



## The Byzantine Churches of Trebizond

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*Anatolian Studies*, Vol. 10. (1960), pp. 141-175.

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# THE BYZANTINE CHURCHES OF TREBIZOND

By SELINA BALLANCE

THE MATERIAL IN this article was collected during a three-month stay in Trebizond (now Trabzon) in the summer of 1958, financed by the Henry L. Florence bursary awarded by the R.I.B.A., to whom I am most grateful not only for the bursary but for permission to publish the material collected.

My especial thanks are due to Mr. David Winfield, leader of the Russell Trust Expedition which is cleaning the wall-paintings in St. Sophia, Trebizond, for immense help and encouragement and for introductions both to churches and to officials ; to the officials, especially the Director of Education and the Mufti, for their courtesy and assistance ; to Bayan Aliye Aşurbay ; and to the many tapeholders, both Turkish and British, who were pressed into service.

It must be made clear at the start that, as I am an architect and neither scholar, archaeologist nor art historian, my approach is architectural and structural. The necessary reading of Greek, both inscriptions and reference books, has been done by my husband. In the matter of wall-paintings, of which there are many, I have done no more than comment on their existence.

The justification for carrying out this survey of the churches of Trebizond is that, though they are frequently referred to as forming an isolated offshoot of later Byzantine architecture and have been the subject of articles in learned journals, no accurate survey has been published of any of them. Texier, in *Description de l'Arménie*,<sup>1</sup> shows a view of St. Sophia, which is repeated in his *Byzantine Architecture* <sup>2</sup> with the addition of a plan and some details of the same church and a plan and section of the Chrysocephalos. Though interesting, they are, like much of Texier's work, unreliable. Millet's article on "Les Monastères et les Églises de Trébizonde" <sup>3</sup> contains much useful historical and comparative material, but has only sketch plans, and those not always accurate in detail. The most thorough structural analyses of any of the churches were those carried out by N. Brounov and N. Baklanov,<sup>4</sup> who studied the churches of St. Sophia, St. Eugenios and the Chrysocephalos during the brief Russian occupation of the city in 1916-17 and who were the first to draw attention to the evidence of major alterations to the buildings, though not all their theories are entirely convincing. And even they did not produce more than sketch

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<sup>1</sup> C. Texier, *Description de l'Arménie, la Perse et la Mésopotamie*, Paris, 1842, pp. 49, 50, Pl. 1.

<sup>2</sup> C. Texier and R. Pullan, *Byzantine Architecture*, London, 1864, pp. 189-202, 217-18, Pls. LX, LXIV.

<sup>3</sup> G. Millet, "Les Monastères et les Églises de Trébizonde," *BCH.*, XIX, 1895, pp. 419-459.

<sup>4</sup> N. Brounov, "La Sainte-Sophie de Trébizonde," *Byzantion*, IV, pp. 393-408 ; N. Baklanov, "Deux Monuments Byzantins de Trébizonde," *Byzantion*, IV, pp. 363-391.

plans. Finally, Professor Talbot Rice's publications on Trebizond include an article on the religious buildings <sup>5</sup> which is especially useful on churches outside the town and has photographs of some which have since disappeared : and a book, in conjunction with Millet, on the wall paintings.<sup>6</sup> The capitals and the sculptures of St. Sophia have been studied by J. Strzygowski <sup>7</sup> and M. Alpatov <sup>8</sup> respectively.

It must be emphasised that this article is only a supplement to those mentioned above and has no pretensions to rivalling any of them, except as to accuracy of surveying ; and practically all of the historical material has been gleaned from them.

Many travellers have passed through Trebizond in the course of the centuries and, of their accounts, those of Hamilton <sup>9</sup> and Lynch <sup>10</sup> are the most useful, Lynch's maps being especially valuable.

The founding of the Christian Church in Trebizond is traditionally assigned to St. Andrew <sup>11</sup> and it is certainly highly probable that there was a Christian community there from an early date. Chrysanthos, the last Metropolitan of Trebizond, mentions that the Chrysocephalos was traditionally founded by Constantine.<sup>12</sup> It is certain that there were churches in the town in the time of Justinian, as Procopius mentions the repair of some " which had been damaged by the long passage of time " <sup>13</sup>, but none survives from this period. Basil I (867–886) rebuilt many which had been damaged during the Iconoclastic troubles ; of these, only St. Anne is still standing and bears an inscription dating its rebuilding to 884/885.

As the capital of the theme of Chaldia, Trebizond had political importance, as well as the mercantile importance which came from its position as the seaport at the end of the long overland trade route from the East—a route which increased in importance when wars disrupted the shorter one to the Levantine ports. In the latter part of the 11th century it was recognised by Alexios I as a semi-independent State with Theodore Gabrâs at its head ; it was a bulwark against the Seljuk Turks as they gradually gained control of more and more of Asia Minor. And in 1204, in the same month that the Fourth Crusade sacked Constantinople, Alexios and David Comnenos, grandsons of the Byzantine Emperor Alexios I, came from Georgia where they had been living at the court of their aunt, the great

<sup>5</sup> D. Talbot Rice, " Religious Buildings of Trebizond," *Byzantion*, V, pp. 47 *et seq.*

<sup>6</sup> Millet and Talbot Rice, *Byzantine Painting at Trebizond*, London, 1936.

<sup>7</sup> J. Strzygowski, " Les Chapiteaux de Sainte-Sophie de Trébizonde," *BCH.*, XIX, 1895, pp. 517–522.

<sup>8</sup> M. Alpatov, " Reliefs de Sainte-Sophie de Trébizonde," *Byzantion*, IV, pp. 410–18.

<sup>9</sup> W. J. Hamilton, *Researches in Asia Minor, Pontus and Armenia*, London, 1842, vol. I, pp. 159–162.

<sup>10</sup> H. F. B. Lynch, *Armenia*, London, 1901, vol. I, pp. 8–36.

<sup>11</sup> W. Miller, *Trebizond*, London, 1926, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> Χρυσάνθος, Ἀρχαῖον Πόντου, 4–5, Athens, 1933.

<sup>13</sup> Procopius, *De Aed.*, 3, 7 ; P. de Tournafort, *Voyage du Levant*, Paris, 1717, Tome II, p. 234.

Queen Tamar, and took the city. They founded a dynasty that outlasted the Byzantine Empire itself by eight years, Trebizond finally falling to Mehmet II in 1461.

Many of the churches in the city were taken over as mosques at or shortly after the Turkish conquest, which has preserved them from destruction. Others which remained Christian until the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations in 1923 have since fallen into decay or been pulled down : it is much to be hoped that St. Anne, the oldest building in the city, will be saved by the Belediye and put into use as a museum depot.

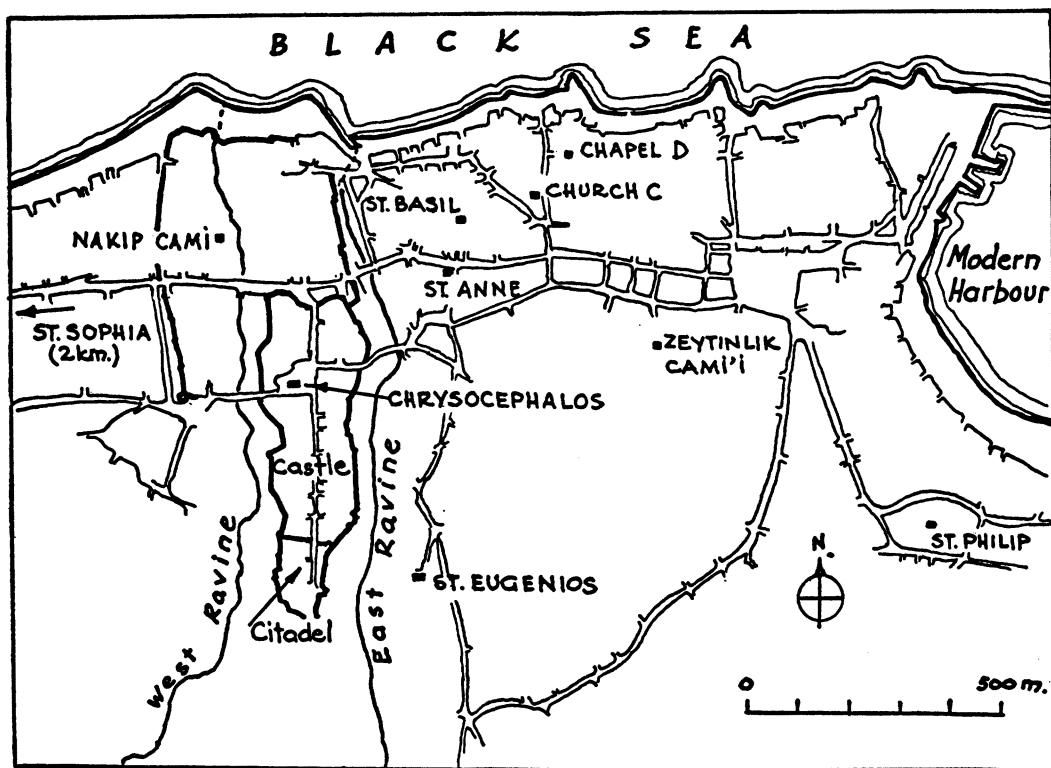


FIG. 1. Map of Trebizond.

In addition to the churches in the city, several have been included from the countryside round about : scores if not hundreds remain to be discovered, especially in the mountain valleys, but the task of finding them is immense (Mr. Winfield has started on it) and a large proportion of them would almost certainly turn out to be as late as the 17th, 18th or even the 19th century.

In the following description the individual churches are dealt with in alphabetical order : firstly, those in the city ; secondly, those outside. Professor Talbot Rice named two churches, both now gone, as Churches A and B : in order to avoid confusion I have continued with this in un-named buildings, i.e. Chapel D and Church C.

Throughout the plans one convention of hatching is observed : cross-hatching for the earliest parts, single hatching for the second period and

broken hatching for the latest period of each particular building. The Chrysocephalos and Kaymaklı are the only exceptions. Cave monasteries are omitted as they have so little medieval building : their interest lies in their wall-paintings.

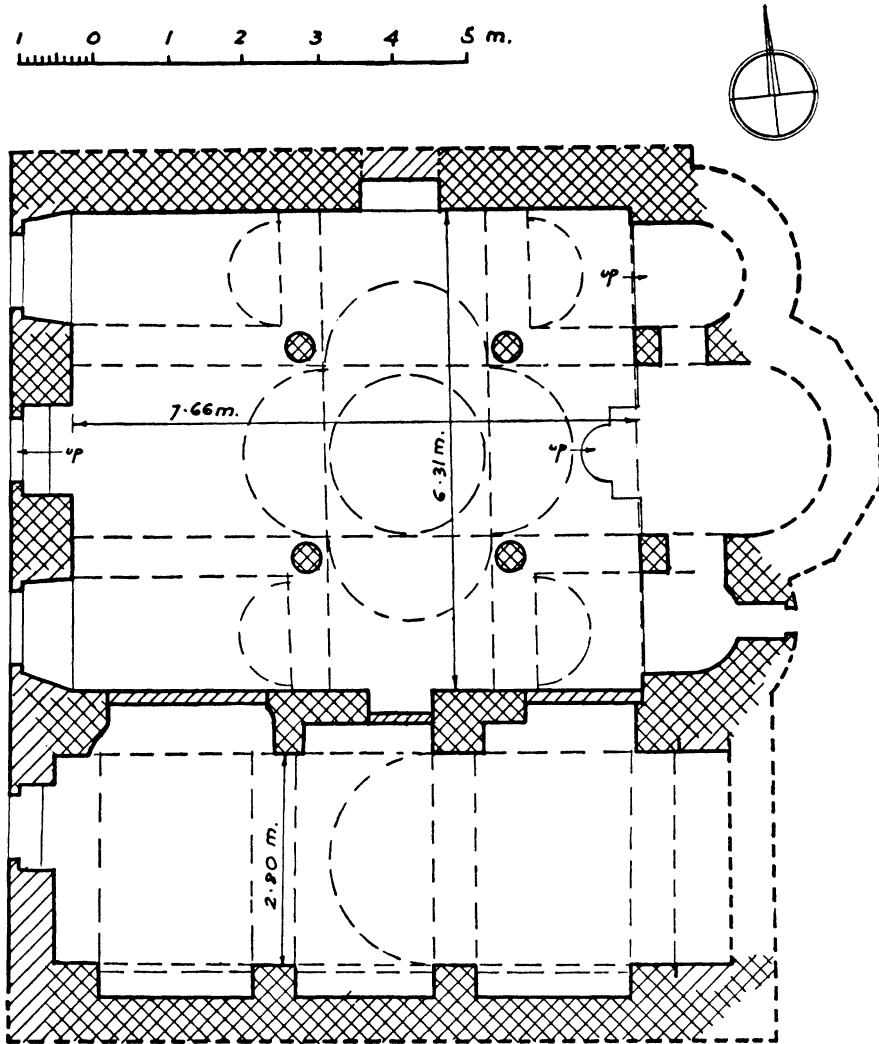


FIG. 2. Plan of Church C.

### THE CHURCHES

The dating of the churches is extremely difficult. There is a paucity of written records and only one dated inscription on stone <sup>14</sup> ; probably there were many inscriptions on the frescoes—several were seen in the last

<sup>14</sup> Millet gives many other inscriptions in an article "Inscriptions Byzantines de Trébizonde", *BCH.*, XX, 1896, pp. 496-501, and in the article mentioned in note 3, but none is relevant to the dating of the churches.

century—but even those would not necessarily help with dating the building as such, except as a *terminus ante quem*. Comparisons with churches elsewhere can of course be helpful, but there do not appear to be any sufficiently close parallels to offer dating evidence more exact than a century or two either way.

