

THE MIDDLE BYZANTINE SANCTUARY BARRIER: TEMPLON OR ICONOSTASIS?

By A. W. EPSTEIN

AT THE PRESENT TIME the interior of the Orthodox church is dominated by the richly painted iconostasis which separates visually as well as physically the layman in the nave from the priest in the sanctuary. But the opaque barrier was not always part of the liturgical furnishings of East Christian churches. Indeed, the evolution of the wooden iconostasis from the open marble screen of low parapet slabs with, on occasion, colonnettes supporting an architrave or epistyle typical of the Early Christian period has recently received considerable attention.¹ The period at which the marble screen, often referred to as a templon in the sources, began to assume a more opaque character through the addition of permanently attached panel paintings remains open to debate.² Such scholars as Chatzidakis and Weitzmann propose a tenth- or eleventh-century date for the development.³ Others, including Ouspensky, Lazarev and Walter, conclude that it is a late Byzantine or even post-Byzantine phenomenon.⁴

As the open form of sanctuary barrier has been convincingly demonstrated for the early churches of Constantinople until the age of Justinian, in my opinion, the critical phase for the understanding of the barrier is the period from the end of the ninth century until the re-establishment of Orthodoxy in Constantinople in the aftermath of the Latin occupation (1204–61).⁵ Within this chronological framework, it is important to look first at the evidence for the form of the sanctuary barrier remaining in the capital of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople. Since during the Middle Byzantine period the capital was culturally dominant, providing the main source of artistic innovation in the Empire, it is

¹ Most recently: M. Chatzidakis, 'L'évolution de l'icone aux 11e–13e siècles et la transformation du templon', *XVe Congrès International d'études byzantines; III, Art et Archéologie* (Athens 1976), 157–92; idem, 'Ikonostas', *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, eds K. Wessel and M. Restle (Stuttgart 1973), cols 326–54; G. Babić, 'La décoration en fresques des clôtures de choeur', *Zbornik za Likovne Umetnosti*, xi (1975), 3–49; C. Walter, 'The Origin of the Iconostasis', *Eastern Churches Review*, iii (1971), 251–67; idem, 'Bulletin on the Deesis and the Paracletis', *Revue des études Byzantines*, xxxviii (1980), 261–9. Among the most valuable of the older works on the subject are: E. Golubinskij, *Istorija ruskoj cerkvi*, 2nd edn (Moscow 1904) i, pt 2, 195–216 (I want to thank Mr M. Puskin of the Department of Russian of the University of Birmingham for his translation of this fundamental secondary source); T. Ouspensky, 'The Problem of the Iconostasis', translated from Russian by A. E. Moorhouse, *St Vladimir's Seminar Quarterly*, viii, pt 4 (1964), 186–218; V. Lazarev, 'Trois fragments d'épistyles peintes et le templon byzantin', *Deltion tēs christianikēs archaiologikēs Hetaïrias* (dedicated to Timotikos G. Sotierios), iv (1966), 117–43; A. Grabar, 'Deux notes sur l'histoire de l'iconostase d'après des monuments de Yougoslavie', *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloki Institut*, vii (1961), 13–22.

² The medieval use of the terms 'templon' and 'iconostasis' have been dealt with repeatedly in scholarly literature. See for instance, Walter, 'Origin of the Iconostasis', 251 sqq., or Chatzidakis, 'Ikonostas', cols 326 sqq.

³ Chatzidakis, 'L'évolution de l'icone', 169; K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of St Katherine at Mount Sinai: The Icons. Vol. I* (Princeton 1976), 102.

⁴ Ouspensky, 'Problem of the Iconostasis', 186 sqq.; Lazarev, 'Trois fragments', 117 sqq.; Walter, 'Origin of the Iconostasis', 266 sqq.

⁵ From his examination of Early Byzantine Constantinopolitan screens, T. Mathews concludes that although screens with colonnettes supporting epistyles were the most popular form of apse closure, there is no indication that these screens were ever fitted with curtains for the isolation of the sanctuary as has been previously thought, *Early Churches*, 162 sqq. The implications of the association of images with the sanctuary barrier in the pre-Iconoclastic period are discussed by E. Kitzinger, 'Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm', *Berichte zum XI. internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress, Munich, 1958*, iv, pt 1, 1–50, esp. 41 sqq. The evidence for the early use of figurally decorated curtains in the templon has recently been added to by C. Mango, 'Liturgy and the People' (unpublished lecture, Dumbarton Oaks Symposium, May 1979); idem, 'The History of the Templon and the Martyrium of St Artemios', *Zograf*, x (1979), 40–8 did not come to my attention until after this article went to press.

particularly important to establish as far as possible the liturgical arrangements current in the metropolis before treating the provincial material. Because of the incomplete state of research on the churches of Constantinople, this has not yet been attempted. For the same reason, the conclusions of this study must remain tentative. Nevertheless, a review of the archaeological and literary evidence for Constantinople does allow a viable reconstruction of the form and decoration of the templon screen at least until the twelfth century.

TEMPLON EVIDENCE FROM CONSTANTINOPLE

The churches of Constantinople have been denuded of their liturgical furnishings. All evidence of the sanctuary fittings has disappeared from most medieval foundations.⁶ However, screen fragments incorporated into later decoration or uncovered during church restoration provide some documentation concerning the Constantinopolitan screen of the ninth until the twelfth century. The barrier that can best be understood, if not fully reconstructed, is that of the Pantocrator Monastery. Because this screen is attested to by literary as well as artistic and archaeological remains, it is possible to formulate some idea of its original structure, decorative programme and function.

The Pantocrator Monastery (Zeyrek Camii), was founded by the Empress Irene (1118–24) and completed by her husband, John II, after her death.⁷ The complex, which consisted of the three extant churches and a number of subsidiary structures, was the largest Byzantine monastic foundation of the twelfth century. The first and largest church on the site was that of the Pantocrator, to the south. In 1136, the Emperor John II provided a *typikon* for the monastery, outlining the liturgical, social and economic organisation of the institution.⁸ The sections of the *typikon*, or foundation charter, concerning the censuring and lighting of the south church of the complex are relevant to the reconstruction of the chancel barrier:

(lines 71 sqq.) . . . after having censed in the form of a cross before the railing, he [the priest] then will withdraw into the sanctuaries . . .

⁶ A review of such monuments as Atik Mustafa Paşa Camii, Eski Imaret Camii, Gül Camii, Ahmet Paşa Camii, Bodrum Camii, Theotokos Panagia Mougliotissa, and Vefa Kilise Camii, show not only that medieval closures have been destroyed, but also that emplacement marks have been obscured in remodelling or even in restoration.

⁷ Janin, *Eglises*, 529 sqq.; van Millingen, *Churches*, 225 sqq.

⁸ P. Gautier, 'Le *typikon* du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator', *Revue des études Byzantines*, xxxii (1974), 1–145. The excerpts translated in the text are found on pages 33, 35, 37 and 39. The Greek text reads:

lines 71 sqq.: καὶ οὕτω σταυροειδῶς θυμιάσας ἐμπροσθεν τῶν κυγκλίδων ἐφεξῆς ἐν τοῖς ἀδύτοις χωρήσει

lines 123 sqq.: Συναγομένων δὲ ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῶν μοναχῶν, οὐδεὶς ἐπ' ἀδείας ἔξει πρὸ τῶν τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου κυγκλίδων ἢ ἐν ἑτέρῳ τόπῳ προσεύχασθαι

lines 148 sqq.: 'Ἐν δὲ ταῖς συνάξεσι τοῦ ὁρθοῦ, τῆς λειτουργίας καὶ τοῦ ἑσπερινοῦ ἀπτέσθωσαν μὲν κύκλῳ τοῦ χοροῦ οἱ κρατῆρες ἅπαντες, ἑξκαίδεκα τὸν ἀριθμὸν ὄντες, καὶ αἱ τοῦ τέμπλου κανδήλαι πάσαι καὶ τῶν τρικανδῆλων καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ἐπιθολίων τέσσαρες, τοῦ νάρθηκος τρεῖς μετὰ τῆς νυκτερινῆς καὶ τοῦ ἑξωνάρθηκος δύο μετὰ τῆς νυκτερινῆς ὁμοίως.

lines 156 sqq.: Κατὰ δὲ τὰς συνάξεις ἕστωσαν ἀπτόμενα ἐν τῷ τέμπλῳ τρία, εἰς τὸ μικρὸν τέμπλον ἐν καὶ παρὰ τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ ἕτερον ἐν, εἰς τὸν Παντοκράτορα ἕτερα δύο, εἰς τὰς δύο προσκυνήσεις ἀνά ἕτερον ἐν. 'Ἐν δὲ ταῖς κυριακαῖς κατὰ τοὺς ὁρθοὺς καὶ ἐν ταῖς λειτουργίαις, ἐτι δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἑσπερινοῖς τῶν σαββάτων ἀπτέσθωσαν κατὰ τὸ τέμπλον τὸ μέσον κηρία ἑπτὰ καὶ εἰς τὸ δεξιὸν τέμπλον τοῦ μικροῦ βήματος κηρία τρία'

lines 163 sqq.: Κατὰ δὲ τὰς μείζονας ἑορτὰς ἢ φωταψία τοῦ ναοῦ οὕτω γενήσεται. 'Ἐν αὐτῇ πρώτη τῇ Μεταμορφώσει. . . κηρία δὲ πηγνύσθωσαν περὶ τὰ τέμπλα καὶ τὰς προσκυνήσεις ἑξαούγρια'

I wish to thank Dr John Nesbitt for correcting my translations of these and other passages in the text of this paper.

(lines 123 sqq.) Having brought the monks together in the church, no one at licence will be able to pray in front of the railing and in another place . . .

(lines 148 sqq.) During the service of matins, the liturgy and vespers, let all the lamps be lit around the choir, sixteen in number, all the candles of the templon and the candelabra, and the four lamps of the four principal arches [?]; in the narthex three (lamps), including the night lamp, and in the exonarthex two (lamps) along with the night lamp . . .

(lines 156 sqq.) During the service, let (candles) be lit; three on the templon, one in the small templon, one near the altar, two facing the Pantocrator, one facing each of the two images of proskynesis. And on Sundays during the orthros and at the liturgy, and also on the vespers of Saturday, light seven candles all along the central templon and three candles facing the right hand templon of the small bema . . .

(lines 163 sqq.) The lighting of the church during the Great Feasts will be thus: in the first place on (the Feast of) the Transfiguration . . . let six-ounce candles be set in place at the templon and the proskynetaria.

These excerpts provide no clear description of the templon, as it is mentioned only tangentially.⁹ Nevertheless, lines 71 sqq. and 156 sqq. indicate that a side screen separated the northern apse from the nave and that the larger, central sanctuary apse was closed by a separate screen. Lines 123 sqq. imply that the space before the screen was particularly attractive for individual prayer. The term *κυγκλίδες*, railings, suggests a low, relatively open screen. It has meant lattice work, grill, open fence, or balustrade from ancient to modern times.¹⁰ *Τέμπλον* has a more specific meaning, as is evident from texts considered below.¹¹ It indicates that the low screen must have been elaborated with colonnettes supporting an architrave or epistyle. Presumably, the candles mentioned in lines 148 sqq., 156 sqq., and 163 sqq., as well as sections in the typikon concerning similar arrangements for the other two churches of the complex, suggest that in the vicinity of the templon were images of special veneration, proskynetaria. As portable icons are distinguished as such in the text, it is most likely that these proskynetaria refer to monumental images decorating the west face of the piers flanking the sanctuary.¹² Such images were, in any case, commonplace in Middle Byzantine churches, as will be shown below.¹³ The typikon thus suggests that the Pantocrator screen was an open colonnade, with closure slabs within the intercolumniations at the bottom and an epistyle beam at the top, set between bema piers on which perhaps are represented images of proskynesis.

This vague literary picture of the chancel arrangements in the Pantocrator may be substantiated by the finds from the restoration carried out by A. H. S. Megaw for the Byzantine Institute in America in 1961–2.¹⁴ The Phrygian marble step at the entrance to

⁹ Other passages relevant to the form of the templon screen are found in lines 728 sqq., 734 sqq., and 860 sqq.

¹⁰ H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford 1968), 950; W. Crighton, *Mega Ellēno-Agglīkon Lexikon* (Athens 1960), 803.

¹¹ See below, p. 6 sqq. and fn. 23.

¹² Gautier, 'Typikon,' 81 sqq., lines 883 sqq. Here the procession and positioning of the famous Theotokos Hodegetria icon is vividly described.

¹³ See below, p. 24.

¹⁴ A. H. S. Megaw, 'Notes on Recent Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul', *DOP*, xvii (1963), 335–62, esp. 344 sqq.

the central apse retains the emplacement scars of uprights on either side of a narrow central opening. The post-hole on the south was reworked at some time to hold a larger piece. On the basis of these marks and fragments of parapet slabs found in the bema area reused in the Turkish pavement, Megaw has reconstructed a templon screen of four colonnettes supporting an epistyle and joined at their base by marble slabs (Fig. 1). He suggests that it was part of the original furnishing of the twelfth-century foundation. More recently, however, excavations undertaken at Saraçhane in Istanbul show that the slabs of

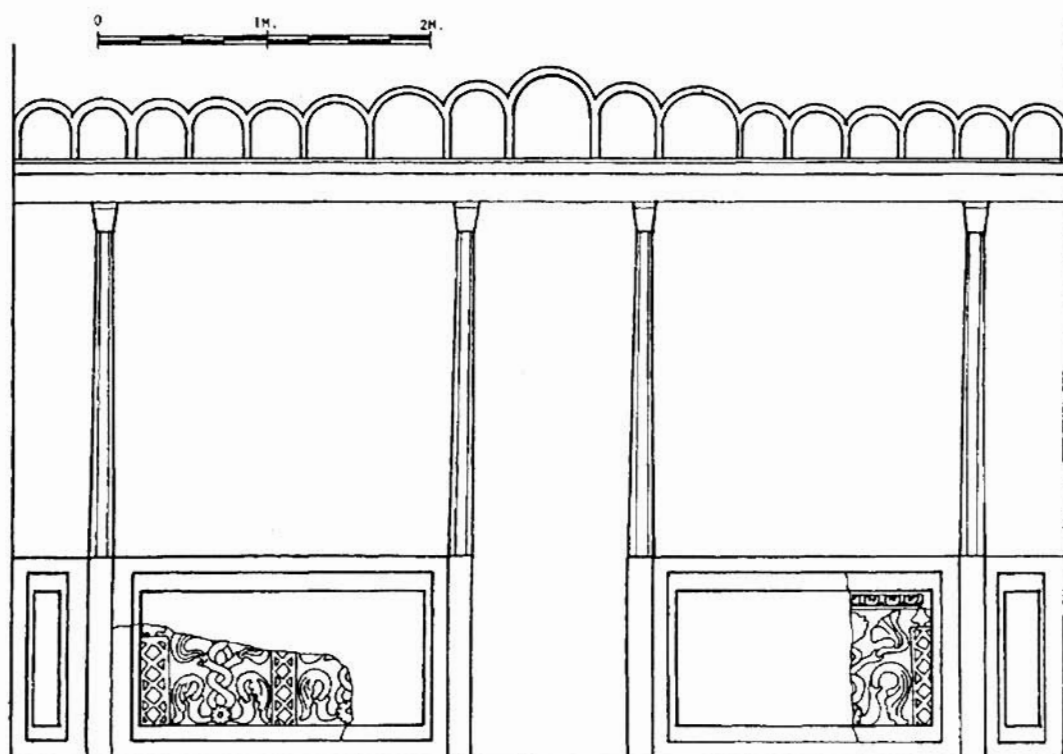


FIG. 1. Istanbul, Pantocrator Monastery, reconstruction of the templon screen
(screen drawn after A. H. S. Megaw; reconstruction of epistyle programme: Epstein)

the reconstructed Pantocrator screen were reused spolia from the early sixth-century church of St Polyeuktos.¹⁵ The reworking of the south emplacement suggests, though certainly does not prove, that Megaw's screen does not date from the twelfth century, but rather from a later adaptation, most likely for the reconsecration of the church after the Latin occupation.¹⁶ Even if the reconstructed screen of the Pantocrator dates from the

¹⁵ R. M. Harrison and N. Firatli, 'Excavations at Saraçhane in Istanbul: Fourth Preliminary Report', *DOP*, xxi (1967), 276; R. M. Harrison, 'A Constantinopolitan Capital in Barcelona', *DOP*, xxvii (1973), 297-300, esp. 299.

¹⁶ Janin suggests that the complex was rebuilt for use as a monastery between 1261 and 1265, *Eglises*, 531.

third quarter of the thirteenth century rather than the early twelfth century, it nevertheless seems to imitate an earlier open barrier as described in the typikon.

