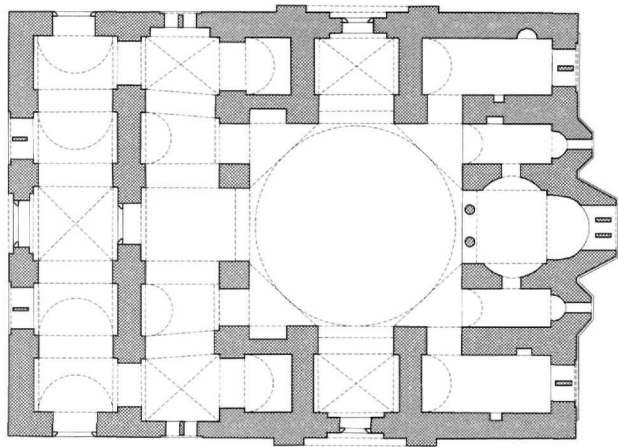
57. In the Vlasopoulos restitution of the church, the gabled roofs were

restored, though, at least at the west façade, the form of its upper part was unknown.

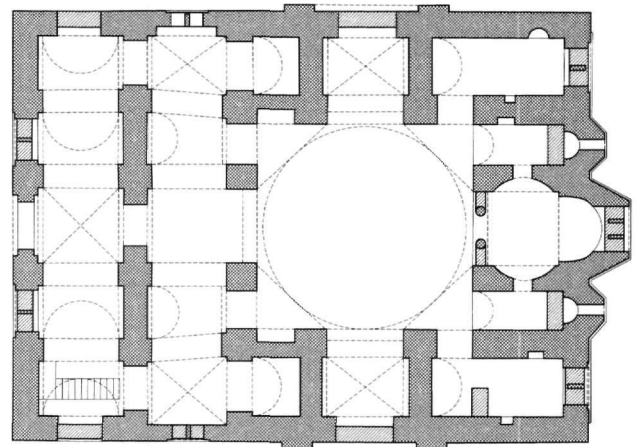
58. The width according to Couchaud was about 1,90 m.

59. Marble frames and arcs enclosing the doors, added in the Vlasopoulos restoration, reduced in some way the great width of their opening.

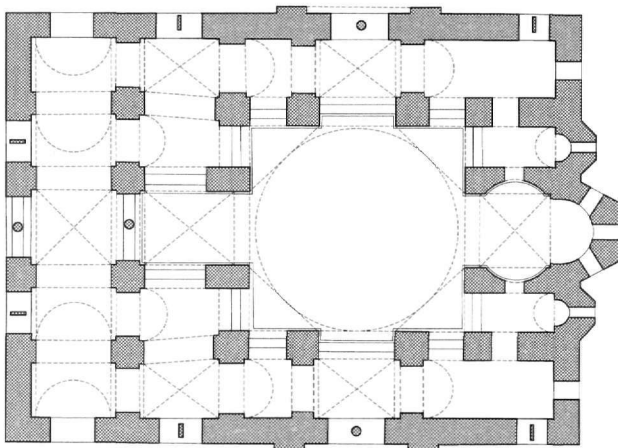
60. In the 1855 restoration, the roofs of the church were covered with bronze sheets (Stikas, *op.cit.*, fig. 19) substituted later by tiles.



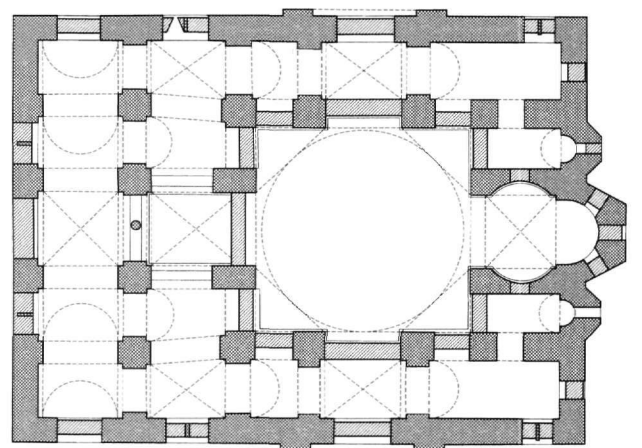
a.



