

CULTURAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST IN THE LATE- FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MANI:

The Soterias Church in Langada and a Group of Related Monuments

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One of the first monuments that attracted my attention when I started working in the Mani several years ago was the fourteenth-century church of Soterias (Christ the Savior) in the village of Langada, dedicated to the feast of the Transfiguration of Christ.¹ Located in the lower neighborhood of the village² and covered with plaster until the mid 1980's (fig. 1), the church's true importance was not understood until its masonry was revealed and some of its monumental paintings uncovered (fig. 2).³

Architecturally, the church combines Eastern and Western features, placing it within a select group of monuments that witnessed cultural interactions in the wake of the Fourth Crusade. Recently, scholars studying ecclesiastical architecture have proposed that the mix of Western and Byzantine architectural styles in rural churches was employed in an ideologically neutral manner that reflected trends in fashion or taste rather than cultural or political identity.⁴ The same approach has been taken to

¹ On short references to the monuments, see Ch. Constantinidi, "Συμβολή στη μελέτη τῶν βυζαντινῶν «τοξωτῶν κωδωνοστασίων»," *Λακ.Σπ.* 6 (1982): 69-71, fig. 4, plan 1; eadem, "Ὁ ναός τῆς Ἁγίας Σοφίας στὴ Λαγκάδα τῆς Ἐξῶ Μάνης," *Λακ.Σπ.* 6 (1982): 94, 95; S. Kalopissi-Verti, "Ἡ Ἑπιπέδι τῆς Ἁγίας Μαρίας στὴ Λαγκάδα τῆς Ἐξῶ Μάνης," in *Ἀμνηστὸς τῆς μνήμης Φώτη Ἀποστολόπουλος* (Ἀθήνα, 1984), 162-190; Ch. Constantinidi, "Ὁ σταυρεπίστεγος ναός τῆς Ἁγίας Παρασκευῆς στὴν Πλάτσα τῆς Ἐξῶ Μάνης," in *Φίλιον Δόρημα εἰς τὸν Τ.Α. Γριτσόπουλον, Πελοποννησιακά* 16 (1985-1986): 429, 437, fig. 10; R. Etzeoglou, "Καρουόπολις, Μία ἐρειπωμένη βυζαντινὴ πόλη, Σχεδιάγραμμα ἱστορικῆς γεωγραφίας τῆς βορειοανατολικῆς Μάνης," *Λακ.Σπ.* 9 (1988): 31; A. Kavadia and K. Tsouris, "Δύο βυζαντινὲς ἐκκλησίαι στὴ Μεσσηνία," *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 47-48 Μελέτες (1992-1993): 277; P. L. Vocotopoulos, *Ἡ ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ εἰς τὴν Δυτικὴν Στερεὰν Ἑλλάδα καὶ τὴν Ἠπειρον ἀπὸ τοῦ τέλους τοῦ 7^{ου} μέχρι τοῦ 10^{ου} αἰῶνος* (Θεσσαλονίκη 1992²), 171 note 7.

² The neighborhood is known to the locals by the name of Bloutsianika.

³ For a preliminary report on the architecture of the Soterias church, see M. Kappas, "Ὁ ναός τοῦ Σωτήρα στὴ Λαγκάδα τῆς Μεσσηνιακῆς Μάνης," in *Εἰκοστό Ἐβδομο Σημῶσιον Βυζαντινῆς καὶ Μεταβυζαντινῆς Ἀρχαιολογίας καὶ Τέχνης, πρόγραμμα περιλήψεων καὶ ανακοινώσεων* (Ἀθήνα 2007), 40-41; idem, *Ἡ ἐφαρμογὴ τοῦ σταυροειδοῦς ἐγγεγραμμένου στὴ Μέση καὶ τὴν Ὑστερὴ Βυζαντινὴ περίοδο. Το παράδειγμα τοῦ ἀπλοῦ τετρακλίονιου/τετράστουλου*, PhD, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Thessaloniki, 2009), v. II, no 92, 315-318 [ikee.lib.auth.gr/record/112442].

⁴ M. Georgopoulou, "Vernacular Architecture in Venetian Crete: Urban and Rural Practices," in *Mechanism of Exchange: Transmission in Medieval Art and Architecture of the Mediterranean, ca. 1000-1500*, ed. H. E. Grossman and A. Walker

churches in Mystras, whose elite population showed an interest in the mixing of eclectic styles. This approach to the study of architecture seems to follow the scholarship of historians, who have emphasized the remarkable degree of inter-ethnic assimilation, coupled with the development of a regional identity that came to be shared by both Latins and Greeks. In many cases, this regional character overshadowed any imperial Byzantine identity.⁵ Although this assessment seems correct for regional church construction in areas such as Crete, Rhodes, Cyprus, and the Frankish Morea, the situation in the Mani peninsula was quite different. The study of the Langada church provides an opportunity to investigate a single monument as the nexus of cultural interactions, and to examine a group of related monuments that share a number of its unusual features.

The church of Langada is a cross-in-square building with a nearly square plan, 8.10 by 8.90 m (fig. 3). The dome is supported by four piers; both the cross arms and the corner bays are covered by barrel vaults. The vaults of the cross arms end in two-stepped arches in the central bay, a solution rarely attested in Byzantine architecture (fig. 4). The dome has an eight-sided drum, topped originally with a scalloped cornice made of poros stone, decorated with simple bosses (fig. 5). At the end of the west cross arm is an elegant belfry, one of the best-preserved examples in the Mani, where such features were quite common in the Late Byzantine period.⁶ At the east end of the church, the original apses of the *prothesis* and *diakonikon* are still preserved (fig. 6). The central chamber of the sanctuary, however, was enlarged in a later period, perhaps during the 17th century or even later. During this reconstruction, the templon was removed and attached to the eastern wall of the church, while the lateral apses were walled in their interior. Through this transformation the capacity of the nave was enlarged (fig. 7). The congregation started using the eastern corner bays, while all liturgical practices took place in the new, elongated apse. Two doors on the south and west sides of the building, provide access to the church. Refurbished in a later period, the doors no longer preserve their original form. Remains of the church's initial sculptural decoration—two marble slabs, a few part of the colonnades, and the epistyle of the templon—can still be seen in the interior of the building, either

(Leiden and Boston, 2013), 149-182; eadem, "The Landscape of Medieval Greece," in *A Companion to Latin Greece*, ed. N. I. Tsougarakis and P. Lock (Leiden and Boston, 2015), 326-368.

⁵ G. Page, *Being Byzantine. Greek identity before the Ottomans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁶ Constantinidi, "Συμβολή στη μελέτη," (n. 1 above), 62-79.

incorporated into its later pavement or laying on the steps in front of the wooden, 19th-century iconostasis. The interior surfaces of the church remain unarticulated apart from a cornice that adorns the springing of the dome's drum; this is decorated with simple bosses. Today the interior walls are covered by plaster; two different layers of painted decoration have been identified during the last ten years.

The combination of Byzantine features, such as the brick decoration and the articulation of the surfaces, with Western elements, mainly of Gothic inspiration, makes this church highly unusual for this region. A frieze of reticulate ornaments made by plain bricks adorns all sides of the monument, changing level and size only on the eastern façade, where the decoration was more elaborate. A similar ornament fills the upper part of the western gable. Dentil courses run around the building on two different levels, while all the stone masonry that is visible today was initially covered by plaster. Special cut bricks are used only to improve aesthetic problems such as in the corners of the dentil bands. All the lateral semi-arches framing the windows are made of bricks; in these, the recessed brick technique is applied in its simpler form with pieces of brick in the hidden courses (fig. 8).⁷ Of crucial importance is the role of the mortar in the final impression of the ceramic decoration;⁸ carefully cut, the mortar enhances the plasticity of the ornament in a way rarely attested in Byzantine architecture (fig. 9). The west façade is articulated with three blind arches; the centralmost was rebuilt in a later period. Apart from the main arch that was intended to relieve the lintel of the west door, the symmetrical lateral apses are the only synthetic values in the design of the façade (fig. 2).

Western elements are seen in the shape and the construction of the eastern original windows (fig. 10) as well as in the blind arches adorning the diagonal sides of the dome's drum (fig. 11). In the window of the north cross arm, the mason seems to have copied some innovative forms of Gothic design known in Western monuments of the second half of the fourteenth century, although he either misunderstood them or simplified the details (fig. 12-13). The same shape would have been also applied in the south window, which is today completely destroyed. The shape of the dome's waterspouts, which are made of poros stone, are also unusual by Byzantine standards.

⁷ On this specific variation of the recessed brick technique, see R. Ousterhout, "Observations on the 'Recessed Brick' Technique During the Paleologan Period," *Αρχ.Δελτ.* 39 (1984), Μέρος Α' - Μελέτες, 163-170.

⁸ On the application of mortar in Byzantine architecture, see R. Ousterhout, *Master Builders of Byzantium* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 181-184.

A group of buildings in the Mani share many close similarities with the church of Langada: the Soterias church in Fagrianika of Melia,⁹ St. Georges at Konakia,¹⁰ and St. Paraskevi in Platsa.¹¹ Their study suggests how groups of masons worked in the region. The Soterias church in Fagrianika is a cross-in-square church of the two-columned variant elongated on its west side in the 18th century, as indicated by the joints in its lateral sides as well as the fresco decoration in the interior (fig. 14). An impressive bell tower — one of the highest in the Mani — was added to its west façade in 1808. Ceramic friezes adorn the exterior walls, while the north window, which has stood intact through the centuries, imitates Gothic forms identical to those in the Langada church (fig. 15). In addition, on the south side of the church there are still remains of perhaps three arches articulating the wall, similar to ones on the west façade at Langada. Recent works of restoration and consolidation have revealed part of a first layer of frescoes in the bema that can be dated in the late fourteenth century.¹²

St. George at Konakia is a simple two-column cross-in-square church (8.20 x 4.40m) that today serves as the *katholikon* of an isolated and declining monastery (fig. 16).¹³ Heavily damaged on the exterior and fully repainted on the interior, the church holds little interest for architectural historians. A few preserved details, such as the two-stepped arches of the barrel-vaults below the dome, and especially the form of the north window (fig. 17), which is identical to those at Langada and Melia, betrays a close connection with this group of monuments.

St. Paraskevi in Platsa (fig. 18-19), one of the best-preserved Byzantine monuments in the Messenian Mani, follows the simpler variant of the cross-vaulted type, the only original typological creation of the Late Byzantine period.¹⁴ Its close ties with this group of monuments is demonstrated mainly by the form and the synthetic concept of its ceramic decoration, the articulation of its west façade, and the application of the recessed brick technique in the same simplified way as seen in the church of Langada, with pieces of slabs embedded in the hidden courses.