The original marble framework of the Pantocrator templon evidently was adorned by a series of images placed over its architrave. The programme of this figural decoration can be reconstructed. In 1438, Joseph, Patriarch of Constantinople, reportedly recognised parts of the Pantocrator's templon decoration in the Pala d'Oro, the sumptuous altarpiece of San Marco in Venice.¹⁷ Though the credibility of the Patriarch's comment has been questioned, there are good reasons to believe that the seven uppermost enamel plaques of the Pala d'Oro, representing the Archangel Michael, Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, the Crucifixion, the Anastasis, the Ascension, the Pentecost and the Koimesis of the Virgin did come from the Pantocrator's screen.¹⁸ After the Latin occupation of Constantinople, the Pantocrator Monastery became the site of the Venetian Podestà, allowing the Venetians every opportunity to despoil the monument before their eviction in 1261.¹⁹ On stylistic grounds, the enamels have been ascribed independently to an early twelfth-century, Constantinopolitan workshop.²⁰ The subject matter of the panels suggests that they were part of the dodekaortion, images of the Twelve Feasts of the Orthodox liturgical year. The Archangel Michael, inclining as he does to the right, seems to indicate that he was originally part of a Deesis, that is, Christ flanked by the Virgin, John the Baptist, and the Archangels, Michael and Gabriel.²¹ The most important argument in favour of the Pantocrator provenance is that the enamel plaques now incorporated into the Pala d'Oro when augmented by six further Feast images and four more Deesis panels constitute an ensemble equivalent in length to the epistyle of the Pantocrator screen (Fig. 1).²²

The Pantocrator screen, on the basis of literary, archaeological and artistic evidence, can be reasonably reconstructed as a marble templon supporting a sumptuous programme of images perhaps flanked by proskynetaria. Though the bema was restricted to the area behind the triumphal arch, there is no indication that it was separated visually from the nave. Indeed, the figural decoration of the templon is elevated above the intercolumniations of the screen or set to the side, in order to complement rather than obscure the priestly rites being carried out behind it. This screen of a major metropolitan monastic foundation provides a pattern upon which fragments, both literary and archaeological, of other barriers in Constantinople might be cautiously reassembled.

¹⁷ Sylvestre Syropoulos, *Les Mémoires du grand ecclésiastique de l'Église de Constantinople. Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le Concile de Florence (1438-9)*, ed. V. Laurent (Rome 1971), 222 sqq., lines 11 sqq. (Concilium Florentinum: documenta et scriptores, ser. B, vol. IX).

¹⁸ A catalogue of the enamels of the Pala d'Oro provides a description and measurements for each of the panels, *La Pala d'Oro*, ed. H. Hahnloser (Florence 1965), 39 sqq. (*Il Tesoro di San Marco*, testi di W. F. Volbach, A. Pertusi, B. Bischoff, H. R. Hahnloser, and G. Fiocco, 1). Hahnloser discusses the evidence for associating the plaques with the Pantocrator in his essay, 'La decorazione della parte superiore, l'opera del Boneseña, 1343-5, e l'iconostasi del secolo XII', 94 sqq. For review of the argument, and for bibliography: J. Deér, 'Die Pala d'Oro in neuer Sicht', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, LXII (1969), 308-44.

¹⁹ Janin, *Eglises*, 531.

²⁰ For instance, J. Beckwith, *Byzantine Art and Architecture* (Baltimore 1970), 118 sqq.

²¹ *La Pala d'Oro*, ed. Hahnloser, 94 sqq. For a consideration of the Deesis, see below, p. 23 sqq., fn. 89.

²² The slight differences in sizes among the Pala d'Oro enamels need not be explained by differences in provenance, as Hahnloser suggests, *Pala d'Oro*, 94 sqq. The central opening of the Pantocrator screen is off-centre in order to be on axis with the entry into the church. Megaw, 'Notes on Recent Work', 344 sqq. This would necessitate some adjustment in the size of the individual feast scenes. The plaques with the central Deesis might well be larger because of their greater significance. A. Grabar, on the basis of his calculation of the length of the reconstructed epistyle, dismisses the possibility that the Pala d'Oro panels came from the Pantocrator, 'Études critiques', *CA*, XVI (1966), 238.

The closest literary approximation to the Pantocrator screen is the templon in the palace church of Christ the Saviour described in the *Vita Basilii*.²³

Close to the above churches is the house of prayer he [Emperor Basil I (867–86)] constructed in honour of our God, the Saviour, and those who have not seen it will find its costly magnificence altogether incredible; so great a mass of silver and gold, of precious stones and pearls has been expended for its adornment. Indeed, the entire pavement is made of solid beaten silver with niello exhibiting the perfection of the jeweller's art; the walls on the right and left are also covered with an abundance of silver, picked out with gold and studded with precious stones and gleaming pearls. As for the closure that separates the choir from the nave, by Hercules, what riches are contained in it! Its columns and lower part are made entirely of silver, while the beam that is laid on top of the capitals is of pure gold, and all the wealth of India has been poured upon it. The image of our Lord, the God-man, is represented several times in enamel upon this beam.

The 'lower part' must refer to the waist-high parapet; the 'beam' is the epistyle. It is decorated, like the architrave of the Pantocrator screen, with enamel images. The fact that Christ is represented 'several times' on it suggests that there were plaques representing the principal events of His life, i.e. the Festival cycle.²⁴ A description of a templon in an account of the sacred objects in Diataxis of the Michael Attaliates' monastery of Christ tou Panoiktirmonos from 1078 indicates that while a figural sequence on a templon might be commonplace, it did not always represent scenes from the life of Christ. 'The templon has in the middle the Deesis and [on either side?] the narrative of the holy Precursor [John the Baptist]'.²⁵

²³ Theophanes continuatus, *Vita Basilii*, 330, lines 8 sqq. (Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, XLVIII, Bonn 1838). The translation is from Mango, *Sources and Documents*, 196. The Greek text reads:

γειτονεί δὲ τούτοις καὶ ὁ ἐπ' ὀνόματι τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν καὶ θεοῦ κατασκευασθεὶς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ εὐκτῆριος οἶκος, οὐ τὸ πολυτελὲς καὶ ὑπέρτιμον τοῖς οὐκ ἰδοῦσιν ἀπιστος νομισθῆσεται· τοσοῦτος ἀργυρος καὶ χρυσὸς καὶ τιμίων λίθων καὶ μαργάρων πλῆθος ἐν τῇ τούτου περιβολῇ καταβέβληται. τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἔδαφος ἅπαν ἐξ ἀργύρου σφυρηλάτου καὶ στιβαροῦ μετ' ἐγκαύσεως, τὸ τῶν χρυσοχόων ἀκριβὲς τῆς τέχνης ἐπιδεικνύμενος, κατεσκευάσται, οἱ δὲ ἐξ δεξιῶν καὶ ἐξ εὐωνύμων τοῖχοι ἀργυρον ἀφθονον καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπικείμενον ἔχουσι, διηνηθισμένον χρυσῷ καὶ τιμίοις πεποικιλμένον λίθοις καὶ μαργάρων λαμπρότησιν. ἡ δὲ διείργουσα τὰ ἄδυτα τοῦ θεοῦ οἴκου τούτου κιγκλῖς, Ἡράκλεις, ὅσον ὄλβον ἐν ἑαυτῇ περιεῖληφεν! ἢς οἱ στῦλοι μὲν καὶ τὰ κάτωθεν ἐξ ἀργύρου διόλου τὴν σύστασιν ἔχουσι, ἡ δὲ ταῖς κεφαλῆσι τούτων ἐπικειμένη δοκὸς ἐκ καθαροῦ χρυσοῦ πάσα συνέστηκε, τὸν πλοῦτον πάντα τὸν ἐξ Ἰνδῶν περιεχυμένον πάντοθεν ἔχουσα· ἐν ἧ κατὰ πολλὰ μέρη καὶ ἡ θεανδρική τοῦ κυρίου μορφή μετὰ χυμεύσεως ἐκτετύπεται.

²⁴ Two other passages allude to open, magnificently decorated sanctuary closures. In the same *Vita Basilii*, the following is part of the description of the Nea Ecclesia:

The barrier that separates the sanctuary from the nave, including the columns that pertain to it and the lintel that is above them, the seats that are within [the sanctuary] and the steps that are in front of them, and the holy tables themselves—all of these are compacted of silver suffused with gold, of precious stones and costly pearls...

καὶ αἱ τῶν ἐκτὸς διείργουσαι τὰ θυσιαστήρια κιγκλίδες καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς περίστουλα καὶ τὰ ἄνωθεν οἶον ὑπέρθυρα χρηματίζοντα οἱ τε ἐντὸς θᾶκοι καὶ αἱ πρὸ τούτων βαθμίδες καὶ αὐταὶ αἱ ἱερὰ τράπεζαι, ἐξ ἀργύρου πάντα περιεχυμένον ἔχοντος τὸν χρυσὸν καὶ λίθοις τιμίοις ἐκ μαργαριτῶν ἡμφιεσμένοις πολυτελῶν τὴν σύμπληξιν καὶ σύστασιν ἔχουσι.

Theophanes continuatus, *Vita Basilii*, 226, lines 8 sqq.; Mango, *Sources and Documents*, 194. The other description is found in Photius's Homily X, concerning the church of the Virgin of the Pharos. Peristyle here describes the templon, implying an open colonnade:

Elsewhere gold is twined into chains, but more wonderful than gold is the composition of the holy table. The little doors and columns of the sanctuary together with the peristyle are covered with silver...

B. Laourdas, *Photii Homiliai*, supplement 12 to *Hellenika* (Thessalonike 1959), 100 sqq.; Mango, *Sources and Documents*, 185 sqq. Also see R. J. H. Jenkins and C. Mango, 'The Date and Significance of the Tenth Homily of Photius', *DOP*, IX-X (1955–6), 123–40, esp. 123 sqq.

²⁵ K. N. Sathas, *Mesaiōnikē Bibliothēkē*, vol. A (Venice 1872), 47. The Greek text reads: Τὸ τέμπλον ἔχον καὶ αὐτὸ μέσον τὴν Δέ[ησιν] καὶ τοῦ τιμίου καὶ ἁγίου Προδρόμου τὴν διήγησιν. Sathas read Δέ[σποιναν] instead of Δέ[ησιν]. Chatzidakis has corrected this interpretation, 'Ikonostas', col. 338.

A less luxurious screen, but one of the same basic form as those of the churches of the Pantocrator and the Saviour, is described in a deed granting the Genoese the palace of Botaniates which included a chapel. The deed dates from 1202, but the building probably was constructed in the tenth or eleventh century.²⁶

The partition of the bema consists of four posts of green [marble] with bronze collars, two perforated closure slabs, a marble entablature and a gilded wooden templon.

Here the decoration above the epistyle is realised in wood rather than in enamel, as in the Pantocrator and Saviour. Perhaps through analogy with the gilded wooden beams of St Katherines on Sinai, the panels at St John Lampidistas on Cyprus or the fragment in Leningrad which are discussed below, it is possible to suggest that this 'gilded wooden templon' was adorned with figural images.²⁷

In addition to these few literary references, there is further archaeological and art historical evidence for the form and decoration of the Constantinopolitan templon. Open marble screens can, for instance, be hypothesised on the basis of marble fragments for three further churches: the monastery of Constantine Lips, Kalenderhane Camii and the church of the Theotokos tēs Pammakaristou.

The church of the Theotokos, Katholikon of the monastery founded by Constantine Lips in 907, retains much of its high quality architectural sculpture. Other fragments, excavated by Macridy in 1929, are now in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum.²⁸ Among these fragments are pieces forming part of a marble slab ornamented with a peacock set frontally. Fragments of a matching slab have been found more recently in the church.²⁹ Originally these slabs would have measured approximately one metre in length, an appropriate size for a closure consisting of an opening flanked by colonnettes bearing an epistyle, and paired marble parapets. As the opening to the sanctuary of the church is only 3.63 metres wide, no further uprights or intercolumnar closures would be necessary. Such a solution was first suggested by Grabar and later accepted by Mango and Hawkins.³⁰

More ambiguous is the evidence for a marble chancel barrier in the twelfth-century church now known only by its Turkish name, Kalenderhane Camii. On the eastern piers of the building are sculptural fragments in the form of a pair of marble frames (Pls I and VI A).³¹ These frames consist of two registers, the lower one made up of short colonnettes with crudely carved cushion capitals supporting impost blocks and a narrow cornice carved in low relief with an acanthus leaf motif. Above are two slender *verde antique* uprights of rectangular section. The capitals of these elegant piers were disfigured and

²⁶ *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi*, III, eds F. Miklosich and J. Müller (Vienna 1865), 55; translation from Mango, *Sources and Documents*, 239 sqq. The Greek text reads: ἡ περιφραγὴ τοῦ βήματος διὰ στημονόρων τεσσάρων πρᾶσινων μετὰ στεφάνων χαλκῶν, στήθων τρυπητῶν δύο, κοσμήτου μαρμαρίνου καὶ τέμπλου ξυλίνου κεχρυσωμένου.

²⁷ See below, p. 15 sqq and fn. 67.

²⁸ The accession numbers are: 4309–67, 4369–71, 4380, 4569 and 4570. For discussions of the church and its sculpture: Grabar, *Sculptures*, I, 100 sqq.; T. Macridy, 'The Monastery of Lips and the Burials of the Palaeologi', *DOP*, xviii (1964), 253–78, A. H. S. Megaw, 'The Original Form of the Theotokos Church of Constantine Lips', *ibid.*, 279–99, and C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, 'Additional Notes on the Monastery of Lips', *ibid.*, 299–315.

²⁹ C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, 'Additional Finds at Fenari Isa Camii', *DOP*, xxii (1968), 179.

³⁰ Grabar, *Sculptures*, I, 106 sqq.; Mango and Hawkins, 'Additional Notes on the Monastery of Lips', 305.

³¹ E. Freshfield, 'Notes on the Church of the Kalenders in Constantinople', *Archaeology*, 2nd ser., v (1897), 431–8, esp. 435 sqq.; van Millingen, *Churches*, 186. The best photographs published since the restoration of the church are found in T. Mathews, *Byzantine Churches of Constantinople: A Photographic Survey* (Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park and London 1976), 184 sqq.

adorned with a simplified acanthus-derived ornament in the Turkish period. The upper cornices are the most beautifully carved pieces in the *mélange*. The one on the north is adorned with a central, plastically modelled bust of Christ, arched acanthus leaves and, at the ends, the Virgin and John the Baptist. The one on the south has a central *hetoimasia*, or empty throne representing the presence of Christ, acanthus and probably angels. Both these programmes are set above a register of low relief leaf patterns bordered by the bead and reel. Van Millingen suggested that they framed images of proskynesis of the type suggested by the Pantocrator *typikon*.³² However, frames of this type remaining both in Constantinople and in the provinces are convincing sculptural entities, almost universally formed of an elaborately carved arch supported on colonnettes, like that in the Kariye Camii (Pl. IIA).³³ The heterogeneity of the Kalenderhane Camii 'frames' would be unworthy of the capital. It is equally unlikely that the fragments, as they stand, represent the remains of a *templon* screen, as Freshfield proposed.³⁴ Had the upper cornices projected across the apse opening to form the epistyle of a sanctuary closure as he hypothesised, the screen would have been perilously high and without parallel. Also, the *Deesis* is normally the central theme of the epistyle programme, not a secondary subject relegated to the side of the beam.³⁵

Because of the difficulties in the alternatives so far put forward, further speculation seems in order.³⁶ The finely carved upper cornices of the Kalenderhane Camii 'frames' are fragments. As evidenced by the unfinished nature of their terminations, both pieces have been cut down to fit their present location. This, in addition to the inorganic relation of the various parts of the Kalenderhane Camii 'frames', suggests that the present arrangement is a late construction of reused pieces of marble. The character of the stiff, arching acanthus and its combination with more abstract, low relief vegetal ornament and the bead and reel motif, associates the upper cornices with the carving of the sepulchral monument on the north wall of the *parecclesion* of the Kariye Camii and the *proskynetaria* frame in the *naos* of the same Palaeologan foundation (Pl. IIA).³⁷ It is possible, then, that the upper cornices of the Kalenderhane Camii 'frames' are late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century in date, stemming from the restoration of the church to the Orthodox rite after the re-establishment of Byzantine control of Constantinople. They may, in fact, be fragments of the epistyle of a Palaeologan *templon*, incorporated into the decoration of the eastern piers only when the church was turned into a mosque. The revetment of this area was certainly altered at that time. The Palaeologan screen would have consisted of four *verde antique* uprights supporting an epistyle with a

³² Van Millingen, *Churches*, 186.

³³ Ø. Hjort, 'The Sculpture of the Kariye Camii', *DOP*, xxxiii (1979), 199-289, esp. 232 sqq. Also see, D. Oates, 'A Summary Report on the Excavations of the Byzantine Institute in the Kariye Camii, 1957-8', *DOP*, xiv (1960), 223-31; H. Belting, 'Zur Skulptur aus der Zeit um 1300 in Konstantinopel', *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, dritte folge, xxiii (1972), 63-111, esp. 75 sqq.; and Grabar, *Sculptures*, II, 132. For a contrary point of view, H. Buchwald, 'The Carved Stone Ornament of the High Middle Ages in San Marco, Venice', *Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft*, xiii (1964), 137-70, esp. 156 sqq.

³⁴ Freshfield, 'Notes on the Church of the Kalenders', 435 sqq.

³⁵ See below, p. 23 sqq.

³⁶ The original use and reuse of these impressive marble fragments will no doubt be fully clarified with the final publication of the excavations and restoration of the Kalenderhane Camii carried out under the direction of C. L. Striker and K. D. Kuban. The sculpture is being published by U. Peschlow.

³⁷ See above, fn. 33.

central Deesis with subsidiary flanking themes, one of which was the hetoimasia.³⁸ Unfortunately, no evidences of the screen's emplacement were found in the walls or floor of the sanctuary in the course of the restoration of the building carried out under the direction of C. L. Striker and K. D. Kuban.³⁹ Consequently, the reconstruction of a templon for the Kalenderhane Camii must remain hypothetical.

