

tinyen'in, 227 piskopos'un burada kurulan sinoda iştirâk ettiklerine dair bilgi veren Phrantzes ile onun eserini iktibas edenlerin hatâya düştüklerini, çünkü bu küçük kilisenin 100 kişiden fazla insan istiaab edemeyeceğini söyler ve belki de Phrantzes'in beşinci ve altıncı sinod'un toplandığı yerin kubbe mânâsına gelen trullo'nun müruru zamanla harap ve münderis olan bir saray olması ihtimalinden bahseder.

Velhâsıl son mukadderatı Fethiye'ye bağlı kalmış olan ve tip itibariyle muahhar bir devreye ait olması melhuz bulunan bu harap mabed, eğer kısa bir zamanda imdadına yetişilip onarılmazsa mahvolup gidecektir. Yurd içinde bütün geçmiş medeniyet eserlerini onarmayı ve muhafazayı şiar edinen Cumhuriyet Hükümetimizin bu binayı da mahivden kurtaracağı şüphesiz olmakla beraber Devlet hazinesine ait ödeneklerle başa çıkılamıyacak kadar sayısı çok olan bu kabil İstanbul'daki harap eserlerin "İstanbul Sevenler Kurumu,, veya "Âbideleri Koruma Kurulu,, gibi özel teşekküllerin de onarım işlerine iştirak etmeleri ve bu teşekküllerin tarih ve san'at namına yabancı kurulların da müzaheretlerini sağlamaları temennisinde bulunmak yerinde bir istek olur, kanaatindeyiz.

THE BYZANTINE CHURCH OF THE HOLY VIRGIN PAMMACARISTOS AT ISTANBUL

Condensed from the article in Turkish by AZİZ OGAN

When Constantine the Great transferred the capital of the Empire in May 330 A.D. to the city to which he gave his name a new period began in the history of art and architecture.

Althouh it would be premature to give it the name of Byzantine in cannot be denied that the reign of Diocletianus (285 - 305) witnessed an important transformation in Roman art.

With the progress of Christianity began the decline of the ancient Pagan art which drew its inspiration from life and from nature. The new art retained the traditions and inheritance of the ancient Greek and Roman art to which, under the influence of the Christian religion, were added numerous elements from the East. The blending of those two schols produced a new art

to which we give the name of Byzantine, and which after a period of infancy, reached its zenith in the 6th century, under Justinian, with St. - Sophia. This new revolution was not entirely free from the influence of the past to which it remained permanently attached.

This influence is noticeable in all the Christian monuments which were erected in diverse places in the East. Those monuments are at the same time strongly marked with the influence of the Christian faith and traditions. It may be said that the birth and development of Byzantine art always bore the imprint of religious inspiration.

Byzantine architects built numerous churches in Constantinople and the environs. That is the reason why they enjoyed the sympathy of that pious people, and the protection of the emperors.

Byzantine architecture offers a type of remarkable character. Perhaps more pains were devoted to the building of churches than palaces. Their exterior aspect was majestic, and the interior of the larger buildings was richly decorated. The walls were adorned with mosaic panels, and the floors covered with various designs in marble and coloured stones. The capitals of columns were beautifully sculptured. This system of decoration is still seen in the period of decline of Byzantine architecture.

In Constantinople, the political and cultural centre of the Empire, all religious buildings preserved as the year 1204 suffered more or less from the damage caused by far as the looting of the Crusaders.

Following the fall of the Latin Empire in 1261 we observe some signs of a renaissance, which however did not last long. Works of art that were destroyed were not replaced by new ones.

When the Turks entered Istanbul nothing was left except St. Sophia, and the churches, obelisks, and walls still existing to-day. The conquerors found themselves in a town that had been for centuries devastated by fires, earthquakes, and fighting.

It is thanks to the care and skill of Turkish administrators and architects that those monuments were preserved from further damage and still exist to-day.

Among the old churches of Byzantium that of the Holy Virgin Pammacaristos occupies a preeminent place. The building, which is equally interesting because of its plan and the elegant floral decoration of its mosaics, is situated in the centre of a large square in the present district of Çarşamba, in the vicinity of Sultan-Selim. A picture drawn in 1584 shows that the church had an atrium surrounded by four walls.

The church comprises two buildings. The western church was built as an annex and a women's convent by Maria Doucaena, wife of Michael Doucas Glabas Tarchaneiotes, who was protostrator, i. e. commander-in-chief of the armies of Andronicus II. Palaeologus. On examining the type and technique of structure of the two buildings we are led to infer that they belong to distinct periods. The central building is undoubtedly older than the Pareccleision, the date of which is certain.

