



## Trigleia, Church of Hagia Sophia (Byzantium)

### Περίληψη :

The Byzantine Church of Hagia Sophia in Triglia, Bithynia –now the Islamic mosque Fatih Camii– is an example of the complex, four-column cross-in-square type. The approximate date of construction falls around the beginning of the 9th century, though scholars have argued between a late-8th- and a mid-9th-century date. Currently known as the Fatih Camii mosque, the former Church of Hagia Sophia was once dedicated to Hagia Sophia, that is Christ the Divine Wisdom.

### Χρονολόγηση

9th C.

### Γεωγραφικός Εντοπισμός

Asia Minor

## 1. Location

Trigliia (Tirilye, Trilye, now Zeytinbagi) is situated in [Bithynia](#), on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara. The Church of Hagia Sophia is located on the seaside, within the village centre. When F.W. Hasluck visited Tirilye at the beginning of the 20th century, the population was still almost entirely Greek, while there have been evidence of inhabitation already in ancient times.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Architectural description

It is not certain whether the Church of Hagia Sophia belonged to a monastery or a parish church. The architectural type of Hagia Sophia, is of particular interest because of its connections with Constantinopolitan forms, and its seemingly prototypical influence on the complex, four-column, **cross-in-square** church during the Middle Byzantine period. This complex type consists of the **narthex**, the inscribed cross, the **corner bays** between the arms of the cross, and the tri-partite **bema**. However, there is difference within the spatial divide between the sanctuary and the central nave, wherein which there is usually no interruption between the two. Consequently, the plans and vaulting of Hagia Sophia reveals two more major attributes of the complex cross-in-square church type, emphasizing particular interest in its structural form. The church represents the transition between the **ambulatory churches** of the [Early Byzantine period](#), and the furthering development of cross-in-square churches.

The central part of the church consists of an almost quadrangular nave, where four columns support the central dome ([fig.1](#) and [2](#)). Above, between the arms of the cross there are four domical vaults of unequal size. In reality, the length of the northern **parabema** in Hasluck's plan is misleading; it is in fact slightly shorter than the main **apse**.<sup>2</sup>

On the eastern side of the church there were originally three apses, but now only the main apse and the northern one, that of the **prothesis**, are still preserved, while the **diakonikon** apse has been destroyed. The exterior form of the main apse is three-sided and semi-hexagonal, as in the [churches of Constantinople](#). While the shape of the **prothesis** is semicircular, so to must have been the form of the destroyed **diakonikon**. This type of arrangement, a three-sided main apse combined with semicircular side apses, is familiar in the region of Macedonia. The entire eastern part of the church is slightly broader than the width of the nave. The main apse of the sanctuary had two registers of windows, but some of them seem to have been walled up at a later time ([fig.3](#)).<sup>3</sup>



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The nave is connected to the narthex by three openings left in the wall. In front of the narthex there is a courtyard, or **atrium**, provided by a colonnade in the west. The atrium was an earlier feature. The cylindrical dome of Hagia Sophia is an intermediary between the earlier flat, and later, high and narrow types. It is raised above a square base, but rests on a rounded **drum**. The exterior of the dome is decorated by eight slightly recessed blind arches, with plain tile **voussairs**.<sup>4</sup> The drum of the dome in Hagia Sophia resembles the dome-base of the [Church of St. John in Trullo](#), Constantinople. Both of which have eight windows in similar detail, though the drum-base of St. John is slightly lower than the one in Hagia Sophia.<sup>5</sup>

Hagia Sophia was constructed mainly of stones, but the use of brick was also used in some layers. The drum of the dome and the sanctuary apse are constructed with brickwork, and the blind arches in the gables are similarly framed with bricks.<sup>6</sup> Four monolithic columns carrying the dome are made of dark-brown marble.<sup>7</sup> Under the eaves, there are dental **cornices**, a decorative motif also consisting of bricks.