Fragments of a templon have also been found in the main eleventh- or twelfth-century church of the Theotokos Pammakaristos (the Fetiye Camii).⁴⁰ Among the fragments associated with the screen are a section of epistyle, 78cm. in length, with the bust of an Apostle carved in high relief, a portion of an ornamentally carved parapet slab, and a capital, adorned on three sides with busts identified as Peter between John the Evangelist and Matthew (Pl. II B).⁴¹ If all these pieces did belong to the Fetiye Camii screen, it would have had a form similar to that of the Fenari Isa Camii, being made up of two colonnettes with capitals decorated with the Princes of the Apostles and the four Evangelists supporting an architrave ornamented with the Apostolic college. Whether or not there was a central Deesis on the original screen is impossible to say. This reconstructed screen would not, however, stem from the Middle Byzantine period. Belting has included the epistyle fragment and capital in a series of sculptures dating from around 1300.⁴² Like the pieces in the Kalenderhane Camii, the fragments found in the Fetiye Camii are the remains not of the original liturgical fittings of the Middle Byzantine foundation, but of the Orthodox restoration of the monastery after the Latin occupation.

The original templa of these Constantinopolitan churches may well have been included in the booty appropriated by the Crusaders after Constantinople fell to them in 1204. Indeed, evidence for the programme of the Middle Byzantine epistyle is still found in the West. As has already been mentioned, the figural decoration of the Pantocrator screen may be reconstructed on the basis of the enamel plaques presently incorporated in the Pala d'Oro in San Marco in Venice.⁴³ An even more elaborate epistyle programme has been proposed by Weitzmann for an unidentified tenth-century church in Constantinople on the basis of a series of ivory carvings now scattered in western collections.⁴⁴ On the basis of virtually identical size, shape, style and workmanship, Weitzmann associates the ivory plaques of Christ, the Virgin and Saints Peter and Paul in Bamberg, the pair of ivories representing the Presentation of Christ in the Temple in Leningrad and a fragment of the Archangel Gabriel in Dumbarton Oaks with a Constantinopolitan templon screen.

³⁸ The *verde antique* uprights are reminiscent of those mentioned in the description of the church in the Palace of Botaniates. See above, p. 7.

³⁹ Dr Judith Herrin kindly provided me with this information.

⁴⁰ C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, 'Report on Field Work in Istanbul and Cyprus', *DOP*, xviii (1964), 319-40, esp. 331 sqq.; H. Belting, 'Zur Skulptur aus der Zeit um 1300', 70 sqq.; Grabar, *Sculptures*, II, nos 130-1. Compare H. Belting, 'Konstantinopol'skaja kapitel' v Leningrade. Rel'efnaja plastika pozdnevizantijskogo perioda v Kahrie Dzami', *Vizantija južnye slavjane i drevnjaja Rus' zapadnaja Evropa. Iskušstvo i kul'tura (Festschrift V. N. Lazarev)*, ed. V. N. Grashchenkov (Moscow 1973), 136-55.

⁴¹ Grabar, *Sculptures*, II, 131. Mango and Hawkins identify the figures as John (?), Peter and Matthew (?), 'Report on Field Work in Istanbul', 331.

⁴² Belting, 'Zur Skulptur aus der Zeit um 1300', 70 sqq.

⁴³ See above, p. 5 sqq.

⁴⁴ K. Weitzmann, 'Die byzantinischen Elfenbeine eines Bamberger Graduale und ihre ursprüngliche Verwendung', *Festschrift für K. H. Usener* (Marburg 1967), 11-20; idem, 'Diptix slonovoj kosti iz Ermitaza, odnosjascijsjs k krugu imperatora Romana', *Vizantijskij Vremennik*, xxxii (1971), 142 sqq.; idem, *Ivories and Steatites, Catalogue of Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection* (Washington 1972), III, 101 sqq.

Weitzmann proposes that the epistyle programme from which the pieces came would have included not only a Deesis with Archangels and the Feast cycle, but also the twelve Apostles. Such a beam would have been between 4.34 and 4.90 metres in length, about the same width as the bema opening of Theotokos Pammakaristos, for instance.

The lintel of the east portal of the Baptistery at Pisa may provide another example of *spolia* from a templon screen (Pls IV_{A,B}).⁴⁵ This lintel sculpture now is over four metres in length. The original size of the piece cannot be determined as its terminations have been recarved with palm trees. The surface of the beam also may have been reworked, as the wings of the Archangels are more schematised than the flesh or draperies of the figures.⁴⁶ The full modelling of the drapery and the three-dimensional asceticism of the figures support the twelfth-century dating of the sculpture. Certainly the detailed treatment of the figures contrasts with the generalised handling of the Fetiye Camii busts. Haloes and small rectangles between each image at the upper border have lost their original inlay. The squares presumably framed the figures' identifying inscriptions. The oak leaf border below was carved separately to fit its present position. Conversely, the incongruity of the style of the Deesis piece within the richly ornamented Italian portal clearly betrays its Byzantine sources. While the style of the lintel carving makes a Byzantine provenance for the piece possible, its programme—particularly the alternating Archangels and Evangelists on either side of the Deesis—has no known parallel in the East, as Weitzmann has pointed out. The sculpture may, however, have been inspired by Byzantine booty or wrought by a Byzantine artist. Certainly the Pisans had a share in the spoils of 1204. Unfortunately, nothing is known of the Greek monastery of the Saviour tōn Apologothētōn, which was given to the Pisans by the legate Peter of Capua after the fall of Constantinople.⁴⁷

What little evidence remains seems to indicate that the Constantinopolitan templon during the Middle Byzantine period consisted of a colonnade closed at the bottom by ornamental parapet slabs and supporting an epistyle decorated with a figural programme, which often included a central Deesis. Evidently, while the quality of the sculpture may have changed, the same programmatic and formal arrangement also typified the sanctuary closure of the early fourteenth century, after the termination of the Latin occupation.

TEMPLON EVIDENCE FROM THE PROVINCES

The sketchy picture of the Middle Byzantine templon screen derived from Constantinopolitan evidence can be partially filled in through reference to the richer remains of the Byzantine provinces. However, it cannot be presumed, as it sometimes is, that all features found outside the capital necessarily mirror missing elements in Constantinople itself. Included here is a brief discussion of the remains of a few of the more complete or more

⁴⁵ This piece was brought to my attention by T. G. Peterson. S. Bettini, 'Un libro su San Marco', *Arte Veneta*, xv (1961), 263-77, esp. 274; *Venezia e bizanzio*, *Catalogo*, ed. I. Furlan (Venice 1974), no. 32a. For the most recent discussion of the piece, especially its iconography, K. Weitzmann, 'The Painting of Latin Icons in the East and the *maniera graeca* in the West' (unpublished paper, Fifth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, Dumbarton Oaks, 28 October 1979).

⁴⁶ For the recarving of Byzantine marble by Italians, see, O. Demus, *The Church of San Marco, Architecture and Sculpture* (Washington 1960), 120 sqq.

⁴⁷ Janin, *Eglises*, 46.

significant *templa* and epistyle fragments, as well as several of the more problematic exemplars.⁴⁸ While this enumeration is far from exhaustive, it is representative. The relevance of this material to the Constantinopolitan chancel barrier is treated in the final section of the paper.

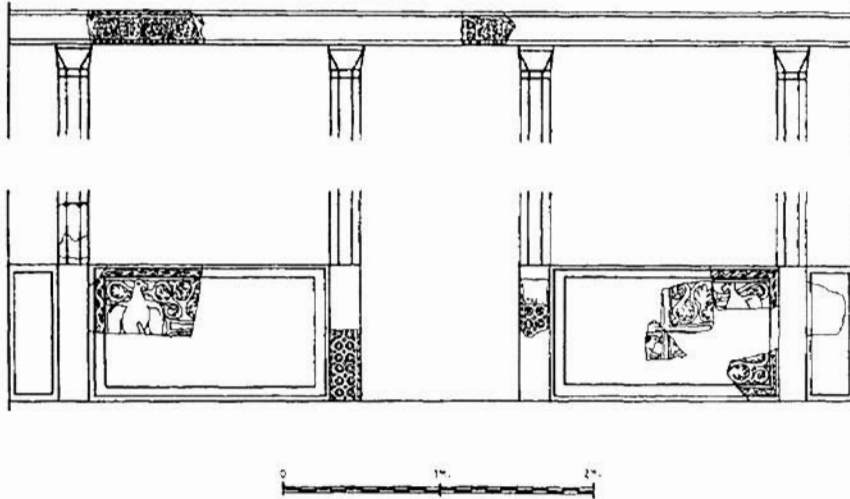


FIG. 2. Skripou, church of the Koimesis, reconstruction of the *templa* (after A. H. S. Megaw)

One of the earliest surviving Middle Byzantine *templa*, that of the church of the Koimesis at Skripou in Greece dating from 873/4, has been reconstructed in an exemplary publication by A. H. S. Megaw.⁴⁹ The bema closure is made up of a colonnade with four octagonal supports carrying an elaborately carved architrave. The placement of the piers, two flanking the central entrance, two others close to the sides of the sanctuary, is similar to the reconstructed screen of the Pantocrator in Constantinople (Figs 1 and 2). Birds, animals and crosses as well as vegetal elements make up the ornamental repertory of the

⁴⁸ For a bibliography of published screens and screen fragments, Chatzidakis, 'Ikonostas', cols 326 sqq. Where possible, I have avoided including screens that I have not seen. The fragments on Athos have, in consequence, not been included here; see, L. Brehier, 'Anciennes clôtures des choeur antérieures aux iconostases dans les monastères de l'Athos', *Atti del V congresso internazionale di studi bizantini* (Rome 1940), II, 48-56. I have also excluded Italian examples of Byzantine or byzantinising sanctuary closures. Although they are often quoted in surveys, they are distinct from their eastern counterparts. The screen at Torcello is one of the most monumental and best preserved eleventh-century closures still extant. Its architrave carries thirteenth-century panel paintings of the Virgin and saints in a way which might be cited as a parallel for the reconstructed Pantocrator screen. Nevertheless, in plan it resembles nothing known in the Empire. For a discussion of the parapet slabs, see H. Buchwald, 'The Carved Stone Ornament of the High Middle Ages in San Marco, Venice', *Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft*, XI-XII (1962-3), 169-209, esp. 202 sqq. I. Andreescu is presently working on this material, 'Altinum-Torcello: the Earliest Date of the Cathedral of Santa Maria, an Art Historical Survey', *Abstracts of the Sixth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference* (Oberlin, Ohio 1980), 13. Equally, the 'iconostasis' of wood and marble at Santa Maria in Valle Porclaneta is tempting to use as an example of a Byzantine screen. Its architrave has a lower register of intertwined medallions and a central register of fifteen narrow arches on either side of three much larger ones, suitable for a Deesis and saints. However, the date of this closure is not clearly established as Middle Byzantine, although Bertaux suggested a twelfth-century date for historical reasons, E. Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie Meridionale* (Paris 1904), II, 554 sqq. Most basically, it is suspect to ascribe to any church of the Latin rite a screen identical in form to that used contemporaneously in an Orthodox monument. See below, p. 25 and fn. 106.

⁴⁹ A. H. S. Megaw, 'The Skripou Screen', *Annual of the British School at Athens*, LXI (1966), 1-32.

marble screen. Only the central intercolumniation of the colonnade is open, the other four are closed at the bottom by parapet slabs which are decorated with a central cross. The pastophories, apsed side chambers flanking the sanctuary, have similar but smaller closures.

The remarkable screen of the tenth-century church at Sebastia (Selciklar Köy) in Phrygia is also well published.⁵⁰ This sanctuary closure is a colonnade with three intercolumniations. The central one is open; the two side spaces are partially closed at the bottom by paired marble slabs, decorated with birds, animals and geometric motives, set between low uprights. Each of the surviving balusters is decorated with a medallion of a martyr as well as non-figural ornament. Most impressive, however, is the epistyle of the screen. In knotted medallions are busts of St Eutychios and thirteen Apostles and Evangelists flanking the central depictions of the Deesis with archangels. All the figural decoration was originally coloured by mastic inlay. On the upper border of the piece is an inscription referring to the donor, the bishop Eustrathios.

The church of the Holy Apostles in the Agora at Athens, which has been dated to the late tenth or early eleventh century, has been restored with a simple screen of three bays made up of fragments found in the vicinity.⁵¹ The closure slabs, epistyle and colonnettes are decorated with non-figural ornament. In contrast to most sanctuary barriers which are set between the piers of an extended bema, this screen is placed between the east columns of a centralised, tetraconch church. Even with the change in plan, the traditional templon was retained, despite its unsatisfactory juxtaposition with the marble columns of the interior (Pl. IIIA).

The two churches in the monastic complex at Hosios Loukas in Phocis both retain considerable fragments of their templa. The smaller north church, now dedicated to the Panagia, dates to the tenth century.⁵² Its sculptural programme has been regarded as homogeneous and contemporary with the original construction of the building; in fact, the proskynetaria frames may be twelfth-century additions.⁵³ Its central screen consists of an epistyle supported by four colonnettes. Lower parts of the screen, including the parapet slabs, are reconstructed. The pastophory epistyles are similar in form, though narrower. Their original closure slabs have also been lost. Post-medieval icons in wooden frames have been placed above each of the templa and wired precariously within the intercolumniations of the main screen. Surviving on the pier between the sanctuary and diaconicon is the arch-in-rectangle frame of a monumental proskynesis image. A fragment of the complementary frame from the north pier has also been found.⁵⁴ Originally these elements, like the later proskynetaria frame in the Kariye Camii in Constantinople, were supported on paired colonnettes. The sculpture of the templa, like the capitals of the church, retains vestiges of its original polychrome decoration (Pl. III B). Of equally high quality, though of a more plastic sculptural style, are the screens of the early

⁵⁰ N. Firatli, 'Découverte d'une église byzantine à Sébaste de Phrygie', *CA*, xix (1969), 151-66, esp. 161 sqq.

⁵¹ A. Frantz, *The Athenian Agora*, vol. xx, *The Church of the Holy Apostles* (Princeton, N. J. 1971), 14 sqq.

⁵² M. Chatzidakis, 'A propos de la date et du fondateur de Saint-Luc', *CA*, xix (1969), 127-50; E. G. Stikas, *To Oikodomikon Chronikon tēs Monēs Louka Phōkidos* (Athens 1970), 1 sqq.

⁵³ Grabar, *Sculptures*, II, 50 sqq.; L. Bouras, *The Sculpture of Hosios Loukas*, in press, for a reassessment of the chronology of the sculpture.

⁵⁴ G. Tsimas and P. Papahadzikis, Athens, *Hosios Loukas*, IV, nos 39 and 52.

eleventh-century Katholikon of the monastery.⁵⁵ The forms of the screens are similar to those of the Panagia. The epistyle is, however, decorated with griffins as well as ornamental designs. Above the epistyle is a secondary lintel with five corbels simply decorated with interlace. It is possible that icons were supported above this piece and lamps suspended from its corbels.⁵⁶

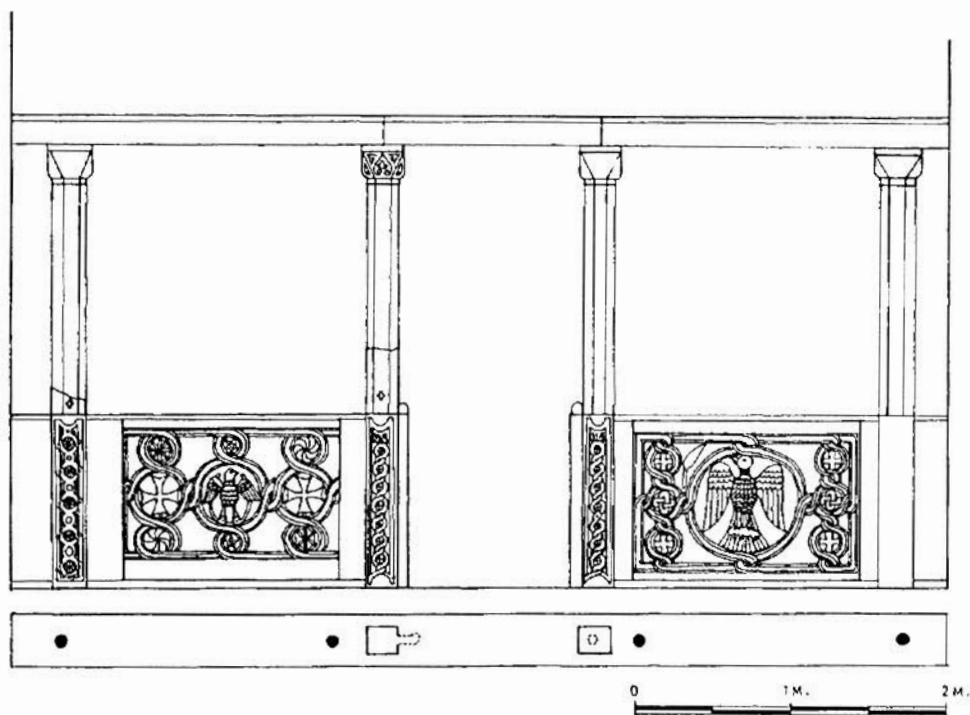


FIG. 3. Ohrid, St Sophia, reconstruction of the templon screen (drawing: Epstein)

The present form of the church of St Sophia in Ohrid is generally ascribed to the mid eleventh century.⁵⁷ Fragments of its screen were incorporated into the pavement and exterior walls of the building when it was converted into a mosque. These slab pieces as well as members now stored in the prothesis apse allow a tentative reconstruction of the closure (Fig. 3). It consisted of four colonnettes supporting an epistyle and three intercolumniations, two of which were closed by parapet slabs decorated with eagles, one attacking a snake, the other a rabbit. Evidence for a similar templon is found on the entrance step to the diaconicon. On the west faces of the two east piers are fragments of the proskynetaria images: to the left, the Virgin of Tenderness, to the right the enthroned

⁵⁵ See above, fn. 52. Grabar, *Sculptures*, II, 50 sqq.

