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*Carolyn S. Snively*

**TRANSEPTS IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHITECTURE  
OF EASTERN ILLYRICUM AND THE EPISCOPAL BASILICA  
AT STOBİ**

In this paper the nature and definition of the transept, which sometimes appears as a feature of Early Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture in the Balkan Peninsula, will be considered.<sup>1</sup> Before examining the transept and its variations, however, the methods of transmission of such concepts will be considered.

*Communication and the Spread of New Ideas*

In antiquity the system of Roman roads, constructed initially for military purposes, connected the distant provinces of the Roman geographical empire with each other and with Rome and facilitated the relatively rapid movement of people and goods around the Mediterranean world. It may be useful to remember, in this day of superhighways and transportation by air, that within the Roman territorial empire located around the Mediterranean Sea, there were only two methods of travel, by land along Roman roads and over the sea during some seasons of the year. Not only people and merchandise, but also concepts and ideas, such as transepts and monasticism, traveled by road and in ships. They moved more quickly along major highways and in and out of seaports. Communication was slower along secondary roads, but with relative hot spots where such roads crossed. Great parts of the rural countryside, however, remained relatively untouched and unaware of new ideas that passed by.

The Via Egnatia (Fig. 1), built shortly after the final Roman takeover of the Macedonian kingdom in the mid 2nd century BC, followed the line of earlier, less formal routes. Initially the road stretched from Apollonia or Dyrrachion<sup>2</sup> on

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<sup>2</sup> The survey project directed by Jack Davis and Muzafer Korkuti has shown that the harbor of Apollonia had silted up and that little activity took place around its site in the Late Antique period. Thus the primary port on the Adriatic sea for the Via Egnatia became Dyrrachion. See "The Mal-lakstra Regional Archaeological Project: Internet Edition," <http://river.blg.uc.edu/MRAP.html>.



Fig. 1. The Southwest Central Balkan Peninsula. Adapted from R. F. Hodinott, *Early Byzantine Churches in Macedonia and Southern Serbia*, MacMillan, 1963.

Сл. 1. Југозападни део Балканског полуострва. Адаптирано из: *Рано-византијске цркве у Македонији и јужној Србији*, Р. Ф. Ходинот, 1963.

the Adriatic coast to Thessaloniki, but it was soon extended as far as Byzantium, later Constantinople. The Via Egnatia formed the major part of the primary land route for travel and communication between Rome and the East.

The political importance of the Via Egnatia diminished somewhat in Late Antiquity when Rome ceased to be the western capital and as western provinces were gradually lost. Barbarian invasions into the Balkan Peninsula sometimes made travel along sections of the road dangerous or impossible. Nevertheless, communication between Italy and the East did not cease; the Via Egnatia continued to be the main east-west road across the Prefecture of Eastern Illyricum and a major land link between Constantinople and its Balkan provinces and with the capital of Eastern Illyricum, Thessaloniki, in particular.

With few exceptions, the outstanding cities were located near major roads or on the coast. In those locations one finds the Late Antique towns with the largest numbers of churches and the most up-to-date plans and decoration. A look at the map will show that the majority of the well known cities of the southern Balkan Peninsula in Late Antiquity are located on or near the Via Egnatia, stand on secondary roads, or are seaports. Beroia or modern Veria had been the second city in Roman Macedonia, the seat of the Macedonian League and the focal city of the imperial cult in the province. It retained its importance in Late Antiquity, no doubt in part because of the tradition of apostolic foundation of the church, but also, I would argue, because it was readily accessible from the Via Egnatia.

Cities such as Dyrrachion, Scampis (Elbasan), Lychnidos (Ohrid), Heraklea Lynkestis (Bitola), Beroia, Edessa, Thessaloniki, Amphipolis, and Philippi have provided examples of art and architecture in which eastern and western models are clearly visible or in which eastern and western influences have mingled with local customs to produce new regional building traditions. New ideas spread gradually into the hinterland behind the zone along the road.