The date, within about fifty years, of St. Sophia is reasonably certain ; the last phase of St. Eugenios is almost certainly post-1340. St. Philip has certain minor decorative features in common with both of these : St. Anne was rebuilt in 885 ; and apart from that we know virtually nothing. Thus absolute dating has very little to go on : but even relative dating of parts

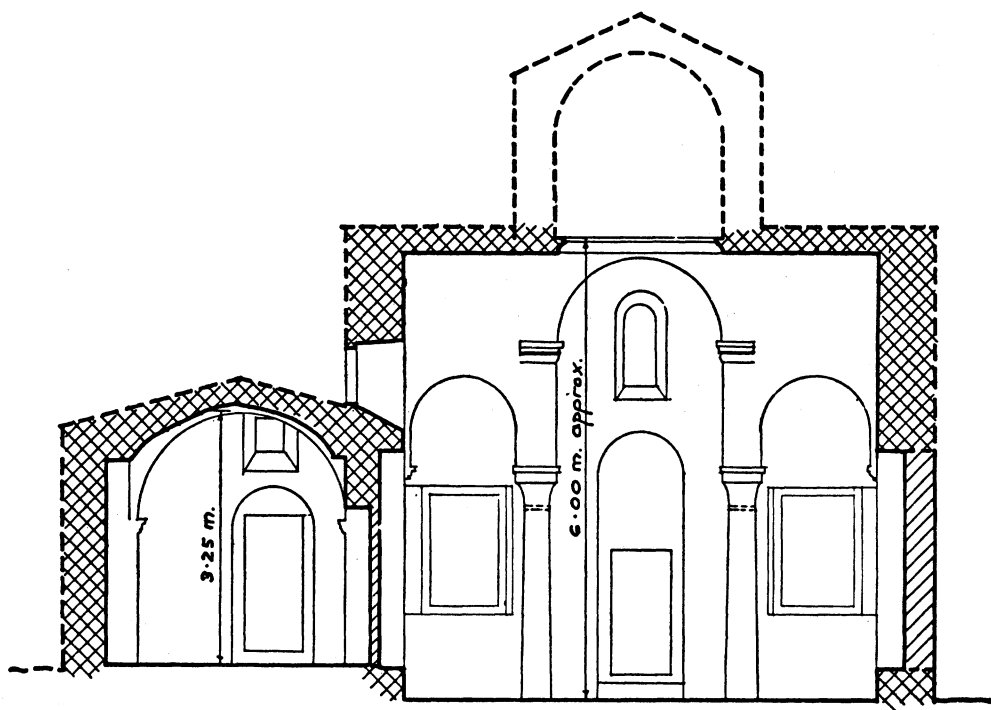


FIG. 3. Section of Church C, looking west.

within any given church is complicated by the fact that such useful indications as straight joints, blocked doors and windows and additions to walls are frequently hidden by plaster or at best by several layers of whitewash, externally as well as internally.

#### CHURCH C. Plan and section, Figs. 2 and 3. Pl. XVIa.

This church is included because, though it may well be as late as the 18th century, there is just a possibility that it is Byzantine. It has lost its east wall and dome : and most of the west wall has been rebuilt, probably in the 19th century. The purpose of the chamber to the south is obscure and there is nothing to show whether it is earlier or later than, or contemporary with, the church itself. Possibly the two wide openings between the two, which are arched and are relatively low, were for tombs.

An interesting point about the plan is the strong local basilical tradition

evident in the barrel-vaulting, not cross-vaulting, of the corner bays and in their being rectangular rather than square.

The columns and capitals are built up of brick and masonry and plastered ; and all mouldings are of plaster.

THE CHRYSOCEPHALOS. Plan, Fig. 4.

The cathedral of Trebizond, known as the church of the Golden-headed Virgin, was originally attached to a monastery ; it is the only building surviving within the castle walls which is known to have been a church, and was converted into a mosque when the Turks took the city in 1461.

Only the ground floor plan is shown here : the key to the gallery stairs was mysteriously lost, so no survey could be done of the upper floor,<sup>15</sup> comprising galleries over aisles, narthex and exo-narthex and rooms over the additions on the north-east ; nor could a section be attempted. Hence this is not a full description of all parts of the church. Possibly there are clues to be found in the upper storey which would help to solve some of the problems, both those connected with the curious combination of elements of the plan and those of dating, relative to each other, the different parts of the building.

The plan is unusual in several respects. Though strongly basilical in character, it has a dome, and transepts open from floor to vault running north and south to the outer walls ; the aisles, like the nave, are barrel-vaulted, with ribs, but have galleries over them, even over the eastern bays which are cut off from the rest by the transepts : and the vaults of the aisle bays on the ground floor span at right-angles to those of the nave and the galleries.

Galleried aisles are not common in basilicas and, as will be seen below, it is very probable that this church was originally a basilica : but in some of the Armenian churches with a more basilical than centralised plan, e.g. Pitzounda,<sup>16</sup> there are galleries. The arrangement of the vaults of the ground-floor aisles has very few parallels : it occurs at Bin-bir-kilise Nos. 1 and 6, but in both cases the vaults have been inserted later : Radauti, Moldavia,<sup>17</sup> is another example, but too late (15th century) to have exercised an influence here.

The exo-narthex is unique in Trebizond though not unknown elsewhere : but the addition of the large north doorway and porch—itself a normal feature in the city—is curious in a church with such a strong east-west axis.

Unlike the other three-aisled churches in Trebizond, the Chrysocephalos had only one apse—the small south apse is of very rough construction and much later—which is, however, typical of the local style in

<sup>15</sup> Baklanov's sketch plans are of some use here, but are to a minute scale.

<sup>16</sup> Fergusson, *History of Architecture*, London, 1867, p. 337.

<sup>17</sup> Ramsay and Bell, *The Thousand and One Churches*, London, 1909, pp. 45 and 73 ; P. Henry, *Les Églises de la Moldavie du Nord*, Paris, 1930.

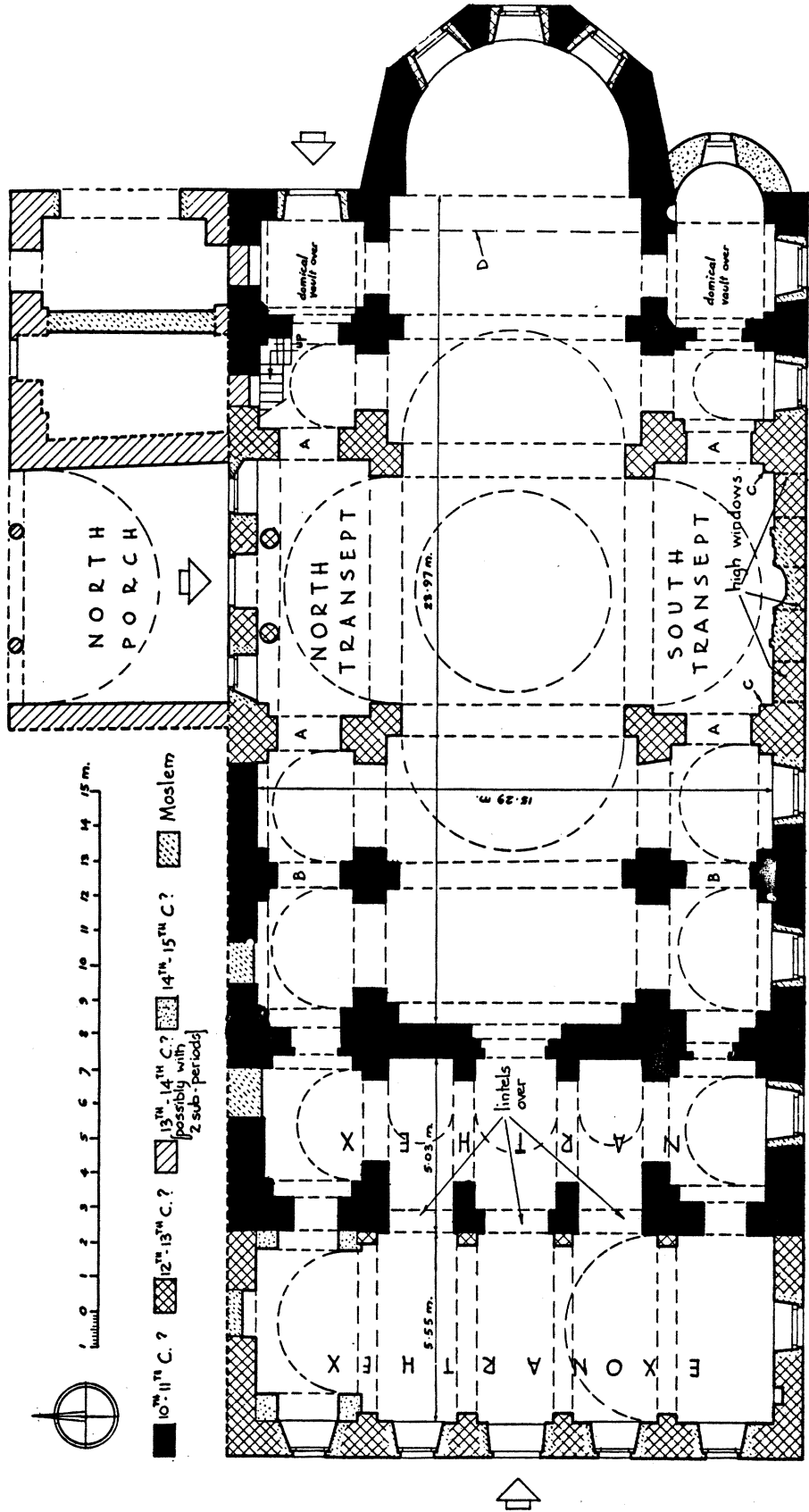


FIG. 4. Plan of the Chrysocephalos.



being five-sided and of finer masonry than the rest of the church, though the top 2 m. or so is not so well built. The prothesis and diaconicon are thus simply the east bay of north and south aisle respectively, but are given a special treatment with domical vaults (the only examples in Trebizond) and by being shut off from the rest of the aisles by doorways, that of the south aisle having a fine moulded surround with a length of classical cornice over it, carved with key ornament, egg-and-dart and palmettes.<sup>18</sup>

Access to the small first-floor rooms east of the transept is gained, in the case of the north transept, by means of a ledge about 1 m. wide supported on the arcade of classical columns with Ionic capitals which flanks the north doorway. (The modern staircase cuts into this ledge and makes it even narrower at its east end.) The south transept must have had a timber gallery across it, against the outer wall, as there are corbels in the right positions for beams, and the lintel of a doorway, now blocked, can be seen in the east wall of the transept (see Pl. XVIc, arrows). At the outer angles of the south transept there are nibs (C on plan and Pl. XVIc), like those from which the blind arcading of the aisle outer walls springs, but amputated 4.50 m. above the floor : possibly they originally carried up and round the transept vault and were cut down if the windows were at one time enlarged, or perhaps the nibs were for the support of the timber gallery. A further point of interest is the small window or door at first-floor level looking out into the bema from the small chamber to the east of the south transept.

The north and south bays of the narthex have thicker walls than the rest : just possibly there were stairs to the galleries here, though they would not have fitted in very satisfactorily, and if they were of masonry it is curious that they should have disappeared, and if of timber there would have been no necessity for thicker walls. Alternatively, there may have been towers here, though they are unusual outside Syria.

The function of the additions at the north-east is obscure but probably they were part of the monastery complex. They have been altered in Turkish times. All the lower windows of the church are Turkish, except those in the apse, which are almost certainly Byzantine, though late insertions : the inner sides may, however, have been widened by the Turks.

The dome drum is twelve-sided. Internally there is a gallery formed by setting back the drum from the pendentive ring, which itself has been built forward (see Pl. XVIIa). Externally the windows are set back in larger arcaded recesses. All the roofs, except those of some of the lower parts on the north, are of metal—formerly they were copper but now are lead—on an even, low pitch : it seems probable that originally, on the apse at least, the form of the vault was followed (see pp. 173-4).

Other points of interest are the small round windows high up in the south transept ; the re-used classical columns with Ionic capitals in the north porch (as well as those at the north doorway) ; the pierced marble or stone slabs in the tympanum over the porch arcade (Pl. XVIb) ; the marble

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<sup>18</sup> Professor Talbot Rice considers that it was moved to this position by the Moslems, perhaps from a south door now blocked.

*opus sectile* on the north and south walls of the bema and the interior of the apse ; and the moulded door surrounds, almost certainly re-used earlier ones, at the west ends of the nave and aisles. There is said to be an *opus sectile* floor under the existing timber floor of the apse ; and there are wall-paintings hidden by whitewash, probably on most of the internal surfaces : some were seen in 1916<sup>19</sup> ; in the 19th century traces of mosaics were still visible on the exterior.<sup>20</sup> The lintel of the north doorway has part of a Hadrianic inscription on it.

The dating of any part of the church is very difficult. The only evidence, other than stylistic, is the report<sup>21</sup> of a plaque (since lost) bearing the date 914, which was found under the floor of the present building during repairs in 1877: it is said to have been built into the apse of the then existing church by the Metropolitan Basil when restoring the episcopal throne in 914.

Thus the present fabric is probably later than 914 : but Chrysanthos<sup>22</sup> quotes a dedication hymn preserved in Libadenus, sung at the rebuilding of the cathedral when Acacius was Metropolitan, after the great damage done to the town in 1341 when the Hamidoğulları set fire to it. But it is almost inconceivable that the plan and general form of the church date from that time : in its positively grim exterior appearance it certainly looks older than St. Sophia and St. Eugenios, and though there is a great feeling of solidity, dignity and simplicity in the interior, it has none of the sophistication of St. Sophia. The single apse in a three-aisled church was common enough in the early churches but is most unusual later than, say, the 8th century (except possibly in Lycaonia).

It may be significant that this church, and the 9th-century St. Anne, are the only ones in the city which are accurately laid out, with all the corners right-angles and the walls parallel. On stylistic grounds a date in the 10th or perhaps 11th century seems reasonable for the basilical layout, with the dome perhaps 12th century (see below), but it is difficult to see how this can be reconciled with the evidence of the rededication hymn of the mid-14th century.

The church must have been considerably altered at different times. N. Baklanov, who studied it in 1917,<sup>23</sup> while almost certainly right in thinking that it was originally a basilica, was not radical enough—his theory being that all the piers as they stand were part of the original church and that one in each arcade was removed, with of course the galleries and vaulting of the two bays involved, to form the transepts. The curious form of the dome piers would then be due simply to the addition of some masonry on the inner angles to reduce the span of the nave bay. But facts do not

<sup>19</sup> Millet, *op. cit.*, in note 3, p. 458, quotes Marengo in *Missions Catholiques*, XI, p. 303 ; Baklanov, *op. cit.*, in note 4, p. 388. More were seen in 1959.

<sup>20</sup> Rice, *op. cit.*, in note 5, quotes Fallmerayer, *Originalfragmente*, München, 1843, I, p. 120.

<sup>21</sup> Marengo, see note 19.

<sup>22</sup> Chrysanthos, *op. cit.*, in note 12, p. 245.