At the ends of the northern and the southern cross-arms, especially visible in the southern one, there are two slender columns built into the wall ([fig.2](#) and [6](#)). Originally, these columns supported a triple arcade, attesting to the existence of side **aisles**.<sup>8</sup> Altogether there are twelve columns in Hagia Sophia: four below the dome, four in the lateral walls—two in the northern side and two in the southern<sup>9</sup>—and four in the entrance of the atrium. The four capitals of the atrium of Hagia Sophia are re-used from 6th-c. structures, but the columns seem to stand in their original place.<sup>10</sup> The cushion-shaped capitals of the columns are elaborately sculpted with acanthus leaves. According to Semavi Eyice, the 6th-c. capitals in second use indicate the existence of another edifice, located either on the same site, or nearby in the area.<sup>11</sup>

### 3. Decoration: Interior elements

When F.W. Hasluck visited Hagia Sophia, he accounted a few traces of mosaics left in the soffits of the window arches in the bema apse and on the lateral walls.<sup>12</sup> Inside the church, no pictorial program is visible due to whitewashing, but it has been attested that wonderful mosaics decorated the walls.<sup>13</sup> Few elements of sculpted decoration remain, some in the narrow decorative **cornices**, one below the springing of the arches, and another above the spring.

Inside there were some monograms preserved when F.W. Hasluck studied the imposts of the north-eastern and south-eastern central columns, but now those monograms have since been destroyed. They are known through the drawings made by Hasluck ([fig.4](#)) and a variety of interpretations has been proposed. It has been assumed that the monograms provide clues to the date of Hagia Sophia's construction. According to this evidence, the church was presumably built or restored by two **patrikioi**, one of them named Michael.<sup>14</sup>

The large capitals of the columns similar to those of the atrium are re-used, but the imposts placed upon these capitals, the cornice that runs around the church interior, and the capitals of the southern triple arcade are Middle Byzantine work, and probably contemporary with the construction of the church.<sup>15</sup>

In the immediate vicinity of Hagia Sophia, there are still some remnants of Early Byzantine forms. From the 6th century, an abacus block decorated with leaves and three similar parapet slabs still remain. Also, a re-used slab can be found in a street fountain to the west of the church. A selection of varying capitals along with a particular impost capital, similar to those found in the atrium and nave, are decorated in the early **corinthian order**.<sup>16</sup>



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### 4. Date and dedication

Neither the construction nor the builders of Hagia Sophia are known with certainty. On stylistic grounds, the church seems to have been constructed sometime in the early 9th century.<sup>17</sup> The aforementioned Michael was perhaps one of the builders or donors, either of the construction or of the restoration of the church, though this suggestion has been often disputed.

The dedication of the church was also unclear at some point. F.W. Hasluck assumed the name St. Stephen after Evangelides and Kleonymos, who referred to the church with this name. Hasluck himself suggested that the church was dedicated to the Annunciation, while the invocations of the monograms suggest that the church was actually dedicated to Christ.<sup>18</sup> Churches by the name Hagia Sophia (mean. the Divine Wisdom) are in fact dedicated to Christ, and not to Saint Sophia –a martyr who died with her three daughters Pistis, Elpis and Agape. The concept of Christ as the Divine Wisdom derives from the [first Ecumenical Council of Nicaea \(325\)](#), where a christological doctrine was formulated. From a theological point of view it was essential that Christ was born, not created, and he was of the same essence as the Father. To these Christological formulations was also added the concept of Christ as Logos and Sophia, as the Word of the Wisdom of God. By dedicating churches to Hagia Sophia, the Divine Wisdom, this particular aspect on the Incarnation was emphasized.

### 5. Conversion: the Fatih Camii

It is not known when exactly the church was converted to the mosque Fatih Camii, but it has been suggested that this took place in the 16th or the 17th century.<sup>19</sup> It is not even known, when Trigleia was captured by the Turks, but something can be concluded on the basis of the capture of [Prousa](#), now Bursa. The co-Emperor [Andronikos III](#) landed at Trigleia when Prousa was besieged by Sultan Osman in 1317, and succeeded in sending provisions there, but Trigleia was still Byzantine in 1337.<sup>20</sup>

Historically, churches were often dramatically altered after Islamic conversion, but in the case of Hagia Sophia, the architectural structure has been perfectly preserved.<sup>21</sup> Only one minaret was built into the south-western side of the shrine, and some smaller changes were made. For example, the intercolumnia of those columns at the ends of the northern and southern arms of the cross, have been built-up, but the columns are still somewhat visible ([fig.6](#)). The favouring of lateral annexes in Constantinople, as in the north church of the [Monastery of Constantine Lips \(Panachrantos\)](#), and in [Kalenderhane Camii](#), are evident here as well.