Stobi, located in the northern part of the Roman province of Macedonia and in the later 5<sup>th</sup> and early 6<sup>th</sup> century the capital of Macedonia Secunda, was linked to the cities of the Via Egnatia by means of the north-south route from Thessaloniki to central Europe and the diagonal route from Heraklea Lynkestis to Sofia. As far as communication was concerned, Stobi belonged in a second tier of cities; recent investigations suggest that major architectural and artistic developments were likely to arrive there slightly later than they had appeared in the cities of the Via Egnatia and sometimes in a modified or simplified form.

### *The Transept*

A transept is defined as “the transverse unit of a basilica plan, as a rule inserted between nave and apse,” according to Richard Krautheimer.<sup>3</sup> This concept is quite clear in the basilica of St. Peter in Rome (Fig. 2), where the transept appears as an aisle running at right angles to nave and side aisles, protruding beyond the side aisles at north and south, and with a separate roof. But the continuous transept was relatively rare.

Slightly more common in the Balkans and Asia Minor was the cross transept (Fig. 3), in which the colonnades and thus the lateral aisles turned north and south in order to form the arms of the transept. Examples of the cross transept

<sup>3</sup> R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1979, 545.

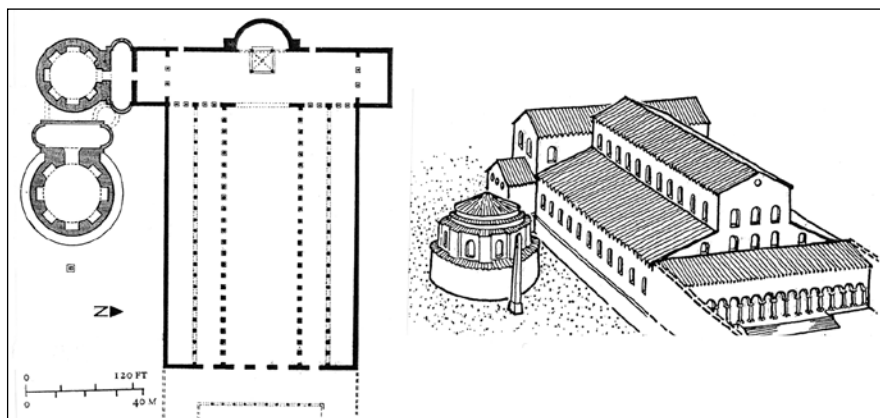


Fig. 2. Rome, Basilica of St. Peter. Plan and isometric view of basilica proper, showing the transept between the apse to the west and nave and aisles to the east. Adapted from R. Krautheimer 1979, p. 56, figs. 21-22.

Сл. 2. Рим, Базилика св. Петра. План и изометријски изглед саме базилике, који показује трансепт између апсиде на западу и централног и бочних бродова на истоку. Адаптирано из: Р. Краутхајмер, 1979., стр. 56, сл. 21-22.

in various versions may be seen in St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki, probably in the Episcopal Church beneath St. Patapios in Veria, in the Cruciform Basilica on Thasos, and in Basilica A at Philippi. All date to the late 5<sup>th</sup> or the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Thessaloniki and Philippi stood on the Via Egnatia, Veria was located near that highway, and the island of Thasos was and is easily accessible by sea from Kavalla, the port city of Philippi.

At Philippi the colonnades turn to north and south and then run east to the east wall of the church. Thus the lateral aisles continue to the east wall; two square spaces are formed to north and south of the presbyterium and separated from it only by the lateral clergy benches and the chancel screen. The square spaces appear to be closely linked to the presbyterium.<sup>4</sup>

On Thasos the colonnades and lateral aisles of the Cruciform Basilica form a complete cross. They turn out to north and south, then make a corner and run east, but then turn back in to south and north, and finally run east to the east wall of the church. The result is that the last eastern leg of the side aisle flanks the presbyterium and is separated from it by the colonnade as well as by the chancel screen and lateral clergy bench. The rectangular spaces created by the turns of the colonnades are located in front of, i.e., west of, the presbyterium and appear to have functioned as extensions of the nave.