⁵⁶ A drawing made by V. G. Barskij in 1745 shows a row of icons under small arches above the epistyle. There is, however, no way of establishing the date of those images, nor the date of the intercolumnar images which are also shown in the scheme. *Stranstvovanija Basilja Grigorica Barskago*, ed. N. P. Barsukov (St Petersburg 1887), IV, plate following p. 147.

⁵⁷ R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (Baltimore 1975), 328 sqq. Also see review by H. Hallensleben in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, LXVI (1973), 125.

Mother of God.⁵⁸ From the fresco ground, it is clear that these images had arched frames, one of which has been incorporated into the south wall of the church.⁵⁹

Like St Sophia in Ohrid, the Katholikon of Daphni near Athens retains nothing *in situ* of its original late eleventh-century marble templon. On the basis of sculptural fragments and emplacement marks on the bema step and piers, however, Orlandos reconstructed a screen which in basic form is similar to those in Hosios Loukas: a central closure with four colonnettes and two parapet slabs flanking an entrance; two side screens; and on the west face of the east piers, marble proskynetaria frames.⁶⁰ What does remain of this scheme are the upper fragments of the two proskynetaria images, Christ on the right and the forehead and veil of the figure on the left.⁶¹

The simple screen in the monastic church of the Eleousa at Veljusa is of interest because its date, 1080, and patron, Bishop Manuel of Stroumitsa, are known from the monastery's typikon.⁶² The screen of the main apse has been reconstructed by Miljković-Pepik with three intercolumniations, the side two filled at the bottom by marble slabs. The epistyle is carved with twenty-two arches, each filled with a debased acanthus leaf design. Above the entrance is carved a Maltese cross in a medallion.

In the church of the Panagia tēs Gōnias on Santorini is one of the most beautiful screens surviving from the Middle Byzantine period (Pl. VA). The church is dated by a lost inscription to the reign of Alexius I Comnenos (1081–1118).⁶³ The screen probably dates from the same time. The closures of the main and side apses have been preserved in their entirety, including an epistyle, four uprights and paired parapet slabs in the central bay. All the pieces are ornamented with geometric patterns realised in champlévé technique. It retains with splendid effect its dark blue and red mastic inlay. At present, the epistyle is surmounted by an eighteenth-century (?) wooden structure enframing icons. On the top of this piece are corbels from which lamps are suspended.

The closure of the sanctuary apse has been reconstructed in the church of St Panteleimon at Nerezi in Yugoslavia, which is dated to 1164.⁶⁴ This screen is made up of four octagonal colonnettes supporting an epistyle decorated with running acanthus. The lower parts of the four intercolumniations flanking the central opening are closed by parapet slabs. The slabs are decorated with birds, animals and abstract floral motifs in interlaced rectangles. On the eastern piers on either side of the templon are proskynetaria representing a standing Virgin carrying the Christ Child and St Panteleimon. They are enframed with lavishly sculptured trefoil arches supported on coupled columns. One of

⁵⁸ P. Miljković-Pepik, 'La fresque de la Vierge avec le Christ du pilier situé au nord de l'iconostase de Sainte Sophie à Ochrid', *Akten des XI. Internationalen Byzantinistenkongresses, Munich, 1958* (Munich 1960), 388–91.

⁵⁹ Photographs of this piece and other fragments from the templon are found in I. Nikolajević-Stojković, 'Contribution à l'étude de la sculpture byzantine de la Macédoine et de la Serbie', *Zbornik Radova, Srpska Akad. Nauka, Vizantoloki Institut*, iv (1956), figs 9 sqq.

⁶⁰ A. K. Orlandos, 'Neōtera curēmata eis tēn Monēn Daphniou', *Archeion tōn Byzantinōn Mnēmēiōn tēs Hellados*, viii (1955–6), 67–99.

⁶¹ E. Diez and O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaics in Greece, Hosios Lucas and Daphni* (Cambridge, Mass. 1931), fig. 65.

⁶² P. Miljković-Pepik, 'The Altar Screen from the Monastery of the Mother of God Eleousa in Veljusa', *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloki Institut*, vi (1960), 137–44. For the typikon, see L. Petit, *Le monastère de N. D. de Pitié*, extract from the *Bulletin de l'Institut Archéologique Russe à Constantinople* (Sophia 1900), 1–153, esp. 69 sqq.

⁶³ This screen was brought to my attention by L. Bouras, who also facilitated my visit to the monument: A. K. Orlandos, 'H Piskopē tēs Santorēnēs', *Archeion tōn Byzantinōn Mnēmēiōn tēs Hellados*, viii (1951), 178–224, esp. 190 sqq.

⁶⁴ N. Okunev, 'Iconostase du XIe siècle à Nérèz', *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, iii (1929), 5–21, pls I and III.

these frames survives. Polychrome marble is simulated in fresco below the sills of the proskynetaria.

Another twelfth-century screen exists in a fragmentary form in the church at Samari near Messenia.⁶⁵ This templon was made up of two uprights (now missing) supporting an epistyle elaborately carved with griffins at the end, an arch in the centre with flanking ornamental bosses and isolated acanthus leaves. The west faces of the piers of the apse also retain sculptured marble frames for proskynetaria.

In addition to those screens of the ninth to twelfth centuries which can be reconstructed within their monumental context, there are numerous fragments of closures which are worth mentioning because of their figural decoration.⁶⁶ In the museum of Thebes there is a ninth-century epistyle fragment decorated with busts of Christ and the Virgin, possibly part of a Deesis, as well as three busts of Apostles, all carved in contiguous medallions.⁶⁷ Christ flanked by the Virgin and John the Baptist in medallions, with seraphim in the spandrels, ornament a ninth- or tenth-century epistyle fragment in Afyon Karahisar. The piece also carries a partial inscription, reading: '... mayst thou intercede with my Lord for the monk ...'⁶⁸ Another fragment in the museum at Smyrna has again the Deesis as its central ornament, in this instance inlaid with coloured mastic to make it more prominent. Unfortunately no convincing date has been given to this piece.⁶⁹ Even more interesting than these marble fragments are the wooden epistyle beams at St Katherine's on Mount Sinai.⁷⁰ In that collection there are six beams dated between the eleventh and thirteenth

⁶⁵ G. Millet, *Catalogue des négatifs de la collection chrétienne et byzantine fondée par G. Millet*, nouv. édn (Paris 1955), 117; Grabar, *Sculptures*, II, 99 sqq. It is possible that the fleshy acanthus leaves extending from the epistyle functioned as corbels to support hanging lamps.

⁶⁶ Some fragments of epistyles contain busts of saints or scenes only, but may have originally included a central Deesis. For instance, there is in the Museum of Chios, a fragment crudely incised with the busts of saints in medallions, including St Isidore, *Byzantine Art, a European Art, Catalogue of an exhibition in Athens* (Athens 1964), no. 26. SS Philip, Makarios, Luke and Panteleimon are similarly represented in a piece in the Museum at Afyon Karahisar. Like the previous example, it probably dates from the tenth century. W. M. Calder, W. K. C. Guthrie, and W. H. Buckler, *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua* (Publications of the American Society for Archaeological Research in Asia Minor) IV, *Monuments and Documents from Eastern Asia and Western Galatia* (Manchester 1933), 13, no. 40, pl. 17. There is in the Hermitage in Leningrad the fragment of an epistyle perhaps from Athos decorated with painted half-figures of the Apostle Philip, St Theodore Stratelates and St Demetrius under carved arches. Lazarev, 'Trois fragments', 117 sqq. Three full-length figures of the Apostles James, Philip and Luke in the Byzantine Museum in Athens are ascribed to an eleventh-century templon screen. Even without a central Deesis, a screen containing all twelve Apostles would have to be at least 3.76 m. in length. G. Soteriou, *Odegos Byzantinou Mouseiou* (Athens 1924), cik. 10. In the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos and dating from the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century are parts of an epistyle beam decorated with representations of scenes from the life of Christ and from the life of the Virgin, all under arches. M. Chatzidakis, 'Eikones epistyliou apo to Agion Oros', *Deltion tēs christianikēs archaiologikēs Hetairias*, IV, pt 4 (1965), 377 sqq. Grabar proposed that the marble, inlaid icon of St Eudocia found in Constantine Lips's church originally came from its epistyle decoration, *Sculptures*, I, 110 sqq. This suggestion has been rightly rejected by Mango and Hawkins, 'Additional Notes on the Monastery of Lips', 305 sqq. Two later series of panel paintings are perhaps worth noting here. The scenes of the Washing of the Feet and Christ in Gethsemane of the thirteenth century are enclosed in slightly pointed arches within a square frame. Old photographs in the Stylianou collection show this piece along with others as part of the epistyle decoration of the monastery of St John Lampadiste in Cyprus; *Byzantines Eikones tēs Kyprou* (Mouseio Mpenakē, Athens, 1 September — 30 November 1976). A complete epistyle, 3.53 m. in length, including twenty-three scenes and two prophets and dating from the fourteenth or fifteenth century, is now in the narthex of the monastery of St John Lampadiste; its original provenance is unknown: *Byzantines Eikones tēs Kyprou*, no. 31.

⁶⁷ A. Orlandos, 'Glypta tou Mouseiou Thēbon', *Archeion tōn Byzantinōn Mnēmōn tēs Hellados*, V (1939-40), 126 sqq.

⁶⁸ W. H. Buckler and W. M. Calder, *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua* (Publications of the American Society for Archaeological Research in Asia Minor), VI, *Monuments and Documents from Phrygia and Caria* (Manchester 1939), 122, no. 359, pl. 62.

⁶⁹ A. Orlandos, 'Christianika glypta tou Mouseiou Smyrnēs', *Archeion tōn Byzantinōn Mnēmōn tēs Hellados*, III (1937), 128-52, esp. 142.

⁷⁰ G. and M. Soteriou, *Ikones tēs Monēs Sina* (Athens 1958), 102 sqq.; also see K. Weitzmann, 'A Group of Early Twelfth-Century Sinai Icons Attributed to Cyprus', *Studies in Memory of David Talbot Rice*, eds G. Robertson and G. Henderson (Edinburgh 1975), 47-63.

century, all of which are decorated with a central Deesis. In three of the epistyles the Deesis is flanked by scenes from the life of Christ. In two others the Deesis is complemented by images from the life of the Virgin and the miracles of St Eustratios, respectively, instead of the normal feast cycle. Each subject is enframed by a painted arch. The original location of these beams is not known.

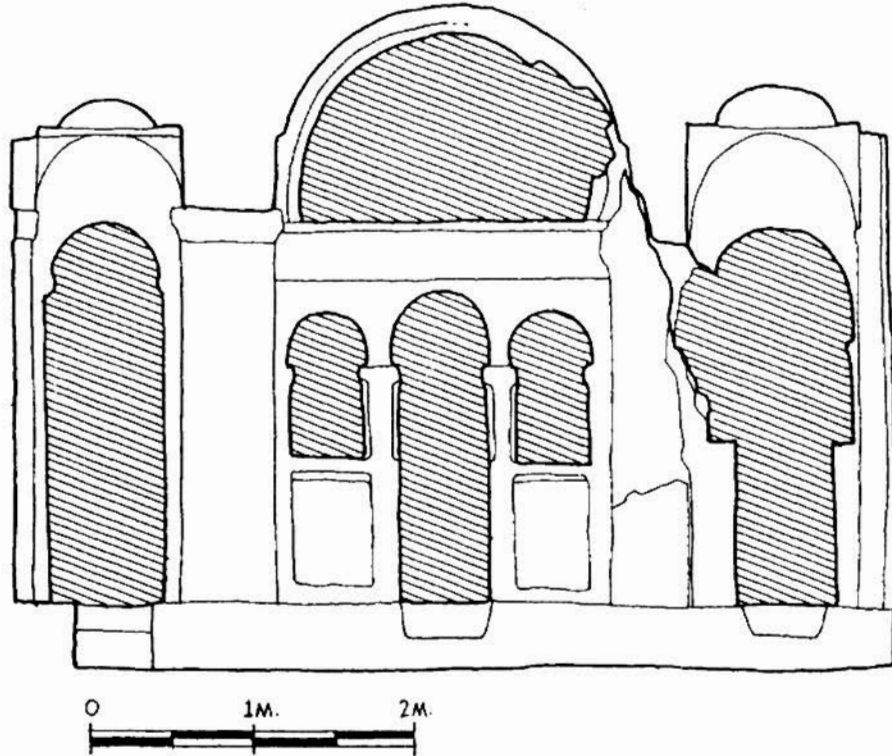


FIG. 4. Cappadocia, Göreme, Chapel 25, section to the east (*drawing: Epstein*)

The examples of *templa* so far mentioned come from churches with some architectural pretension. Screens of more rustic monuments are also still extant. Most of these closures are constructed of base materials. Nevertheless, because they retain evidence of the *templon's* programme, because they reflect on the process by which metropolitan types were adapted to provincial needs and because, finally, they have occasionally been misunderstood by scholars, a few are included in this survey.

The area richest in non-marble *templon* screens is Cappadocia. The nature of the tuff rock from which the cave chapels of Cappadocia were hewn dictates that these barriers be wall-like in their solidity and proportions. For the same reason, these barriers are pierced by round-headed apertures rather than by rectangular ones. Even so, these barriers mime the *templa* of built churches. Where space permits, a central entrance is flanked by two side openings, as in a normal screen. There are even several examples of screens with

carved pseudoparapet slabs, like that of Chapel 25 in Göreme Valley (Fig. 4).⁷¹ The citation of these rock-cut closures as examples of the opaque barrier in the Orthodox church, precursors or current reflectors of the marble screen with permanent intercolumnar icons, is incorrect.⁷² Indeed, a number of important chapels in Cappadocia and South Italy have only low barriers, with no evidence of ever being closed more fully. St

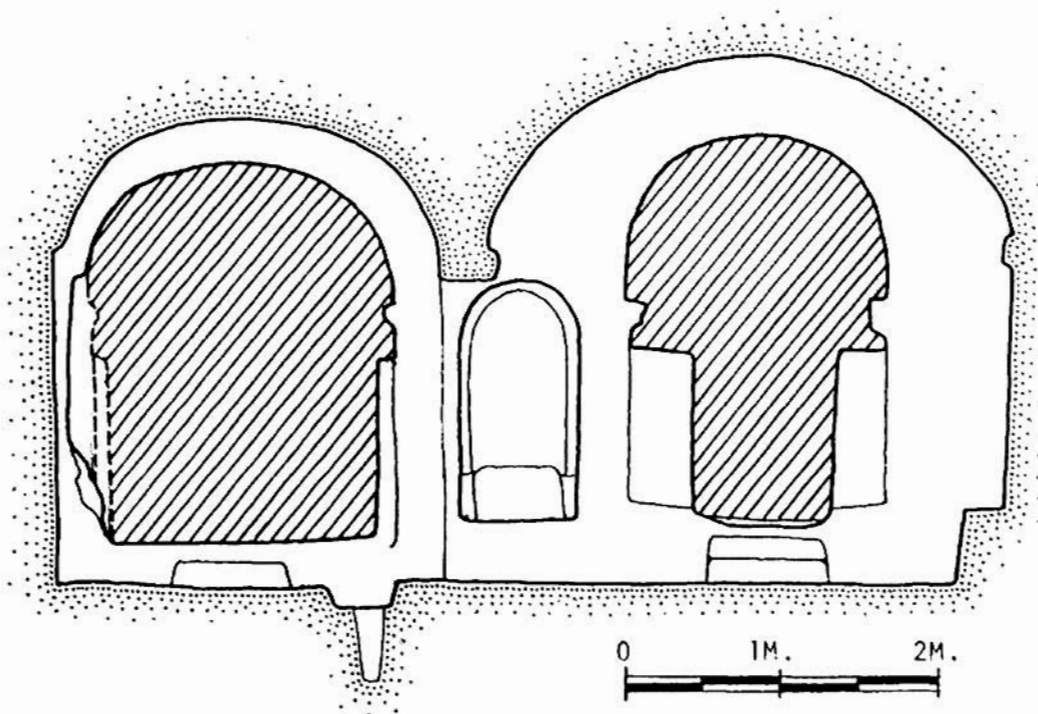


FIG. 5. Cappadocia, Göreme, St Eustathios, section to the east (drawing: Epstein)

Eustathios in Göreme Valley and the crypt of San Salvatore, Giurdignano, provide two examples (Figs 5 and 6).⁷³ The relatively well-preserved fresco decoration of these cave chapels indicates that the programming of the templon screen area was also modelled on that of the normal built church. The rock-cut epistyle of the early eleventh-century church of Kılıçlar Küşlük in Göreme is ornamented with a central Deesis.⁷⁴ More often the Deesis seems to have been transferred to the conch of the apse, as in the mid eleventh-century

⁷¹ Other well-preserved examples of rock-cut screens are found in Geyik Kilise in Soğanlı Dere and Chapel 17 in Göreme Valley. G. de Jerphanion, *Une nouvelle province de l'art byzantin, les églises rupestres de Cappadoce*, II, pt 1 (Paris 1936), 369 sqq.; I, pt 2 (Paris 1932), 479; plate vol. I, 25, 2.