<sup>23</sup> *op. cit.*, in note 4.

quite bear out this theory. The dome piers are not, as can be seen on the plan (Fig. 4), cross-shaped ones with something added—much masonry would also have had to be cut away, a senseless proceeding ; the transept is 80 cm. more than twice the width of a nave bay ; the ribs (A on plan) springing across the aisles from the dome piers 20 cm. broader than those further west (B on plan), presumably for the purpose of taking greater thrust. Hence it seems certain that transepts, dome piers entire and dome must all be contemporary. The reasons for believing that the whole church does not date from the same time are firstly, that it would be extraordinary to build a galleried church with such inconvenient access to the parts of the gallery east of the transepts—these small rooms must surely be witness to a basilican plan ; second, that there is an indication of an earlier and lower vault to the nave in the extra “ step ” in the vaulting of the bema (D on plan, and see Pl. XVIIa), which is semicircular, like the apse conch and unlike all the ribs of the nave and crossing, which are slightly pointed. Bearing out this is the fact that the cornice in the apse and eastern part of the bema gives way to a simpler coarser one, which is used in the rest of the nave, at the same point on the plan. Thus those parts of the present church which belong to the earliest period are the apse (but the existing windows are later) and all the structural walls of nave and aisles up to the earlier vault spring level, slightly lower than the present one. The narthex almost certainly belongs to this earlier period ; the exonarthex must be later, because of the treatment as an important entrance of the three narrow central bays of the narthex, whose vaults spanning north-south give a strong directional axis towards the door of the nave and which have lintels with dentil mouldings instead of arches at the west. This treatment would surely never have been lavished on what, with the exonarthex built, are simply intermediate bays on the way into the church. And the thick walls of the north and south bays, whether or not they were for towers, must also surely have been originally on the outer face of the church. At what period the exonarthex was built cannot at the moment be determined, but quite possibly it is of the same date as the crossing.

The additions at the north-east are later than the transepts and are probably 13th century, judging by a window with mouldings of the St. Sophia type over it : the north porch is probably latest of all, unless the south apse is later still : judging by other churches in the town, north porches became the fashion in the late 13th or 14th century. The absolute dating of the different periods is very difficult and nothing is certain. It is just possible, but on the whole unlikely, that the great reconstruction involving the insertion of the dome belongs to the period commemorated in the rededication hymn, 1340–50 : unlikely, because one would not expect major innovations to the cathedral at as late a date as that, particularly as the Empire (and therefore presumably the revenue) was shrinking as the Turks came closer and closer, and because it only leaves a century for three later periods of additions, of which the middle one—the north porch—is of careful design and workmanship. Only the south apse is of the roughness one might well expect in the last years of the Empire's life. The dome and

the crossing are more likely to date from either the beginning of the Comnene period, i.e. early 13th century, or from the century before.

This 12th-century date seems the best guess in our present state of knowledge: while the interior has a strong resemblance to St. Eugenios, the exterior of the drum is simple to the point of grimness and has none of the refinements of mouldings which the Comnene churches show, either there or over the apse windows. It is more probable that St. Sophia and St. Eugenios followed the Chrysocephalos in the way the drum is set back from the pendentive ring and the pendentives themselves brought forward, rather than the other way round.

The history of the church can be tentatively reconstructed thus:—

- (1) An early church or churches on the site, of dates unknown: bishop's throne repaired in 914.
- (2) A basilica, comprising the present building from apse to narthex, with six bays to nave and aisles, galleries over aisles, and narthex. 10th or 11th century.
- (3) Major reconstruction, involving raising the vault and inserting crossing and dome: exonarthex perhaps of this period. 12th century.
- (4) Additions on north-east. 13th century.
- (5) North porch. Late 13th or 14th century. Possibly apse windows enlarged at this time.
- (6) South apse. 14th or 15th century.

And there was Acacius' reconstruction in 1340–50. But all remains uncertain. There is probably enough evidence hidden under plaster to solve most of the problems, but whether it will ever be possible to study it is another matter.

#### CHAPEL D. Plan and section, Fig. 5.

This building, hitherto unrecorded, stands in a high-walled garden and its small size indicates that it was probably a private chapel. The vault is

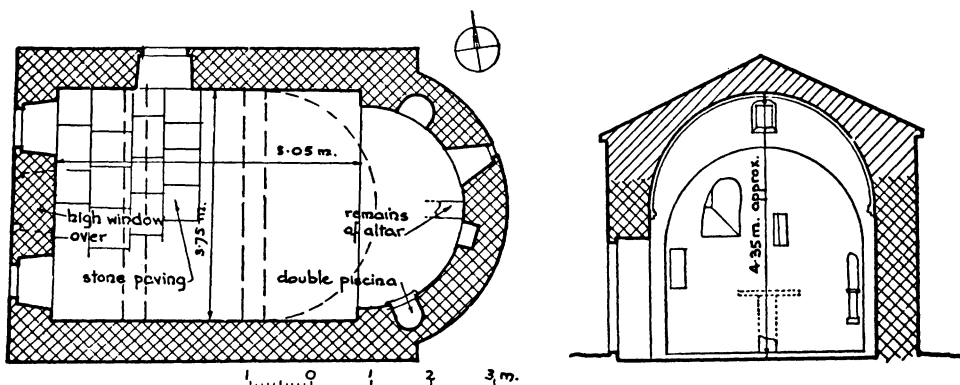


FIG. 5. Plan, and section looking east, of Chapel D.

later than the walls and a raking joint on the west wall shows that it originally had a timber roof. The large west windows and the tiny one over the apse

arch belong to the second, post-Byzantine period, but the walls are of similar masonry to Comnene period buildings. The two-storey niche, and the apse window being so markedly off-centre, are curious features.

NAKIP CAMI. Plan, Fig. 6 ; section, Fig. 7.

Converted into a mosque centuries ago, probably fairly soon after the Turkish conquest, the Christian dedication of this church has been lost. But in a map of Trebizond published in "Relation d'un voyage en Orient,

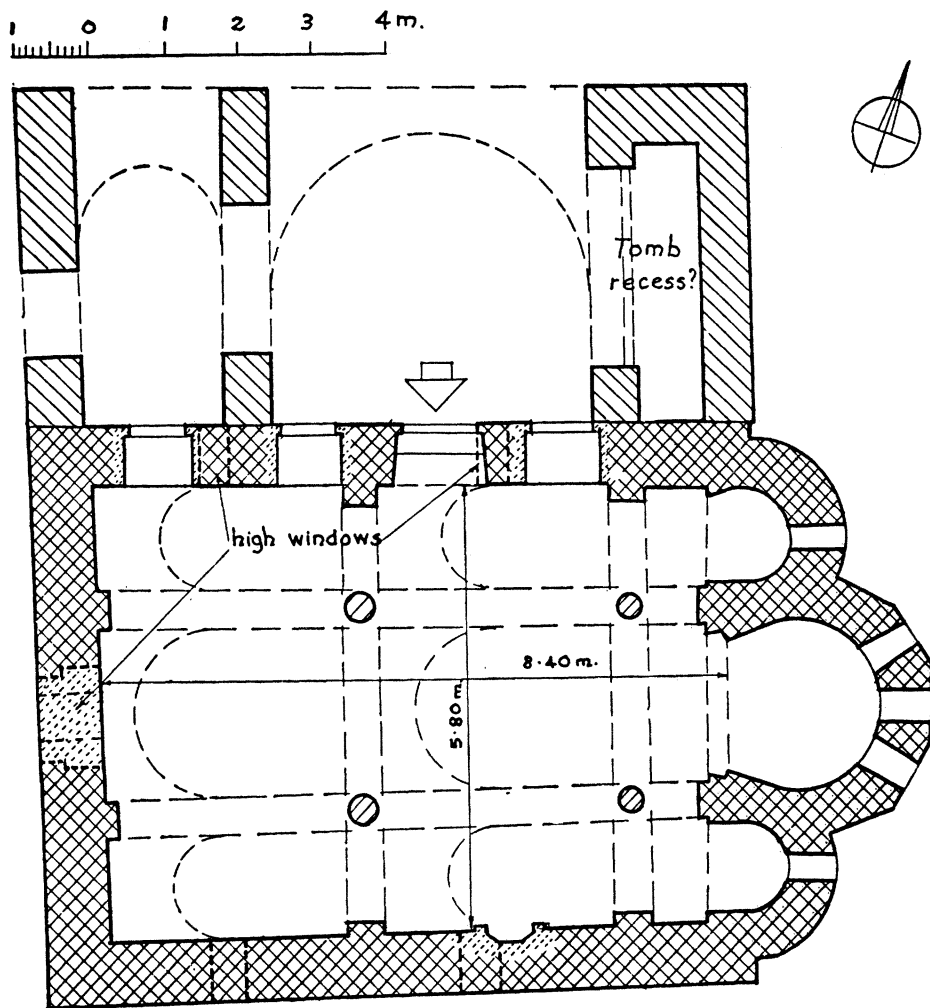


FIG. 6. Plan of Nakip Cami.

1604-1612", by Julien Bordier,<sup>23a</sup> it appears that it may have been the church of St. Andrew : as Bordier has twisted the town through nearly a right-angle in relation to the ravines and sea-shore, it is not possible to be certain, but the church of "St. Andray", noted as being at that time a

<sup>23a</sup> See below, note 42.

mosque, is in the right position with reference to the west ravine, the walls and the gate to the harbour.

This is the only surviving example in the town of the Anatolian barn-church, but it differs from the typical plateau church in several respects. There is no narthex, though it has a north porch which is a later addition ; it has three apses, horseshoe in plan internally but with the central one polygonal externally and the side ones rounded. The arcades have a most curious lopsided stilt due to the west pair of columns being 75 cm. taller than the east pair (Pl. XVIIc) : as all the columns are reused and three of the capitals are inverted bases, this was probably due to materials available rather than to any aesthetic conception. Large blocks of masonry which are

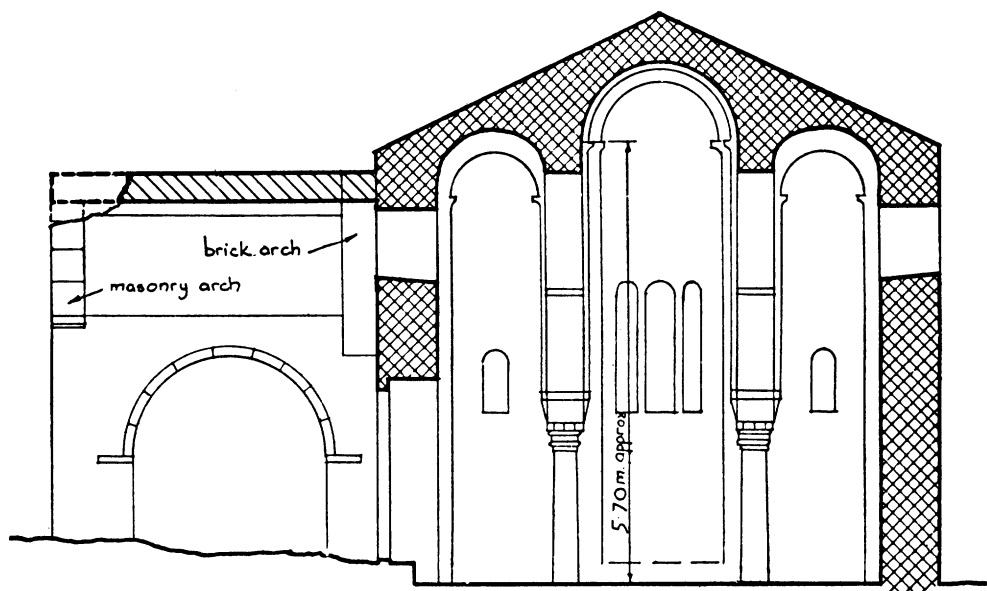


FIG. 7. Section of Nakip Cami, looking east.

almost certainly of the classical period are used in the apses, which are of good masonry except for the top 1.50 m., which is much rougher ; the rest of the walls are of smaller blocks with liberal use of mortar and the vaults are of mortared rubble, though the lower part of the porch vault is of brick. All the arches are of brick, including those over the original windows.

There are still traces of frescoes in the main apse ; and in 1929 Professor Talbot Rice <sup>24</sup> was able to see considerably more, including some on the exterior of the church : he tentatively assigned them to the 15th century, though he points out that if the church became a mosque soon after the conquest, they must be earlier than 1451. The church itself must be considerably older : since it was clearly a humble one but even so had access to classical fragments, the supply of which must eventually have given out, it is probably reasonable to hazard a guess at the 10th or 11th century. Professor Talbot Rice considers it 11th century. It is now a very dirty ruin.

<sup>24</sup> Rice, *op. cit.*, in note 5, p. 113.

ST. ANNE. Plan and section, Figs. 8 and 9.

By what chance of history this church was allowed to remain a place of Christian worship is unknown, but it was in use until 1923, even though in an old quarter of the town and not far outside the fortified area. It is certainly the oldest church, having an inscription in Greek on a battered relief over the door, which states that the church was rebuilt in 884-5.<sup>25</sup> It is known that the Emperor Basil the Macedonian had many churches

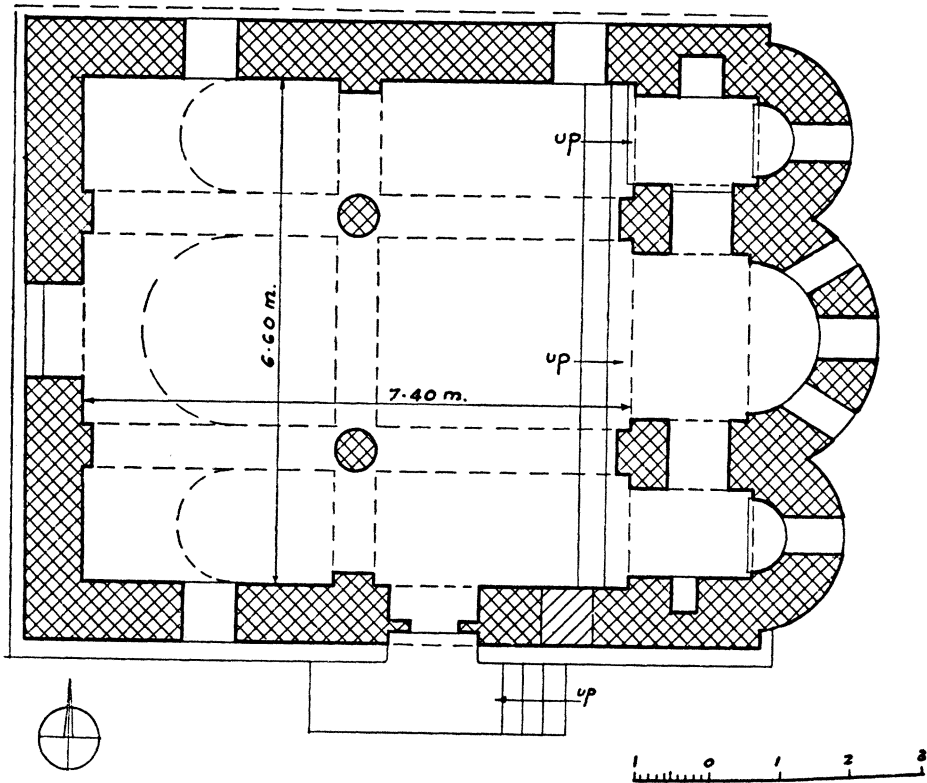


FIG. 8. Plan of St. Anne.

repaired, in Constantinople and elsewhere, which had suffered during the iconoclastic period and Millet considered that St. Anne may well have been one of them. How far the earlier plan was followed it is impossible to say : but as the masonry, including that of the apses, is all of one type it appears that it was rebuilt completely.