<sup>4</sup> R. Krautheimer, "Il transetto nella basilica paleocristiana," *Actes du Ve Congrès international d'archéologie chrétienne*, Vatican City and Paris, 1957, 283-290; this article was republished in an English translation and with a postscript by the author in a volume of his collected works: R. Krautheimer, "The transept in the Early Christian basilica," *Studies in Early Christian, Medieval, and Renaissance Art*, New York University, 1969, 59-68. On p. 59 he refers to "an abbreviated version of the cross-transept in which aisles were limited to one or two sides of the transept's arms."

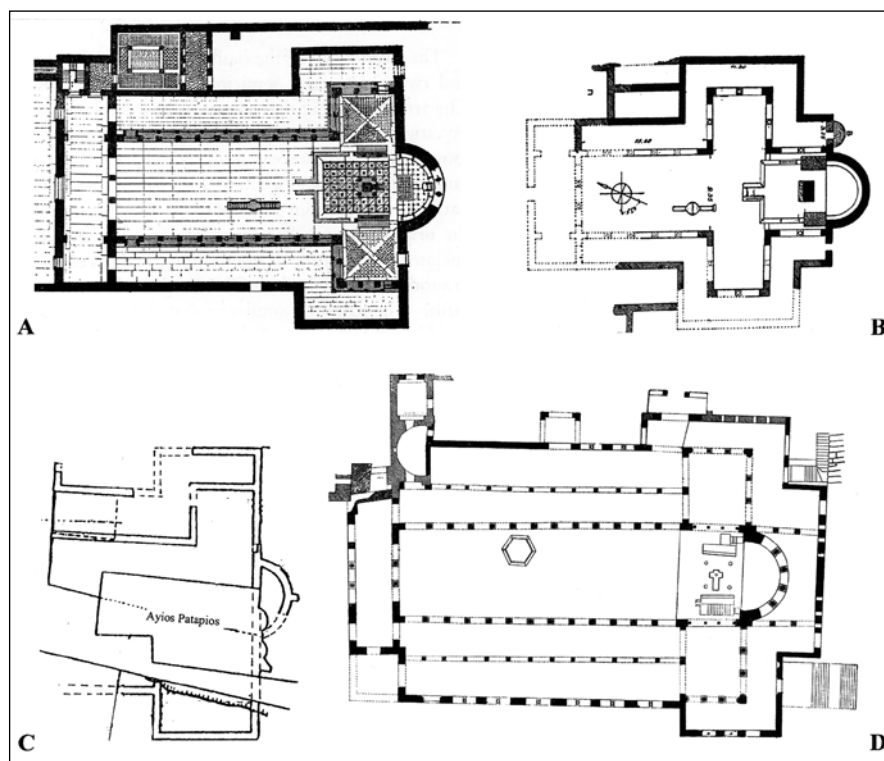


Fig. 3. Churches in the province of Macedonia with cross transepts.

- A. Philippi, Basilica Alpha, showing the eastern part of the church complex.  
 B. Thasos, Cruciform Basilica. C. Beroia (Veria), Episcopal Basilica; tentative and partial reconstruction. D. Thessaloniki, St. Demetrios; reconstruction (Sotiriou) of the original five-aisle basilica of the late 5<sup>th</sup> or early 6<sup>th</sup> century.

Сл. 3. Цркве у провинцији Македонија са крстастим попречним бродом.

- А. Филипи, Базилика Алфа, источни део црквеног комплекса. В. Тасос, Крстаста базилика. С. Верија, Епископална базилика; пробна и парцијална реконструкција.  
 D. Солун, Св. Димитрије; реконструкција (Сотириу) оригиналне петобродне базилике с краја V или почетка VI века.