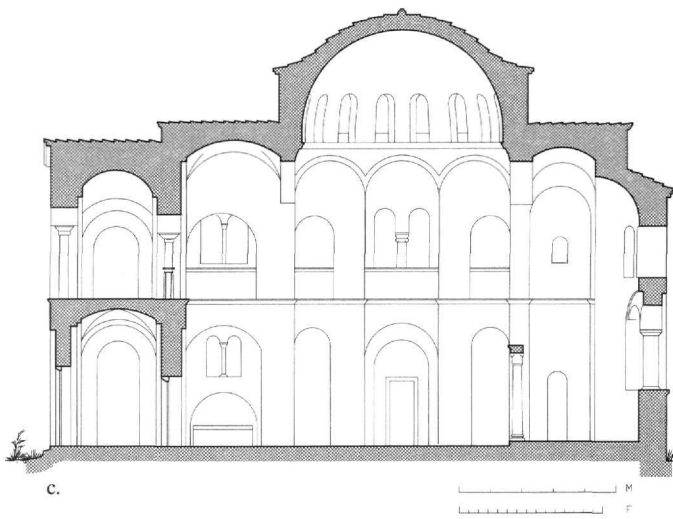
a.



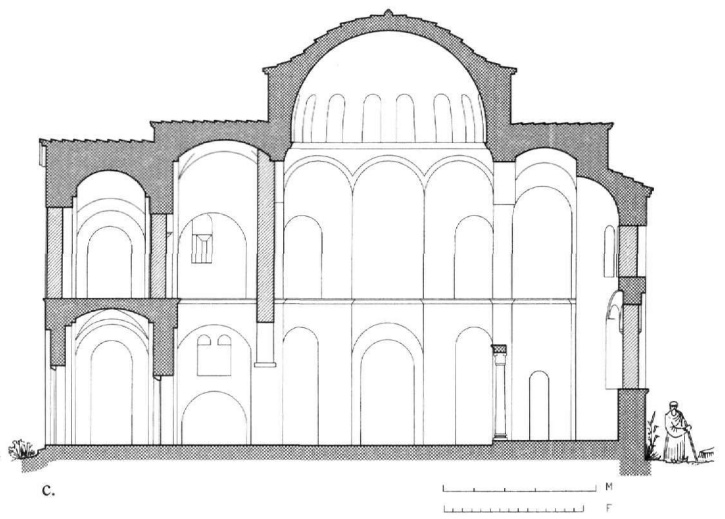
b.



b.



c.



c.

*Fig. 8. Reconstruction of the church in its original form. a. Plan at ground level. b. Plan at gallery level. c. Longitudinal section.*

*Fig. 9. Reconstruction of the church as in 1820. a. Plan at ground level. b. Plan at gallery level. c. Longitudinal section.*

on the central square of the church were walled up from the level of the gallery up to their keystones and gave the impression of blind arches. Only the east side, facing the sanctuary, remained free. It is evident from drawing 32/16 (Fig. 7) that at the west the unified arm was bridged by an arch, above which the new wall was built. These actions, and the walling up of all the external openings<sup>61</sup>, were presumably designed to support the four large arches that carried the dome, and to strengthen the octagonal infrastructure of both the dome and the entire building.

Couchaud's section drawing confirms this intervention which, though intended as a rescue operation, completely distorted<sup>62</sup> the interior of the monument. The *terminus ante quem* for it is provided by the date of the wall-paintings executed on the new walls<sup>63</sup>, which will be discussed below.

The preserved archways either side of the sanctuary on the upper floor (*paraklyptika?*) have also been walled up. Couchaud's plan shows reinforcing walls in front of the apses of the prothesis and diakonikon, though Durand's and Bindesbel's drawings of the wall-paintings indicate that these walls did not exist. The south-east side-chapel was isolated at the west by a transverse wall, in which a small door was created. Finally, the staircase at the south-west extreme of the church in Couchaud's plan, which pierced the corner vault, certainly did not belong to the original form of the building<sup>64</sup>.