⁹ N. Drandakis, “Ερευναί εις τήν Μεσσηνιακὴν Μάνην,” Πρακτικὰ τῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας 1976, 220-221, pl. 157a.

¹⁰ N. Drandakes, E. Dore, V. Kerpetze and M. Konstandoudakes, *Ἐρευνα στὴν Κάτω Μάνη* (Athens, 1993), 34-46, fig. 1, pl. 10.

¹¹ Constantinidi, “Ὁ σταυρεπίστεγος ναὸς” (n. 1 above), 423-440.

¹² E. Gerousi, K. Eliopoulos, and M. Kappas, “Μηλέα Μεσσηνιακῆς Μάνης, Ναὸς Μεταμόρφωσης τοῦ Σωτήρος Φραγκριανικῶν,” *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 61 (2006), Χρονικὰ Β1, 392-393.

¹³ Drandakes et al., *Ἐρευνα στὴν Κάτω Μάνη* (n. 10 above), 34-46, fig. 1, pl. 10.

¹⁴ Constantinidi, “Ὁ σταυρεπίστεγος ναὸς” (n. 1 above), 423-440

The distinctive construction techniques shared by this group of monuments make it tempting to assign them to the same group of masons. All of the churches share identical building details, which would have been very difficult to copy. This technical knowledge seems to have been passed among masons through experiential learning and by apprenticeship under the tutelage of a master.¹⁵ The only securely dated monument of the group is St. Paraskevi in Platsa. An inscription immured on its west façade provides a precise chronology in the year 1412.¹⁶ Based on the perfection of some details of the brick decoration and mainly the trajectory of its synthetic concept, I would consider St. Paraskevi as the last creation of our group, proposing a late- 14th- or early- 15th-century date for the rest of buildings, including the Soteras in Langada.

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One of the most interesting questions is to consider how masons involved in the construction of the Langada church were aware of Western features of architecture, especially given the remote location in the Mani. In order to answer this question, we need to consider the historical circumstances of the period.

The conquest of the Peloponnese in the early 13th century by the Crusaders and the creation of the principality of Achaia, with Andravida as its capital, radically altered the geopolitics of the region¹⁷. These historical changes had a discernible impact on art and architecture.¹⁸ It is now more evident that with Andravida as its

¹⁵ R. Holod, "Text, Plan, Building: On the Transmission of Architectural Knowledge," in *Theories and Principles of Design in the Architecture of Islamic Societies*, ed. M. Bentley Sevcenko (Cambridge, MA: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1988), 1-2; D. Turnbull, *Masons, Tricksters and Cartographers: Makes of Knowledge and Space* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 2000), 55 and 63-68; Robert Ousterhout analyzes the training and practice of masons in Byzantium, see Ousterhout, *Master Builders* (n. 8 above), esp. 58-85.

¹⁶ Constantinidi, "Ο σταυροειστέγος ναός" (n. 1 above), 424.

¹⁷ A. Bon, *La Morée Franque, Recherches historiques, topographiques et archéologiques sur la Principauté d'Achaïe (1205-1430)* (Paris, 1969).

¹⁸ For the impact of the conquest of the Peloponnese by the Crusaders to the art and architecture of the region, see S. E. J. Gerstel, "Art and Identity in the Medieval Morea," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. A. E. Laiou and R. P. Mottahedeh (Washington, DC, 2001), 263-280; H. Grossman, "Syncretism Made Concrete: The Case for a Hybrid Moreote Architecture in Post-Fourth Crusade Greece", in *Archaeology in Architecture: Papers in Honor of Cecil L. Striker*, ed. J. Emerick and D. Deliyannis (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 2005), 65-73; S. Kalopissi-Verti, "The Impact of the Fourth Crusade on Monumental Painting in the Peloponnese and Eastern Central Greece up to the End of the Thirteenth Century", in *Byzantine Art in the Aftermath of the Fourth Crusade*, ed. P. L. Vocotopoulos (Athens, 2007), 63-88; M. Kappas, "Εκκλησίες της Μητροπόλεως Μεσσηνίας από το 1204 έως και το 1500," in *Χριστιανική Μεσσηνία, Μνημεία και Ιστορία της Ιεράς Μητροπόλεως Μεσσηνίας* (Athens, 2010), 189-272; R. Ousterhout, "Architecture and Cultural Identity in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Hybrid Cultures in Medieval Europe, Papers and Workshops of an International Spring School*, ed. M. Borgolte and B. Schneidmüller (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2010) 261-275; H. Grossman, "On Memory, Transmission and the Practice of Building in the Crusader Mediterranean," in *Mechanism of Exchange: Transmission in Medieval Art and Architecture of the Mediterranean, ca. 1000-1500*, ed. H. E. Grossman and A. Walker (Brill: Leiden – Boston, 2013), 183-219; S. E. J. Gerstel, "The Morea", in *Heaven and Earth, Art of Byzantium from Greek Collections*, ed. A. Drandaki, D. Papanikola-Bakirtzi and A. Tourta (Athens, 2013), 300-303; M. Kappas, "Δυτικές επιδράσεις στην αρχιτεκτονική της Μεσσηνίας (13^{ος}-15^{ος} αι.)," in *Festschrift for Charalambos Bouras* ed. M. Korres (forthcoming); S. E. J. Gerstel and M. Kappas, "Between East and West: Locating

center, a notable local school of architecture flourished in the 13th century, combining elements from both the regional Byzantine building tradition and the newly introduced Western forms of architecture.¹⁹ Local groups of masons continued to build noteworthy enterprises funded by members of both the Frankish ruling class and the local Greek aristocracy, which was incorporated into the newly established feudal system of administration. Among the most prominent examples of this amalgamation of Eastern and Western forms is the church of the Dormition at Merbakas,²⁰ convincingly associated with the Catholic bishop of Corinth William de Moerbeke in the 1270s, the katholikon of the Blacherna monastery close to Glarentza,²¹ and the church of Panagia Katholiki at Gastouni, erected in 1278/79 by the noble family of Kaligopouloi.²²

How do we account for the synthesis of Western and Eastern elements in the monuments of the Mani, far from the area of Frankish occupation in the northeastern Peloponnese? What chronological clues do Western features in the churches of the Mani provide? Both the shape of the arches and moreover the details in the construction of the two-lobed windows in three of our churches — at Langada, Melia, and Konakia — seem to copy Gothic prototypes of the mid or late fourteenth century attested in a series of monuments of western Europe.²³ Even in the eastern

Monumental Painting from the Peloponnese,” in *Whose Mediterranean is it anyway? Cross-cultural interaction between Byzantium and the West 1204-1669, 48th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (March 28-30), London (forthcoming); M. Kappas, “Cultural Interactions Between East and West: the Testimony of Three Orthodox Monasteries in the Thirteenth-Century Frankish Messenia,” in *Byzantine and Latins in the Greek Mainland and the Islands (13th-15th centuries): Archaeological and Artistic Evidence of an Interrelation*, round table organized by S. Kalopissi-Verti and V. Foskolou, 23rd *International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, August 22-27 (Belgrade, 2016).

¹⁹ D. Athanasoulis, “The Triangle of Power: Building Projects in the Metropolitan Area of the Crusader Principality of the Morea,” in *Viewing the Morea. Land and People in the Late Medieval Peloponnese*, ed. S. E. J. Gerstel (Washington D.C., 2013), 111-151.

²⁰ M. L. Coulson, *The Church of Merbaka, Cultural Diversity and Integretion in the 13th Century Peloponnese*, PhD in Courtauld Institute of Art (Courtauld, 2002). See also G. Sanders, “Three Peloponnesian Churches and Their Importance for the Chronology of Late 13th and Early 14th Century Pottery in the Eastern Mediterranean,” in *Recherches sur la céramique Byzantine, Actes du Colloque organize par l' École Française d' Athènes et l' Université de Strasbourg*, Athènes 8-10 Avril 1987, ed. V. Déroche – J.-M. Spieser (Paris, 1989), 189-199; Ch. Bouras – L. Boura, *Ἡ ἑλληδική ναοδομία κατὰ τὸν 12^ο αἰώνα* (Athens, 2002), 332-333; Ch. Bouras, “The Impact of Frankish Architecture on Thirteenth Century Byzantine Architecture,” in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. A.E. Laiou – R. P. Mottahedeh (Washington D.C., 2001), 250-251; A. Papalexandrou, “The Architectural Layering of the History in the Medieval Morea, Monuments, Memory, and Fragments of the Past,” in *Viewing the Morea, Land and People in the Late Medieval Peloponnese*, ed. S. E. J. Gerstel (Washington D.C., 2013), 29-35; G. Sanders, “William of Moerbeke’s Church at Merbakas: The Use of Ancient Spolia to Make Personal and Political Statements,” *Hesperia* 84, no 3 (July – September 2015): 583-626. For the older option on the 12th c. dating, see G. Hadji-Minaglou, *L’égglise de la Dormition de la Vierge à Merbaka (Hagia Triada)* (Paris, 1992).

²¹ D. Athanasoulis, *Ἡ ναοδομία στήν Ἐπισκοπή Ὠλένης κατὰ τήν μέση και τήν ὕστερη βυζαντινή περίοδο*, PhD, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Thessaloniki, 2006), 144-186; Papalexandrou, “The Architectural Layering of the History” (n. 20 above), 35-39. For the identification of Blacherna with the famous monastery of Santa Maria de Camina, see N. Tsougarakis – Chr. Schabel, “Of burning monks, unidentified churches and the last Cistercian foundation in the East: Our Lady of Camina in the principality of Achaia”, *Journal of Medieval History* 41 (2015): 60-87.

²² D. Athanasoulis, “Ἡ αναχρονολόγηση του ναοῦ τῆς Παναγίας τῆς Καθολικῆς στη Γαστούνη,” *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἐτ.* 24 (2003) 63-77.

²³ A. Zaragoza-Catalan, “Mediterranean Gothic Architecture,” in *Μεσογειακή Γοτθική αρχιτεκτονική/Mediterranean Gothic Architecture* (Athens 2007), 12-19; idem “The Land of Valentia,” in *Μεσογειακή Γοτθική αρχιτεκτονική/Mediterranean Gothic Architecture* (Athnes 2007), 52-55; B. Borngässer “Late Gothic Architecture in Spain and Portugal,” in *Gothic, Architecture, Sculpture, Painting*, ed. R. Toman (H.F. Ullmann, 2013), 266-299; C. Freigang, “The Papal Palace in Avignon,” in *Gothic*,

Mediterranean such solutions, though rare, can be found in distant buildings of the late fourteenth century, from Venetian Crete,²⁴ to the Medieval Kingdom of Serbia in the northern part of the Balkans.²⁵ This makes a huge chronological gap of almost one century compared to the Western forms found in monuments such as the church of Merbakas, which raises another crucial question: what happened in the Mani after the mid-14th century that caused the appropriation and assimilation of brand new Western forms and ideas in the architectural design of the region?