The church suffered from an earthquake in 1855.<sup>22</sup> During the occupation of Trigleia by the Greek army in 1920-22, Fatih Camii was again re-arranged as a church. The whitewashed mosaics were at some point restored, revealing magnificently elaborate mosaics.<sup>23</sup> Nowadays, traces of mosaics can be seen in the soffit of the southern triple arcade. For reasons unknown, the mosaic cubes were large, about 0.02 m<sup>2</sup>, alternately black and white.<sup>24</sup>

### 6. Evaluation

The Church of Hagia Sophia of Trigleia represents a fully developed complex cross-in-square plan, but its dimensions differ from the proportions of the later generalized complex churches. Its type is decisively Byzantine in architecture, and serves as an example of the development of the complex four-column cross-in-square plan. Together with the



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Church H in Side, this church of Trigleia underscores a development in western Asia Minor, from where it was adopted to Constantinople. Despite of the earthquake of 1855, and of the church's conversion into a mosque, the architecture of Hagia Sophia is exceptionally preserved. However the fabulous mosaics are still yet to be fully revealed and only partial restorations have been carried out in previous years.<sup>25</sup>

1. Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), pp. 285-308; 285, 287. The large number of ancient inscriptions that have been found in Trigleia indicate the presence of habitation during Antiquity.
2. Ruggieri V. sj., *Byzantine Religious Architecture (582-867), its History and Structural Elements* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 237, Roma 1991), pp. 227-229, fig. 5,19,20; Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), plan, p. 288, fig. 2.
3. Buchwald H., "Western Asia Minor as a Generator of Architectural forms in the Byzantine period, provincial back-wash or dynamic center of production?" in *Form, Style and Meaning of Byzantine Church Architecture*, no. V (Variorum reprints, Ashgate 1999), pl. 13.
4. Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), p. 288.
5. Buchwald H., "Western Asia Minor as a Generator of Architectural forms in the Byzantine period, provincial back-wash or dynamic center of production?" in *Form, Style and Meaning of Byzantine Church Architecture*, no. V (Variorum reprints, Ashgate 1999), p. 225.
6. Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), fig.1 (3).
7. Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), p. 289.
8. Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), p. 290; Buchwald, 1999, V, 225.
9. Ousterhout R., *Master Builders of Byzantium* (Princeton University Press 1999), fig 9.
10. Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 236.
11. Eyice S., "Monuments byzantins anatoliens inédits ou peu connus", *Corsi di Cultura sull'arte Ravennate e Bizantina* 18 (1971), pp. 316-317.
12. Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), pp. 288, 290.
13. Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 236.
14. Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 237. See also in the section "Quotations".
15. Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 237.
16. Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 238.
17. Buchwald H., *The Church of the Archangels in Sige near Mudania* (Wien 1969), p. 61; *idem*, "Western Asia Minor as a Generator of Architectural forms in the Byzantine period, provincial back-wash or dynamic center of production?" in *Form, Style and Meaning of Byzantine*



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*Church Architecture*, no. V (Variorum reprints, Ashgate 1999), p. 225.

18. Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), p. 287; Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 237.
19. Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 237. According to F.W. Hasluck, Hagia Sophia was converted into a mosque in 1661, as Evangelides had read on the mumber. Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), pp. 287-288.
20. Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 236-237.
21. Eyice S., "Monuments byzantins anatoliens inédits ou peu connus", *Corsi di Cultura sull'arte Ravennate e Bizantina* 18 (1971), pp. 316.
22. Hasluck, F.W., "Bithynica", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 13 (1906-07), p. 288.
23. Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 236.
24. Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 236.
25. Ousterhout R., *Master Builders of Byzantium* (Princeton University Press 1999), fig. 9.














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	<b>Eyice Semavi</b> , "Monuments byzantins anatoliens inedits ou peu connus", <i>Corsi di Cultura sull'Arte Ravennate e Bizantina</i> , 18, 1971, 309-332.
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### Γλωσσάριο :