It is the only Trapezuntine church to have a clerestory, which is not commonly used with barrel-vaults in any area, though examples occur in Anatolia, Georgia, Greece and elsewhere. It seems that the ground level round the building must have dropped since the church was built, as the walls of the crypt<sup>26</sup> are very rough and project beyond the face of the walls above—presumably they were originally below ground. Millet<sup>27</sup> says that

<sup>25</sup> Millet, *op. cit.*, in note 5, p. 23.

<sup>26</sup> The church of the Panaghia Evangelistria and Church A, both now destroyed, also had crypts.

<sup>27</sup> Millet, *op. cit.*, in note 3, p. 443.

there clearly was a narthex but there is no sign of it now : the outer face of the west wall gives no indication of there having been any further structure there. The present ground-floor window in that wall was certainly formerly a door (Pl. XVIIIa).

The columns supporting the arcade are classical, with very shallow bases : the capitals (Pl. XVIIIb) are Ionic, with curious impost blocks with

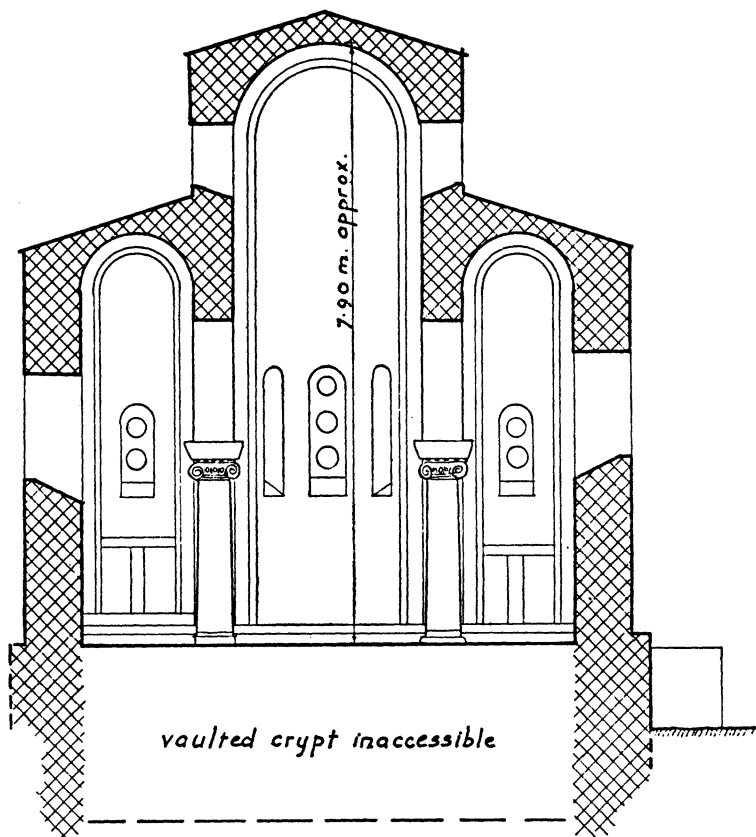


FIG. 9. Section of St. Anne, looking east.

a form of dentil on them. All arches, including those over the window and those of the crypt (the latter visible through a hole in the floor), are of brick. The medieval pierced stone window-slabs remain, as do the semicircular stone altars on one support. In the relieving arch over the south door, above the relief already mentioned, there are several small stones carved with curlicue crosses and other motifs : they are very like some at the Armenian monastery of Kaymaklı (see p. 169) and must have been inserted at some later date.

Few traces of fresco remain visible, due as much to dirt and smoke as to destruction : there were indications as late as 1929 that the exterior as well as the interior had many paintings.

ST. BASIL. Plan, Fig. 10.

The main part of this church as it stands may be of late Comnene period, i.e. 15th century : or it may date from after the Turkish conquest;



reusing materials from an earlier church. The western bay of the nave and the narthex with gallery over were built in the years 1890–95<sup>28</sup> : and a stone in the north wall testifies to repairs to the older part in 1867.

The masonry of the earlier part is composed of large, closely jointed blocks, very like that of the apses of the churches of the Commene period : but instead of being confined to the apses, it is used for the walls of the body of the church as well (Pl. XVIIIc). The windows in the apses, and the high-level ones in the transepts, are of the usual medieval shape : and a band of moulding runs over and between the windows of main apse and of dome

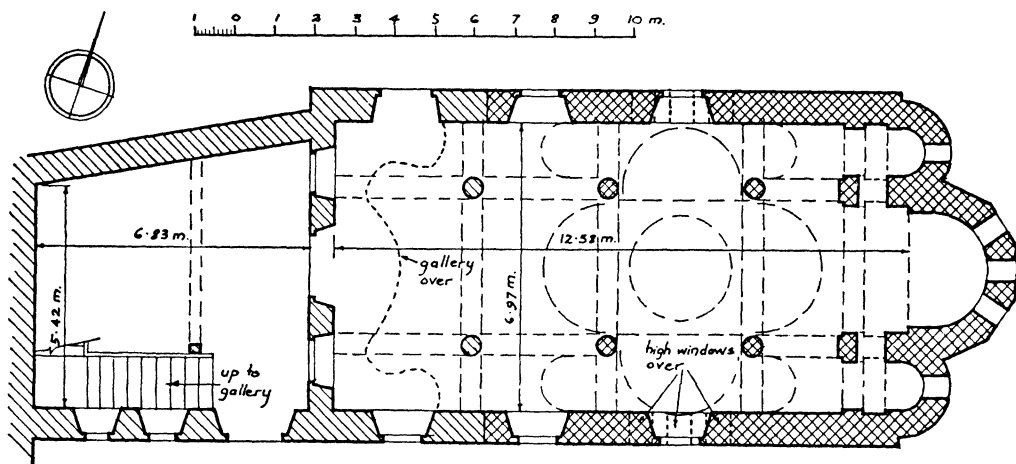


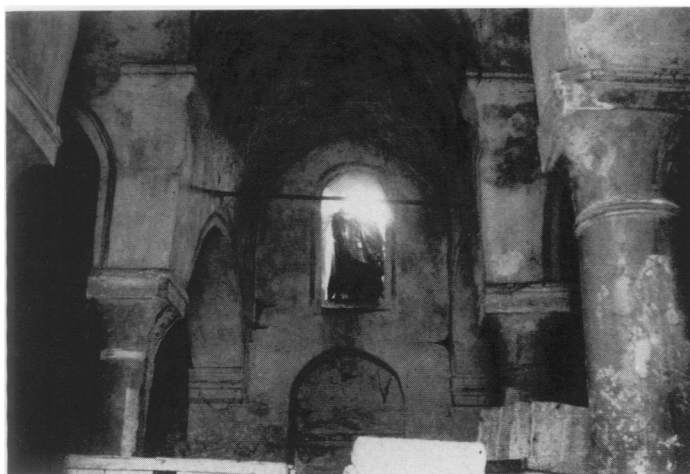
FIG. 10. Plan of St. Basil.

drum, just as it does in, for instance, St. Philip, though with a less sure handling. The use of barrel-vaults throughout, and the long west bay, are typical Trapezuntine features. Inside, the columns are reused late classical or early Byzantine ones and three of the “capitals” are in fact early Byzantine bases. There is a local tradition that all these came from another church somewhere along the coast to the west. The lintel over the door from narthex to church is also a reused earlier fragment : beneath a frieze of swags and putti there is an inscription of A.D. 542 (*CIG.*, IV, 8637). Chrysanthos records that there was a portrait of Justinian on horseback in the church.

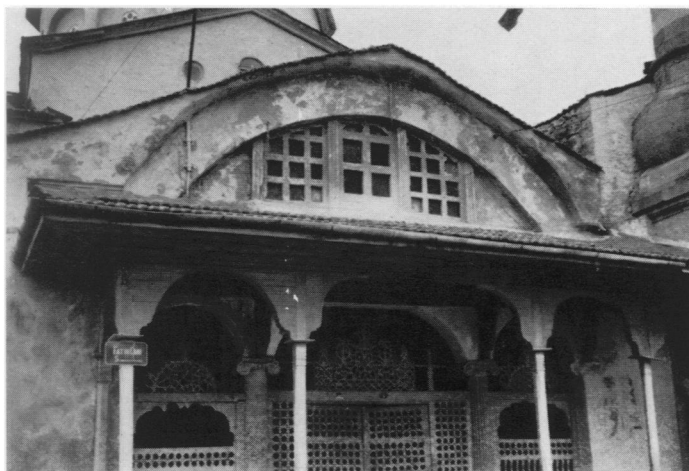
ST. EUGENIOS. Plan, Fig. 11 ; section, Fig. 12.

As St. Eugenios was the patron saint of Trebizond the church and monastery dedicated to him must always have been of more than average importance and it is, in fact, known to have been rich. Its position on the ridge to the east of the East Ravine meant that it tended to get sacked by any invading army that reached the city but failed to take it. In 1222 the Turks got possession of the monastery and destroyed or severely damaged it ; and it was burnt down during a civil war in 1340. When Mehmet II finally took Trebizond in 1461 he first said his prayers in this church, which is therefore known as *Yeni Cuma Cami'i* (New Friday Mosque).

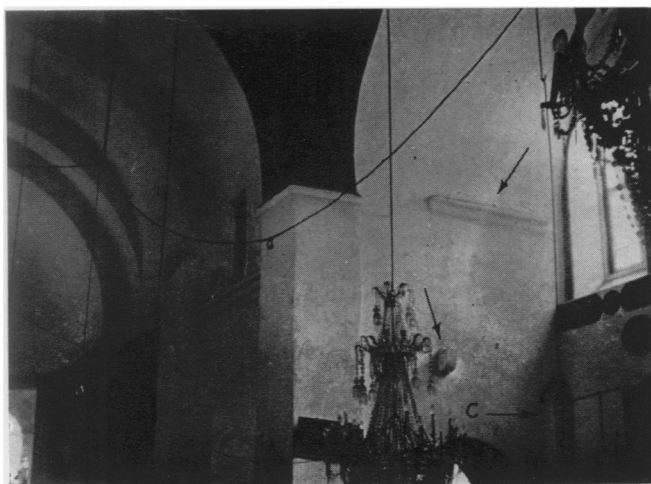
<sup>28</sup> Chrysanthos, *op. cit.*, in note 12, p. 439.



(a) Church C, interior looking west.



(b) Chrysocephalos, north porch.



(c) Chrysocephalos, east wall of south transept.



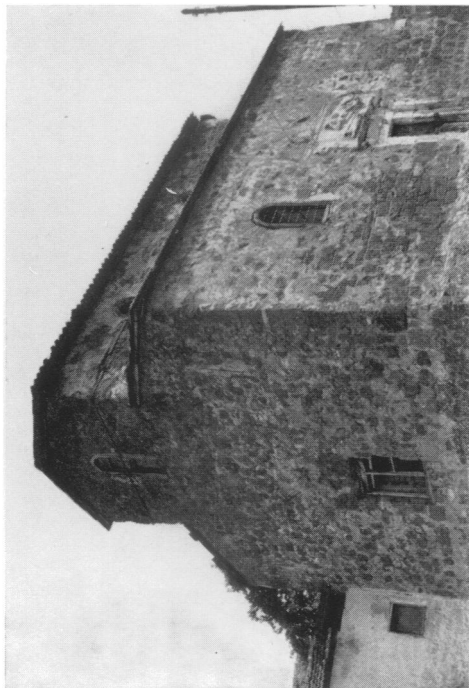
(a) Chrysocephalos, interior looking east.



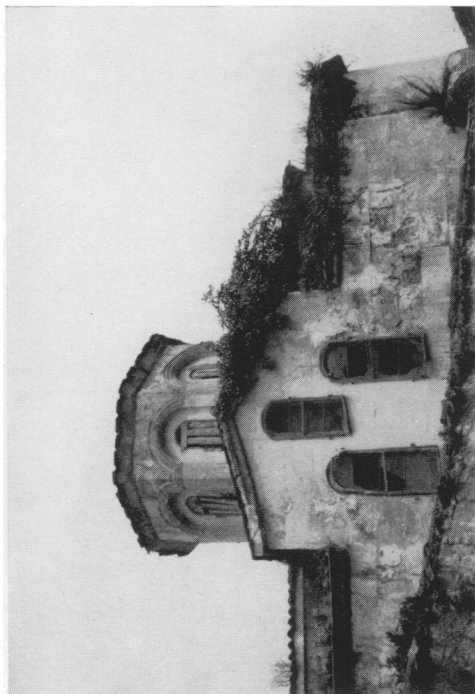
(b) Chrysocephalos, exterior from south-east.



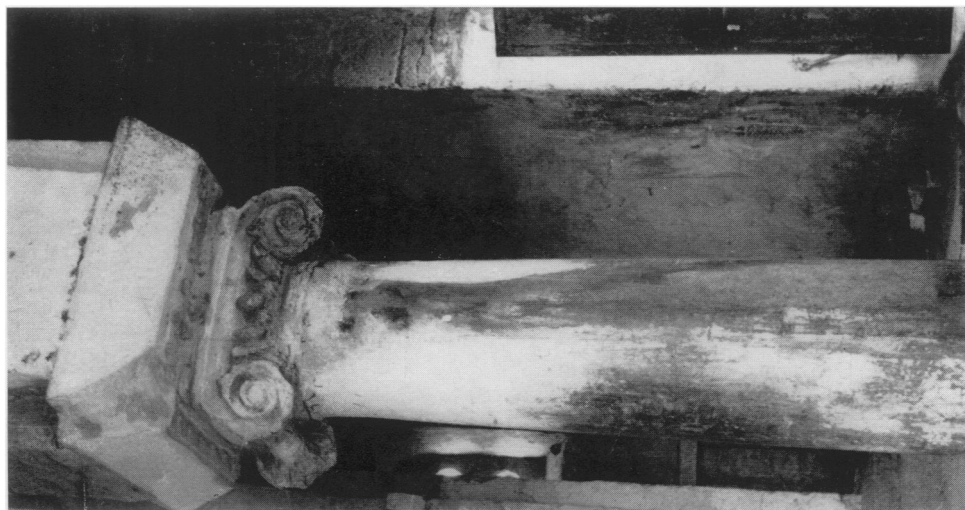
(c) Nakıp Cami'i, interior looking south-east.



(a) St. Anne, exterior from south-west.



(c) St. Basil, south elevation.



(b) St. Anne, capital and column.



(a) St. Eugenios from the south-east.



(b) St. Eugenios, interior looking west, upper part.



(c) St. Eugenios, interior looking west, lower part.



(a) St. Philip, part of west wall showing blocked opening.



(b) St. Philip, interior looking east.





(a) St. Sophia from the north-west.