Very little survives of the sculptural decoration of the Soteira. Mullions are all that remain *in situ* of all the windows on the east side and of the two-light windows at the east end of the galleries (Figs. 10-11). As noted above, Vlasopoulos's restoration respected the axial column with its Ionic capital integral with the impost block (Fig. 12), a form common in the Early Christian period<sup>65</sup> though not unknown in the katholikon of the monastery of Hosios Loukas<sup>66</sup>. The decorative motifs of the capitals and impost blocks above the mullions are very simple and commonly found in the eleventh century (six-point rosettes and

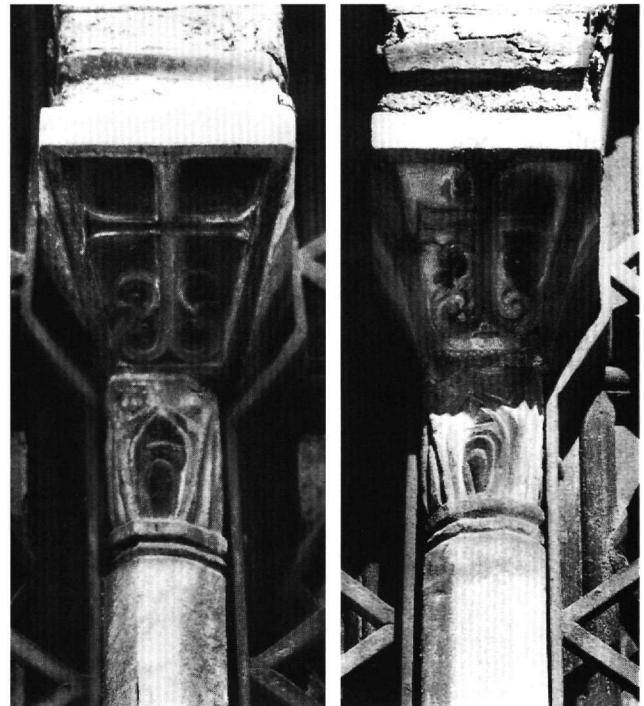


Fig. 10. The mullion capitals of the east façade windows. The imposts are modern (1850).

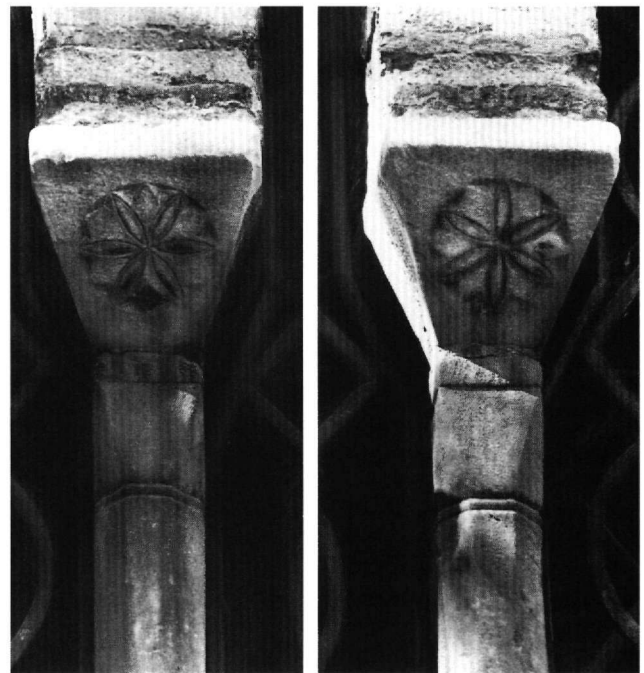


Fig. 11. The mullion capitals and imposts of the triple window of the bema apse.

61. Comments by N.L. Demensil, in *Byzance retrouvée* (n. 40), p. 136.

62. The first notion from the section drawing of Couchaud is that Soteira had no galleries at all. See N. Gioles, *Βυζαντινή ναοδομία*, Athens 1987, 167 n. 12.

63. Kalantzopoulou, *Μεσαιωνικοί ναοί*, A', 250.

64. The access to the galleries of all the known churches of the greek-cross octagon type is done by external staircases.