⁷² Brehier, 'Anciennes clôtures... Athos', 53 sqq.; Walter, 'Origin of the Iconostasis', 258.

⁷³ Jerphanion, *Une nouvelle province*, I, 147 sqq. A. Medea, *Gli Affreschi delle cripte eremitiche Pugliesi* (Rome 1939), 120 sqq.

⁷⁴ M. Restle, *Die byzantinische Wandmalerei in Kleinasien* (Recklinghausen 1967), II, pl. 279.

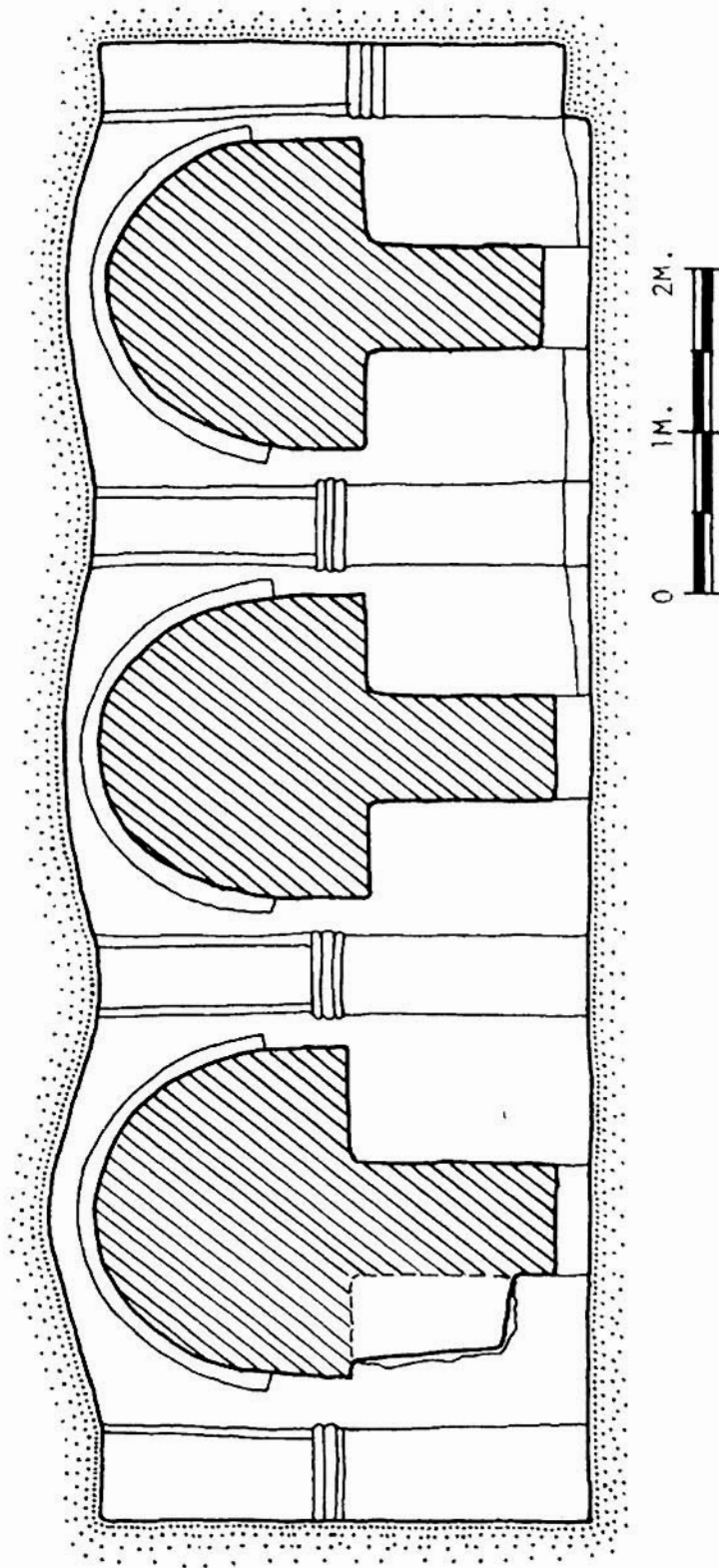


FIG. 6. South Italy, Giurdignano, San Salvatore, section to the east (*drawing: Epstein*)

column churches of Göreme.⁷⁵ In Kilîçlar Kilise, a church dated to the early tenth century on the basis of painting style, proskynetaria representing the Virgin and Christ flank the entrance to the sanctuary.⁷⁶

Another cave church of some significance is found not far from Paphos in Cyprus — the Enclistra of St Neophytos. This chapel, which is partially carved out of rock and enclosed by a curtain wall, went through a number of extensions and transformations which are documented by distinct painting phases and by Neophytos's typikon.⁷⁷ Before the cleaning of the monument by the Department of Antiquities in Cyprus and Dumbarton Oaks, the bema and naos were divided by a wooden-framed screen with a central opening, reused painted stone slabs, and icons (Pl. VB). A *terminus ante quem* for this arrangement is provided by the border of the 1503 Pantocrator in the bema which overlaps the upper extremity of the templon's decoration. The introduction of this screen, however, damaged the image of St Nicholas in the bema, part of the 1183 painting phase. It may also have eliminated part of the same phase of decoration on the west side of the wall — the remaining Christ might have been originally flanked by the Virgin and the Baptist.⁷⁸ I hypothesise the following sequence: when the nave was extended in 1196, the entrance to the bema was also enlarged. Initially this new opening was closed only by parapet slabs and flanked by processional icons (Figs 7 and 8). That the paired images of the Virgin and Christ, which have been ascribed to the early thirteenth century, were meant to serve as processional icons is evidenced by their fittings.⁷⁹ At the time of the 1503 restoration, but before the repainting of parts of the nave and sanctuary, the present structure was built, incorporating the earlier icons and, now damaged, parapet slabs. This would account for the similarity of the crude carved decoration of the screen with that in the renewed narthex of the monument.⁸⁰

The cave chapel of St Sophia on Kythera may provide a comparison for the proposed reconstruction of Neophytos's original, sanctuary closure of 1183. Here a simple masonry wall separates the nave from the sanctuary, broken only by a rectangular entrance. The spatial limitations of the small, low cave and, no doubt, the economic limitations of the monastery, did not allow a more elaborate barrier. On the left are represented SS Sophia,

⁷⁵ In the eleventh century the Deesis is sometimes found in combination with the theme that enjoyed the greatest popularity in Cappadocia in the tenth century, the liturgical Maiestas, for instance in Eski Gümüş and the church of Ayvalık köy. For the most recent evaluation of the frescoes of these churches, see N. Thierry, 'Une style schématique de Cappadoce daté du XIe siècle d'après une inscription', *Journal des Savants* (1968), 45 sqq. The Deesis in its normal form is very common in the eleventh century. In addition to the Column Churches, the Triconch of Tağar and Direkli Kilise are among the most important examples. Jerphanion, *Une nouvelle province*, II, 187 sqq.; I, pt 2, 393 sqq.; N. and M. Thierry, *Nouvelles églises rupestres de Cappadoce, région du Hasan Dagi* (Paris 1963), 183 sqq. In South Italian rock-cut churches the figural group most commonly found in the principal apse of the church is also the Deesis. It occurs, for instance, in S. Lorenzo in Faşano, S. Antonio Abate, S. Leonardo, S. Marina and S. Simeon a Famosa in Massafra, S. Margherita, S. Nicola and S. Angelo in Mottola, and S. Giovanni in S. Vito dei Normanni; Medea, *Gli Affreschi*, figs 26, 155, 137, and 48.

⁷⁶ Jerphanion, *Une nouvelle province*, plate vol. I, 44, 2.

⁷⁷ C. Mango and E. J. W. Hawkins, 'The Hermitage of St Neophytos and its Wall Paintings', *DOP*, xx (1966), 119–206, esp 122 sqq.; *Kypriaka Typika, Pegai kai meletai tes Kypriakes istorias*, ed. I. P. Tsiknopoullos (Nicosia 1969), II, 69 sqq.

⁷⁸ Mango and Hawkins regard the naos painting as homogeneous and date it to the early thirteenth century. A close stylistic analysis of the paintings, however, seems to me to suggest that the image of St Stephen the Younger immediately to the left of the screen and the enthroned Christ on the right are the remains of the limited decoration of the naos undertaken in the 1183 phase of painting found largely in the bema and cell. This implies that the nave was not newly excavated in 1196, but simply enlarged, especially in elevation, in order to open above to Neophytos's new quarters.

⁷⁹ Mango and Hawkins, 'The Hermitage of St Neophytos', 161.

⁸⁰ This similarity is commented on by Mango and Hawkins, *op. cit.*, 160, though they come to a different conclusion concerning its date.

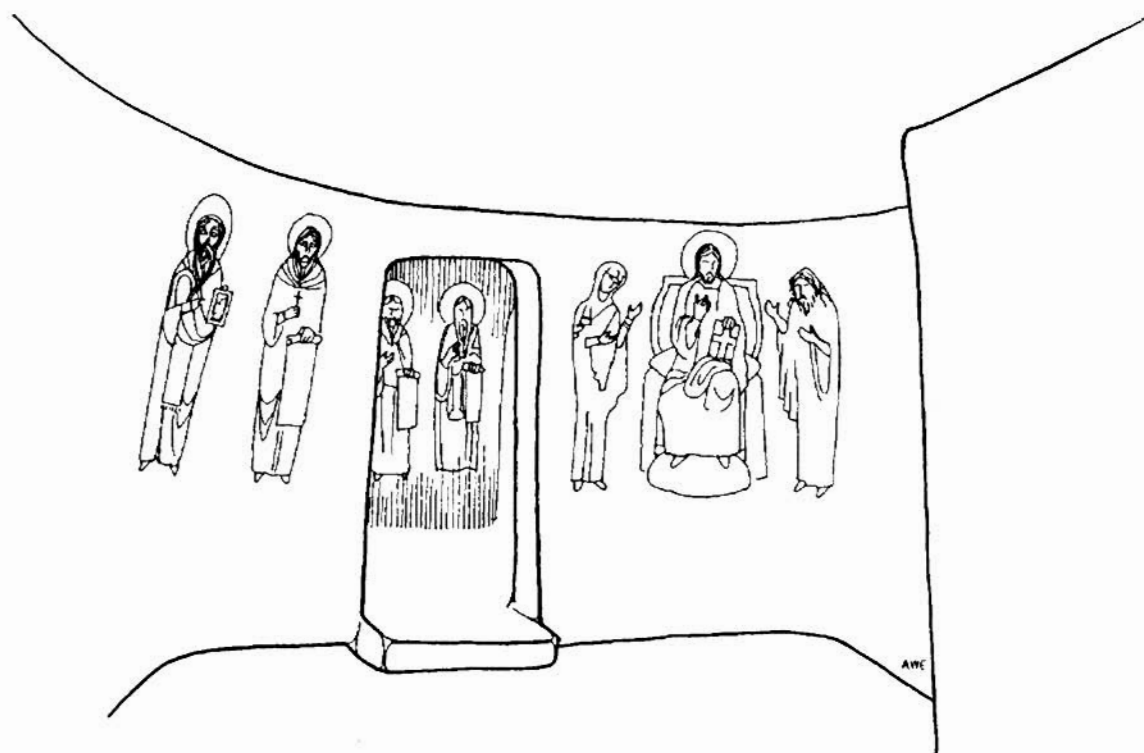


FIG. 7. Paphos, St Neophytos, hypothetical reconstruction of the first phase of the sanctuary screen (drawing: Epstein)

Agape, Elpis and Pistis; on the right, the small standing figure of a local saint, St Theodore of Kythera beside a more monumental Deesis, the Virgin and Baptist flanking an enthroned Christ. These paintings probably date to the thirteenth century, although they have also been ascribed to the late eleventh or early twelfth century.⁸¹

Some built chapels are hardly more impressive than the rock-cut churches of Cappadocia, Cyprus and Kythera. In Geraki in Greece, for instance, two churches, the Evangelistria and the church of St George, evidence a makeshift adaptation of a normal Byzantine scheme to the straightened circumstances of a small provincial building. The screen of the first is a crude masonry affair, not unlike that of the eleventh-century rock-cut chapel, Çarıklı Kilise, in Cappadocia, or the fourteenth-century churches of Karan in Serbia or St John in Mistra.⁸² Similarly, the permanent icons on masonry infilling introduced into the screen of the church of St George, like those of the Serbian church of

⁸¹ A. Xyngopoulos, 'Fresques de style monastique en Grèce', *Pepragmena tou 9 Diethnous Byzantinoloikou Synedriou, Thessalonikē, 1953* (Athens 1955), 510–6.

⁸² Chatzidakis, 'L'évolution de l'icone', 168; H. Counouplotou-Manolessou, 'Geraki, Suntērēsīs toichographiōn', *Archaiologika Analekta Athenōn*, iv, pt 2 (1971), 154–61. For comparison: Çarıklı Kilise, reconstructed section, A. W. Epstein, 'Rock-cut Chapels in Göreme Valley, Cappadocia: the Yılanlı Group and the Column Churches', *CA*, xxiv (1975), fig. 8; chapel of St John, S. Dufrenne, *Les programmes iconographiques des églises byzantines de Mistra* (Paris 1970), fig. 17; Karan, Grabar, 'Deux notes', 19 sqq.



FIG. 8. Paphos, St Neophytos, hypothetical reconstruction of the second phase of the sanctuary screen (drawing: Epstein)

Staro-Nagoricino, appear to be transplanted monumental proskynetaria rather than pseudo-panel paintings as has been suggested.⁸³

Evidence provided by provincial literature must be treated with the same care as the evidence drawn from provincial monuments. Rustic saints' lives must be treated with great caution. Typika and inventories are more credible sources. Two such documents are particularly interesting. The typikon for Backovo in Bulgaria was written in 1081. Like the Pantocrator typikon it provides an indication of the fittings of the church.⁸⁴

⁸³ G. Bošković, 'Staro-Nagoričino et Gračanica, deux églises de Milutin', *L'art Byzantine chez les Slavs, Orient et Byzance*, iv, ed. G. Millet (Paris 1930), 195 sqq.; idem, 'Kurze Reisenotizen', *Starinar*, vi (1931), 140-89, esp. 173 sqq.; Grabar, 'Deux notes', 17 sqq.

⁸⁴ L. Petit, *Typikon de Grégoire Pacourianos pour le Monastère de Pétritzos (Backovo) en Bulgarie (Vizantiiskii Vremennik, suppl. 1, xi, 1904)*, 28, lines 19 sqq.

Ὁφειλόμενον ἡμῖν ἔστι καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν τε καὶ νύκτα ἀκομήτους διατηρεῖν ἐμπροσθεν τῆς εἰκόνης τῆς ὑπεραγίας θεοτόκου κανδήλας τρεῖς, καὶ ἐν τῷ μεγάλῳ βήματι κανδήλαν μίαν, καὶ ἐμπροσθεν τοῦ ἁγίου βήματος ἐν τοῖς καγκέλοις ἐμπροσθεν μὲν τῆς σωτηρίου σταυρώσεως κανδήλαν μίαν, καὶ ἐμπροσθεν δὲ τῆς ἁγίας εἰκόνης τοῦ προδρόμου καὶ βαπτιστοῦ κανδήλαν μίαν, καὶ ἐμπροσθεν τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ ἁγίου Γεωργίου κανδήλαν μίαν, καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ τάφῳ ἡμῶν κανδήλας τρεῖς.

We are obliged to set out lights burning day and night in the following way: three lamps before the image of the Holy Mother of God, one lamp in the great bema, one lamp before the holy bema on the chancel [screen] in front of the Crucifixion, one lamp before the image of St Michael [?], and three lamps at our tomb.

The meaning of this passage is ambiguous. It can quite reasonably be interpreted to mean that that lamp which is suspended from the top of the screen in front of the epistyle icon of the Crucifixion is the one to be kept burning continuously. The others on the closure, it is implied, are lit only during certain offices and the liturgy. This passage, then, possibly provides evidence for an epistyle feast cycle like that of the Pantocrator in Constantinople or those of St Katherine's on Sinai.⁸⁵

A similar suggestion of an elaborate epistyle programme is found in a later inventory of the church of the Theotokos tēs Koteinēs near Philadelphia in Asia Minor.⁸⁶

... Five sieves [?]. Two lamps (λάμπ(ρ)αι) for the curtain. Another two for the Archangels. Another three outside the porch. Another on the tomb. A cast metal cross along with a censer in the sacred dome. Two trays. The weathercock of the church. Large images of proskynesis. Another five at the templon. At this templon the twelve small images of the Royal Feasts. Embellished icons: two of Christ and [one of] St George. Ivory carvings: the Koimesis and the Nativity. Another small, embellished Koimesis. Another, the archistrategos represented in brass.