A lost document probably written in Naples in 1336 and published in 1969 by Jean Longnon and Peter Topping may provide an answer to this question.²⁶ According to the text, Aikaterine Valois,²⁷ who was in charge of the administration of the Principality of Achaia for more than one decade (1332-1341), together with her son Roberto, Prince of Taranto, donated vast estates to Niccolò Acciajuoli in Langada and Melia, the two villages where the most important monuments mixing Eastern and Western features are located.²⁸

We can reliably assume that the presence of the Florentine family of Acciajuoli in the two villages of the Mani was reinforced in the next decades as was their role in the geopolitics of Southern Greece in general.²⁹ After Niccolò's death in 1365 his son Angelo inherited his colossal fortune in the Morea; a year later Niccolò's nephew Nerio I, had taken over his uncle's vast estates, which included the town and fortress of Corinth, expanding his power gradually. In 1388 he occupied Athens, becoming the first Duke of the glorious city, while he remain one of the closest allies

Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, ed. R. Toman (H.F. Ullmann, 2013), 188-189; B. Borngässer, "Gothic Architecture in Italy," in *Gothic, Architecture, Sculpture, Painting*, ed. R. Toman (H.F. Ullmann, 2013), 242-251; C. Bruzelius, *The Stones of Naples. Church Building in Angevin Italy 1266-1343* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2004), fig. 206. See also the decorative details of the frieze of the Dukes's palace in Venice and its influence in the ecclesiastical architecture of Crete, O. Gratziou, *Η Κρήτη στην Ύστερη Μεσαιωνική εποχή. Η μαρτυρία της εκκλησιαστικής αρχιτεκτονικής* (Herakleion, 2010), fig. 93.

²⁴ M. Borboudakes, "Θυρώματα και παράθυρα σε εκκλησίες της Κρήτης (τέλος 14ου – μέσα 15ου αιώνα)," in *Γλυπτική και λιθοξοϊκή στη Λατινική Ανατολή, 13ος – 17ος αιώνας*, ed. O. Gratziou (Herakleio, 2007) 60-89; Gratziou, *Η Κρήτη στην Ύστερη Μεσαιωνική εποχή* (n. 23 above), 55-76, fig. 73, 92-93.

²⁵ See for example windows in churches of the so called Morava School, V. Korać – M. Šuput, *Архитектура византиског света* (Belgrade, 1998), fig. 517-518, 520, 527.

²⁶ J. Longnon and P. Topping, *Documents sur le régime des terres dans la principauté de Morée* (Paris, 1969), 19-29.

²⁷ M. Dourou-Eliopoulou, *Το φραγκικό πριγκιπάτο της Αχαιάς (1204-1432). Ιστορία. Οργάνωση. Κοινωνία* (Thessaloniki, 2005), 46-47.

²⁸ In the document Langada is mentioned with exactly the same name, while Melia is mentioned by the name Xiromelia, Longnon – Topping Documents (n. 26 above), 23 και 27; see also E. Moundreas, "Τοπωνυμικά της Μεσσηνίας (στην εποχή της Φραγκοκρατίας)," in *Πρακτικά του Α' Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Πελοποννησιακών Σπουδών* (Sparta, 7-14 September 1975), v. II (Athens, 1976-1978), 197-198.

²⁹ D. Giannakopoulos, *Δουκάτο των Αθηνών: Η κυριαρχία των Acciajuoli* (Thessaloniki, 2006); A. Papadia-Lala, "Society, Administration and Identities in Latin Greece," in *A Companion to Latin Greece*, ed. N. I. Tsougarakis – P. Lock, (Brill, Leiden and Boston, 2015). 121-122.

of Theodoros I Palaiologos, despot of the Morea from 1382 until 1407.³⁰ To reinforce his alliance with Theodoros in 1385 he offered him his elder daughter Bartolomea as a wife, promising that on her father's death she would inherit Corinth.³¹ He finally died in 1394 while his successors Antonio and Nerio II, Dukes of Athens, continued to play a predominant role in the geopolitics of Southern Greece until the mid 15th c.³²

Although the document of 1336, an estate inventory, mentions only the landed property without any reference to churches or other buildings, I would propose that connection between the Western feudal lords in the Mani and the foundation of monuments with Western features is significant. Even if this hypothesis cannot be fully proven, in my opinion, it provides the most sufficient explanation for the primary introduction of innovative Gothic features in this deeply conservative region, which had rejected any Western influence for almost two centuries.

An analogous combination of local and innovative Western ideas is also attested in some churches of Mystras,³³ as well as in a part of the city's palace complex attributed to the building activity of the Despot Manuel Kantakouzenos and his successors.³⁴ This fashion in the architecture of the southeastern Peloponnese in my opinion is not accidental; on the contrary it may reflect a certain political and ideological tendency in the upper class society of Mystras that favored a more conciliatory position towards the relations with the West in general.

The contacts between East and West were undoubtedly improved by the presence in Mystras of the Despoina Isabella de Lusignan, whose origins were found

³⁰ D. A. Zakythinou, *Le despotat grec de Moré. v. I Histoire politique, Edition revue et augmenté par Ch. Maltézou* (Variorum Reprints: London 1975), 125-165 and 340-348; A.-M. Talbot, "Theodore I Palaiologos," *ODB* 3: 2040; S. Runciman, *The Lost Capital of Byzantium. The History of Mistra and the Peloponnese* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2009), 54-61.

³¹ Dourou-Eliopoulou, *Το φραγκικό πριγκιπάτο* (n. 27 above), 55; Runciman, *The Lost Capital of Byzantium* (n. 29 above), 55-56.
³² On their impressive palace built in the Propylaea, see T. Tanoulas, *Τὰ Προπύλαια τῆς Ἀθηναϊκῆς Ἀκρόπολης κατὰ τὸν Μεσαίωνα I-II* (Athens, 1997).

³³ G. Marinou, "Δυτικά στοιχεία στο Μυστρά" in *Γλωπτική και λιθοξοϊκή στη Λατινική Ανατολή, 13ος – 17ος αιώνας*, ed. O. Gratziou (Herakleion, 2007), 48-59. Western influences in the churches of Mystras are increasing after the mid-fourteenth c., with the most exuberant example being the church of Pantanassa of the third decade of the 15th c., see S. Sinos, *Η αρχιτεκτονική του καθολικού της Μονῆς της Παντάνασσας του Μυστρά* (Athens, 2012).

³⁴ Though the first phase of Mystras palace had been dated by A. Orlandos to the mid 13th c. assigned to the building activity of Guillaume Villehardouin, it's seems more likely that nothing in this complex can be traced back to the period before the arrival of the first Despot, Manouel Kantakouzenos. For the palaces, see A. Orlandos, "Τὰ παλάτια τοῦ Μυστρά," *Αρχ.Βυζ.Μνημ.Ελλ.3* (1937): 3-114 [reprinted, idem, *Τὰ παλάτια καὶ τὰ σπίτια τοῦ Μυστρά* (Βιβλιοθήκη τῆς ἐν Ἀθήναις Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας αρ. 203) (Athens, 2000)]; Ch. Bouras, "Τὰ ἀνάκτορα τῶν Δεσποτῶν, Μυστράς, Ἑλλάς," in *Κοσμική Μεσαιωνική Αρχιτεκτονική στα Βαλκάνια 1300-1500 και η Διατήρησή της*, ed. S. Ćurčić and E. Chatziryfonos (Thessaloniki, 1997), 242-243; S. Sinos, *Τα μνημεία του Μυστρά. Το έργο της Επιτροπῆς Αναστήλωσης Μνημείων Μυστρά/ The Monuments of Mystras. The Work of the Committee for the Restoration of the Monuments of Mystras*, ed. S. Sinos (Athens, 2009), 337-373; S. Kalopissi-Verti, "Mistra. A Fortified Late Byzantine Settlement," in *Heaven and Earth, Cities and Countryside in Byzantine Greece*, ed. J. Albani – E. Chalkia (Athens, 2013), 229.

in the Frankish kingdom of Cyprus.³⁵ This tradition was kept over the following years. Theodoros I Palaeologos, who succeeded Manuel in the administration of the Despotate married Bartholomea Acciajuoli, as already mentioned.³⁶ His successor Theodoros II Palaiologos (1407-1443) married the Italian princess Cleopa Malatesta,³⁷ while his brother Constantine Palaiologos, who ruled Mystras from 1443 to 1449, married Maddalena/Theodora Tocco.³⁸ What is more, the emperor Manuel II Palaeologos who strained to improve the contacts between Byzantium and the Latin West remained in Mystras for long periods to supervise his son's administration as a despot.³⁹ The most predominant building mixing high quality Westerns influence with Byzantine practices is the last structural phase of the palace in Mystras, which can be attributed to the patronage of Manuel himself during his residency in the capital city of the Despotate in the years 1408 and 1415.⁴⁰

In this case, neither in the monuments of Mystras nor at least in the two most important churches in the Mani presented above, the Soterias church in Langada and the Soterias church in Melia, the emulation of Western forms seems to be in a neutral manner reflecting just an architectural eclecticism. To the contrary, this osmosis in the architectural field seems to be directly related with the social status of the buildings' patrons, reflecting their ideology. So, though in many fourteenth and fifteenth century churches of the Morea the Western features were merely a superficial veneer on standard regional constructions,⁴¹ there are still examples where Western details were assimilated with a strong ideological intent.

A newly discovered element supports my hypothesis. Recent work inside the Soterias church in Langada revealed part of its original paintings in the semi domes of the lateral conches. There, in a prominent location, are represented two figures: St. Peter the founder of the Church of Rome in the apse of the *diakonikon* (fig. 20), and St. Sylvester, Pope of Rome in the early 4th century in the *prothesis* (fig. 21).