65. A.C. Orlandos, *Ἡ ξυλόστεγος παλαιοχριστιανική βασιλική τῆς μεσογειακῆς λεκάνης*, Athens 1954, B', 314-325. V. Vemi, *Les chapiteaux ioniques à l'époque paléochrétienne*, Paris 1989.

66. Schultz - Barnsley, op.cit. (n. 3), pl. 26a.



Fig. 12. Capital and impost of the colonette at the axis of the gallery.



Fig. 13. Impost over a modern mullion on the south façade.

crosses) (Fig. 13). Unfortunately, none of the marble door-frames of the church survives. They were probably removed during the long period of its abandonment. The bowls in the tympana of the three-light window of the bema apse have been replaced by later small decorative disks.

According to Lenoir's drawing, the templon of the Soteira had two columns (presumably *spolia* in second use), with Corinthian capitals, Ionic bases and shafts of coloured (?) marble, which supported a straight architrave with relief decoration<sup>67</sup>. The closure slabs were of masonry, with the undulating lines familiar during the Ottoman period that represent a naïve imitation of marble slabs with coloured veins. The use of heavy columns in a templon is completely inexplicable, particularly in the period at which the church was built, and in Greece.

67. Our research in order to identify this shafts and capitals with other columns in the Byzantine Museum of Athens was fruitless.

68. Xyngopoulos, *EMME*, A2, 81, fig. 81. About the unreasonable destruction of Byzantine and Postbyzantine murals in Athens, at the middle of the nineteenth century, see also A.K. (Lyssandros Kaftantzoglou), *Βανδαλική καταστροφή, Ὁ Αἰών*, of the 9th July 1862.

69. Kalantzopoulou, *Μεσαιωνικοί ναοί*, A', 250.

70. M. Chatzidakis, *Ἑλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά τήν Ἄλωση (1450-*

Couchaud notes that "...the icons that are still preserved have dazzling colours and gildings". The publication by St. Kalantzopoulou of 18 of Durand's 22 drawings, has revealed the wealth of the monumental painting of the Soteira, of which all that now survives is the representation of the bust of Christ and two angels in a blind arch on the south wall of the church<sup>68</sup>. Kalantzopoulou proposed three painting phases in the monument<sup>69</sup>, none of which is the original and the last of which is dated to the early eighteenth century, after the repair to the damage caused by the 1705 earthquake. In fact, the excellent drawings by Durand attest that many of the wall-paintings in the sanctuary had the iconographic discipline and also the elegance of the figures of the Cretan "school", which, particularly in Attica and Athens<sup>70</sup>, experienced a fresh flowering at this late date, after the vicissitudes

1830), Athens 1987, A', 102, 114-115. A. Xyngopoulos, *Σχεδιάγραμμα ἱστορίας τῆς θρησκευτικῆς ζωγραφικῆς μετά τήν Ἄλωση*, Athens 1957, 284-289. N. Chatzidaki, *Ψηφιδωτά καί τοιχογραφίες στίς βυζαντινές καί μεταβυζαντινές ἐκκλησίες τῆς Ἀθήνας*, Athens 2000, 276, 277, fig. 39 (Frescoes in the bema apse of the katholikon of Kaisariani monastery. The iconographic program and the style are very close to Soteira).

of the Venetian campaign. However, it could be agreed, on the basis of purely iconographic evidence, that the wall-paintings in the dome belonged to the original painted decoration of the church in the eleventh century. The drawings by Lenoir, Couchaud, and especially Durand confirm that above the zone of the windows (between which there were representations of full-length prophets) were depicted eight standing frontal angels, who probably<sup>71</sup> supported the circular glory of the Pantokrator. The early date of the theme of angels-caryatids is attested by its adoption in the church of the Metamorphosis at Koropi in Attica<sup>72</sup>, which is dated to the third quarter of the tenth century<sup>73</sup>. The same rare motif also adorned the dome of another Athenian church of the Saviour<sup>74</sup>, now destroyed, of which almost nothing is known. The exterior surfaces of the preserved original walls of the Soteira are adorned by pseudo-cufic ceramics (Fig. 14). Some of them are placed individually amongst the dressed stones of the masonry, which are separated by double courses of bricks (Fig. 15), and some are set in a continuous frieze encircling three sides of the building at roughly the level of the springing of the window arches. An interesting technique is used in the frieze, which consists of clay plaques with champlévé ornaments and with the background filled with white lime plaster (Fig. 16). This is a version in cheaper materials of the champlévé technique used in Middle Byzantine sculpture.