Again, the meaning of this passage is ambiguous. Nevertheless, the monastery evidently held two large images of veneration which, judging from their context in the inventory, might have been set up near the bema, as in St Chrysostomos on Cyprus. There the impression of cross-beams in the shallow niches flanking the original screen indicate that portable icons were set up in that position as proskynetaria. In addition, seventeen icons are associated with the templon screen. This suggests that, like the reconstructed Pantocrator screen, the five figures of the Deesis (Christ, the Virgin, John the Baptist and the two Archangels) were set above the epistyle in the midst of somewhat smaller images of the liturgical feasts. It would in any case be difficult to place an uneven number of images, like five, in the intercolumniations of the screen.⁸⁷

The evidence from the Byzantine provinces confirms the basic form of the Middle Byzantine sanctuary barrier as it is known from Constantinopolitan remains — a relatively open screen of three or more bays, closed by low parapet slabs and divided by colonnettes supporting a decorated epistyle. The provincial material also clarifies some aspects of the templon which are only vaguely alluded to in the Constantinopolitan finds: the programme of the screen, the form and function of the proskynetaria, and the problem of the intercolumnal icon.

⁸⁵ It seems likely that corbels to support hanging lamps of the type still found at Hosios Loukas should be restored on the larger templon.

⁸⁶ This inventory dates from 1247. S. Eustratiados, 'Ἐν Φιλαδέλφεια Μονῆ τῆς ὑπεραγίας Θεοτοκου τῆς Κοτεινῆς', *Hellēnika*, III (1930), 325–39, esp. 332, lines 6 sqq.

Κόσκινα πέντε. Λάμπαι δύο τοῦ πέπλου. Ἐτερεὶ δύο τῶν ἀσωμάτων. Ἄλλαι τρεῖς ἐξωθεν τοῦ προπύλου. Ἐτέρα ἐν τῷ τάφῳ. Σταυρὸς χρυτὸς μετὰ θυμιατοῦ τοῦ ἐν τῷ θείῳ τρούλλῳ. Ἀπαλλαρεὶ χρυταὶ δύο. Ἀνεμομυλιάριον τῆς ἐκκλησίας. Εἰκονίσματα μεγάλα τῆς προσκυνήσεως. Ἐτερα ἐν τῷ τέμπλῳ πέντε. Εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ τέμπλον αἱ ἑβ' ἑορταὶ μικρὰ εἰκονίσματα τῶν βασιλικῶν ἑορτῶν. Εἰκονίσματα κεκοσμημένα δύο ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ ὁ ἅγιος Γεώργιος. Ἐλεφάντινον γλυπτὸν ἡ κοίμησις καὶ ἡ γέννησις. Ἐτερον μικρὸν ἡ κοίμησις κεκοσμημένον. Ἐτερον ὁ ἀρχιστράτηγος ἐκ χαλκοῦ ἱστορισμένον.

⁸⁷ Chatzidakis assumes these images were intercolumnar icons; 'L'évolution de l'icone', 166. N. Oikonomides noted in a conversation that any irregular number of icons could hardly be assumed to fill the even number of spaces on either side of the central opening of a templon screen.

THE PROGRAMME OF THE MIDDLE BYZANTINE SCREEN

The area in the immediate vicinity of the altar was programmatically significant in the Byzantine church. The epistyle of the templon, then, must hold a position of relatively high status in the spatial hierarchy of the church.⁸⁸ It is, in consequence, important to establish the subject and meaning of the epistyle programme. Where the figural decoration of a screen survives, it almost always includes a central Deesis. The widespread popularity of this theme is certainly understandable.⁸⁹ In the liturgy, prayers are extended repeatedly to Christ through the Virgin and John the Baptist.⁹⁰ The Deesis image, with abstract simplicity and formal elegance, combines a statement on the efficacy of prayer and intercession with the threat of the Last Judgement.⁹¹ It also is a form which is readily adapted to local needs or a patron's personal taste through a combination with secondary figures or scenes. The addition of St Eutychios to the ensemble of Evangelists and Apostles flanking the Deesis on the epistyle of the church of Sebastia and the representation of scenes from the life of St Eustratios on either side of the Deesis on one of the epistyle beams in St Katherine's on Mount Sinai reflect the versatility of the central theme of the Deesis.⁹²

If the Deesis image is so significant, why does it not appear on all the surviving epistyles? It seems probable that many epistyles which are carved only with abstract ornament may originally have supported figural images executed in another material. A number of instances of this have been noted: the reconstructed Pantocrator screen, as well as those of the church of the Saviour described in the *Vita Basilii*, the church in the palace of Botaniates, and the church of the Theotokos tēs Koteinēs. It is also possible that in instances where the epistyle did not bear the persons of the Deesis, the image appeared elsewhere in the sanctuary area. This might account for the ubiquitous presence of the Deesis in the conches of rock-cut chapels in both Cappadocia and South Italy.⁹³ The Deesis appears in monumental form in built churches as well, such as, for instance, St Sophia in Ohrid, St Sophia in Kiev, St Demetrius at Pec, Hosios Loukas, and the SS Anargyroi in Kastoria.⁹⁴ In all, there can be little doubt that the Deesis was the principal

⁸⁸ For a general discussion of programming in the centrally planned Byzantine church, see O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration* (London 1948).

⁸⁹ For a discussion of the meaning of the Deesis, see C. Walter, 'Two Notes on the Deësis', *Revue des Etudes Byzantines*, xxvi (1968), 311–36, and 'Further Notes on the Deësis', *ibid.*, xxviii (1970), 161–87.

⁹⁰ See, for instance, E. Kantorowicz, 'Ivories and Litanies', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, v (1942), 56–81, esp. 71 sqq.

⁹¹ The idea of witness is also important; Walter, 'Two Notes', 324 sqq.

⁹² See above, pp. 12 and 15 sqq. It has been suggested that epistyles adorned with intaglio busts of Christ, the Virgin and the Baptist and saints, like those dated to the ninth and tenth century found in Asia Minor, precede the more elaborate epistyle programmes involving icons; Walter, 'Origin of the Iconostasis', 258 sqq.; Chatzidakis, 'L'évolution de l'icône', 169. In this case the imposition on history of a linear development from simple and crude to complex and refined has little foundation. The reference in the ninth-century *Vita Basilii* quoted above (p. 6) and the tenth-century ivory epistyle programme proposed by Weitzmann (p. 9) belie the supposition that the great Deesis above the screen evolved from simple, decorative medallion busts carved in the epistyle. Much more likely the inlaid epistyle beams found in the provinces (p. 15 and fn. 66) are relatively cheap imitations of the more elaborate schemes characteristic of the great churches of the Empire.

⁹³ See above, fn. 75. Problems of 'migration' are discussed in A. Xyngopoulos, 'Les fresques de l'église des Saints-Apôtres à Thessalonique', *Art et Société à Byzance sous les Paléologues, Actes du Colloque organisé par l'Association Internationale des études byzantines à Venise en Septembre, 1968* (Venice 1971), 83–9, esp. 87; M. E. Frazer, 'Church Doors and the Gates of Paradise: Byzantine Bronze Doors in Italy', *DOP*, xxvii (1973), 145–62, esp. 150 sqq.

⁹⁴ R. Hamann-Maclean and H. Hallensleben, *Die Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien vom 11. bis zum frühen 14. Jahrhundert* (Giessen 1963), pl. 12; H. Logvin, *Kiev's Hagia Sophia* (Kiev 1971), pl. 16. Also see fig. 18. The Deesis in the SS Anargyroi is reproduced in S. Pelekanides, *Kastoria, I, Byzantinai toichographiai* (Thessalonike 1953), pl. 12.

image of the figurally decorated templon screen, both in Constantinople and its provinces.

The evidence of proskynetaria in the provinces also substantiates the vague indications of images of special veneration in Constantinople. These proskynetaria seem to be either monumental images placed on the piers flanking the templon or portable icons erected to either side in front of the screen. Examples of such paired icons still exist in Cyprus, one set from Lagoudera now in the Archbishop's Palace in Nicosia and the other at St Neophytos. Both retain their processional fittings.⁹⁵ There is also some manuscript evidence of icons being set up near the altar. For instance, icons are represented as part of the sanctuary decoration in Constantinopolitan manuscripts like Sinai codex 339 of the twelfth century.⁹⁶ A great many more examples of monumental proskynetaria may be cited, including those discussed above.⁹⁷ Both the monumental proskynetaria and the portable proskynetaria represent important figures in the celestial hierarchy. The Virgin, Christ, or the patron saint of the foundation continually appear in this context.⁹⁸ Indeed, these are the essential figures of church decoration. As in the case of the Deesis, when a parochial church could not, for lack of space, accommodate these images in the normal manner, spatial compromises were sought. In St Nikolaos Kasnitzes in Kastoria and in St George in Kurbinovo, proskynetaria are set in painted or real arched niches just before the templon on the north and south walls of the church.⁹⁹ In Perachorio on Cyprus they were represented on non-structural walls perhaps built especially for that purpose immediately before the sanctuary on either side of the sanctuary apse.¹⁰⁰ In Geraki and in some cave churches they were removed to the masonry surface of a crude wall-screen.¹⁰¹ Finally, then, it can be assumed that the widespread popularity of proskynetaria in the provinces ultimately reflects Constantinopolitan practice.

A further addition to the sanctuary arrangement found in the provinces has also been regarded as a reflection of Constantinopolitan practice: the intercolumnar icon. Lazarev ably summarises the evidence for the intercolumnar icon in an article that first appeared in 1966, concluding that the sanctuary barrier closed by icons permanently fixed between the columns of the templon makes its appearance only in the thirteenth or fourteenth century.¹⁰² The debate, nevertheless, continues. Weitzmann assumes the existence of intercolumnar icons from the tenth century.¹⁰³ Chatzidakis has more recently suggested that intercolumnar icons are a feature of the Byzantine templon from at least the eleventh century.¹⁰⁴ He brings both literary and archaeological sources to bear on the problem. He

⁹⁵ For the Neophytos pair, see above, p. 19 sqq. and fn. 79. For the Lagoudera images, also A. Papagorgiou, *Ikonen aus Zypern* (Genf 1969), 3, 19 and 23. The Lagoudera icons are difficult to study at the present time. The lower border, however, retains the scars of fittings for carrying. For processional icons in general, see A. Grabar, 'Sur les sources des peintures byzantines', *CA*, xii (1962), 351-80, esp. 366 sqq.

⁹⁶ Grabar, 'Deux notes', 20, fig. 7.

⁹⁷ Also see G. Babič, 'La décoration en fresques de clôtures de choeur', *Zbornik za Likovne Umetnosti*, xi (1975), 3-47.

⁹⁸ S. der Nersessian, 'Two Images of the Virgin', *DOP*, xiv (1960), 71-86, esp. 80 sqq.

⁹⁹ Pelekanides, *Kastoria*, pl. 57a; Hamann-Maclean and Hallensleben, *Die Monumentalmalerei*, pl. 6a-b.

¹⁰⁰ A. H. S. Megaw and E. Hawkins, 'The Church of the Holy Apostles at Perachorio, Cyprus', *DOP*, xvi (1962), 277-348, esp. 333, pls 2 and 48.

¹⁰¹ See above, p. 19 sqq.

¹⁰² Lazarev, 'Trois fragments', 117 sqq.

¹⁰³ Weitzmann, *The Monastery of St Katherine: The Icons*, 102. The author writes concerning the icon of St Nicholas (B. 61), 'Whether this icon could already have been part of the iconostasis is impossible to determine with certainty, but it seems possible, for the icon belongs approximately to the period when large-scale icons began to replace curtains in iconostases'. Compare this with the author's statement on the subject in his introduction, *ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰⁴ Chatzidakis, 'L'évolution de l'icone', 165 sqq.

quotes, for instance, the Backovo typikon and the Theotokos tēs Skotinēs inventory as evidence of the intercolumnar icon. As shown above, both these references may be related to epistyle decoration. He also cites Leo of Ostia's description of the sanctuary barrier ordered from Constantinople by Desiderius for Montecassino between 1058 and 1086.¹⁰⁵ This screen is described as having five icons suspended from the epistyle.¹⁰⁶ But this arrangement may be related to Western rather than Eastern practice. After all, Desiderius also commissioned an altar frontal from Constantinople, a liturgical accoutrement unknown in the Orthodox East.¹⁰⁷

The archaeological evidence for early intercolumnar icons that Chatzidakis uses is also unconvincing: the icons of St Neophytos and the Panagia tou Arakou at Lagoudera, the rustic churches of Geraki and Cappadocia. Thus neither the literary sources nor the provincial monumental evidence provides proof that intercolumnar icons were common in the provinces of the Empire, much less its capital, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. On the contrary, the templon seems to remain a relatively open division between the sanctuary and the nave.

Arguments against the early introduction of intercolumnar icons, and the increasing opacity of the screen which such permanently placed images entail, necessarily remain negative. But while arguing *ex nihilo* is always suspect, it is perhaps worth reviewing the relevant lacunae. In various publications of screens and screen fragments, no reference is made to dowels, hooks, grooves or any other means of securing icons or, for that matter, curtains. Even the marble capital from around 1300 which probably comes from the templon of the Fetiye Camii is carved with Apostolic busts on three sides, implying that all three faces were visible.¹⁰⁸ Equally, the elaborately enframed monumental proskynetaria in the Kariye Camii of the early fourteenth century indicate that panel paintings of the same subject were not planned for the intercolumniations of the templon.¹⁰⁹ In addition, the depiction of liturgical arrangements in illuminated manuscripts provides no evidence for the postulation of an opaque screen in Middle Byzantine Constantinople. Miniatures in the Homilies of Gregory Nazianzus in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS grec. 510, a Gospel book, MS grec. 74 in the same library, and the Menologion of Basil II in the Biblioteca Vaticana, grec. 1613, continue to represent the sanctuary barrier as a low chancel screen.¹¹⁰ Images associated with these screens are limited to the Annunciation on the low doors at the entrance of the sanctuary and panel paintings that are either free-standing or attached to a ciborium.¹¹¹ While it may be true that these miniatures

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ For Leo of Ostia's text, see *Chronicon Casinense*, III, cols 711 sqq. (*Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris 1844-64) CLXXIII). The relevant passages are translated by H. Bloch in E. G. Holt, *Literary Sources of Art History* (Princeton 1947), 4-10.

¹⁰⁷ *La Pala d'Oro*, ed. Hahnloser, xii.

¹⁰⁸ See above, p. 9.

¹⁰⁹ P. Underwood's consideration is problematic; *Kariye Djami*, vol. 1 (New York 1966), 168 sqq.

¹¹⁰ H. Omont, *Miniatures des plus anciens manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale du VI^e au XIV^e siècle* (Paris 1929), pls LII and LX; *Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Évangiles avec peintures byzantines du XI^e siècle, I, reproduction des 361 miniatures du manuscrit grec 74* (Paris n.d.), pl. 133; *Il Menologio di Basilio II (Cod. Vaticano Greco 1613)* (Turin 1907), pls 61, 324 and 365 (Codices e Vaticanis Selecti, VIII); for other examples of low screens, Grabar, 'Deux notes', 13 sqq.; Mathews, *Early Churches*, figs 95 sqq.

¹¹¹ Apart from images in manuscripts the only remains of templon doors date from after the Middle Byzantine period. Templon doors and their iconography are discussed by Grabar, 'Deux notes', 13 sqq.

follow pre-iconoclastic models, the common occurrence of the low screen in manuscripts must have meant that this form of sanctuary barrier was still recognisable in the Middle Byzantine period and by no means heretical.¹¹² Indeed, it seems likely that the pre-iconoclastic foundations in Constantinople, like St Sophia, retained their original open sanctuary barriers.¹¹³

Two final sources, both mystical interpretations of the church, may be quoted as evidence for the relative openness of the Byzantine templon. At the end of the eleventh century, Nicholaos of Andida wrote:

The shutting of the doors and the closing of the curtain over them, as they are accustomed to do in monasteries, and the covering over the gifts with the so-called *aēr* signifies, I believe, the night on which took place the betrayal of the disciple, the bringing [of Christ] before Caiaphas, the arraignment before Annas, the false testimonies, the mockery, the blows and the rest ... But when the *aēr* is taken away and the curtain drawn back, and the doors opened, this signifies the dawn on which they led him away and handed him over to Pontius Pilate, the governor.¹¹⁴

Certainly the templon was closed, but by curtains rather than by permanently attached intercolumnar icons. In addition the reference to closure is circumscribed. It occurs only for a short time during the liturgy and, as Mathews has already noted, the practice is described as specifically monastic.¹¹⁵

It is possible that opaque sanctuary barriers were only introduced universally into the Orthodox church in the post-Byzantine period. Certainly the absence of any mention of either intercolumnar icons or curtains in a detailed, metaphysical description of the sanctuary by Symeon of Thessalonike (d. 1429) is significant.

The closure manifests the division between the senses and the intelligence, even as a firmament separates the spiritual from the material. The columns before the altar, Christ, are those of his Church, which exhort and support us. Then above the closures is the joining entablature, declaring the bond of love and unity in Christ of the blessed on earth. Then above the entablature is Christ, in the middle of the holy images, and flanking him, His Mother and the Baptist, angels, apostles and

¹¹² Grabar, 'Deux notes', 15; Walter, 'Origin of the iconostasis', 254.