³⁵ D. Zakythinios, "Une princesse française à la cour de Mistra au XIVe siècle, Isabelle de Lusignan Cantacuzène," *RÉG* 49 (1936): 62-76; W. H. Rudt de Collenberg, "Les Lusignan de Chypre," *Επ.Κέντρ.Επ.Ερ. (Cyprus)* 10 (1979-1980): 229-231; *PLP*, CD-Rome – Version (Wien, 2001), n. 92549; M. Konstandoudaki-Kitromilidou, "Η Isabelle de Lusignan Καντακουζηνή και τα τιμαλφή της από τον Μυστρά στην Κρήτη," in *Επιστημονικό Συμπόσιο στη Μνήμη Νικολάου Β. Δρανδάκη για τη Βυζαντινή Μάνη (Καραβοστάσι Οιτύλου, 21-22 Ιουνίου 2008)*, *Πρακτικά*, ed. E. Eleutheriou and A. Mexia (Sparta, 2008-2009), 161-170.

³⁶ See above n. 30.

³⁷ Runciman, *The Lost Capital of Byzantium* (n. 30 above), 65-66, 70, 109-110, 132.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 68-69, 70.

³⁹ Zakythinios, *Le despotat grec de Moré* (n. 30 above), 165-191; Kalopissi-Verti, "Mistra" (n. 34 above), 229.

⁴⁰ See n. 34 above.

⁴¹ Kappas, "Εκκλησίες της Μητροπόλεως Μεσσηνίας" (n. 18 above), 240-249; *idem*, "Δυτικές επιδράσεις στην αρχιτεκτονική της Μεσσηνίας (13^{ος}-15^{ος}αι.)," in *Festschrift for Charalambos Bouras*, ed. M. Korres (forthcoming).

According to legend dated back at least to the fifth century, it was Sylvester and not Eusebios who baptized Constantine after healing him from an intractable disease.⁴² The pope also helped the emperor to identify a vision of two men he had seen by providing him an icon with Peter and Paul. This legend was later related to the *Donation of Constantine* according to which the astonished emperor granted the pope and the Church of Rome many privileges supporting his position in the Church hierarchy. Though this story was known in Byzantium from at least the early Middle Byzantine period,⁴³ I cannot imagine anyone else in the Mani of the late 14th century who could have created such an iconographic composition other than a Western feudal lord, perhaps one of the descendants of Niccolò Acciajuoli.⁴⁴

Once Western elements were introduced in a small group of related buildings in the Mani, they were copied in other structures, establishing a path by which foreign elements became assimilated into the architectural koine of the region.

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A second, larger group of neighboring buildings shows close typological and morphological affinities with the monuments at Langada, Melia, Konakia, and Platsa. The most impressive of these is the monastic church of St. George at Bosinianika in the region of Bardounochoria (fig. 22), which has an identical plan to the Langada church with similar dimensions and proportions.⁴⁵ Its exuberant brick decoration, unique in the region, betrays a provincial quality. In some of the arches the recessed brick technique is applied (fig. 23), an element supporting the close connections with the building activity of the masons involved in the Langada group. The church of Soteras in Kastanitzza, a few kilometers away from Bosinianika, used to be quite

⁴² A. Kazhdan, "Silvester I," *ODB* 3: 1900.

⁴³ For the depictions of Silvester in Byzantine art and its political context especially during the controversy between the patriarch Michael Kerularios and the emperor Isaak Komnenos, see I. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, "Silvester and Kerularios," in *XVI Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress* (Wien, 4-9 Oktober 1981), Akten II/5, *JÖB* 32/5 (1982): 453-458; R. Jenkins and E. Kitzinger, "A Cross of the Patriarch Michael Cerularius", *DOP* 21(1967): 233-252. For the iconography of Silvester and his depictions in Art, see J. Traeger, "Silvester I", in *Lexicon der christlichen Ikonographie* 1976, 354-358.

⁴⁴ The frescoes of Langada can be compare with other contemporaneous paintings in Laconia, see M. Panayiotidi, "Παρατηρήσεις για ένα τοπικό «εργαστήρι» στην περιοχή της Επιδαύρου Λιμηράς," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Έτ.* 27 (2006): 193-206.

⁴⁵ Unfortunately this interesting monument remains unpublished; for short references, see N. V. Drandakes, "Ο ναός του Άη Λέου εις το Μπρίκι της Μάνης," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Έτ.* 6 (1972): 158, n. 48, pl. 47b; P.L. Vocotopoulos, "The Concealed Course Technique: Further Examples and Few Remarks," *JÖB* 28 (1979): 257, fig. 16; Constantinidi, "Συμβολή στη μελέτη" (n. 1 above), 69 n. 6; N. V. Drandakes, "Άπό τις τοιχογραφίες του Άγιου Δημητρίου Κροκεῶν (1286)," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Έτ.* 12 (1984): 208 n. 12; G. Velenis, *Έρμηνεία του έξωτερικού διακόσμου στη βυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική*, PhD Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Thessaloniki, 1984), 96; Constantinidi, "Ο σταυρεπίστεγος ναός" (n. 1 above), 431; N. V. Drandakes, *Βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες της Μέσα Μάνης* (Αθήνα, 1995), 128. For a longer description of the church, see Kappas, *Η εφαρμογή του σταυροειδούς εγγεγραμμένου* (n. 3 above), v. II, no 88, 301-302.

similar (fig. 24).⁴⁶ Initially constructed as compact cross-in-square building of the two-pier variant, the church was elongated on its east side at a later period (fig. 25).⁴⁷ Recent work carried out by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Laconia provided valuable help to define its structural phases.⁴⁸ Part of the south façade that remains from the original building is adorned with the typical reticulate brick band, one of the hallmarks of this group of masons. Similar features can be identified in the churches of Hagioi Anargyroi at Nomitzi (fig. 26),⁴⁹ St. Nicholas in Prasteio (modern Proastio) (fig. 27),⁵⁰ the south porch of the church of St. Georgios at Dryalos (fig. 28),⁵¹ as well as in the church of the Soterias in Oitylo (fig. 29).⁵² Apart from the typical brick frieze, one more basic feature of this group of masons can be seen in the Oitylo church: the application of the recessed brick technique in the windows of its dome.⁵³

All of these buildings share common features in the fields of typology and construction with the church of Soterias in Langada and the other monuments I have assigned to the same workshop. Although I do not have sufficient evidence to ascribe their production to the same masons, they constitute a unified group, which can be differentiated from other buildings in the Late Byzantine Peloponnese.

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A closer analysis of typological and morphological issues allows us to contextualize the material and define the connections with Byzantine architecture in general. The type of compact cross-in-square church of the four-columned or four-pier variant, seen in the church at Langada, is well known in the region. Of the approximately 130 known cross-in-square churches in the Peloponnese, more than ten follow this specific variation, primarily in Laconia and Messenia.⁵⁴ Almost all the

⁴⁶ N. Skagos, *Ο ναός της Μεταμόρφωσης του Σωτήρος στην Καστάνια (Καστάνιτσα) της Έξω Μάνης* (Sparta, 2008).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 6-9.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

⁴⁹ R. Traquair, "Laconia III. The Churches of Western Mani," *BSA* 15 (1908-1909): 193-194, pl. XIV; Ph. Drossogianni, *Αρχ.Δελτ.*24 (1969), *Χρονικά* 1, 163.

⁵⁰ Drandakis, "Έρευνα εις την Μεσσηνιακὴν Μάνην," (n. 9 above), 224; V. Palantzas, "Ο ναός τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου στὸ Πραστεῖο τῆς δυτικῆς Μάνης," *Ἐκκλησιολογία ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα μετὰ τὴν Ἰλωση 2* (1982): 311-326.

⁵¹ Traquair, "Laconia" (n. 49 above), 181, pl. XI XII; H. Megaw, "Byzantine Architecture in Mani," *BSA* 33 (1932-1933): 162; Constantinidi, "Συμβολὴ εἰς τὴν μελέτην" (n. 1 above), 71-72, fig. 5.

⁵² N. V. Drandakes, "Ο Σωτήρας τοῦ Οἰτύλου," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Ετ.* 18 (1995): 79-88.

⁵³ Drandakis did not realize the application of the recessed brick technique in the arches of the dome's windows and thought they were built of alternating bricks and voussoirs, see Drandakes, "Ο Σωτήρας τοῦ Οἰτύλου," (n. 52 above), 83.

⁵⁴ Hagios Charalambos in Kalamata, St. Petros in Kastania, Soterias at Nomitzi, St. Demetrios in Platsa, Soterias in Langada, St. Sergios and Bakchos at Kitta, Blacherna at Mezapos, Pantanassa at Geroumana, Cheimatissa at Phloka, the katholikon of the Old Philosophou Monastery, St. Jonh the Baptist at Chryssapha, for all these examples see Kappas, *Η εφαρμογή του σταυροειδούς εγγεγραμμένου* (n. 3 above), v. I. 134-160, v. II 298-341 with extensive bibliography. The same type was probably applied in the broadly damaged church of Panagia at Kastanochori, Arcadia that remains unpublished, on its sculptures see, G. Pallis, "Νεότερα γὰρ τὰ ἐργαστήριον γλυπτικῆς τῆς Σαμαρινῶν," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Ετ.* 27 (2006): 92-93.

Middle Byzantine examples are found in the Mani, where the domes are exclusively supported on four elegant marble columns especially carved for the monuments.⁵⁵ During the Late Byzantine period, however, in most of the documented examples in the Mani, and also in the regions of Monemvasia, Geraki and Chryssapha, the columns were replaced by piers.⁵⁶ This fundamental change in architectural design may reflect the disruption of Middle Byzantine marble workshops in the immediate region caused by the political instability that followed the conquest of the Morea by the Crusaders after the fall of Constantinople in 1204.

The two-columned variant,⁵⁷ the most popular plan of the inscribed cross type among Byzantine masons in southern Greece through the Middle and Late Byzantine periods, is common in Late Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture in the Peloponnese.⁵⁸ Apart from the churches of the Soterias in Fagrianika and St. Georges at Konakia, two-columned churches dated to the 14th century can be found in Prasteio (St. Nicholas),⁵⁹ Kastania (Panagia),⁶⁰ Germa (St. Nicholas),⁶¹ Oitylo (Soterias),⁶² Skoutari (St. Barbara),⁶³ Trype (St. Theodoroi),⁶⁴ Leukochoima (St. Nicholas),⁶⁵ Kokkinorachi (St.

⁵⁵ St. Sergios and Bakchos at Kitta, St. Petros in Kastania, Soterias at Nomitzi, St. Demetrios in Platasa and perhaps Blacherna at Mezapos where the columns are missing. On their sculpture decoration, see N. V. Drandakis, *Βυζαντινά γλυπτά της Μάνης* (Athens, 2002).

⁵⁶ St. John the Baptist at Chryssapha, Pantanassa at Geroumana, Cheimatissa at Phloka and the katholikon of the Old Philosophou Monastery, for the date of this last monument to the late 13th c. or even later, see Kappas, *Η εφαρμογή του σταυροειδούς εγγεγραμμένου* (n. 3 above), v. II no 96, 331-333.