The cufic and pseudo-cufic motifs on the walls of the Soteira have been treated directly or indirectly by G. Sotiriou<sup>75</sup>, A.H.S. Megaw<sup>76</sup>, G. Miles<sup>77</sup>, P. Vocotopoulos<sup>78</sup>, A. Frantz<sup>79</sup> and N. Nikonanos<sup>80</sup>. Depictions of them have already been published by Chr. Hansen<sup>81</sup>, A. Lenoir<sup>82</sup> and G. Lambakis<sup>83</sup>. Despite the destruction of a large part of the ceramic decoration, it is immediately apparent that the motifs of the individual cufic patterns and the system by which they were ap-

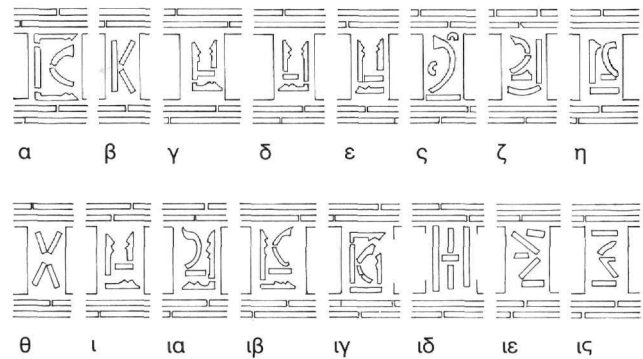


Fig. 14. Cut brick pseudo-cufic patterns.



Fig. 15. Detail of the masonry on the south façade.

71. The notes of Paul Durand assure that the figures on this zone of the dome were those of angels. In his drawing no. 32/16 we see the lower part of their bodies but not their hands. It is sure that the hands were extended towards up.

72. Ch. Bouras, *Βυζαντινή και μεταβυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική στην Ελλάδα*, Athens 2001, 71, fig. 55.

73. A.C. Orlandos, 'Ο ἐν Ἀκαρνανίᾳ βυζαντινός ναός τῆς Ἐπισκοπῆς, *ABME B'* (1961), 29, figs. 9, 15, 18.

74. N.H.J. Westlake, On Some Ancient Paintings in Churches of Athens, *Archaeologia* LI, 1888, 173-188. O.M. Dalton, *Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, Oxford 1911, 248, fig. 153. Kalantzopoulou, *Μεσαιωνικοί ναοί*, B', pl. 67 (34.1).

75. G. Sotiriou, Ἀραβικά διακοσμήσεις εἰς τὰ βυζαντινά μνημεῖα τῆς Ἑλλάδος, *ΔΧΑΕ B'* (1936), 64-65.

76. Megaw, op.cit. (n. 4), 103, 104.

77. G. Miles, Byzantium and the Arabs. Relations in Greece and the Aegean Area, *DOP* 18 (1964), 3-32, fig. 24.

78. P. Vocotopoulos, Περί τῆν χρονολόγησιν τοῦ ἐν Κερκύρα ναοῦ τῶν Ἁγίων Ἰάσονος καὶ Σωσιπάτρου, *ΔΧΑΕ E'* (1969), 163-169.

79. Frantz, *Holy Apostles* (n. 12), 8, fig. 2, p. 25 n. 11, p. 26.

80. N. Nikonanos, Κεραμοπλαστικές κουφικές διακοσμήσεις στὰ μνημεῖα περιοχῆς Ἀθηνῶν, *Ἀφιέρωμα στὴ μνήμη Στ. Πελεκανίδη*, Thessaloniki 1983, 336-338, fig. 3, dr. 2-4.