¹¹³ Comparing an ekphrasis of St Sophia written by Michael of Thessalonike and read in the Great Church two days before Christmas in the late 1140s or 1150s, with that written by Paul the Silentary for the same day in 563, suggests that the sanctuary closure had not changed radically between the sixth and twelfth centuries; C. Mango and J. Parker, 'A Twelfth-Century Description of St Sophia', *DOP*, xiv (1960), 233–45; P. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza and Paulus Silentarius, Kunstbeschreibungen justinianischer Zeit* (Leipzig/Berlin 1923). In the twelfth century as in the Justinianic age, the barrier seems to have been relatively open, its most notable feature being the silver columns which defined the bema enclosure. Mango and Parker, 'A Twelfth-Century Description', 239, para. 6, lines 186 sqq.; Friedländer, *Kunstbeschreibungen*, 246, lines 682 sqq. Also see, S. G. Xydis, 'The Chancel Barrier, Solea and Ambo of Hagia Sophia', *Art Bulletin*, xxix (1947), 1–24. Neither the sixth-century nor the twelfth-century writer mentions curtains, panels or anything else obscuring the sanctuary.

¹¹⁴ Nicholaos Andidorum, *Protheoria*, col. 445 (*Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, cXL). This work is dated to between 1055 and 1063 by R. Bornert, *Les Commentaires byzantins de la divine liturgie du VIIe au XVe siècle* (Paris 1966), 181 sqq. It has been more recently ascribed to the end of the century by J. Darrouzès, 'Nicholas d'Andida et les Azymes', *Revue des Etudes Byzantines*, xxxii (1974), 199–210. The translation is from Mathews, *Early Churches*, 171. The Greek text reads:

Ἡ δὲ τῶν θυρῶν κλείσις, καὶ ἡ ἐπάνω τούτων ἐξάπλωσις τοῦ καταπετάσματος, ὡς ἐν τοῖς μοναστηρίοις εἰώθησι, καὶ ἡ τοῦ λεγομένου ἀέρος τῶν θείων δώρων ἐπικάλυψις, ὡς οἴμαι, τὴν νύκτα ἐκείνην δηλοῖ, καθ' ἣν ἡ τοῦ μαθητοῦ προδοσία προσέβη, καὶ ἡ πρὸς Καϊάφαν ἀπαγωγή, καὶ ἡ πρὸς Ἄνναν παράστασις, καὶ αἱ ψευδομαρτυρίαι, καὶ μὴν καὶ οἱ ἐμπαῖγμοι, καὶ οἱ κολαφισμοὶ, καὶ τὰλλα ὅσα τὸ τῆνικαῦτα συμβέβηκε' ... Αἰρουμένου δὲ τοῦ ἀέρος καὶ τοῦ καταπετάσματος συστέλλομένου, τῶν θυρῶν τε ἀνοιγομένων, ἡ πρωΐα διατυπύεται, καθ' ὃν ἀπήγαγον αὐτὸν καὶ παρέδωκαν Ποντίῳ Πιλάτῳ τῷ ἡγεμόνι.

¹¹⁵ Mathews, *Early Churches*, 171.

others of the saints. Thus Christ is in heaven with his saints, is with us now, and will come for judgement. And the closure makes the bema eminently represent the remembrance of Christ. So the tomb is the altar, as the bema is manifestly the remembrance [of the area?] around the tomb. Thus, the ambo stands before the door of the tomb, evincing the stone rolled from the door of the tomb . . .¹¹⁶

Not only does Symeon not mention intercolumnar icons, but specifically mentions the images of the Great Deesis above the epistyle.

The archaeological, pictorial and documentary evidence, or lack of evidence, associated with Constantinople indicates that in the capital of the Empire, through the Middle Byzantine period and into the fourteenth century, the templon screen remains relatively open, the emphasis of its figural programme still on the epistyle, not on the columnar area of the screen. It is also clear that outside the capital, in the provinces of the Empire, Constantinopolitan practices were normally followed. Only within the peculiar circumstances of unpretentious, non-metropolitan buildings were permanent visual barriers introduced. These provincial examples cannot be seen as isolated reflectors of Middle Byzantine Constantinopolitan practice, nor should they be regarded as the original source for the later Orthodox iconostasis. They were local adaptations of common liturgical arrangements to the restricted space of provincial buildings. To locate the sources of the iconostasis, the opaque sanctuary closure, and to identify the time at which it became the koine of the Orthodox church, it may be necessary to consider the juncture in the fourteenth century of Hesychast mysticism and the wood-building genius of the Russian north.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Field research for this paper was facilitated by grants from the Central Research Fund of the University of London, the Field Research Committee of the University of Birmingham, and the Research and Development Committee of Oberlin College. I want to thank Robin S. Cormack and A. H. S. Megaw for their helpful criticism at various stages of this article's development.

ABBREVIATIONS

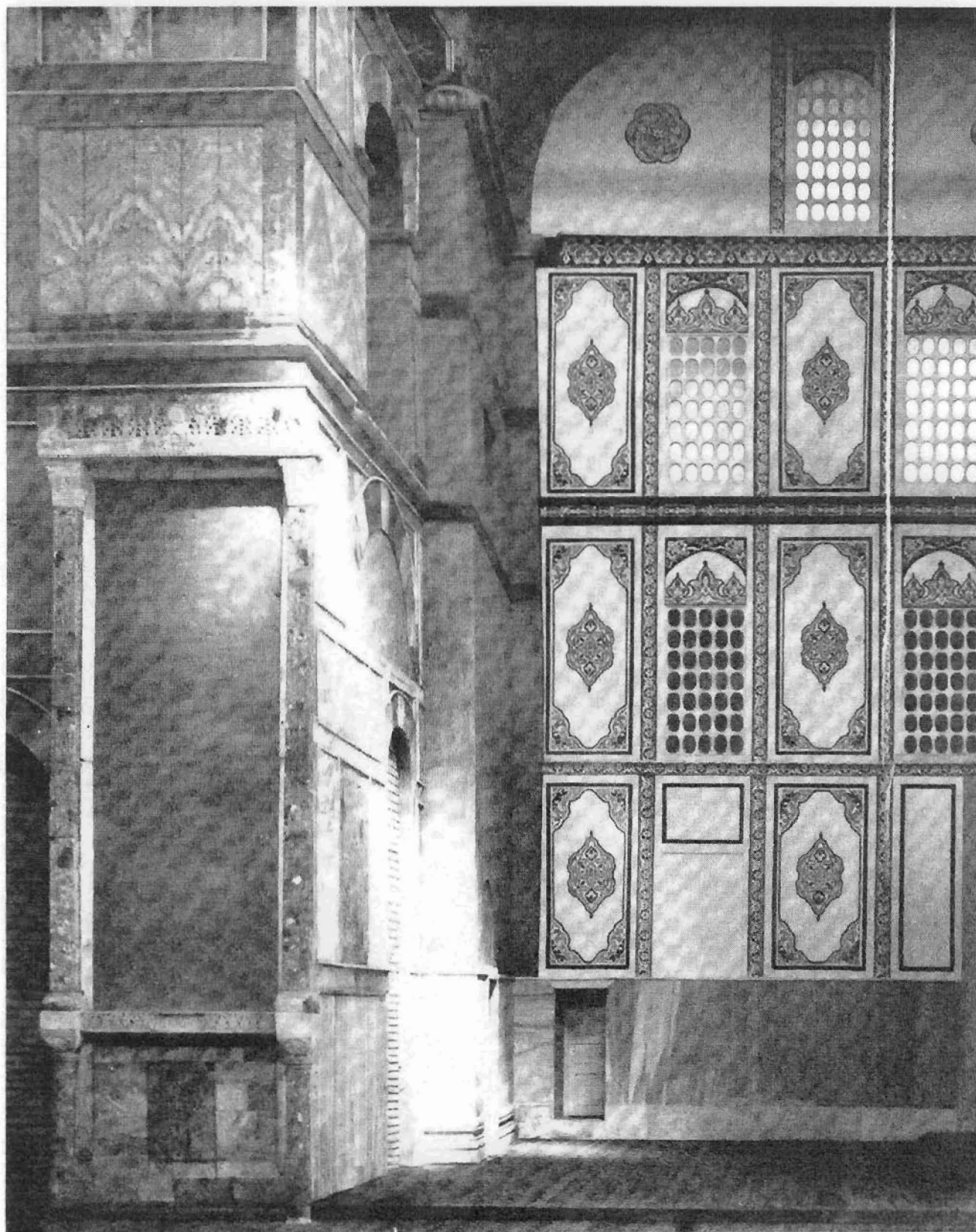
CA
DOP

Cahiers Archéologiques
Dumbarton Oaks Papers

¹¹⁶ Symeonis Thessalonicensis Archiepiscopi, *De sacro templo ejus consecratione*, col. 345 (PG, ed. Migne, clv). The Greek text reads:

Τὰ διάστημα δὲ τὴν διαφορὰν δεικνύει τῶν αἰσθητῶν πρὸς τὰ νοητὰ, καὶ ὡς στερέωμά ἐστι διαφράττων ἀπὸ τῶν ὑλικῶν τὰ νοούμενα· καὶ διὰ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου ἐμπροσθεν τοῦ Χριστοῦ οἱ στῦλοι τῆς αὐτοῦ εἰσὶν Ἐκκλησίας, τοῦτον τε κηρύσσοντες, καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐπερεΐδοντες. Διὸ καὶ ὑπεράνω τῶν διαστημάτων ὁ κοσμητικὸς συνέχων, τὸν σύνδεσμον δηλῶν τῆς ἀγάπης, καὶ τὴν ἐν Χριστῷ ἔνωσιν, τῶν ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἁγίων μετὰ τῶν ἄνω. Ὅθεν καὶ ὑπεράνω τοῦ κοσμήτου μέσος μὲν ἐστὶ διὰ τῶν ἱερῶν εἰκόνων ὁ Σωτὴρ, ἐκατέρωθεν δὲ ἡ Μήτηρ τε καὶ ὁ Βάπτιστής, ἄγγελοι τε καὶ ἀπόστολοι, καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ τῶν ἁγίων, τὸ ἐν οὐρανοῖς τὸν Χριστὸν οὕτως εἶναι μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων αὐτοῦ, καὶ μεθ' ἡμῶν εἶναι νῦν, καὶ ἐργεσθαι μέλλειν τῶν τοιούτων ἐκδιδασκόντων. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ὡς τὸ μνημα Χριστοῦ ἐξαιρετικῶς εἰκονίζον τὸ βῆμα ποιῶσι τὰ διάστημα. Καὶ τάφον μὲν εἶναι τὴν ἱεράν τράπεζαν, ὡς μνημα δὲ τὸ βῆμα, τὸ περὶ τὸν τάφον δηλαδὴ. Διὸ καὶ ὁ ἀμβων πρὸ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνηματός ἴσταιται, τὸν κυλισθέντα λίθον ἀπὸ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου δεικνύς

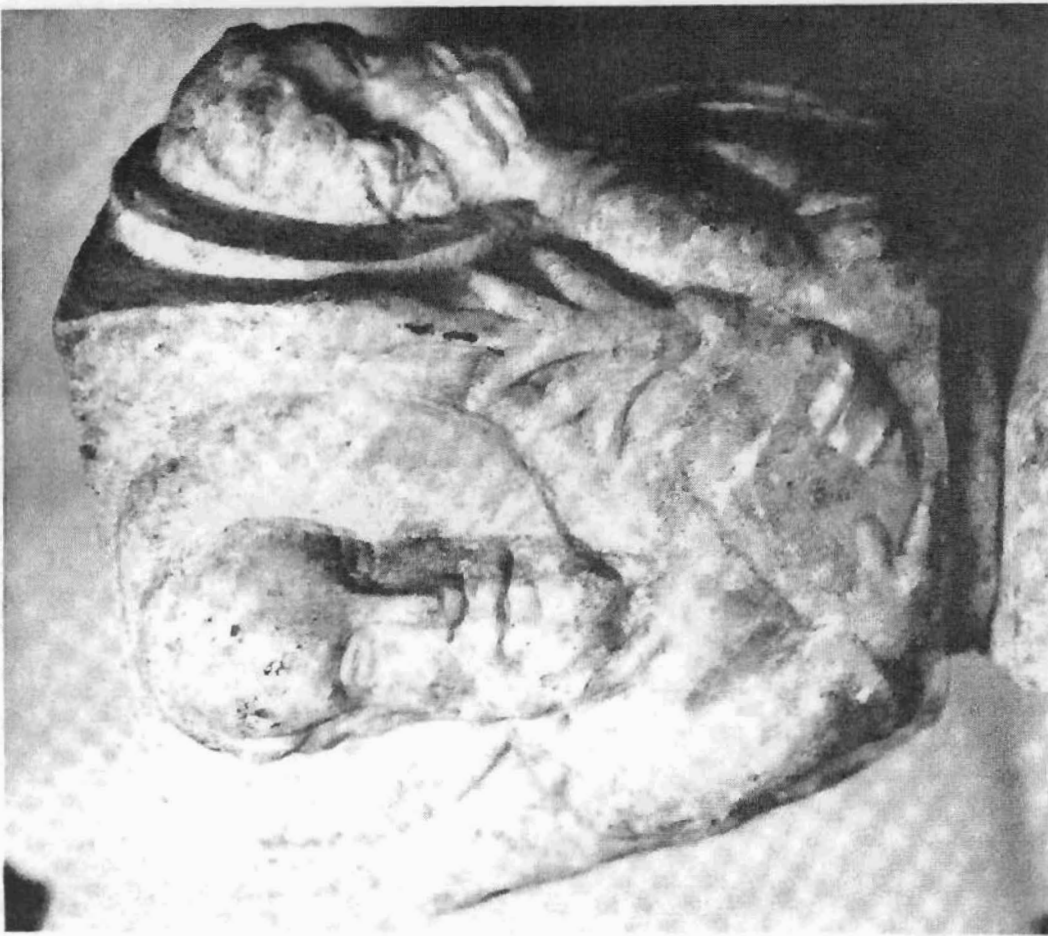
- Grabar, *Sculptures*, I and II A. Grabar, *Sculptures byzantines du Constantinople (IVe-Xe siècle)* (Paris 1963), I; *Sculptures byzantines du moyen âge (XIe-XIVe siècle)* (Paris 1976), II
- Janin, *Eglises* R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin, pt I, Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique. Vol. 3, Les églises et les monastères* (Paris 1953)
- Mango, *Sources and Documents* C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453, Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 1972)
- Mathews, *Early Churches* T. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople* (Pennsylvania State University 1971)
- Van Millingen, *Churches* A. van Millingen, *Byzantine Churches in Constantinople, Their History and Architecture* (London 1912)



Istanbul, Kalenderhane Camii, frame on the west face of the pier
to the south of the bema

Photo C. L. Striker/Dumbarton Oaks

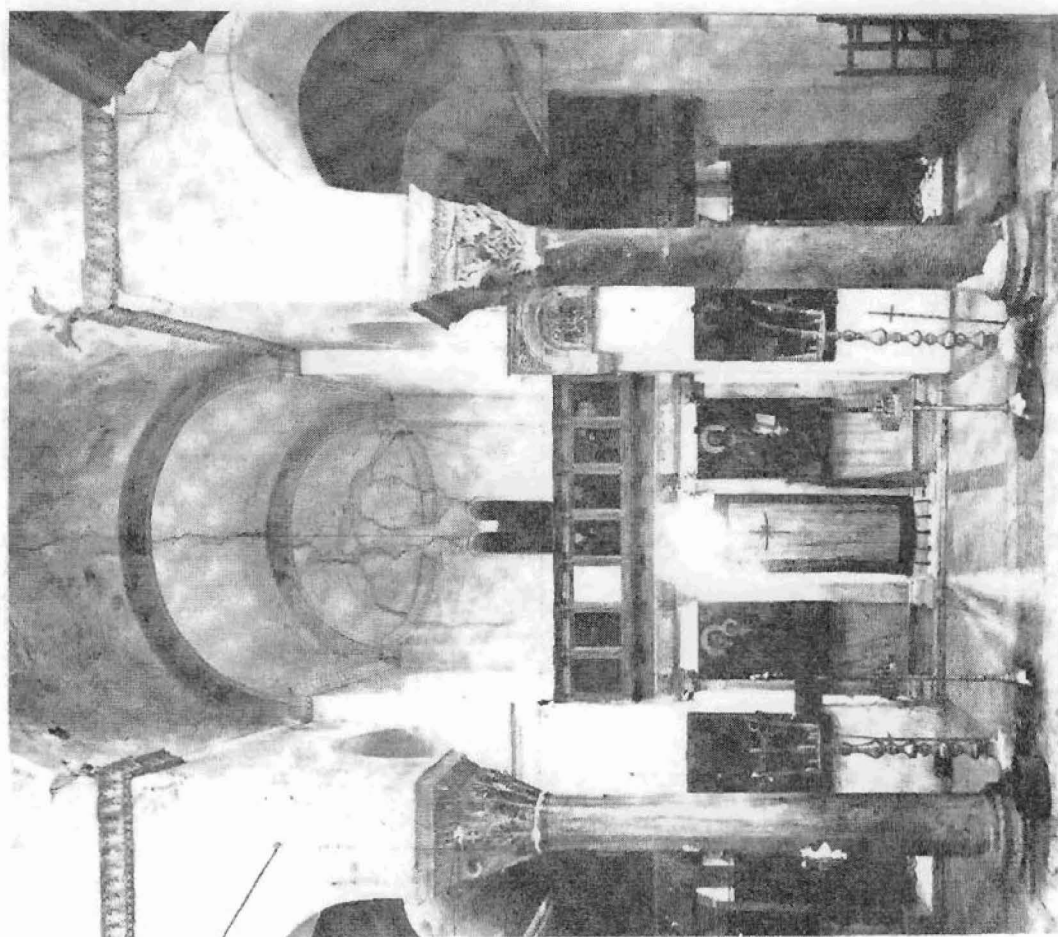
Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier