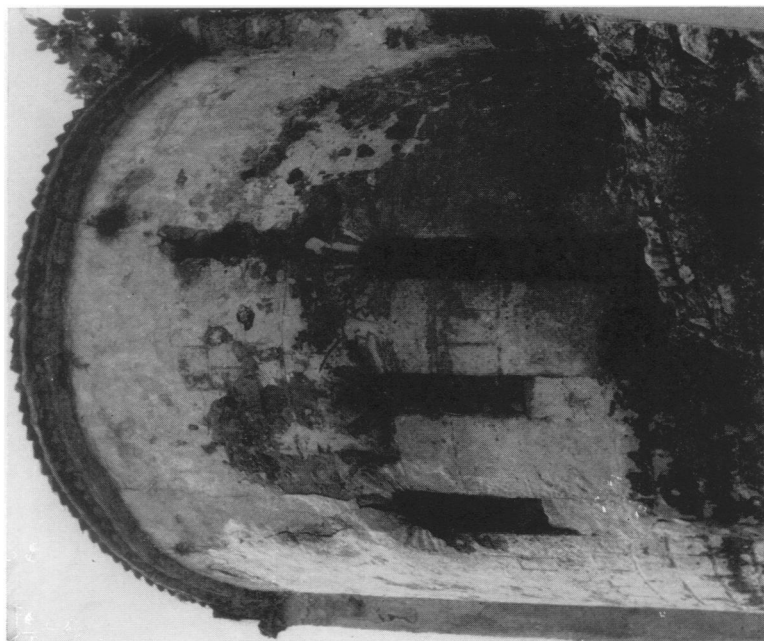
(b) St. Michael, Akçaabat, from the south.



(a) Kaymaklı Monastery, apse of church and monastic buildings from the north-east.



(b) Kaymaklı Monastery, conch of church apse.



(c) Apse of church at Orta Mahalle, Akçaabat.



Baklanov recognised the most important point about the plan of the church, which is that it has been radically redesigned, having been originally a basilica. Along the north wall there are two engaged responding pilasters with no piers with which to respond, whereas the third or easternmost matches up perfectly with the cross-shaped pier of the north nave arcade. On the south wall there are only two pilasters, the central one having gone in the forming of the mihrab, but they match up with those of the north wall; strangely, they have no side nibs, as the north wall ones have, for

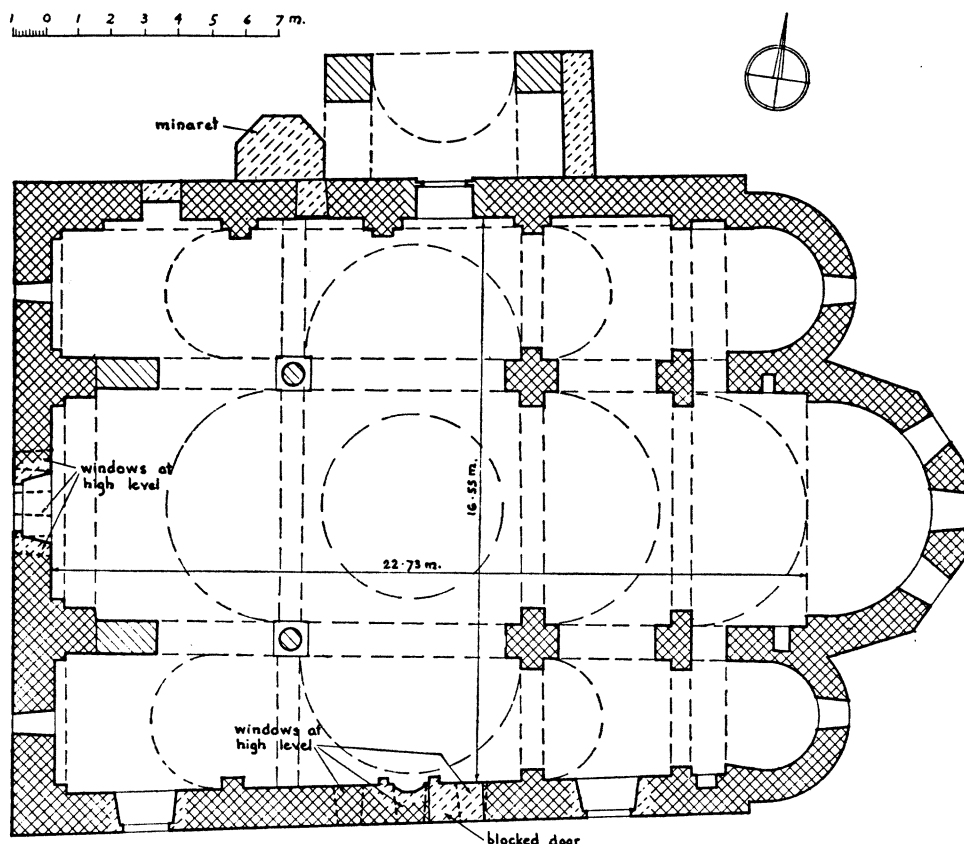


FIG. 11. Plan of St. Eugenios.

blind arcading. It seems certain that originally there were three cross-shaped piers in each nave arcade and, by analogy with other Trapezuntine churches, probably barrel-vaults over all the aisles.

The easternmost piers then were left and two more were built to carry a dome. These two western piers are really remarkable (Fig. 12): the upper third of each is part of a "Doric" column, built up of masonry and plastered, with twenty facets (not flutes), and the lower two-thirds an ordinary square masonry pier. The capitals are inverted Ionic bases with unconventional impost blocks above. The result is peculiar and hamhanded but, in fact, not as offensive as one might expect (see Pl. XIX*b* and *c*).

The builders perhaps did not want the dome bay and that west of it to

vie with each other, for they have brought out a long nib of masonry from each of the responds on the west wall to reduce the span of the arches west of the dome. Or perhaps they did not want them to rise very much higher than those east of the dome, which are presumably original : these are surprisingly low considering the height of the aisles, but very much the same proportion as those in the Chrysocephalos (though without any evidence for a gallery). Barrel-vaults were built, running north and south from the

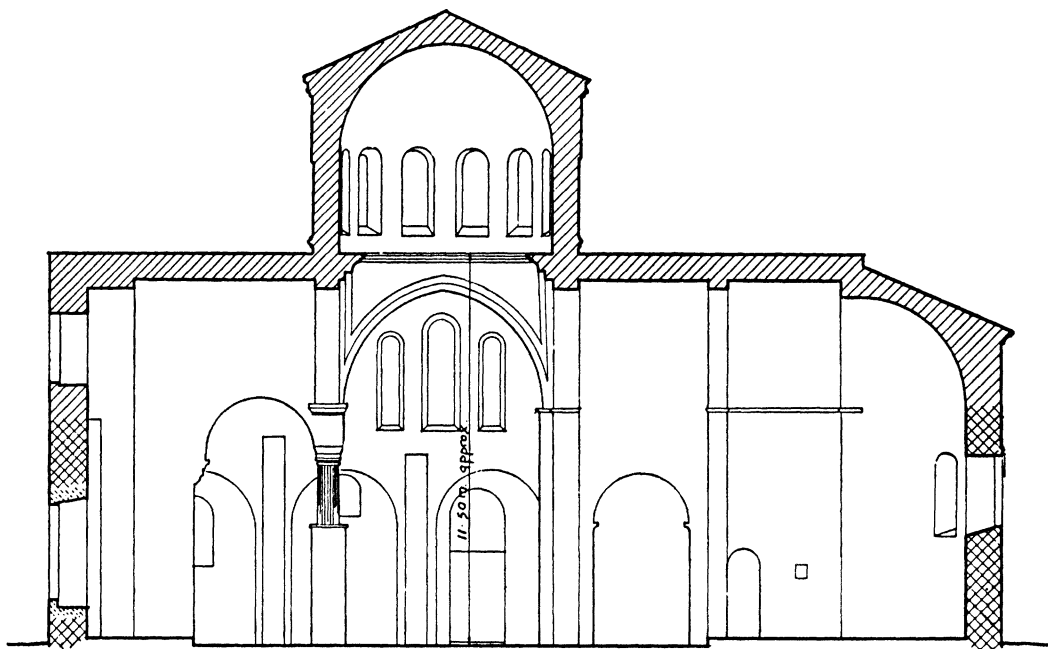


FIG. 12. Section of St. Eugenios, looking north.

dome bay to the outer walls, the final plan thus approximating to the cross-in-square type.

The north porch is an addition, but still Byzantine ; it has several fragments of carving built into it, that over the door being the same as that over the blocked south door.

The south windows are Moslem, as is the central west one ; the latter is said by Baklanov to replace the original central door and he also states that, according to Texier, there was a narthex. Fallmerayer, early in the 19th century, saw <sup>29</sup> frescoes on the outside of the west wall depicting the Emperors of Trebizond from Alexios I (1204-22) to Alexios III (1349-90).

The south apse is slightly horseshoe in plan and has a brick cornice externally where the other parts of the building have stone cornices of various profiles ; it may therefore be of a different period or may owe its cornice to repairs. The main apse has a cornice of Byzantine carving : most of it is of the same design as the lintels over north and south doors, but in addition there are two crosses and some other motifs. The irregularity of

<sup>29</sup> Rice, *op. cit.*, in note 5, p. 54, quotes Fallmerayer, *Originalfragmente*, I, p. 125.

the placing of the crosses shows that the stones are reused, perhaps from an earlier church. The masonry of the apses is good, with mouldings round the heads of and between the windows; the rest of the masonry is, as usual, rougher. The dome drum is particularly attractive (Pl. XIXa) with sixteen sides and windows, the latter being deeply inset and with a moulding round the head of the arches and linking them. The drum is set in an unusual manner in that the axes of the church pass not through a window but through a pier of masonry. Internally it stands some 60–70 cm. back from the pendentives, with a railing round the gallery thus formed.

Frescoes were visible internally in Baklanov's time as well as those in the narthex already mentioned and some on the outside of the apse, which had by then disappeared; and there is an *opus sectile* pavement seen by Marengo but now covered. This bears a date 1291 and a fragment of stone with the same date, possibly from a tomb, is mentioned by Millet. The pavement has apparently been twice repaired since then.<sup>30</sup> The monastery is known to have existed in 1223; so the first period of the church may be earlier than that and bearing in mind its resemblances to the Chrysocephalos—cross-shaped piers, low nave arcades—it probably was. Another point in favour is that every known church (except for one small one, now destroyed) of the Comnene period has a dome and the original St. Eugenios could not have done so, since the proportions of its bays are wrong.

The rebuilding in its present form is likely to have taken place either in 1291 or after the catastrophe of 1340. It may be coincidence that the former date appears twice; if the pavement were visible its extent might indicate to which period of the church it belonged. The fire of 1340 must have necessitated a lot of repair or rebuilding and perhaps it is most logical to believe that the fabric of the church we see to-day is chiefly mid-14th century, though that does not prove that its plan had not already been altered half a century earlier.

ST. PHILIP. Plan, Fig. 13; section, Fig. 14. Pl. XXb.

Possibly because it was well outside the main part of the town the church of St. Philip was not converted into a mosque at the Turkish conquest, but became the Christian cathedral, the Chrysocephalos having been taken over by Islam at once; but in 1665 the same fate overtook St. Philip's.<sup>31</sup>

The original church consisted of the polygonal apse, domed naos and short western bay. The single bay and single apse church must, it would seem, have been most inconvenient for the Greek rite, in which, after the early centuries, prothesis and diaconicon were used; hence it is not a usual plan in late times and its continuance in this area may be another example of great conservatism. There was a door in the north wall of the naos and

<sup>30</sup> Rice, *op. cit.*, in note 5, p. 54, quotes Minzlov, *The Epic of Trebizond* (in Russian), Berlin, c. 1922.

<sup>31</sup> Rice, *op. cit.*, in note 5, quotes Κυριακίδου, 'Ιστορία τῆς μονῆς τῆς Σουμέλα, Athens, 1898, pp. 90 f.

the west bay may have had entrances in south or west walls, or in both. When the church became the cathedral, the large western arm was added : it had a south door, either a door or window in the north wall and an open arcade of three arches at the west. The upper part of the centre of these survives as a window, complete with its capitals, half walled in ; the curve of the other two, which were lower, can be made out on the external face, though it is not easy to bring this out in a photograph. The superior masonry of the southern end of the wall can be seen clearly in Pl. XXa and the sharp line where it ends marks the beginning of the arcade : the carved stone just north of this point must have come from elsewhere and been built

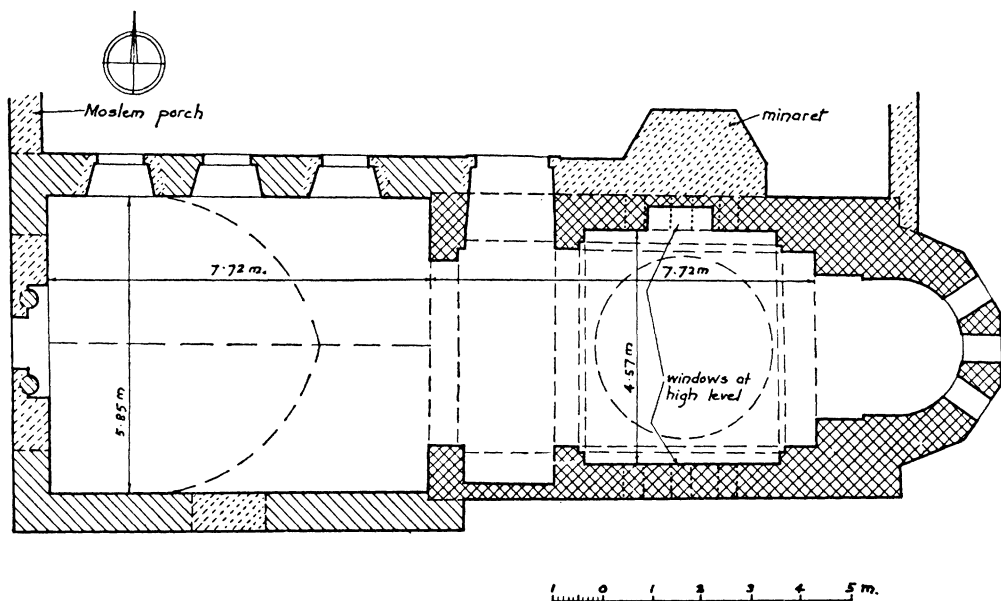


FIG. 13. Plan of St. Philip.

in in the blocking ; the larger ones higher up are symmetrically placed and may be contemporary with the arcade, though they seem to come so close to the openings that they must have cut into the voussoirs. The south wall of the western addition is also of good masonry as high as the spring of the vault ; the masonry of the north wall cannot be seen as it is inside the immense Moslem porch and has been plastered over, but it retains a carved cornice at vault spring level.