⁵⁷ More than ten examples can be found only in the Mani; in the western part of the Laconian Mani (Mesa Mani): St. Theodoros at Bambaka (Megaw, "Byzantine Architecture in Mani" (n. 50 above), 139), Taxiarches at Glezou (Ibid., 139), St. Barbara at Eremos (Bouras – Boura, *Η ελλαδική ναοδομία* (n. 20 above), 133-135, fig. 136), Ai Strategos at Ano Boularioi (Traquair, "Laconia" (n. 15 above), pl. XI), Soterias in Gardenitsa (Ibid., pl. XI), Asomatoi at Kouloumi (N. Drandakis, "Ἐρευναί εἰς τὴν Μάνην," *Πρακτικά τῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας* 1977, 208-212, fig. 3), St. Nicholas at Ochia (Bouras – Boura, *Η ελλαδική ναοδομία* (n. 20 above), 259-261, fig. 297), Episkopi (St. George) at Stavri (ibid., 128-131, fig. 129) and Agetria (Hodegetria) (ibid., 24-25, fig. 1). For all the churches mentioned above see also A. Mexia, *Βυζαντινὴ ναοδομία στὴν Πελοπόννησο. Η περίπτωση τῶν μεσοβυζαντινῶν ναῶν τῆς Μέσας Μάνης*, PhD, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Athens, 2011), I-II. In the eastern part of the Laconian Mani (Kato Mani): St. Demetrios at Platanos (Limberdo) (N. Drandakis, "Ἐρευναί εἰς τὴν Μάνην," *Πρακτικά τῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας* 1974, 110-113, fig. 1). In the Messenian Mani (Exo Mani): Soterias in Melia (Fagrianika) (n. 9 above), St. Nicholas in Prasteion (n. 51 above), Panagia (Dormition) church in Kastania (M. Kappas, "Approaching Monemvasia and Mystras from the Outside: The View from Kastania," in *Viewing Greece: Cultural and Political Agency in the Medieval and Early Modern Mediterranean*, ed. Sh. E. J. Gerstel (Brepols, Turnhout, 2016), 162-165, fig. 11).

⁵⁸ For this variant of the cross-in-square type, see G. Millet, *L' école grecque dans l'architecture byzantine*, Paris 1916, 57-58; A. K. Orlandos, "Ὁ παρὰ τὴν Ἄμφισσαν ναὸς τοῦ Σωτῆρος," *Ἀρχ.Βυζ.Μνημ.Ελλ.*1 (1935): 181-196, espec. 182; idem, "Βυζαντινὰ μνημεῖα τῆς Ἀνδρου," *Ἀρχ.Βυζ.Μνημ.Ελλ.*8 (1955-1956): 55; M. Soteriou, "Τὸ καθολικὸν τῆς Μονῆς Πετρακῆ Ἀθηνῶν," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἐτ.* 2 (1960-1961): 123-124; Ch. Bouras, "Ὁ Ἅγιος Ἰωάννης Λιγουριοῦ Ἀργολίδος," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἐτ.* 7 (1973-1974): 1-28, esp. 4; S. Sinos, *Die Klosterkirche der Kosmosoteira in Bera (Vira)*, Byzantinisches Archiv, Heft 16 (München, 1985), 223-228; St. Mamaloukos, "Παρατηρήσεις στὴν διαμόρφωση τῶν γωνιακῶν διαμερισμάτων τῶν δικιόντων σταυροειδῶν ἐγγεγραμμένων τῆς Ἑλλάδος," *Δελτ.Χριστ.Ἀρχ.Ἐτ.* 14 (1987-1988): 189-204.

⁵⁹ See n. 51 above.

⁶⁰ See n. 57 above.

⁶¹ Drandakis, "Ἐρευναί εἰς τὴν Μάνην" (n. 57 above), 117-119, fig. 2; K. Diamante, "Γέμμα, Ναός Ἁγίου Νικολάου," *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 52 (1997), B1 – Χρονικά, 216-217, pl. 90a-b.

⁶² See n. 20 above.

⁶³ Drandakes et. al., *Ἐρευνα στὴν Κάτω Μάνη* (n. 10 above), 178-182, pl. 40b; E. Pantou – M. Tsoule – A. Mexia, *Ἀποκατάσταση καὶ Ἀνάδειξη Ἱεροῦ Ναοῦ Ἁγίας Βαρβάρας στο Σκουτάρι Γυθείου, π.ε. Λακωνίας/Restoration and enhancement of the holy church of Saint Varvara at Skoutari, Gytheio, Prefecture of Lakonia*, Greek Ministry of Culture Education and Religious Affairs /Ephorate of Antiquities of Lakonia (Sparta, 2015).

⁶⁴ N. V. Drandakes, "Ὁ ναὸς τῶν Ἁγίων Θεοδώρων τῆς Λακωνικῆς Τρύπης," *Ἐπ.Ἐτ.Βυζ.Σπ.*25 (1955): 38-87, fig. 1.

⁶⁵ I. Kakoures, "Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου στὸ Λευκόχομα Λακωνίας," *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 34 (1979), Μέρος Α'-Μελέτες: 150-160.

Nicholas),⁶⁶ and Magoula (St. Nicholas).⁶⁷ What differentiates all of these buildings from their Middle Byzantine examples is that in all these cases the columns are spolia,⁶⁸ while in many Late Byzantine examples the difficulty of finding columns of appropriate size forced the masons to replace them with built piers.⁶⁹

In terms of typology, only the cross-vaulted type found in St. Paraskevi, Platsa, is an original creation of Late Byzantine architecture.⁷⁰ Its earliest applications are encountered in Epirus and in the Peloponnese, while one of the earliest examples is considered to be the two-aisled cross-vaulted church of St. John the Baptist and St. Nicholas at Stavropegi in the Messenian Mani (Exo Mani), dated in the first half of the 13th century.⁷¹ But the type does not seem to have been widespread among the churches of the peninsula.⁷² The only example similar to St. Parasekevi, with a pair of blind arches articulating the interior, can be found in the church of Panagia in the village of Polyaravos in the eastern part of the Mani (Kato Mani),⁷³ while all the other documented examples in the entire peninsula follow, in most cases, the simplest variant of the type.⁷⁴

⁶⁶ Unpublished.

⁶⁷ N. V. Drandakes, “Βυζαντινά και μεταβυζαντινά μνημεία Λακωνικής,” *Αρχ.Εφημ.* 1969, Αρχαιολογικά Χρονικά, 6-11, fig. 1-5.

⁶⁸ The columns in all the Late Byzantine two-columned churches of Mystras (Perivleptos, Evangelistria and St. Sophia) are also spolia, see G. Millet, *Monuments byzantins de Mistra* (Paris, 1910), pl. 28, 31/3-5, 31/1-4 respectively and A. Louve-Kize, “Οι κτήτορες της Περιβλέπτου του Μυστρά,” *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Ετ.* 24 (2003): 101-118.

⁶⁹ The churches of St. Athanasios (N. Moutsopoulos and G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι*, οι εκκλησίες του οικισμού (Thessaloniki, 1981), 139-170, εικ. 216) and St. Sozon at Geraki, (ibid., 173-218, εικ. 275-276, for a late 13th date of these churches, see Bouras – Boura, *Η έλλαδική ναοδομία* (n. 20 above), 334-336), St. Nicholas at Achragias close to the village Theologos (N. V. Drandakes, “Από τὰ χριστιανικά μνημεία τῆς Λακωνικῆς,” *Αρχ.Εφ.* (1994): 23-30, fig. 5; S. Kalopissi-Verti, “Τεχνοτροπικές παρατηρήσεις στο γραπτό διάκοσμο του Αγίου Νικολάου Αχραγιά Λακωνίας,” *Δελτ.Χριστ.Αρχ.Ετ.* 27 (2006): 181-192), Soterias at Velanidia in Epidaurus Limeria (Y. Nagatsuka, *Les églises byzantines en Laconie et dans ses environs*, Thèse de doctorat, (Paris, 1994) II, pl. 59/4), Soterias at Kotraphi (ibid., 34-35, pl. 74/1), St. Nicholas in the homonymous village of Bardounochoria (unpublished), Soterias in Mikri Kastania of Bardounochoria (n. 16 above), the katholikon of Ellika monastery in Messenia (M. Kappas, “Εκκλησίες της Μητροπόλεως Μεσσηνίας” (n. 18 above), 218-222). Spolia are the monolithic piers in the church of Palaiopanagia at Mavrilos close to the Holy Forty Martyrs monastery, see M. Kappas, “Ο ναός του Αγίου Νικολάου στο ρέμα του Σωφρόνη Λακωνίας,” *Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα* 21 (2011) 292, n. 116 with previous bibliography. A late 12th or early 13th date seems possible also for Panagia Chrysaphitissa (J. P. Albani, *Die byzantinischen Wandmalereien der Panagia Chrysaphitissa-Kirche in Chrysapha/Laconien* (Athens, 2000), fig. 9-11) and St. Nicholas in the homonymous village of Monemvasia, see Bouras – Boura, *Η έλλαδική ναοδομία* (n. 20 above), 30-32.

⁷⁰ For this architectural type, see, A. Orlandos, “Οι σταυρεπίστεγοι ναοί τῆς Ἑλλάδος,” *Αρχ.Βυζ.Μνημ.Ελλ.* 1 (1935), 41-52; M. Dores, *Πρόταση γιὰ τὴν τυπολογία τῶν σταυρεπίστεγων ναῶν* (Athens, 1991); H. M. Küpper, *Der Bautypus der griechischen Dachtranseptkirche* (Amsterdam 1990), I-II; P. L. Vocotopoulos, *Ἡ μονὴ τοῦ Αγίου Δημητρίου στὸ Φανάρι. Συμβολὴ στὴ μελέτῃ τῆς ἀρχιτεκτονικῆς τοῦ Δεσποτάτου τῆς Ἠπείρου* (Athens, 2012), esp. 41-43.

⁷¹ N. Drandakes, “Δίκλιτος σταυρεπίστεγος ναός βυζαντινῶν χρόνων,” *Αρχαιολογικά Ανάλεκτα ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν* 14: 1 (1980), 37-46, pl. 1-2.

⁷² For other cross-vaulted churches in the Mani, see Constantinidi, “Ο σταυρεπίστεγος ναός” (n. 1 above), 427 n. 6.