	<b>aisle</b>
The part of the naos of a church set off by the internal rows of piers or columns, namely by the structures supporting the roof.	
	<b>ambulatory (byz. arch.)</b>
A continuous passage that envelops the <i>naos</i> or the centrally planned core of a structure. In a cross-domed church, where the dome is supported on four masonry piers and between each pair of piers two columns are inserted, the ambulatory is formed by the lateral aisles and western part of the church. Later on, an ambulatory could also envelop a cross-in-square core. During the Palaeologan period, ambulatories, usually serving as funerary chambers, were added to many middle-Byzantine churches of Constantinople.	
	<b>apse</b>
An arched structure or a semi-circular end of a wall. In byzantine architecture it means the semicircular, usually barrel-vaulted, niche at the east end of a basilica. The side aisles of a basilica may also end in an apse, but it is always in the central apse where the altar is placed. It was separated from the main church by a barrier, the <i>templon</i> , or the <i>iconostasis</i> . Its ground plan on the external side could be semicircular, rectangular or polygonal.	
	<b>atrium</b>
1. Antiquity: The large, open space within a building, which is enveloped by colonnades. 2. Byzantium: The forecourt of a church in early Christian, Byzantine, and medieval architecture. It was usually surrounded by four porticoes ( <i>quadriporticus</i> ).	
	<b>bema</b>
The area at east end of the naos in Byzantine churches, containing the altar, also referred to as the <i>presbetry</i> or <i>hierateion</i> (sanctuary). In these area take place the Holy Eucharist.	
	<b>corinthian order</b>
The most elaborate of the ancient greek architectural orders. It was developed in the 4th century BC in Greece and it was extensively used in Roman architecture. It is similar to the Ionic order. Its capitals being four-sided and composed of a basket-shaped body decorated with volumes and rows of acanthus leaves.	
	<b>corner bays</b>
In a cross-in-square church, they are the four compartements between the arms of the cross, that make inscribe the central cross into a square. They were usually covered with cross-or domical vaults.	
	<b>cornice</b>
Decorative architectural element projecting from the wall. It is used both on the internal and the external face of the church walls, in order to mark the division between the vertical wall and the spring of the vaults. It is usually made of marble and bears painted or sculptural decoration of vegetal or geometric motifs.	
	<b>cornice</b>
1. (Antiq. and Byz.) Member of the entablature or the architrave that projects in the elevation of a secular or religious building. As a horizontal member it may run along a wall. The cornice may also be the projecting part of the roof, protecting the building from rain. 2. (Byz. archit.) Decorative architectural element used to articulate the walls of a church, both on the inside and on the outside, by marking the division between the vertical wall and the spring of the vaults. It usually bears painted or sculptural decoration of vegetal or geometric motifs.	
	<b>cross-in-square church</b>
Type of church in which four barrel-vaulted bays form a greek cross; the central square of their intersection is domed. The cross is inscribed into the square ground plan by means of four corner bays.	
	<b>diakonikon</b>
An auxiliary chamber of the church, also known in early years as <i>skeuophylakion</i> , which could be a separate building attached to the church. There were kept the sacred vessels but sometimes also the offerings of the faithful, the archive or library. In Byzantine churches the diakonikon becomes the sacristy to the south of the Bema, corresponding to the prothesis to the north, and forming along with them the triple sanctuary. It usually has an apse projecting to the east.	
	<b>drum of dome</b>
Part of the church, semicircular or polygonal, on which rises an hemispheric dome	
	<b>narthex</b>




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A portico or a rectangular entrance-hall, parallel with the west end of an early Christian basilica or church.

 [pastophoria \(parabemata\)](#)


Rooms or places that as a rule surrounded the apse, next to the Holy Bema, of the Paleochristian or Byzantine churches, namely the diakonikon and the prothesis.

 [patrikios](#)

(from lat. *patricius*) Higher title of honour, placed, according to the "*Tactika*" of the 9th and the 10th centuries, between *anthypatos* and *protospatharios*. It was given to the most important governors and generals. Gradually, however, it fell into disuse and from the 12th century did not exist any more.

 [prothesis](#)

In ecclesiastical architecture, the sacristy to the north of the sanctuary. Usually it has an apse projecting to the east. It is the chamber where the eucharistic elements were prepared (*Proskomide*) before the Communion.

 [voussoir](#)

The wedge-shaped stones in the masonry of arch or vault.

## Παραθέματα

The monograms from the church, as resolved by Hasluck:

Northeast column: Κύριε βοήθει | τῷ δούλῳ Νη|κήτα | πατρικίῳ [according to Mango and Ševčenko, the reading of the name Niketas is doubtful and unconvincing].

Southeast column: Χριστὲ βοήθει | ἀβλητικῷ | Μιχαήλ | πατρικίῳ

Mango, C. - Ševčenko, I., "Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), p. 237.