The apse is of good close-jointed masonry, with mouldings over and between the windows ; from what one can see of the other walls of the original church, they are of the usual rougher type of masonry. The dome drum is twelve-sided ; it has a cornice rather like those of St. Eugenios and St. Sophia, but the moulding linking the heads of the windows is a simple rounded one with a curious knot motif at the arch springing.

The interior is very plain now, though in Byzantine times it doubtless was covered with frescoes. The capitals in the west wall are an odd pair : the south one has Moslem-type "stalactite" decoration but is no more curious in a Christian church than some of the decoration at St. Sophia ;

the north one is hard to make out but Professor Talbot Rice, who saw it less smothered in whitewash than it is now, thought that the carving represented single-headed eagles, the Comnene emblem (as opposed to the double-headed eagles of the Palaeologue Emperors in Constantinople). These

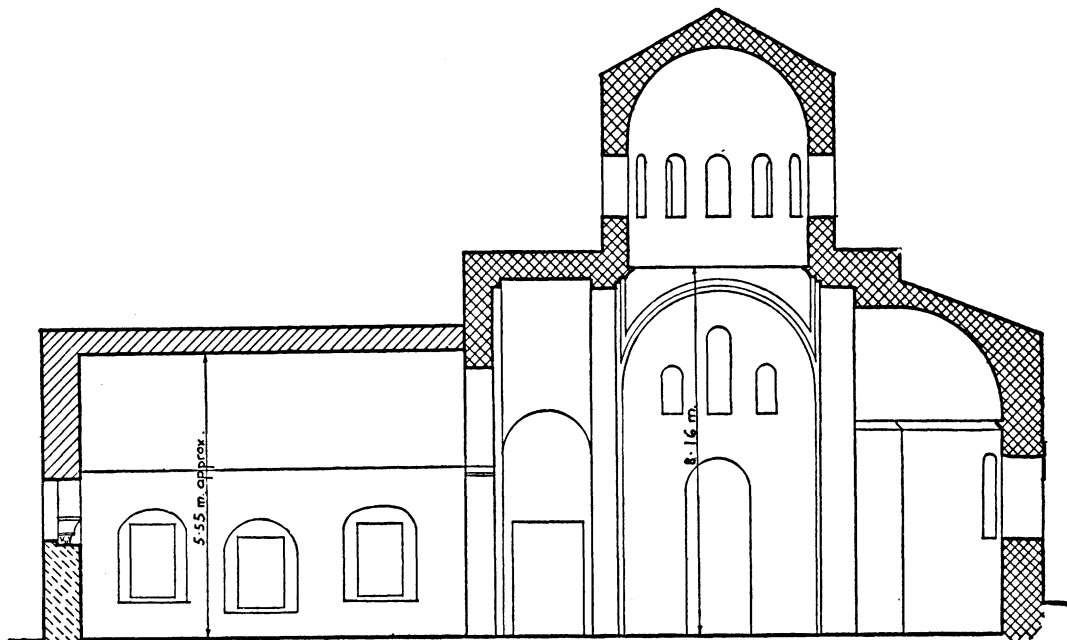


FIG. 14. Section of St. Philip, looking north.

capitals, and the zigzag archivolt moulding, may well have been brought here from another Byzantine building.

Millet dated this church to the thirteenth century but Chrysanthos states that traditionally it was founded by Anna, daughter of Alexios III who ruled 1349-90.

#### ST. SOPHIA. Plan, Fig. 15. Pl. XXIa.

Though this is one of the most interesting and probably the most attractive of the Trapezuntine churches, it will only be described briefly here, as it will be fully discussed from an architectural viewpoint in a full publication which the Russel Trust Expedition intends to bring out after the work of cleaning the wall paintings is complete.

The basic plan as it stands approximates to a cross-in-square, with columns supporting the dome, the east bays of the aisles barrel-vaulted and the longer west bays cross-vaulted. It is probable that the plan was somewhat altered during the course of construction, as the ribs of the arches springing from the columns do not marry up tidily with the pilasters on the walls and to the west of the north door rib and pilaster scarcely coincide at all. The narthex is an unusual feature in Trebizond and for the three great porches it is hard to find a parallel anywhere; though the 12th-century Georgian churches at Gelati, Manglis and Akhtala all have one or more

large porches and at Pitzounda (9th or 10th century), in Armenia, there are fair-sized examples both on north and south of the church.

There is a small chapel over the narthex, accessible only by a modern timber stair : there is no sign that there was ever anything more solid and the small door by which one enters it now is the only opening large enough. The floor of the chapel (or roof of the narthex) cuts across a window on to the west porch, showing that there have been alterations here at some time.

Other points of interest in the church are the synthronos ; remains of stone paving in north porch, narthex and north aisle ; battered but once fine *opus sectile* floor in the dome bay, containing nine different kinds of marble ; and the magnificent set of capitals, columns and bases whose date, within centuries, is a matter of discussion. The capitals and columns of the porches are all re-used ones and are of various dates from the 5th century <sup>32</sup> onwards ; there is also a considerable number of carved stones in the form of roundels set in the walls, which have very strong Armenian and Seljuk affinities. The "honeycomb" imposts of the west porch are even more puzzling, but can be compared with some at the church of the Holy Apostles at Ani.<sup>33</sup> The well-known carvings in the tympanum of the south porch have been dealt with thoroughly by Alpatov.<sup>34</sup>

Though the actual date of founding is still obscure, it appears certain that St. Sophia was built under imperial patronage—it has the single-headed Comnene eagle over the central window in the main apse and in the south porch tympanum—and as Finlay <sup>35</sup> reported seeing the portrait of the Emperor Manuel I (1238–63) among the wall-paintings, it must have been built some time between the founding of the Empire in 1204 and about 1260. It was converted into a mosque <sup>36</sup> in 1573, though the south porch, where the mihrab now is, was still open like the others as late as 1840 when Hamilton saw it.

N. Brounov,<sup>37</sup> who made a detailed study of the church in 1917, advanced the theory that it was originally built as a basilica and altered to its present form later, when the porches were also added. The latter point is certainly disproved by the existence of a particular narrow course of masonry containing many blocks of a red stone not used elsewhere in the building, which runs right round the entire periphery, porches as well as the body of the church, and the basilican theory is certainly not proved. His further idea, of galleries enclosing the angles between the porches, could only be established if the foundations could be found by digging. More information about the structure may come to light during the cleaning of the paintings.

<sup>32</sup> Strzygowski, *BCH*, XIX, pp. 518 ff.

<sup>33</sup> Strzygowski, *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa*, Vienna, 1918, Fig. 775.

<sup>34</sup> *op. cit.*, in note 8.

<sup>35</sup> Millet, *op. cit.*, in note 3, quotes Finlay, *History of Greece*, Oxford, 1877, p. 394.

<sup>36</sup> Evliya Effendi, trans. J. von Hammer-Pürgstall, *Narratives of Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa*, London, 1834, p. 45.

<sup>37</sup> *op. cit.*, in note 4.

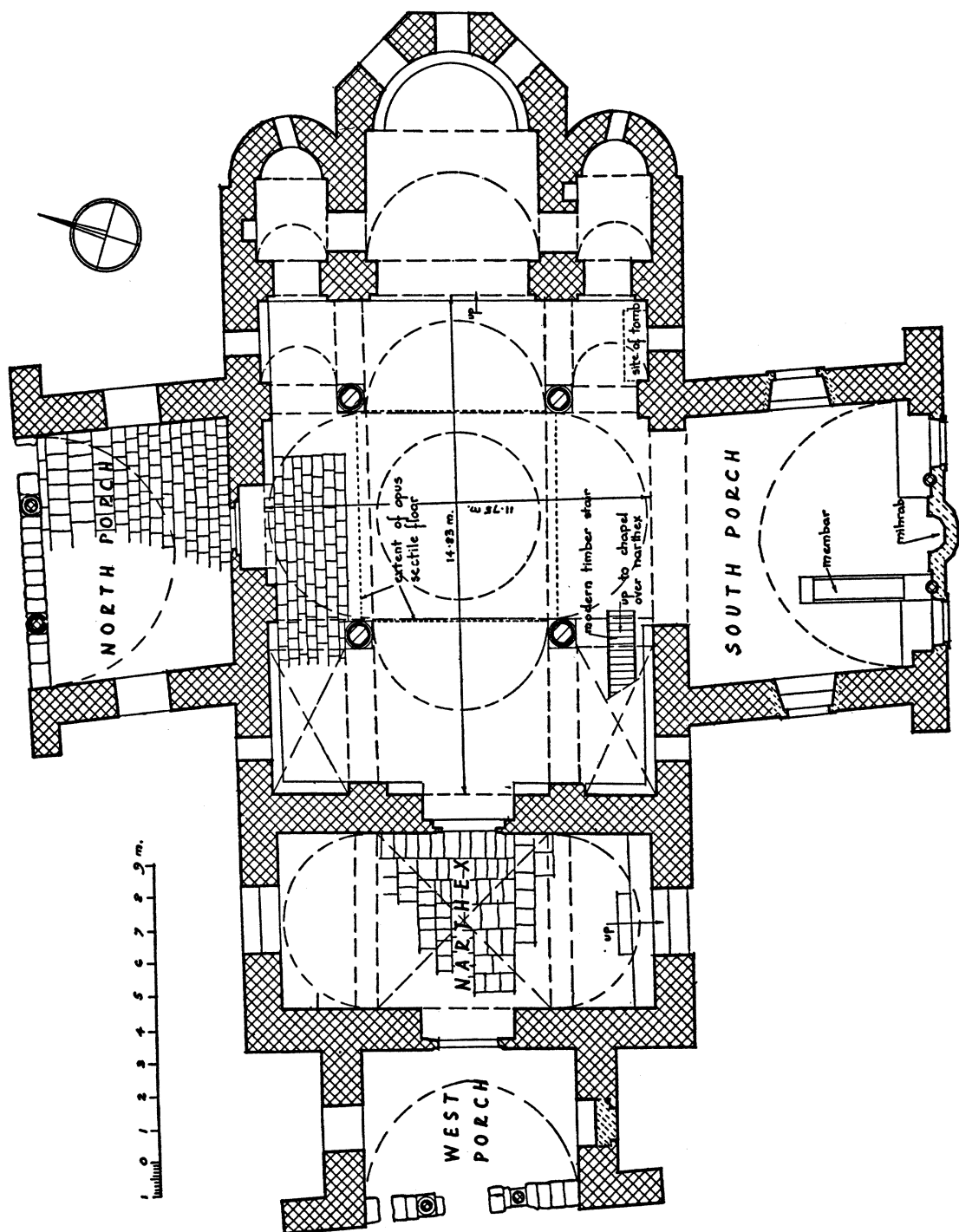


Fig. 15. Plan of St. Sophia.

## ZEYTLİK CAMİ'İ. Plan, Fig. 16.

Though battered and in bad repair, the east end of this small mosque was clearly once that of a church. Its dedication is lost and its existence hitherto unrecorded. The apses are built of large, quite well-laid blocks on a plinth which has now lost its facing; what remains of the south wall is also back to the mortared rubble and has a blocked doorway. On the north wall much of the facing remains, but some has fallen away, revealing that

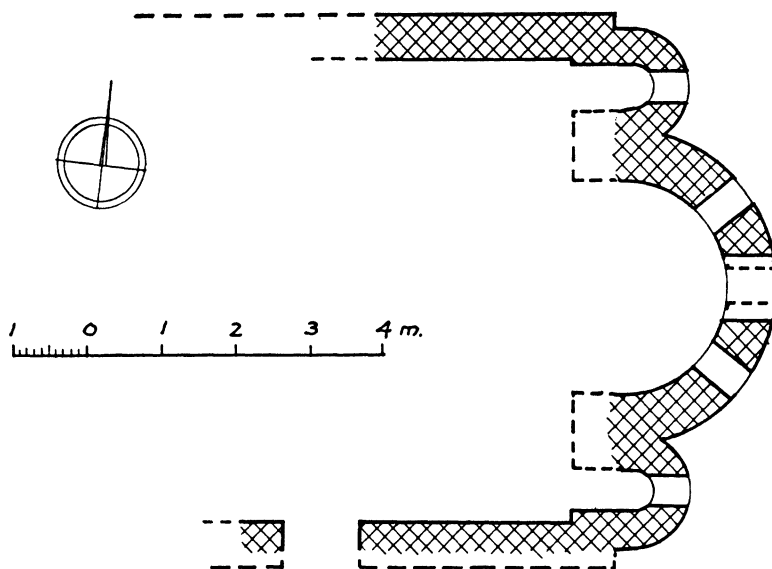


FIG. 16. Plan of Zeytinlik Cami'i.

most of it is of thin (*c.* 10 cm.) slabs, but with some narrow header stones bonded back into the rubble core. Mouldings can be made out round the windows; and the west door of the mosque has a stone with carved interlacing decoration over it, clearly re-used from the church. Dating is difficult: three rounded apses only occur in Trebizond in the 9th-century rebuilding of the church of St. Anne, but the masonry and window mouldings point rather to the period of St. Sophia and the other 13th- and 14th-century churches.

*Outside Trebizond*

## ST. MICHAEL AKÇAABAT. Plan, Fig. 17; section, Fig. 18.

Akçaabat is a fair-sized town eight miles west of Trebizond; the church of St. Michael, which is in a suburb high up to the south of the town, was seen by Hamilton in 1840, when the priest told him that it was then 800 years old, but Professor Talbot Rice considers it more likely to be 13th- or 14th-century. It is now in use as a house. The church was restored and extended in 1846, as is attested by a long inscription over the north door; the medieval structure is easily distinguished from the 19th-century parts, the plan being nearly identical with that of the church of St. Philip (see p. 159). The present dome and drum, though entirely restored, are



doubtless reasonably like the originals. The interior of the church is typically plain Trapezuntine; there is no sign of wall-paintings, but the *opus sectile* floor, in black, white, green and terracotta red, may be similar to an original one, though a complete restoration.

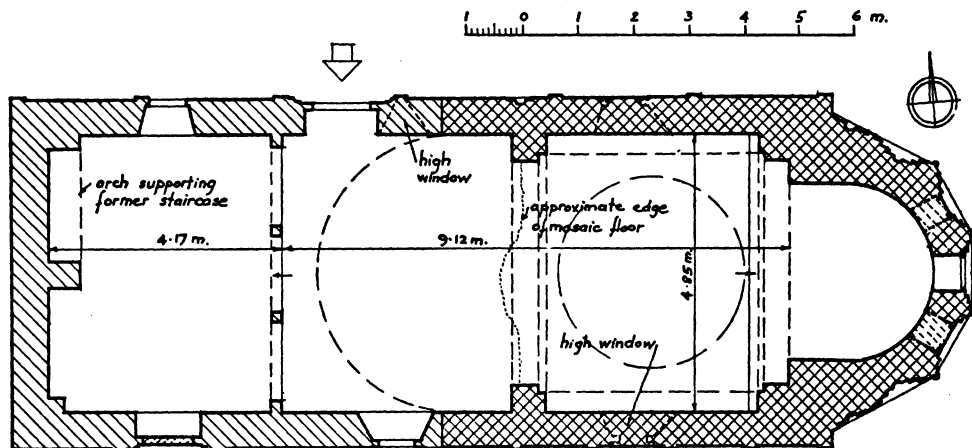


FIG. 17. Plan of St. Michael, Akçaabat.