⁷³ Drandakes et. al., *Ἐρευνα στὴν Κάτω Μάνη* (n. 10 above), 5-13, pl. 1. On this specific variant of the type, see Orlandos, “Οι σταυρεπίστεγοι ναοί” (n. 69 above), 44-45, fig. 2; Constantinidi, “Ο σταυρεπίστεγος ναός” (n. 1 above), 425-427. With three blind arches in each side is articulated the interior of the ruined cross-vaulted church of Soterias close to the village of Orova in the Messenian Mani, see M. Kappas, “Οροβιά, Ναός Μεταμόρφωσης του Σωτήρος,” *Αρχ.Δελτ.* 61 (2006), Χρονικά 1: 399-400.

⁷⁴ The Taxiarches (Ai Strategos) church at Niocastro near Kastania, St. Nicholas “Stis Maroulenas in Kastania, Ai Giannakis in Kampos of Avia, and Pr. Elias in Agia Kyriaki, close to Stavri in Mesa Mani, see Constantinidi, “Ο σταυρεπίστεγος ναός” (n. 1 above), 427 n. 6. See also the church of St. Nicholas at Kalianeikia (P. Kalamara, “Ναός Αγίου Νικολάου Καλιαναϊκῶν,” *Πελοποννησιακά* 19 (1991-1992): 253-264) and the ruined church of St. Demetrios at the southeast of Androubevitsa Monastery in the region of Kampos (unpublished).

The two-stepped arches of the barrel-vaults below the dome is a feature very rarely attested in Byzantine architecture and one that requires further analysis. It is encountered in four of the monuments presented above: Soterias in Langada, St. George at Konakia, St. Nicholas in Prasteio and Hagioi Anargyroi in Nomitzi. I am not aware of any other Byzantine example in the Peloponnese.

One of the oldest known applications of such a solution can be found in the Panagia church of the impressive monastic complex of Hosios Loukas, dated to the second half of the 10th century.⁷⁵ An even earlier date has been proposed for the two major multi-domed churches of Cyprus, St. Lazarus in Larnaca⁷⁶ and St. Varnavas in Salamina,⁷⁷ where the arches below the domes are formulated in this specific way. This solution has also been applied in later cross-in-square churches of the island such as the Archangels in Gialousa⁷⁸ and St. Synesios in Rizokarpaso.⁷⁹

Two-stepped arches were not unknown even in the ecclesiastical architecture of Asia Minor, as indicated by the today lost dome of Çanlı Kilise documented in a valuable photograph taken by Gertrude Bell in 1907.⁸⁰ The simultaneous appearance of this constructive detail in distant regions points, in my opinion, to a lost prototype in Constantinople. Close ties with Constantinopolitan architecture has been demonstrated both in the Çanlı Kilise⁸¹ and in Panagia of Hosios Loukas,⁸² while in

⁷⁵ R. W. Schultz – S. H. Barnsley, *The Monastery of St. Luke of Stiris, in Phokis, and the dependent Monastery of St. Nicholas in the Fields, near Skripou, in Boeotia* (London, 1901); Εὐθ. Στίκας, *Τὸ οἰκοδομικὸν Χρονικὸν τῆς Μονῆς Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ Φωκίδος* (Athens, 1970) 150-180; P. Mylonas, “Δομικὴ ἔρευνα στὸ ἐκκλησιαστικὸ συγκρότημα τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ,” *Ἀρχαιολογία* 36 (1990): 6-30; idem, *Μονὴ τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ τοῦ Στεριώτη. Ἡ ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ τῶν τεσσάρων ναῶν* (Athens 2005). Ch. Bouras, *Ἡ ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ τῆς Μονῆς τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ* (Athens 2015).

⁷⁶ N.G. Kyriazas, “Ναὸς Ἁγίου Λαζάρου,” *Κυπριακὰ Χρονικὰ* 9 (1933): 312-314; A.H.S. Megaw, “Byzantine Architecture and Decoration in Cyprus: Metropolitan or Provincial?,” *DOP* 28 (1974): 79, fig. 29; A.J. Wharton, *Art of Empire, Painting and Architecture of the Byzantine Periphery. A Comparative Study of Four Provinces* (University Park – London, 1988), 66-67, fig. 3.9 (ground-plan); A. Papageorgiou, “Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἁγίου Λαζάρου στη Λάρνακα,” *RDAC* (1998): 205-224; Ch. Chotzakoglou, *Ἁγιος Λάζαρος Λάρνακας. Ἱστορία – ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ τέχνη τοῦ Ἱεροῦ Ναοῦ τοῦ Ἁγίου Λαζάρου* (Nicosia 2004). I am not convinced by the earlier date proposed for the three-domed churches of Cyprus by C. A. Stewart, *Domes of Heaven: The domed basilicas of Cyprus*, Ph.D. Indiana University (Bloomington, 2008).

⁷⁷ Megaw, “Byzantine Architecture” (n. 76 above), 78-79, 77 drawing H and fig. 27; A. Papageorgiou, “Constantinopolitan Influence on the Middle Byzantine Architecture of Cyprus,” *JÖB* 32/4 (1982): 469; Wharton, *Art of Empire* (n. 76 above), 61, 64-66; Papageorgiou, “Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἁγίου Λαζάρου” (n. 76 above) 205, 215, 218; S. Ćurčić, “Byzantine Architecture on Cyprus: An Introduction to the Problem of the Genesis of a Regional Style,” in *Medieval Cyprus, Studies in Art, Architecture and History in Memory of Doula Mouriki* ed. N. Ševčenko and C. Moss (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1999), 77-78; N. Gioles, *Ἡ χριστιανικὴ τέχνη στὴν Κύπρο* (Nicosia, 2003), 57, fig. 39-40.

⁷⁸ Kappas, *Ἡ ἐφαρμογὴ τοῦ σταυροειδοῦς ἐγγεγραμμένου* (n. 3 above), v. II no 28, 72-75. See also C. Bouras, “Middle Byzantine Domed Cruciform Churches on the Greek Islands,” *Zograf* 27 (1998-1999): 14; T. Papacostas, *Byzantine Cyprus, The Testimony of its Churches 650-1200*, Ph.D. Thesis, I-II, Exeter College 2001, II, 6.A 17.

⁷⁹ Kappas, *Ἡ ἐφαρμογὴ τοῦ σταυροειδοῦς ἐγγεγραμμένου* (n. 3 above), v. II no 38, 105-108. See also A. Papageorgiou, “Ἡ βυζαντινὴ τέχνη τῆς Κύπρου (12^{ος}-15^{ος} αἰῶνας),” in *Βυζαντινὴ Μεσαιωνικὴ Κύπρος, Βασίλισσα στὴν Ἀνατολὴ καὶ Πήγαινα στὴ Δύση*, ed. D. Papanikola-Bakirzi and M. Iakovou (Nicosia, 1997), 97; Papacostas, *Byzantine Cyprus* (n. 78 above), II 6.A 107, fig. 237-238.

⁸⁰ R. Ousterhout, *A Byzantine Settlement in Cappadocia* (Washington, D.C., 2005), fig. 37. See also the reconstructed longitudinal section of the fig. 21.

⁸¹ R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 4th rev. ed., with S. Ćurčić (Harmondsworth, 1986), 398-400; Ousterhout, *A Byzantine Settlement in Cappadocia* (n. 78 above), 64-76.

Cyprus the tale is still very strong that Leo the VI patronized the construction of the church St. Lazarus after having transported his relics to Constantinople.⁸³ Why this solution was introduced to the region of Mani in the Late Byzantine period only remains an open question.

The ceramic decoration of the monuments under examination consists mostly of friezes of reticulate ornament made by plain bricks.⁸⁴ This seems to have been the most preferable motif among local builders after the reestablishment of Byzantine rule in the Morea in 1262, especially in Laconian monuments in Krokees,⁸⁵ Chryssapha,⁸⁶ and Geraki,⁸⁷ but also in buildings constructed in Arcadia,⁸⁸ as well as in Argolid.⁸⁹

The application of the recessed brick technique, very well attested in monuments of Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly and Western Asia Minor, remained scarce in Southern Greece.⁹⁰ Apart from the eleventh century church of Panagia Franganilla in the western Peloponnese,⁹¹ all the documented examples up today are dated in the Late Byzantine period and encountered in the region of the Mani, basically among the group of buildings presented above.⁹² In two of these examples

⁸² L. Boura, *Ὁ γλυπτός διάκοσμος τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Παναγίας στὸ μοναστήρι τοῦ Ὁσίου Λουκᾶ* (Athens, 1980), 27, 33, 119-121; P.L. Vocotopoulos, "The Role of Constantinopolitan Architecture during the Middle and the Late Byzantine Period," *JÖB* 31/2 (1981): 565, 567-68.

⁸³ V. A. Foskolou, "Mary Magdalene between East and West. Cult and Image, Relics and Politics in the Late Thirteenth-Century Eastern Mediterranean," *DOP* 65-66 (2011-2012): 295-296.

⁸⁴ For the earliest examples of this motif dated to the 10th c., see Vocotopoulos, *Ἡ ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ* (n. 1 above), 84-85, 171 n. 7. For the application of this motif in the architecture of Late Byzantine Peloponnese, see Drandakes, "Ὁ ναὸς τῶν Ἁγίων Θεοδώρων" (n. 64 above), 42 και n. 5; Constantinidi, "Συμβολὴ στὴ μελέτῃ" (n. 1 above), 65 n. 1; eadem, "Ὁ ναὸς τῆς Ἁγίας Σοφίας" (n. 1 above), 94-95; eadem, "Ὁ σταυρεπίστεγος ναὸς" (n. 1 above), 431-432; K. Tsoures, *Ὁ κεραμοπλαστικὸς διάκοσμος τῶν ὑστεροβυζαντινῶν μνημείων τῆς βορειοδυτικῆς Ἑλλάδος* (Kavala, 1988), 173; G. Demetrokalles, *Ἀγνωστοὶ βυζαντινοὶ ναοὶ Ἱεράς Μητροπόλεως Μεσσηνίας*, II, (Athens, 1998), 53-54. See also Kappas, "Ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου" (n. 68 above), 284 n. 86.

⁸⁵ The churches of St. Demetrios (N. Drandakes, "Ἀπὸ τίς τοιχογραφίες τοῦ Ἁγίου Δημητρίου" (n. 45 above), 206-208), and Panagia (K. Diamante, "Κροκεὲς Λακωνίας, Ἡ ἀναζήτησι μίας βυζαντινῆς θέσεως καὶ οἱ ἐκκλησίες τοῦ οἰκισμοῦ," *Λακ.Σπ.* 12 (1994): 406-407, fig. 5).