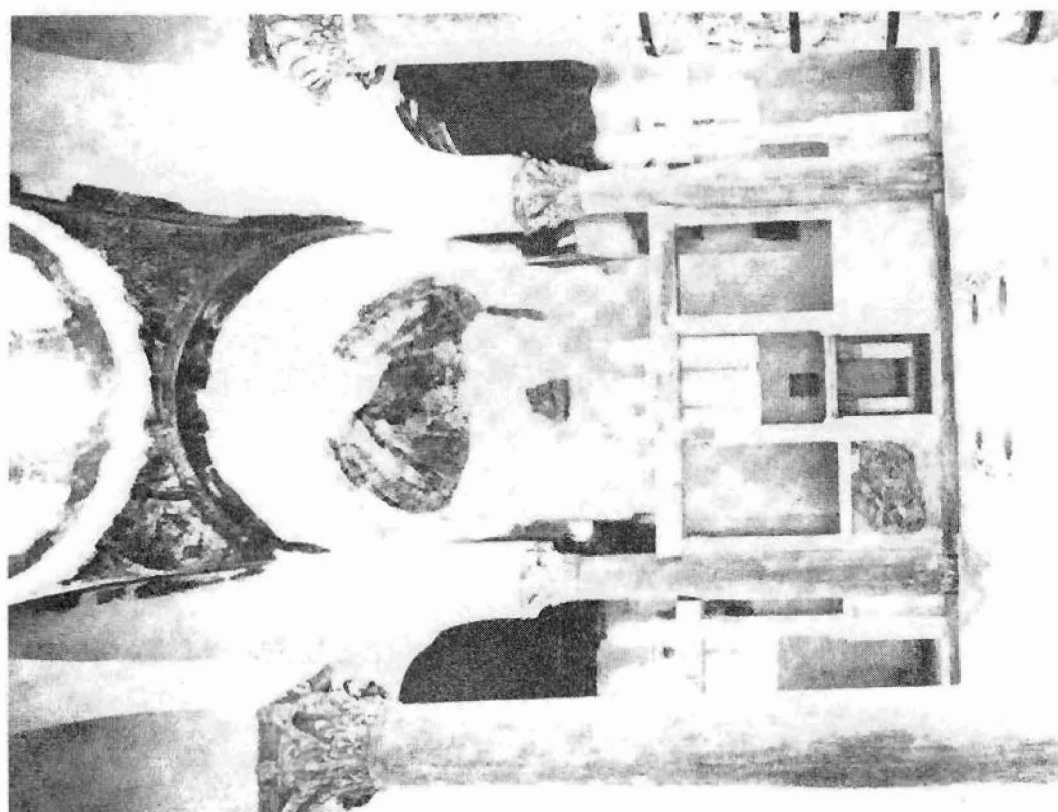
B. Istanbul, Fetiye Camii, fragment from the
templon screen
Photo Dumbarton Oaks



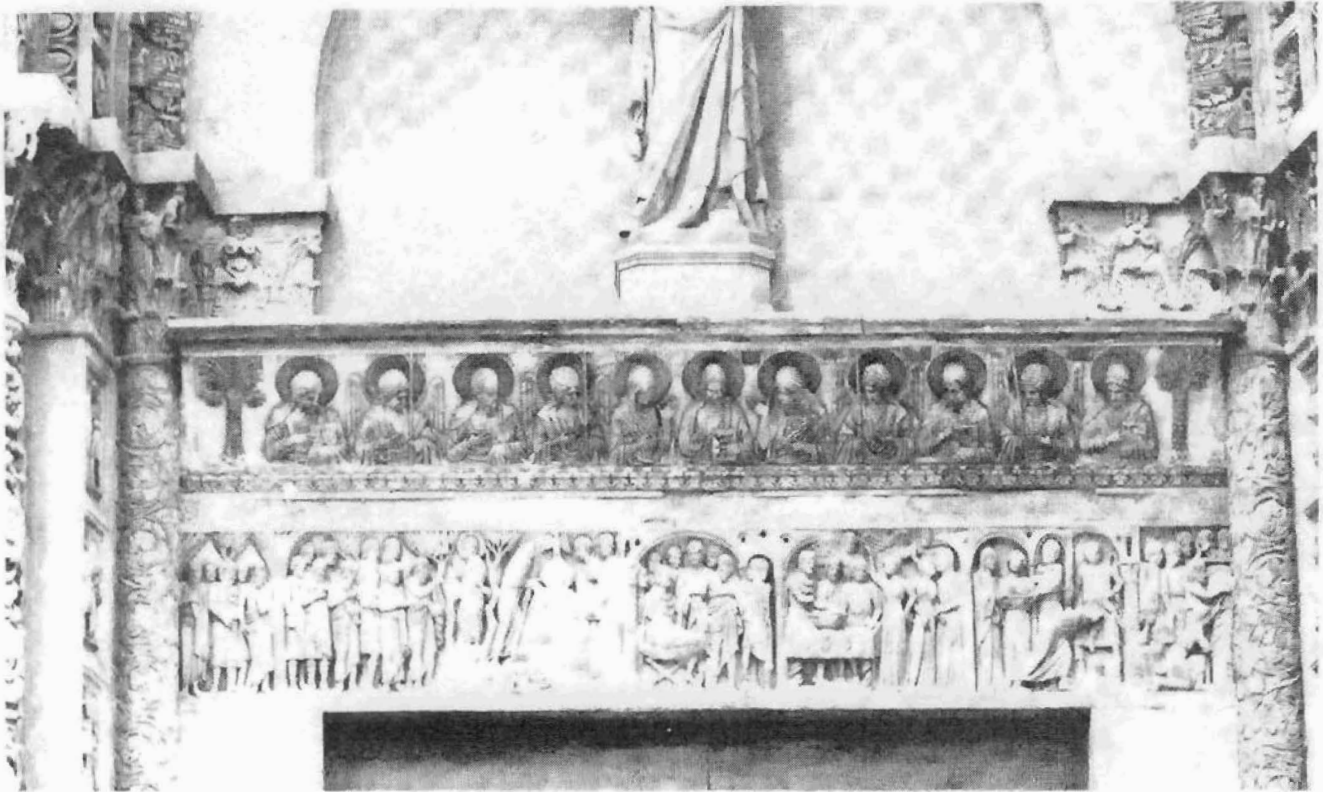
A. Istanbul, Kariye Camii, frame of the
Theotokos Hodegetria on the west face of the
pier to the south of the bema
Photo Dumbarton Oaks



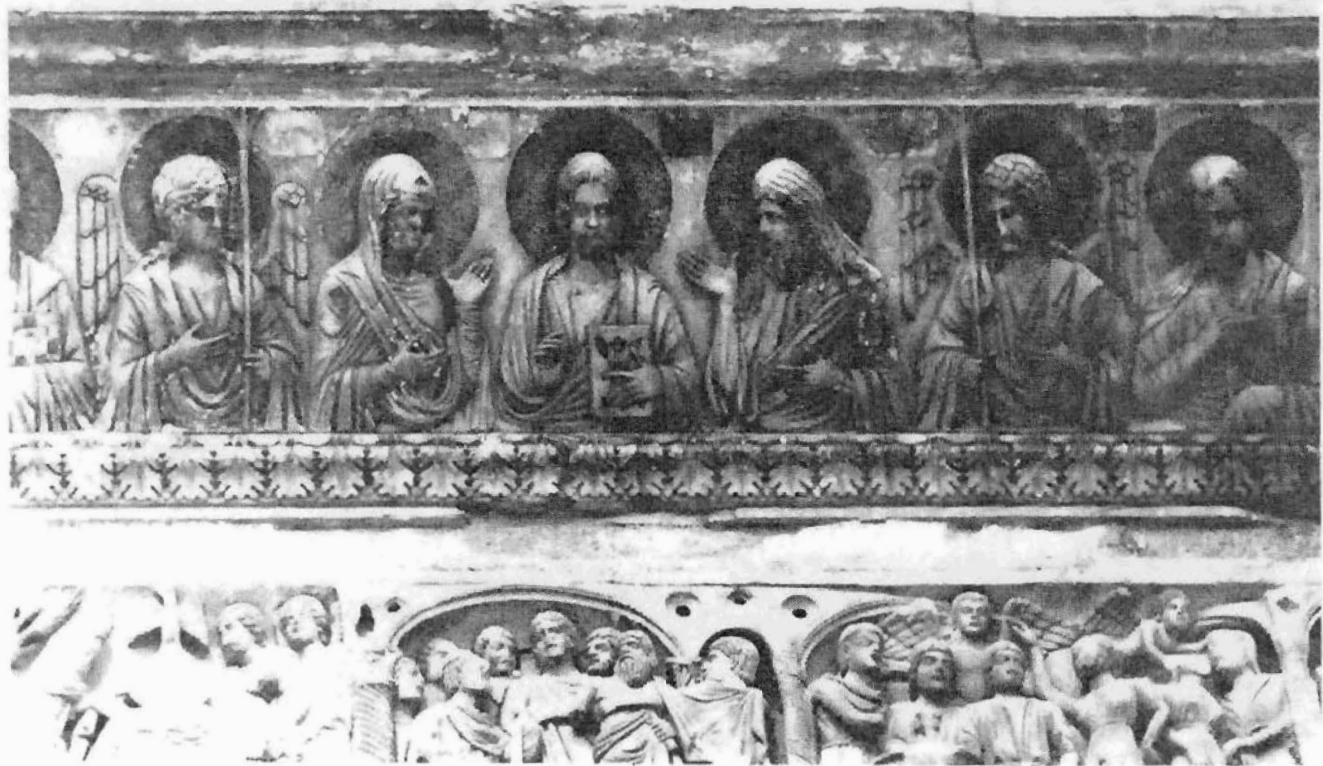
B. Hosios Loukas, Panagia, general view to the east
Photo A. Frantz



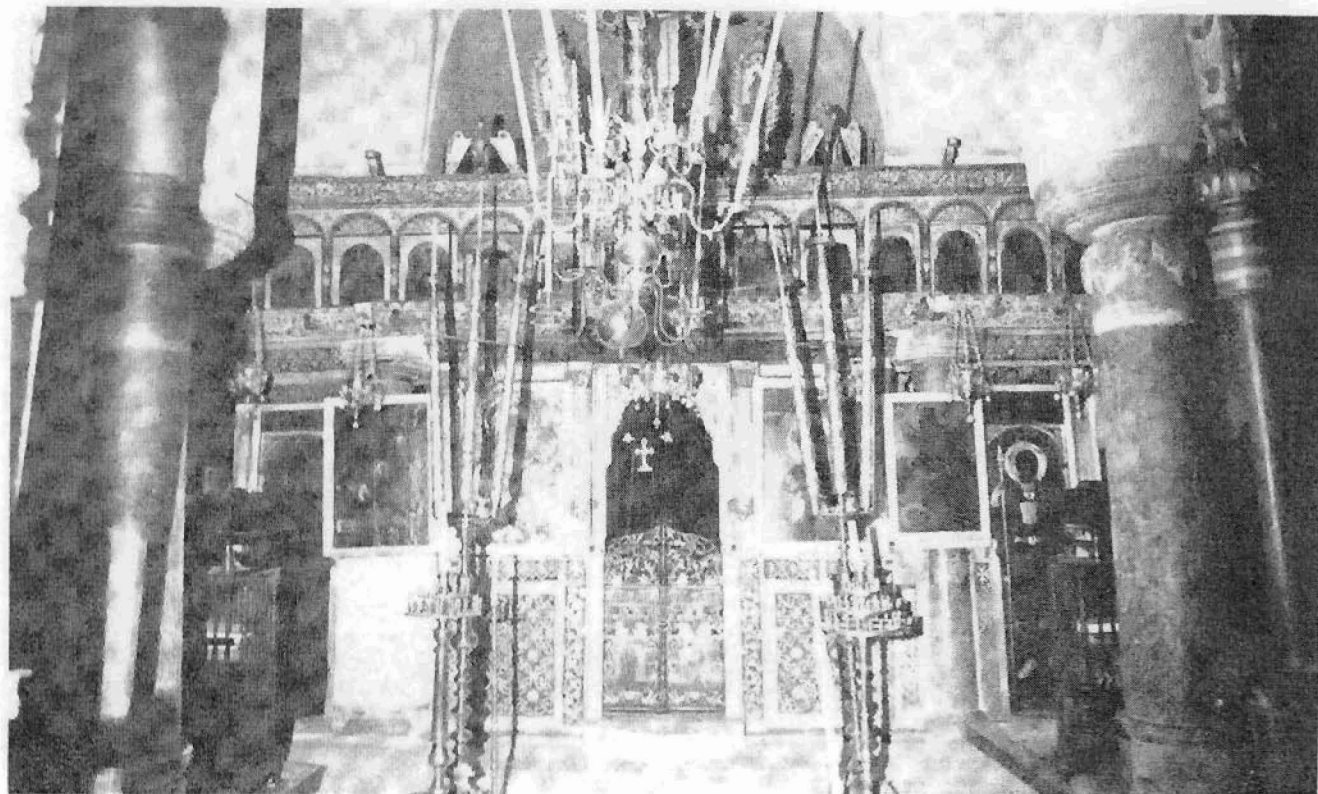
A. Athens, church of the Holy Apostles,
reconstruction of the templon screen
Photo A. Frantz



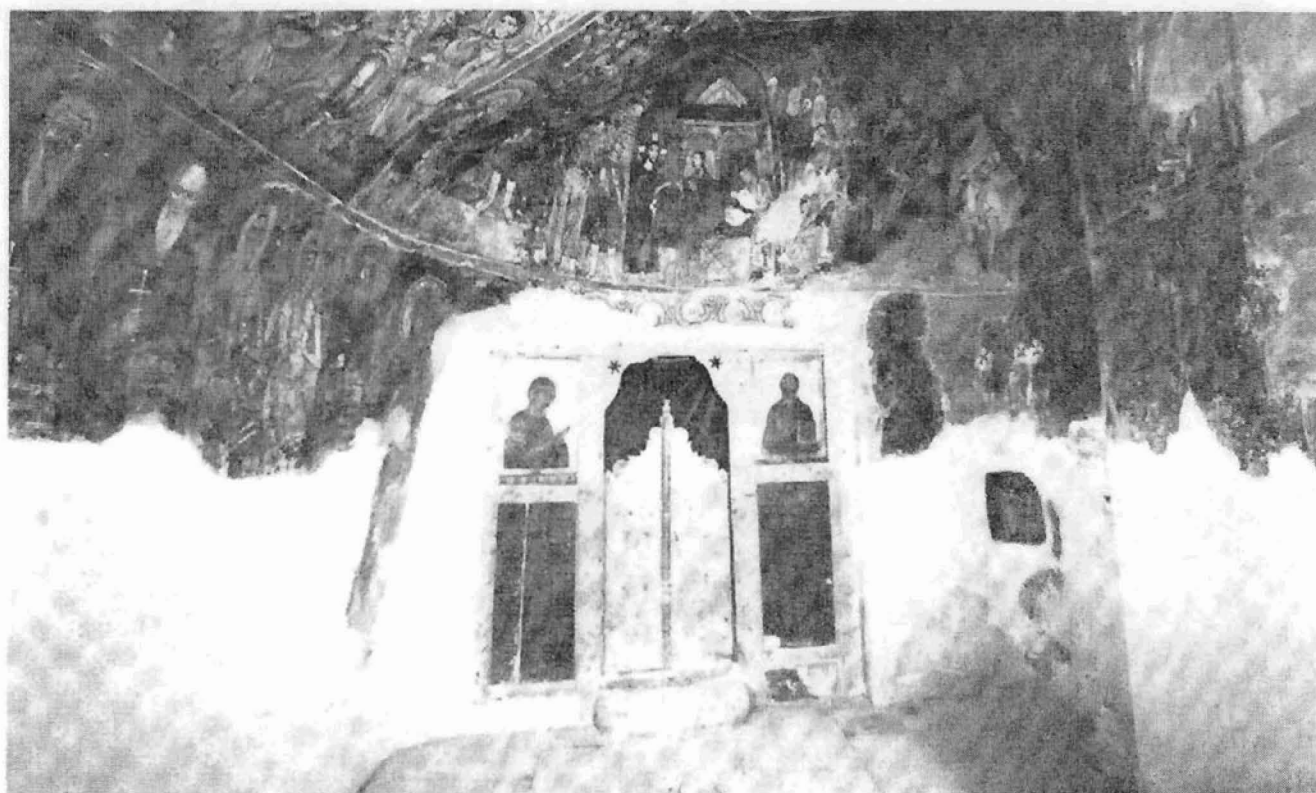
A. Pisa, Baptistery, general view of the east portal
Photo Epstein



B. Pisa, Baptistery, detail of the east portal Deesis
Photo Epstein



A. Santorini, Panagia tēs Gonias, templon screen
Photo L. Bouras



B. Paphos, Enkleistra of St Neophytos, general view of the sanctuary screen
Photo Dumbarton Oaks



A. Istanbul, Kalenderhane Camii, detail of the frame showing the Deesis

Photo J. Herrin

Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier



B. London, Victoria and Albert Museum. Ivory comb, detail

Copyright Victoria and Albert Museum



C. Dijon, abbey church of Saint-Bénigne. West portal, detail

After Dom Plancher

New Interpretation of a Magi Scene