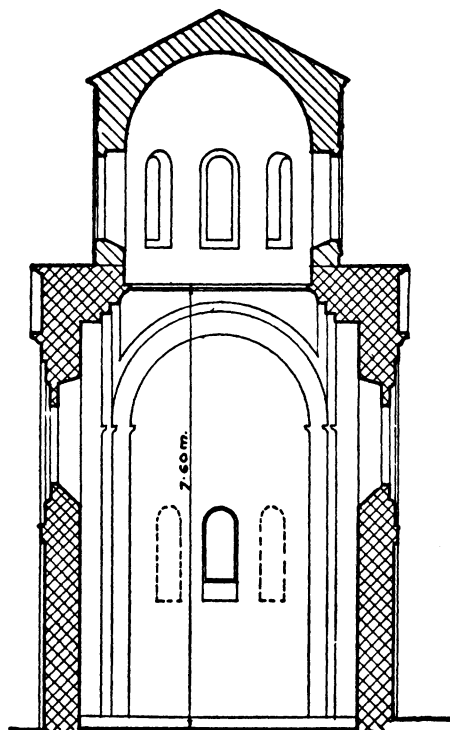


FIG. 18. Section of St. Michael, looking east.

The great interest of the church, however, lies in its exterior (Pl. XXI*b*), as it is entirely different from anything else in the region. Firstly, it is built of a light-coloured stone with variegated shades of pinkish-brown, green and yellow, totally unlike the dull, dark grey or brown stone which is universal locally. Secondly, it is richly decorated with blind arcading in

three levels, separated by bands of carved interlacing decoration, on the apse, with rope mouldings round the top arch and the cornice ; and in two levels on north and south walls of the naos, where it is reduced to absolute simplicity. The pediments which form gables on these walls are totally unrelated to the arcading, spanning two and a half bays on the north wall and four and a half on the south, with the result that the windows (which

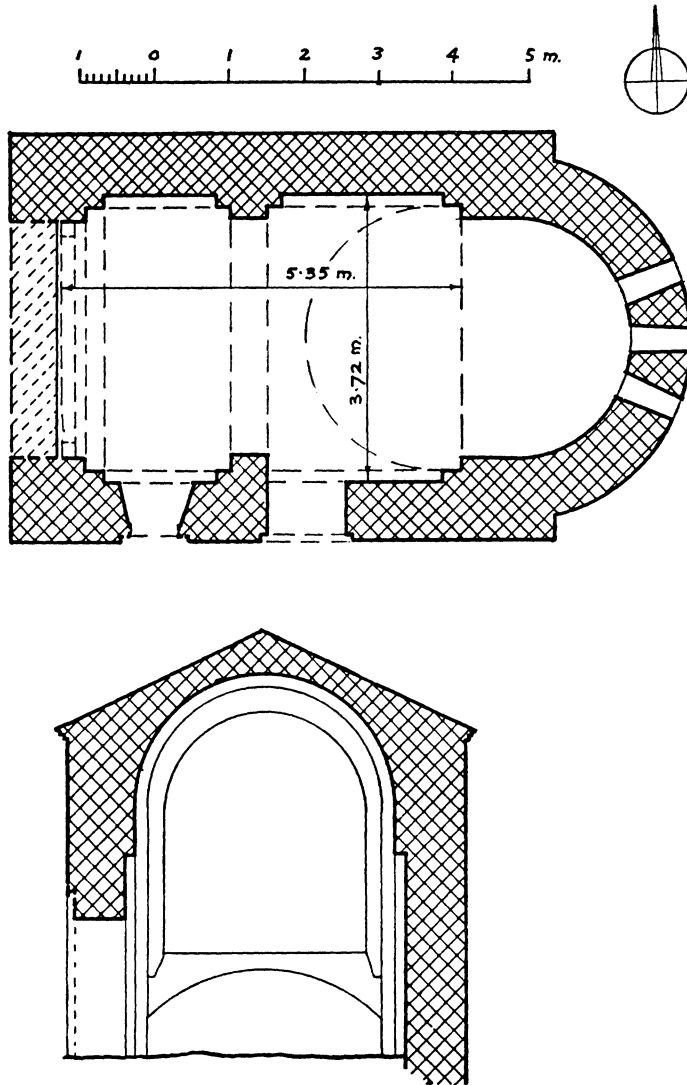


FIG. 19. Plan, and section looking west, of church at Orta Mahalle, Akçaabat.

may date from the 1846 restoration), though in the middle of a bay of arcading, are off-centre to the dome. The bay under the south window has been repaired or blocked in the same masonry as the rest of the wall.

Armenian or Georgian influence must be responsible for this unusual exterior, but it seems certain that it was actually built by local masons : not only is the plan typically Trapezuntine, but the complete failure to grasp the significance of blind arcading in relation to the structure and plan shows that this was a concept quite unfamiliar to the builder. The stone must have been brought from a distance.

It is interesting to note that the curious octagonal church of Varzahan,<sup>38</sup> about 20 km. north-west of Bayburt, is in most respects very Armenian in character and has a similar rope-moulding to that in St. Michael on the external blind arcading. Further rope-mouldings occur on the north porch of Chrysocephalos and on the dome drum of St. Philip.

ORTA MAHALLE, AKÇAABAT. Plan and section, Fig. 19.

This small and hitherto unrecorded church lies about half a mile to the south of St. Michael ; though still in a fair state of repair its use as byre and henhouse is likely to hasten its end. The rounded apse with parallel-sided windows, the barrel-vaulted naos with one rib, the coarse but solidly built masonry and the use of brick for window arches are all typical of medieval work in this area. The further west of the two doors is probably a late cutting and the brick cornice (Pl. XXIIc) may not be original. The west wall is most remarkable : though the quoins appear to indicate that there was no further extension to the west, practically the whole elevation is taken up with two openings (see section) ; the lower one, with the crown of the arch 1·20 m. from the floor, might have been a tomb recess ; the arch enclosing the upper one is slightly forward of the lower and is carried on corbels. Both are now roughly blocked. There are remains of wall-paintings on the internal face of the south wall, near the apse ; only a Deësis can be distinguished.

CASTLE CHURCH, BAYBURT.<sup>39</sup> Plan, Fig. 20.

The great castle of Bayburt, though mainly Turkish as it stands now, has a stretch of wall along its north-east side which must be much earlier and, indeed, there is said to have been an Armenian castle here in the time of the Bagratid dynasty (885–1044) and even earlier.<sup>40</sup> Whether this area was ever part of the Empire of Trebizond does not appear to be known, though at one time it was in High Armenia ; but the ruined church which survives in the castle has the very typical Trapezuntine feature of two rounded side apses combined with a polygonal central one—an arrangement unknown in Armenia. So little is left of the rest of the building that it is uncertain whether it was domed or barrel-vaulted. It is built up considerably on the north side and probably had a crypt.

The masonry is of rather larger blocks than is common on the coast and is the same in apses and side walls.

FETOKA. Plan, Fig. 21.

On the eastern slope of a deep valley running down to the coast at Surmene, and about sixteen miles from the sea, are the ruins of a monastery. The surveying and unravelling of the whole plan would not be easy, but the

<sup>38</sup> op. cit., in note 33, pls. 520, 521.

<sup>39</sup> I am indebted to Miss Freya Stark for information of the existence of this church.

<sup>40</sup> Texier, op. cit., in note 1, p. 59 ; *Travels of Marco Polo*, ed. by H. Cordier, London, 1903, Vol. I, p. 49.

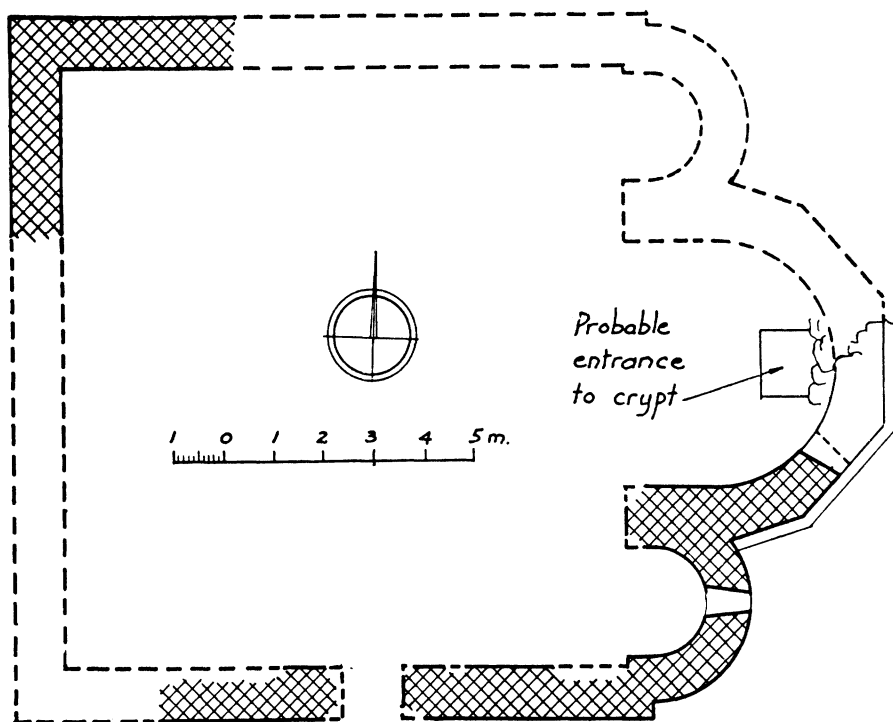


FIG. 20. Plan of church in Bayburt Castle.

church or chapel is clearly recognisable. The highest part now standing is approximately 1.50 m. above the floor; the masonry is of the usual roughly squared type, with blocks up to  $20 \times 30$  cm. laid in thick beds of mortar, as facing to a rubble core. The external facing of the apse has been entirely robbed away, but enough of the rest remains to show that it was polygonal in plan, though a stilted semicircle internally. The west door

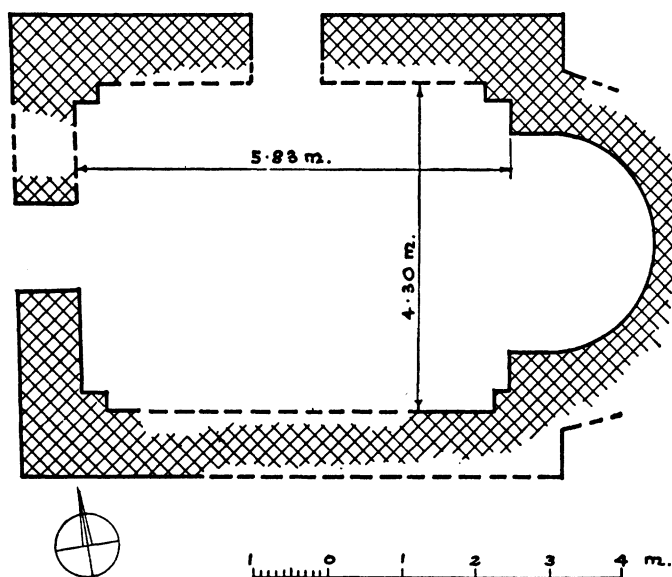


FIG. 21. Plan of church at Fetoka.

and the opening on the north, which may have been door or window, have each one or two large jamb stones in position. A large block, probably a lintel, which is lying nearby may have come from this building : it has a long inscription in Byzantine Greek which is probably a quotation from a sacred writing and conveniently bears the date A.D. 944-945.

There are reports of other churches in this valley.

#### THE ARMENIAN MONASTERY OF KAYMAKLI. Plan, Fig. 22.

This monastery is situated about two miles from Trebizond on the west slope of the valley of the ancient River Pyxites, up which runs the great trade route over the Zigana pass to Eastern Anatolia and Persia. There were Armenian monks here until after the First World War, but the church is now roofless, the open belfry has disappeared (though its ground-floor structure remains) and the chapel and range of monastic buildings are gradually disintegrating.

The history of the monastery may be locked away somewhere in the archives of the Armenian church but nothing seems to be known of it locally. The tiny chapel (internal measurements excluding apse  $2.02 \times 1.71$  m.) has an inscription in Armenian on the huge lintel over the door, which gives the date 1622,<sup>41</sup> but there is no indication of the date of the main church. Professor Talbot Rice is of the opinion that the frescoes in the latter are of mid-18th century date at earliest ; but at the west end of the south wall part of an earlier layer is now visible ; and since Bordier<sup>42</sup> in the first decade of the 17th century visited an Armenian monastery which, from his description of its position, must certainly be Kaymaklı and noted that the many paintings in the church included the Mysteries of the Passion and lives of saints and bishops, it is reasonable to suppose that the present church was standing then. Its fabric, or parts of it, may well date from the 16th century or earlier : the apse (Pl. XXIIa), which is the oldest part, is built of alternating deep and shallow courses, smoothly dressed and closely jointed, with a slightly projecting plinth at the base ; in all very like the apse of St. Sophia. The north wall, though it appears to be later than the apse, is of fair-sized squared blocks ; the south and west walls are still later, of much rougher construction and with a number of carved stones with Armenian-type crosses built in below the central window of the south wall ; the narthex, now gone except for vestiges of foundations, was latest of all. The apse has a neatly constructed masonry semi-dome (Pl. XXIIb) but, unlike any other church of any period in the neighbourhood, the naos had a simple gabled timber roof. The high window in the west gable is a late cutting.

In addition to the frescoes which cover almost the whole of the walls and which Professor Talbot Rice considers to be strongly Armenian in

<sup>41</sup> Rice, *op. cit.*, in note 6, p. 140.

<sup>42</sup> Julien Bordier, "Relation d'un Voyage en Orient 1604-1612," ed. by Chrysanthos in *Ἀρχαίον Ποντον*, 6, Athens, 1934.