⁸⁶ The west façade of the church of Prodrimos, see see N. V. Drandakes, "Ὁ σταυροειδῆς ναὸς τοῦ Προδρόμου στὰ Χρῦσαφα τῆς Λακεδαίμονος," *Λακ.Σπ.* 9 (1988): 301-333; Kappas, *Ἡ ἐφαρμογὴ τοῦ σταυροειδοῦς ἐγγεγραμμένου* (n. 3 above), v. II, no 99, 339-341.

⁸⁷ For example the churches of St. John Chrysostomos, St. Theodoroi, St Athanasios and St. Sozon, see N. Moutsopoulos and G. Demetrokalles, *Γεράκι, οἱ ἐκκλησίες τοῦ οἰκισμοῦ* (Thessaloniki, 1981), 1-45, 75-81, 137-170, 171-220 respectively.

⁸⁸ The church of Taxiarches at Agriakona, see E. Deligianne-Dore, "Οἱ τοιχογραφίες τοῦ ὑστεροβυζαντινοῦ ναοῦ τῶν Ταξιάρχων στὴν Ἀγριακόνα," *Πρακτικὰ Β' Τοπικοῦ Συνεδρίου Ἀρκαδικῶν Σπουδῶν (Τεγέα-Τρίπολις, 11-14 Νοεμβρίου 1988), Πελοποννησιακὰ (Τιμητικὸς τόμος εἰς Γεώργιον Μερικαν)* (Athens, 1990) 541-621.

⁸⁹ For example the churches of Theologos and St. Demetrios at Methana, see Th. Koukoulis, "Catalogue of Churches," in *A Rough and Rocky Place: The Landscape and Settlement History of the Methana Peninsula, Greece*, ed. Chr. Mee – H. Forbes, Liverpool University Press 1997, 219-223, 224-233 respectively.

⁹⁰ Vocotopoulos, "The Concealed Course Technique" (n. 45 above), 247-260.

⁹¹ Ousterhout, "Observations" (n. 7 above), 163-170; Velenis, *Ἐρημνεῖα* (n. 44 above), 65-106; Ousterhout, *Mater Builders* (n. 6 above), 174-179.

⁹² D. Athanasoulis, "Μεσαιωνικά ἐκκλησιαστικὰ ἱδρύματα Ἠλείας. Προκαταρκτικὴ παρουσίαση νέων στοιχείων ἀπὸ τὴν ἀρχαιολογικὴ καὶ τοπογραφικὴ ἐρευνα," in *Ὁ μοναχισμὸς στὴν Πελοπόννησο 4ος-15ος αἰ.* ed. V. Konte (Athens, 2004), 251-253; idem, *Ἡ ναοδομία στὴν Ἐπισκοπὴ Ὠλένης* (n. 21 above), 225-251. See also D. Athanasoulis and M. Kappas, "Σταυροειδεῖς ἐγγεγραμμένοι με συνεπτυγμένο δυτικὸ σκέλος," in *Ἀφιέρωμα στὸν ἀκαδημαϊκὸ Παναγιώτῃ Λ. Βοκοτόπουλο*, ed. V. Katsaros and A. Tourta (Athens, 2015), 79-96.

⁹² Vocotopoulos, "The Concealed Course Technique" (n. 45 above) 257-258, 260; Constantinidi, "Ὁ σταυρεπίστεγος ναὸς" (n. 1 above), 430-431. The same technique is also attested in the blind arches decorating the south façade of the Phaneromeni church

the technique is applied in its simplified form with brick-field mortar joints or even small stones.⁹³

The articulation of the surfaces in Byzantine monuments of southern Greece in general is infrequent.⁹⁴ The solution found in three of the monuments under examination – Soteras in Langada, St. Paraskevi in Platsa and Soteras in Melia – with three symmetrical arches not corresponding to the interior, represents a local improvisation unknown in other regions of Byzantium.⁹⁵ The oldest similar articulation is found in the *katholikon* of the monastery of St. Theodoroi in Prasteion, dated by Ch. Bouras in the 12th century (fig. 30).⁹⁶ This important monument, in ruins until a few years ago, has been recently restored by the Archaeological Service.⁹⁷

The similarities with the monuments presented above led me to question the 12th-century chronology of this church. The crucial feature for the definition of its date lays in its exterior articulation. In my opinion the monument that introduced such innovations in the regional architecture of the Peloponnese is the Hodegetria Church, the *katholikon* of the most important monastery built in Mystras.⁹⁸ In this monument founded in 1309⁹⁹, the patron, the abbot Pachomios, not only imitated metropolitan ideas of church design, but also managed to hire masons specialized in the Constantinopolitan vernacular, as is indicated in numerous morphological and structural details of the building.¹⁰⁰ Apart from blind arches and niches articulating its façades and the drum of its dome, three symmetrical arches adorn the walls of the bell

at Fragoulianika, see Velenis, *Ἑρμηνεία* (n. 45 above), 96. For the architecture and the frescoes of this important church, see also Ch. Constantinide, *Ὁ ναός τῆς Φανερωμένης στὰ Φραγκουλιάνικα τῆς Μέσα Μάνης* (Athens, 1998).

⁹³ Soteras church in Langada and St. Paraskevi in Platsa. For this technic, see Ousterhout, “Observations” (n. 7 above), 163-170.

⁹⁴ Kappas, *Ἡ εφαρμογή του σταυροειδούς εγγεγραμμένου* (n. 3 above), v. I, 304-323.

⁹⁵ Constantinidi, “Ὁ σταυρεπίστεγος ναός” (n. 1 above), 429-430.

⁹⁶ Bouras and Boura, *Ἡ ἐλλαδικὴ ναοδομία* (n. 20 above), 274-276.

⁹⁷ E. Gerousi, K. Eliopoulos, and M. Kappas, “Πραστέιο, Παλαιὸ καθολικὸ μονῆς Ἁγίων Θεοδώρων,” *Ἀρχ.Δελτ.* 61 (2006), Χρονικά 1: 390-392.

⁹⁸ On the architecture of the church, see Ch. Delvoe, “Considerations sur l’emploi des tribunes dans l’église de la Vierge Hodigitria de Mistra”, in *Actes du XIIe Congrès International d’Etudes Byzantines*, τ. III (Belgrade, 1964), 41-47; H. H. Hallensleben, “Untersuchungen zur Genesis und Typologie des ‘Mistratypus’,” *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 18 (1969): 105-118; S. Sinos, “Mistras”, *RbK* (1999): 424-429; idem, “Μονὴ Βροντοχίου,” *Τα μνημεῖα του Μυστρά. Το ἔργο της Επιτροπῆς Αναστήλωσης Μνημείων Μυστρά/ The Monuments of Mystras. The Work of the Committee for the Restoration of the Monuments of Mystras*, ed. S. Sinos (Athens, 2009), 136-154. For the decoration of the church with marble revetments, see A. Orlandos, “Ἡ ὀρθομαρμάρωσις τοῦ ἐν Μυστρά ναοῦ τῆς Ὁδηγητρίας,” *Ἀρχ.Βυζ.Μνημ.Ἑλλ.* 1 (1935) 152-160.

⁹⁹ On the date of the monument to the year 1309, see T. Papamastorakis, “Reflections of Constantinople. The Iconographic Program of the South Portico of the Hodegetria Church, Mystras”, in *Viewing the Morea, Land and People in the Late Medieval Peloponnese*, ed. Sh. E. J. Gerstel (Washington DC, 2013), 371-395; idem, “Myzithras of the Byzantines / Mistra to Byzantinists”, in *Οἱ βυζαντινὲς πόλεις 8^{ου}-15^{ου} αἰῶνας, Προοπτικὲς τῆς ἔρευνας καὶ νέες ἐρμηνευτικὲς προσεγγίσεις*, ed. T. Kioussopoulou (Rhethymno, 2014²), 277-296. I am not convinced by the connection between Theodoros I Palaiologos and Hodegetria suggested in a recent article by A. Tantis, “Ἡ χρονολόγησις του ναοῦ τῆς Ὁδηγήτριας στο Μυστρά”, *Ἀφιέρωμα σὴ μνήμη τῆς καθηγήτριας Βασιλικῆς Δ. Παπούλια, Βυζαντιακά* 31 (2014): 179-204, see also Kappas, “Approaching Monemvasia and Mystras” (n. above), 176 n. 105.

¹⁰⁰ On the Constantinopolitan characteristics of Hodegetria, see also Vocotopoulos, “The Role of Constantinopolitan Architecture” (n. 82 above), 562, 568. The crucial impact of Hodegetria to the regional architecture has not yet been evaluated in its real depth.

tower giving the prototype for later works in the churches of the Mani (fig. 31). Thus, I would date the katholikon of St. Theodoroi monastery in Prasteio a few years after the construction of Hodegetria, to the 1320's, while all the later examples examined in this article, provide a further step in the evolution of this practise.

*

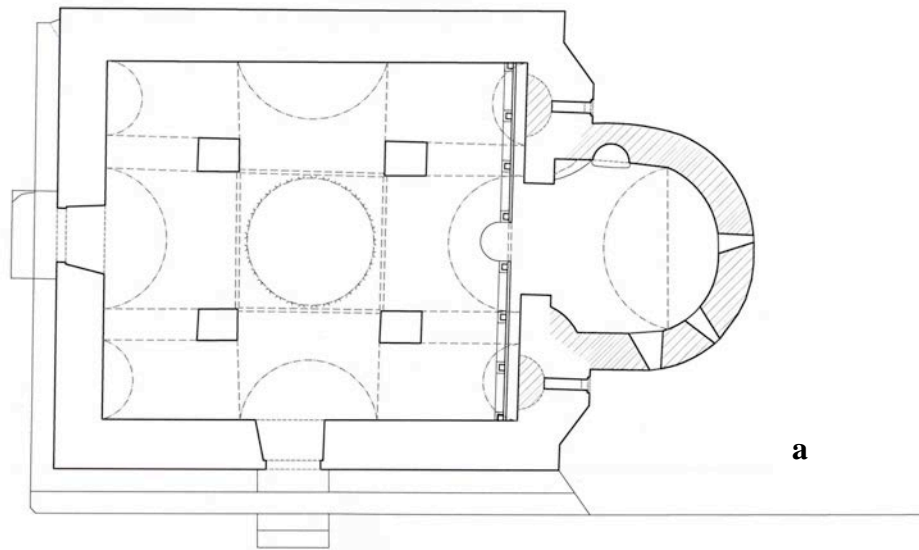
The study of the Langada church provides an opportunity to investigate a single monument as the nexus of cultural interactions, and to examine a group of related monuments that share a number of its unusual features. I have assigned these buildings to the same workshop, based on distinctive constructive and morphological details. I also propose that the introduction of innovative Gothic features in at least two of the examined monuments – the Soteras church in Langada and the Soteras church in Melia – may be attributed to the existence of the vast estates of the Florentine family of Acciajuoli in the region. Thus, at least in this case, the amalgamation of Western and Eastern forms reveal a more complicated picture than just being the result of an architectural eclecticism. They may be much better explained within the framework of Western patronage in villages populated by Orthodox villagers. In the second part of my article I analyzed another group of churches that cannot be assigned to the same workshop, even though they share many common features with the monuments under examinations. Their study suggests how groups of masons worked in Mani may have been influenced by the creations of one another, establishing a pathway by which innovative elements became assimilated into the architectural *koine* of the region.