81. Bendtsen, op.cit. (n. 41), 126, 247.

82. Xyngopoulos, *EMME*, A.2, 83, fig. 78.

83. G. Lampakis, *Mémoire sur les antiquités chrétiennes de la Grèce*, Athens 1902, 42 n. 55-67.



Fig. 16. North façade. Detail of the frieze.

plied bear great similarity to those of the churches of the Panayia at Hosios Loukas and of the Hagioi Apostoloi in the Athenian Agora. The former monument is earlier and the latter roughly contemporary with the Soteira.

G. Millet<sup>84</sup> and E. Stikas<sup>85</sup> have written on the typological similarities of the church under examination and the katholikon of Hosios Loukas. The Soteira is clearly the earliest and most faithful copy of the great church in Phokis. As for the morphology, the direct relationship with the churches of Hosios Loukas was noted seventy years ago by A.H.S. Megaw<sup>86</sup>, who analysed the individual forms: the motifs of the cubic decorative brickwork, the courses of bricks in relation to the frieze, the dentil courses, the step pattern, the three-light window with the lights of equal height and encircling arch, and finally the filling of the tympana of the windows. To the similarities with the katholikon of Hosios

Loukas may be added those of the main dome (which have already been discussed), the composite windows at the ends of the arms of the cross, the *paraklyptikon* from the galleries to the sanctuary, the general tracing of the octagonal support of the dome<sup>87</sup> and the existence of an arcsoilium with a tomb to the left as one enters the nave. The champlévé technique used on relatively large surfaces recalls the elaborate dome<sup>88</sup> of the Panayia in the monastery.

However, the most striking indication of the direct relation between the katholikon of Hosios Loukas and the Soteira Lykodemou consists of certain magnitudes of the central core of the church which are of decisive importance. In fact, five basic dimensions of the transverse section of the church of the Soteira are equal, with a satisfactory degree of approximation<sup>89</sup>, to three quarters of the corresponding dimensions of the katholikon.

	Hosios Loukas	$\times \frac{3}{4}$	Soteira
Diameter of dome	8.625 m.	6.468 m.	6.50 m.
Side of central square	8.70 m.	6.525 m.	6.50 m.
Internal height of dome	17.55 m.	13.16 m.	13.30 m.
Internal height of main arches	11.90 m.	8.925 m.	8.90 m.
General internal width	15.80 m.	11.85 m.	11.90 m.

This observation attests both to the direct relationship between the two monuments and to the existence of a plan. The transfer and reproduction to scale of the dimensions of the katholikon presupposes some plan of the original composition or measured drawings of the model. Further investigation of this subject would be of great interest for the history of Byzantine architecture.

84. G. Millet, *L'école grecque dans l'architecture byzantine*, Paris 1916, 105-118, 160 n. 3.

85. Stikas, *Christianou* (n. 53), 35-46.

86. Megaw, *op.cit.* (n. 4), 102-104, 115, 116, 120, 122, 124, 126 and pl. 36 no. 4.

87. The span off the squinches is a little larger than the span of the four main arches. That means that the octagon of the general plan, in both

cases, is not regular.

88. L. Bouras, *Ὁ γλυπτός διάκοσμος τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Παναγίας στό μοναστήρι τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκά*, Athens 1980, 22-34.

89. We use the dimensions from the measured drawings of Schultz and Barnsley for both monuments and we admit that the height of the dome was not changed in the restoration of 1850.

A more general question, equally worth investigation, is that of the links between the architecture of Athens just after the year 1000, particularly of the Hagioi Apostoloi and the Soteira Lykodemou, and the two churches of the great

monastery in Phokis, which were pioneering in their day and whose decisive role in the creation of the so-called “Helladic School” is repeatedly confirmed<sup>90</sup>.