Among the contradictory statements of authors on the date of foundation of the first church Scarlatus Byzantius and Sotiriou declare that it was built by the Domesticus John Comnenus senior, and his wife Anna Dalassene. John was the father of emperor Alexius I. Comnenus. His wife Anna Dalassene was the daughter of Haron, governor of the Byzantine provinces in Italy, who died in 1067.

Under the Latin occupation the Church of Pammacaristos was very much neglected and out of repair. Towards the end of the 13th century, in 1294, it was completely restored by the protostrator Michael Doucas Glabas Tarchaneiotes, nephew of the emperor Michael VIII. Palaeologus (1261 - 1282). Michael died eighteen years after the restoration, and his wife Maria Doucaena built the Pareccleision.

The women's convent was used as such until 1456, when it became the seat of the Patriarch. Some Greek authors relate in detail that Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror visited the Church of Pammacaristos and had an interview with the Patriarch. For 135 years the building was used as the seat of the Patriarch, and then it was converted into a mosque by Murad III.

The building was entered by the gate facing the apsis. At present it is entered by the gate opened at a later date on the left side of the minaret.

The central dome of the church is largest of all. It is five metres across, and is supported by four piers with bevelled angles.

When the church was converted into a mosque the apsis was altered, its direction being turned from East to South-East, and a mihrab was added. In the right aisle a pulpit was built in A. H. 1000. It is a fine specimen of the carving and sculpture of that period.

The pillars supporting the wide arches of the interior narthex were hewn and reduced to more slender proportions in order to obtain wider space. This produced curiously shaped capitals.

The most important and characteristic part of the Church is the funeral chapel, called Parecclesion, built by Maria Doucaena, in memory of her husband, Michael Doucas Glabas Tarchaneiotos. The graceful domes and the variegated charm of the exterior façade enhance the beauty of the Church.

The Parecclesion is surmounted by a central dome interiorly decorated with mosaics. Above the narthex are two small domes. The windows of the small domes gave light only to the gallery above the narthex, being invisible from the chapel. They are now walled in. All the domes are more or less similar in shape. They were doubtless added to vary the monotony of the roof, and they give a harmonious aspect to the exterior of the Church.

In the upper gallery is an aperture looking into the Parecclesion. It was from there that when Maria Doucaena visited the Church she looked down into the burial-place of her husband.

The stones are cut regularly and interspersed with brick patterns, which prove that the exterior façades were not stuccoed at the time of building but at a later date. In a recent restoration the stucco was removed and the exterior façades restored to their original aspect, with pointed joints.

The mosaics in the dome receive sufficient light from the windows in the drum. In the centre is a large-sized figure of Christ. All round are radiating bands, which divide the segments of the dome. In those segments are the figures of twelve prophets, rendered with great skill, the name of each being inscribed above his head. The faces are very expressive, the attitudes varied and full of life. The figures are clad in white garments with blue,

green, violet, and brown shades. The artist has departed from the traditional types, and created a more personal and realistic work. The central figure, representing Christ, is rendered with great skill. The expression is full of mercy and compassion. Those mosaics, which are by far superior to those in the Karya Mosque, are contemporaneous with the building, i. e, they date from the 14 th century.

Ancient and modern writers who speak of the Convent of Pammacaristos, and recent authors who have studied the building give contradictory statements on the date of foundation. None of them mentions that the central building, which is earliest in date, was erected on top of a cistern. While we were preparing a summary study on the Church of Pammacaristos I noticed a hole formed by a piece of paving which had recently collapsed. Through that hole it was possible to descend with great difficulty upon a massive wall, and, with the help of a strong light, to see the interior. This led us naturally to examine the cistern. The bottom is filled with water. Sediments accumulated for centuries, and the refuse recently thrown through the hole have turned the place into a quagmire. It is impossible to make a thorough inspection before emptying all the water and refuse, and that would take a long time. Nevertheless it was possible to calculate the dimensions of the cistern, and the number and intervals of the columns.

This discovery leads us naturally to the following conclusions :

The topographical and mystical characteristics of the Church of Pammacaristos and its environs indicate that it was a religious city AL first. in order to supply the city with water, a cistern was built in a central place. At a later period that place, which was the most important of the city, and occupied a crowning position on the top of a hill, was chosen for the erection of the Church of Pammacaristos, and the Convent was built on top of the cistern. The fact that the cistern of Pammacaristos is different from the usual type of Byzantine cisterns known to us is because it was afterwards altered in order to ensure the safety of the building, and the parts which were under the pillars supporting the main dome were reenforced.

Under the pavement of the Convent is a gallery, one metre wide, and 3 and a half metres long, beginning at a spot beneath the central dome. It follows a western direction and joins a wall 3 metres high, built to reenforce the cistern at a later date. That gallery is the burial-place of Maria Doucaena's husband, Michael Glabas Tarchaneiotos, mentioned by ancient writers.

The Church is at present converted into a museum.