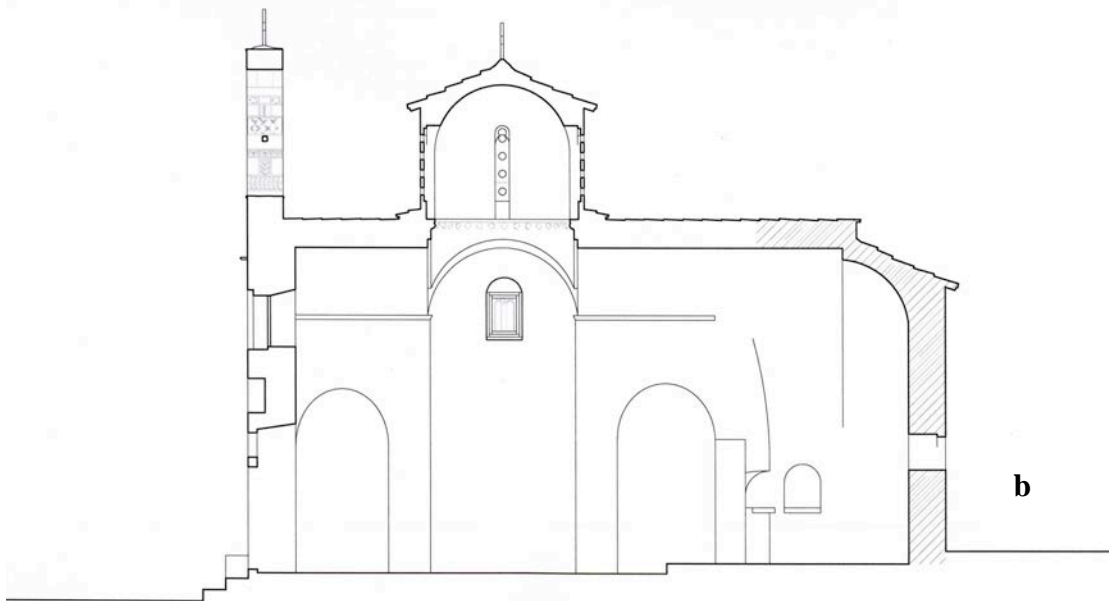
Fig. 1. Church of the Soterias, Langada, views from west and east before the removal of the exterior plaster (R. Andreadi).



Fig. 2. Church of the Soterias, view from west after its masonry was revealed (author).



0 1 5 m



0 1 5 m

Fig. 3. Plan and section of the Soterias church in Langada (G. Ninos).



Fig. 4. View into the dome of the Soterias church (author).



Fig. 5. View of the dome of the Soterias church (author).



Fig. 6. Church of the Soterias, Langada, view from southeast (author).

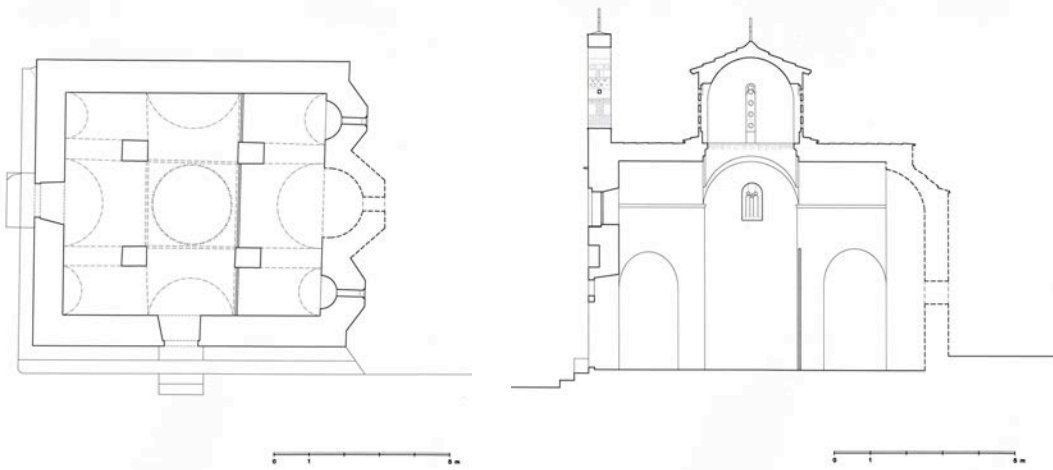


Fig. 7. Plan and section of the Soterias church before the reconstruction of the main apse (G. Ninos).



Fig. 8. The south cross arm of the Soterias church (author).



Fig. 9. Detail of the application of mortar in the brick decoration of the Soterias church (author).



Fig. 10. The windows of the apses of the prothesis and the diakonikon (author).



Fig. 11. Detail of the blind arches adorning the diagonal sides of the dome's drum (author).



Fig. 12. The north cross arm of the Soteris church (author).



Fig. 13. Detail of the window of the north cross arm (author).



Fig. 14. Church of the Soterias in Fagrianika (Melia), view from northwest (author).

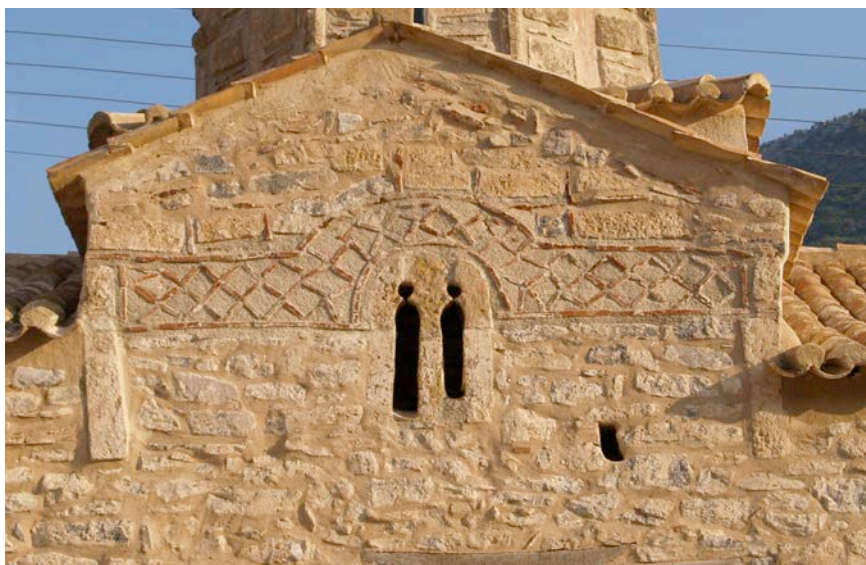


Fig. 15. The north cross arm of the Church of the Soterias in Fagrianika (Melia) (author).



Fig. 16. Church of St. George, Konakia, view from east (author).



Fig. 17. The window of the north cross arm of the Church of St. George, Konakia (author).



Fig. 18. Church of St. Paraskevi, Platsa, view from southwest (author).



Fig. 19. Church of St. Paraskevi, Platsa, view from east (author).



Fig. 20. Church of the Soterias, Langada. St. Peter on the semi dome of the *diakonikon* apse (author).



Fig. 21. Church of the Soterias, Langada. St. Sylvester on the semi dome of the *prothesis* apse (author).



Fig. 22. Church of St. George, Bosinianika, view from east (author).



Fig. 23. Detail of the south façade of the church of St. George, Bosinianika (author).



Fig. 24. Church of the Soteris, Mikri Kastania, view from south before and after the restoration (N. Skagkos).

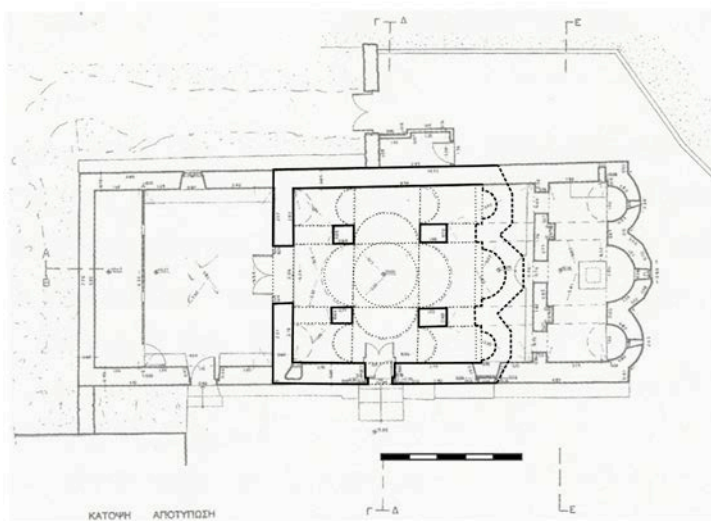
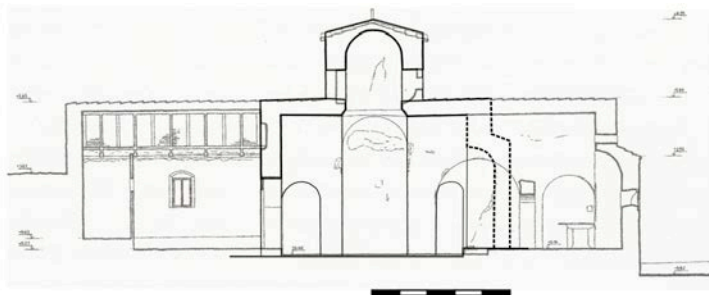


Fig. 25. Church of the Soteris, Mikri Kastania, plan and section (redrawn after N. Skagkos).



Fig. 26. Church of Hagioi Anargyroi, Nomitzi, view from southwest (author).



Fig. 27. Church of St. Nicholas, Prasteio, view from south (author).



Fig. 28. Church of St. George, Dryalos, view from south (author).



Fig. 29. Church of the Soterias, Oitylo, view from southwest (author).



Fig. 30. Church of St. Theodoroi, Prasteio, view from north (author).



Fig. 31. Church of the Hodegetria, Mystras, view of the bell tower (author).