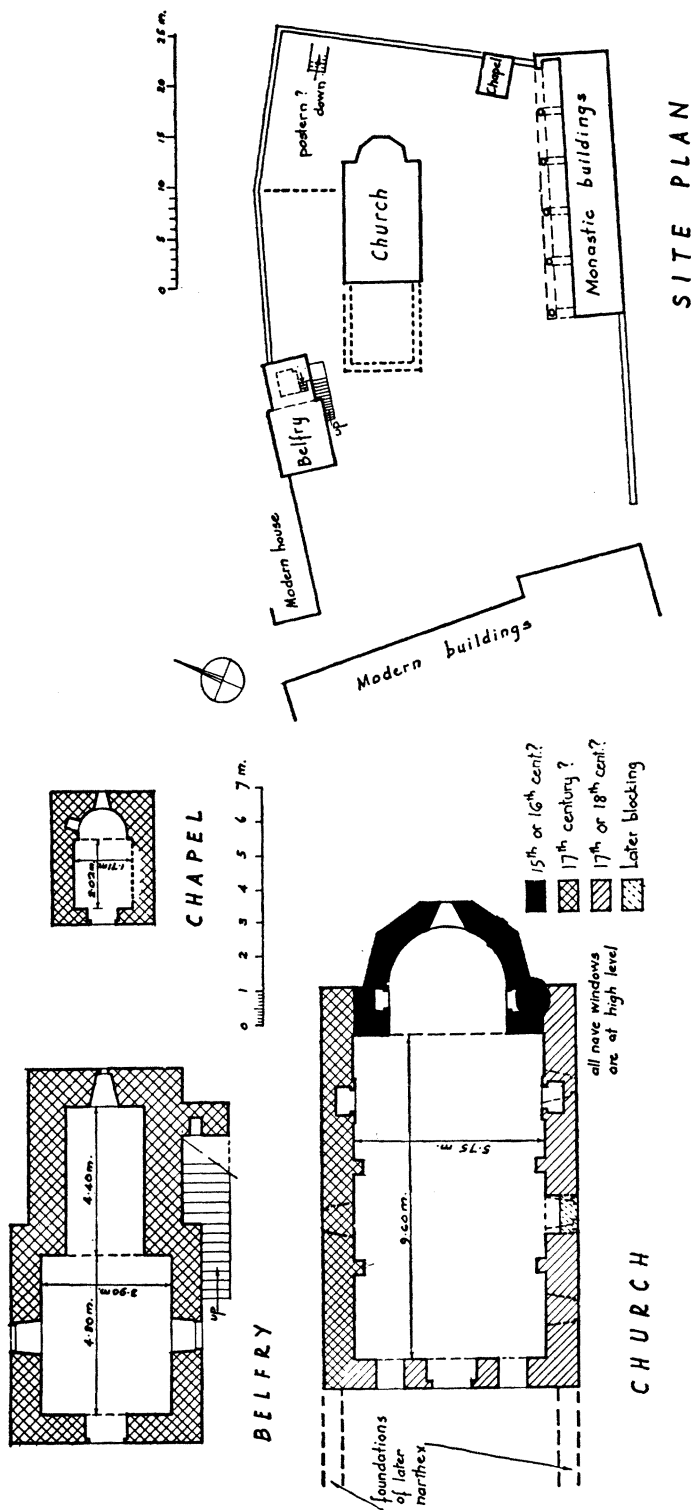


FIG. 22. Plan of church, chapel and belfry, and site plan, of Kaymaklı monastery.

character, the carved decorative niches in north and south walls are also very distinctive.

The little chapel already mentioned has a vault, slightly pointed, of mortared rubble, with hollow earthenware pots built in just above the spring. The inscribed apse is the only example in the district of this very common Armenian treatment of the east end of a church, but in fact it is so small that it would have been difficult to do much else with it. Some frescoes remain in it.

Of the other buildings, the belfry, judging from the style of masonry, may be contemporary with the second period of the church : the range of monastic buildings on the south-east angle of the enclosure appear to be much later. Foundations of other buildings lie below a modern barn and farmhouses. The whole enclosure is built up on north and east on a terrace wall which rises to a maximum height of about 4 m.

#### ST. BARBARA. Plan, Fig. 23.

The remains of a small monastery, locally known as Ayvarvar, stands on a high bluff overlooking the sea about four miles west of Trebizond ; it has not been recorded previously. Only the church can be distinguished, parts of it still standing 2 m. high. The apse, slightly horseshoe in plan

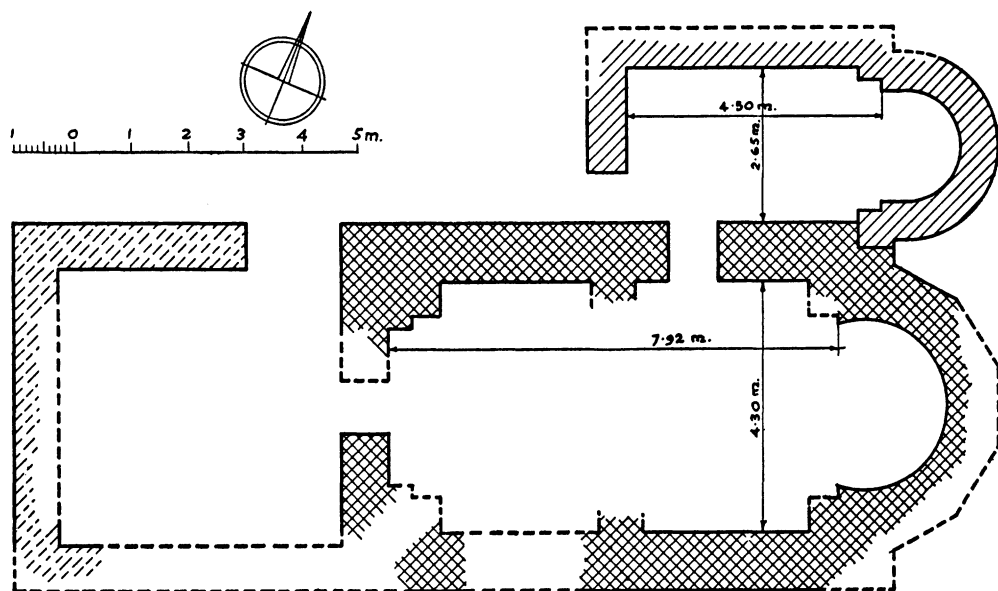


FIG. 23. Plan of St. Barbara.

internally, was faced with more smoothly dressed and larger blocks (45-55 cm. long  $\times$  20-30 cm. deep) than the rest : most have been robbed away but enough remain on the north side to show that the apse was polygonal externally. The church would certainly have had a barrel-vault ; the small chapel on the north and the narthex, both of which are later additions, may have been vaulted or may have had timber roofs.

## SUMMARY

It is not easy to sum up Trapezuntine architecture and it is not easy to analyse it : in the relatively small number of churches surviving there is a wide diversity of plans and of decorative features ; and the two greatest and most interesting, St. Sophia and the Chrysocephalos, are in their different ways partially at least outside the general pattern—in so far as there is one.

The principal local characteristics are :—

(1) Use of basilicas, both barn-church and clerestory types ; and after the introduction of the dome a tendency to continue with basilical characteristics ; e.g. if there is a single bay west of the dome it is never square but much longer east-west than north-south. (It is interesting to note that this was still the custom in the 19th century.) Even when the simple centralised plan of a domed square bay is used, the church is elongated by the addition of a west bay.

(2) The use of the dome ; at what date this was introduced locally is not known but it was probably not before the 11th or even 12th century, by which time it was practically standard for churches throughout the Byzantine world. Domes are invariably supported on pendentives and tall drums ; there is never more than one to a church. A local peculiarity is that the pendentives are brought forward and the actual diameter of the ring at the top slightly decreased by the building of the arches supporting the dome in one or two “ orders ”—see Pl. XIX*b* and Fig. 12. The drums are usually then set back, leaving a narrow gallery round the top of the pendentive ring ; the total effect is to dissociate dome and drum from the pendentives, but whether this gives quite the sublime and “ floating ” effect claimed for it by Millet and Baklanov is a matter of opinion.

(3) Almost exclusive use of barrel-vaults. The barrel-vaulted basilica was a common form on the Anatolian plateau both before and after the Arab wars ; in Armenia and in Georgia it is found at least up to the 7th century. In these countries the dome then became the rule, but many of the churches continued to have a rectangular rather than a square plan, with barrel-vaults over the aisles and the long west bay. In Trebizond, too, the aisles are barrel-vaulted and the west bay is long (see (1) above), but this is probably due to the tenacity of the basilical tradition rather than to foreign influence.

(4) Three projecting apses normal in a three-aisled church (Chrysocephalos is the only exception) ; but the central one is usually polygonal (with five sides) externally, though the side ones are rounded. Polygonal apses were common, though perhaps rather fewer than rounded ones, in Anatolia from an early date ; they were always the rule in Constantinople (St. John in Trullo being the only exception) ; but the combination with rounded side ones is uncommon anywhere and occurs in curiously scattered places : there are two examples at Trillya, on the Sea of Marmara ; and others at Iznik (the ancient Nicaea) ; St. Sophia and Panaghia Chalkeon, Salonika ; St. Sophia, Ochrida (Macedonia) ; Mokwi, Georgia <sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *BZ.*, 1927, p. 85.



(Brunov's plan, Wulff shows a round central apse) ; St. Sophia, Novgorod ; St. Sophia, Kiev (K. J. Conant's reconstruction).<sup>44</sup> There are also one or two examples in Italy which can be considered irrelevant. Of these, most have a three-sided central apse, only Mokwi and the Russian examples having five (or more) sides ; and as these latter examples are all of 11th-century date, whereas most of the others are earlier, it seems highly probable that the influence for this feature came from Georgia and Russia.

(5) Large porches were frequent : St. Sophia has them on north, south and west ; St. Eugenios, St. Philip, Nakıp Cami and the Chrysocephalos on the north only and as later additions. Such porches are found occasionally in Armenia ; in Georgia, at Mokwi (11th-century), Gelati, Manglis and Akhtala (all 12th-century) ; and occasionally in Russia. Thus the same influences appear to have been at work for porches as for apses, though why the north side should have been chosen for the porches is obscure.

(6) Windows are always single, never multiple (except for the double ones in the narthex chapel of St. Sophia) ; in the earlier periods the jambs are parallel in plan, not tapering to the exterior, but later (apse of St. Eugenios) a slight taper is introduced in the much larger windows. Wide shallow mouldings round the heads of and between the apse windows occur in St. Sophia, St. Philip, St. Basil, St. Eugenios and Zeytinlik Cami'i, all of which are probably of Empire date. Mouldings in this position are rare in Anatolia, but very common in Armenia and Georgia.

(7) Use of horseshoe and pointed arches : arches slightly horseshoe in shape occur in Nakıp Cami, St. Philip (apse) and St. Eugenios ; slightly pointed ones in the dome bays of St. Eugenios and the Chrysocephalos, in the long west bay of St. Philip and in all three porches of St. Sophia. The apses of Nakıp Cami are horseshoe on plan, as is the south apse of St. Eugenios. The horseshoe apse and arch are fairly common in Anatolia and in Armenia from the 6th century or earlier ; the genesis of the pointed arch is more obscure, but it occurs at Qasr-ibn-Wardan in the 6th century and Creswell <sup>45</sup> gives several early Islamic examples. In Armenia it was in fairly common use in later centuries.

(8) The masonry in the body of the church is always rougher (except in St. Basil) than that of the apses, which is well-worked, closely-jointed and of larger stones (though not in St. Anne). Arches, where visible, are of brick ; vaults, where visible, of mortared rubble. One factor common to all the medieval churches except the earliest, St. Anne, and the latest phase of St. Eugenios (and omitting the two doubtfuls, St. Basil and Church D), is the addition of masonry to the external walls above the spring of the vaults inside : the masonry below the cornice is different from and inferior to the rest of the walls. The reason is probably that the vaults were originally roofed with lead or copper (or just possibly bitumen) as is believed to have been the case at St. Saviour in Chora, Constantinople, for example, and in

<sup>44</sup> *The Art and Architecture of Russia*, Pelican History of Art, 1954, Pl. I.

<sup>45</sup> *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture*, Penguin Books, 1958, p. 103.

the earlier Russian churches. At some time, perhaps in late Comnene times or perhaps since the Turkish conquest, the advantages of pitched tiled roofs for throwing off rain may have been realised and most of the church roofs altered. Possibly St. Eugenios was rebuilt for the last time after this date, which would account for the uniformity of its walls right up to cornice level. It should, however, be noted that Hatuniye Cami'i, a 16th-century mosque in the town, has a lead roof.

(9) Decoration. As mentioned at the beginning of this article, the emphasis is on architecture, but decorative elements cannot be entirely ignored. The local stone, of a singularly dull grey colour and coarse texture, was not sympathetic to fine mouldings or other carving, but the dome drums of St. Philip and St. Eugenios and the south and west porches of St. Sophia, for example, show how much could be done with it, especially with a coat of whitewash as a help in showing up the relief.

But by far the greater part of the interest and richness must have lain in the wall-paintings, though whether there was a local school or whether the artists were brought in and, if so, from where, is not yet certain. The prevalence of these paintings is notable and, according to 19th-century travellers, there were many on the exterior of the buildings as well as inside ; some survived into this century. The custom of painting the exteriors existed also in Serbia, in Roumania and in South Russia. No mosaics survive, if indeed there ever were any : the nearest approach is the *opus sectile* work on the bema walls of the Chrysocephalos. The floor paving in the same sort of style in St. Sophia has a parallel in a fragment in the Pantocrator church in Constantinople ; the reports in Millet and others of similar floors now covered in St. Eugenios and the Chrysocephalos do not indicate whether or not they are of the same type, but they probably are.

#### CONCLUSION

Thus the earliest and most powerful influences were probably Anatolian : the use of basilicas, of horseshoe apses and arches, of barrel-vaults and of five-sided apses may all originally have come from the plateau and, since most of the existing Trebizond churches were probably built after the Seljuk Turks had put an end to such activity in most of Asia Minor, the tenacity of the tradition—or perhaps the lack of originality on the part of the local builders—is remarkable. The style of the earlier churches cannot, of course, be known, but it is probably fair to assume that the 9th-century church of St. Anne is typical of the smaller ones.

As Trebizond was the port for shipping to the west the goods which came along the great trade route from Anatolia, Armenia, Persia and even further east, it is to be expected that her architecture should show signs of influence from that direction.

The dome may have been introduced from Armenia but, if so, the subsequent treatment of it is totally different ; the use of large porches and of mouldings over apse windows are both probably due to Georgian influence at the time of the Comnene Empire, but are not of major

importance. Similarities with some of the Russian churches are probably due to exchange of ideas along the Black Sea trade routes and the traffic may have been either way, or both ways. It must not be forgotten, moreover, that the Chersonese was for a time under the control of the Trapezuntine emperors. The lack of Constantinopolitan trends is striking, as much trade must have passed between Trebizond and the capital, but the *opus sectile* floor and the columns, capitals and bases in St. Sophia (and perhaps floors in some of the other churches) are almost the only proof of any contact at all. (The question of the paintings is still under discussion.) Trebizond, like Asia Minor in general, was more of the East than of the West; and its architecture, in its synthesis of various elements, remains resolutely individual. Though its warmest advocate cannot call it truly great, a solid dignity and a sure feeling for interior space can certainly be claimed for it.