### Χαράλαμπος Μπούρας

## Η ΑΡΧΙΤΕΚΤΟΝΙΚΗ ΤΗΣ ΣΩΤΕΙΡΑΣ ΛΥΚΟΔΗΜΟΥ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ

**Η** δραστική αποκατάσταση της Σωτείρας του Λυκοδήμου γύρω στο 1850, όταν έκχωρήθηκε στην ρωσική παροικία των Αθηνών, δημιούργησε από τότε ζωνρές αμφιβολίες για την αυθεντικότητά της ως βυζαντινού μνημείου και απέτρεψε την συστηματική της μελέτη. Οί δημοσιεύσεις γι' αυτήν είναι πολύ φτωχές: Τά σχέδια του Couchaud, πού έγιναν πρό της επεμβάσεως, είναι ανεπαρκή και λανθασμένα και τό έκτεταμένο λήμμα του Ά. Ευγγουπούλου στο *EMME* τό 1928 δέν στηρίχθηκε σέ πρωτογενή έρευνα. Οί μνηείες, αναφορές και συγκρίσεις πού έγιναν έκτοτε λίγο μās βοηθοῦν στήν εκτίμηση μās βυζαντινής εκκλησίας πολύ μεγάλης σπουδαιότητας.

Άν και δέν υπάρχουν γραπτές πηγές για τήν ίδρυση της Σωτείρας, τά ακιδογραφήματα πού δημοσιεύθηκαν από τόν Άντωνίνο επιτρέπουν μέ μεγάλη προσέγγιση τήν χρονολόγησή της στήν δεκαπενταετία 1015-1031. Φαίνεται πάντως ότι ήδη κατά τόν 17ο αιώνα ήταν εγκαταλελειμμένη και ότι υπέστη σοβαρές ζημιές κατά τόν σεισμό της 3ης Σεπτεμβρίου 1705. Άκολούθησε μία δραστική παρέμβαση στερεώσεως του ναού και νέα τοιχογράφηση του κατά τά έτη πού ακολούθησαν. Η κατάσταση επιδεινώθηκε κατά τήν Έπανάσταση, όταν βόμβες από τήν Άκρόπολη κατέστρεψαν τό μεγαλύτερο μέρος του τρούλλου, των θόλων του δυτικού τμήματος του ναού και τήν πρόσοψη, ή όποια ήταν ήδη έτοιμόρροπη.

Δυστυχώς δέν κατέστη δυνατόν νά βρεθοῦν τά σχέδια του μηχανικού Τηλεμάχου Βλασοπούλου (1852), τά όποια γνώριζε ό Γεώργιος Λαμπάκης (1891) και βάσει των όποιων έγινε ή ανακατασκευή μεγάλων τμημάτων του ναού πού, όπως φαίνεται, ήταν έτοιμόρροπα και καθαιρέθηκαν. Άσφαλώς πάντως αναγνωρίζομε ότι σώθηκε όλόκληρη ή ανατολική πλευρά, μεγάλα τμήματα των δύο πλαγιών και δέν άλλαξαν τά κάτω μέρη των τοίχων ούτε οί στάθμες των υπερώων και των θόλων. Φαίνεται πάντως ότι σχεδόν όλοι οί θόλοι ανακατασκευάσθηκαν και καταργήθηκαν όλοι οί μή φέροντες έσωτερικοί τοίχοι του ναού, τόσον οί αρχικοί όσον και οί νεώτεροι της στερεώσεως των αρχών του 18ου αιώνας. Άποτέλεσμα αυτού είναι ή αλλοίωση του έσωτερικού χώρου και ή απώλεια της σχέσεως λειτουργίας και χωρικών ένοτήτων στο έσωτερικό του ναού. Διαπιστώνονται και άλλες αλλαγές από τήν αρχική κατάσταση της Σωτείρας του Λυκοδήμου ως προς όρισμένα ανοίγματα και ως προς τά μαρμαρικά πού προστέθηκαν σέ αυτόν. Ο Λαμπάκης πάντως, σαράντα χρόνια άργότερα, έπαινούσε τήν αποκατάσταση Βλασοπούλου, γιατί κράτησε τό σχήμα και τίς διαστάσεις του αρχικού τρούλλου. Οί πολύ αξιόλογες τοιχογραφίες της εκκλησίας, των όποιων έχομε σχέδια χάρη στον Ε. Durand, καταστράφηκαν όλοσχερως, πλην μās.

Έπιχειροῦνται σχεδιαστικές αναπαραστάσεις της Σωτείρας στήν αρχική της μορφή (Εικ. 8) και σέ αυτήν πού

90. Bouras, op.cit. (n. 72), 92-94, 96-98, 100, 101, 103-110. Ch. and L. Bouras, *Η έλλαδική ναοδομία κατά τόν 12ο αιώνα*, Athens 2002, 395, 396, 373 n. 94, 398, 403, 600, 601.

είχε λίγο πρό της Ήπαναστάσεως (Εικ. 9), μέ τήν βοήθεια διαφόρων σχεδίων πού ἔγιναν πρό τοῦ 1852 καί συγκεκριμένα τῶν: α) A. Fauvel τῶν ἀρχῶν τοῦ 19ου αἰ., β) M.G. Bindesbel, 1835, γ) Chr. Hansen, 1835, δ) E. Durand, 1843-1844, ε) τῆς συλλογῆς σχεδίων τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου τῆς Καρλσρούης, 1842-1849, στ) A. Lenoir, 1840 (;) καί ζ) L.A. Winstrup, 1851.

Τά πολυτιμότερα ἀπό αὐτά εἶναι οἱ δύο προοπτικές ἀπεικονίσεις τοῦ ἐσωτερικοῦ τοῦ ναοῦ ἀπό τόν E. Durand, πού ἐπιτρέπουν τήν κατανόηση τῶν σφαλμάτων τῆς ἀπεικονίσεως Couchaud καί κυρίως μᾶς κατατοπίζουν γιά τίς σωστικές ἐπεμβάσεις τῶν ἀρχῶν τοῦ 18ου αἰῶνος, πού περιελάμβαναν τό κλείσιμο, ἐν ὅλῳ ἢ ἐν μέρει, ὅλων τῶν ἐξωτερικῶν ἀνοιγμάτων καί τό κτίσιμο τοίχων στίς τρεῖς πλευρές τοῦ κεντρικοῦ τετραγώνου τοῦ ναοῦ μέ σκοπό τήν ὑποστήριξη τῶν μεγάλων τόξων, τά ὅποια ἔφεραν τόν τροῦλλο. Ὑπάρχουν ὅμως καί ἀξεπέραστα προβλήματα ἀναπαραστάσεως, ὅπως τῆς γεωμετρίας τῶν θόλων, τῆς μορφῆς τῶν στεγῶν ἐν σχέσει πρός τίς κεραῖες τοῦ σταυροῦ στίς ὄψεις καί

ἐπίσης τῆς ἀρχικῆς μορφῆς τῶν μεγάλων ἐξωτερικῶν ἀνοιγμάτων τοῦ κτιρίου.

Ἡ Σωτεῖρα τοῦ Λυκοδήμου εἶναι τό ἀρχαιότερο καί τό πιστότερο ἀντίγραφο τοῦ καθολικοῦ τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκά. Κατά τήν ἐπανεξέτασή της ἐπισημαίνονται ἀφ' ἑνός πλεῖστα μορφικά κυρίως στοιχεῖα καί ἀφ' ἑτέρου ἀναλογικῆς σχέσεις τοῦ κυρίως ναοῦ, πού ἐπιβεβαιώνουν τήν ἄμεση σχέση τῶν δύο μνημείων. Ὁ κερραμοπλαστικός της διάκοσμος μέ κουφικά θέματα πιστοποιεῖ ἐπίσης ἄμεση σχέση μέ τήν ἐκκλησία τῆς Παναγίας στόν Ὁσιο Λουκά. Οἱ παραλληλισμοί αὐτοί (ὀρισμένοι ἀπό τούς ὁποίους ἔγιναν ἀρχικῶς ἀπό τόν A.H.S. Megaw) ἔχουν μεγάλη σημασία δεδομένου ὅτι συνδέουν ἀμέσως τήν ἀρχιτεκτονική τῶν Ἀθηνῶν λίγο μετά τό ἔτος 1000 (Σωτεῖρας τοῦ Λυκοδήμου καί Ἀγίων Ἀποστόλων στήν ἀρχαία Ἀγορά) μέ τούς δύο ναούς τοῦ μεγάλου μοναστηριοῦ τῆς Φωκίδος, τῶν ὁποίων ὁ καθοριστικός ρόλος γιά τήν δημιουργία τῆς λεγομένης «ἐλλαδικῆς σχολῆς» συνεχῶς ἐπιβεβαιώνεται.