The church of St. Patapios was built over the Episcopal Basilica at Beroia and leaves much of the plan of the earlier building uncertain. A tentative reconstruction based on the published plan suggests an arrangement similar to that of Basilica A at Philippi. The later reconstructions of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki make the original plan difficult to reconstruct with certainty. It is also a five-aisle basilica and thus falls into a separate category of churches mentioned below. The basilicas at Philippi and Thasos, which have generally been identified as examples of the cross transept, indicate clearly that rearrangement of colonnades and lateral aisles could be used to create new spaces for quite different purposes.

Whereas the cross transept was more popular in the province of Macedonia, the tripartite transept appeared with some frequency in the provinces of Epirus

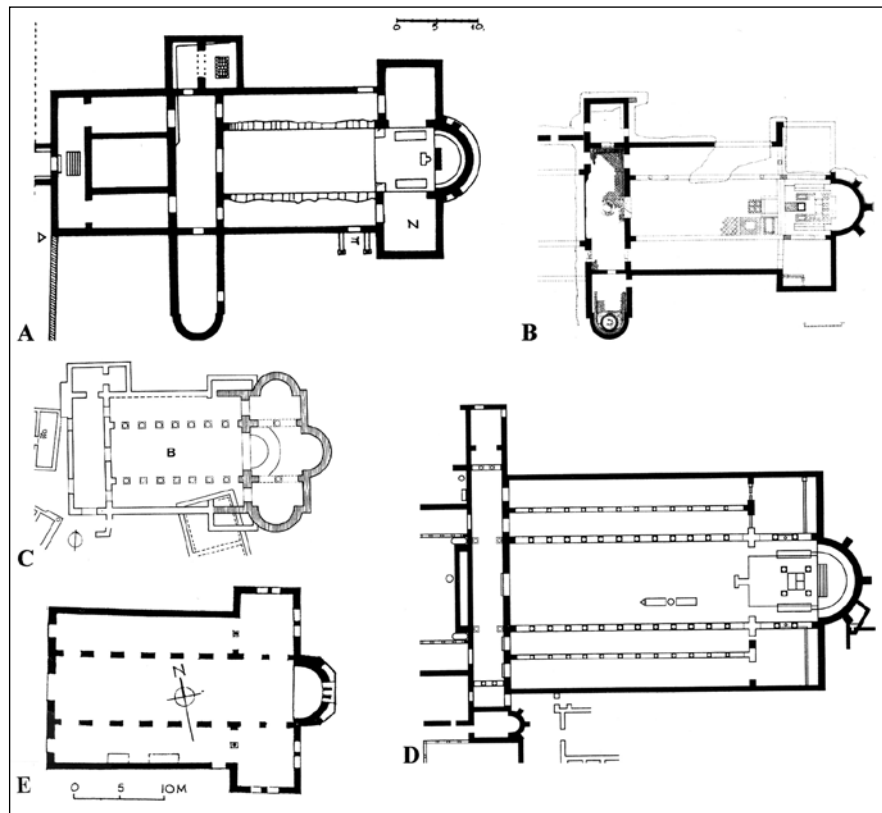


Fig. 4. Churches in the province of Epirus Vetus often identified as having tripartite transepts. A. Nikopolis, Basilica Alpha. B. Nikopolis, Basilica Gamma. C. Dodona, the basilica with two consecutive transepts. D. Nikopolis, Basilica Beta. E. Buthrotum, basilica with transept.

Сл. 4. Цркве у провинцији Епирус Ветус, често идентификоване са троделним трансептима. А. Никополис, Базилика Алфа. В. Никополис, Базилика Гама. С. Додона, базилика са два консекутивна трансепта. Д. Никополис, Базилика Бета. Е. Бутротум, базилика са попречним бродом.

Nova and Epirus Vetus as well as further south in Achaia, e.g., in the basilica at the harbor of Lechaion near Corinth (Figs. 4, 5). Examples are found along the Via Egnatia at Elbasan and at Arapaj near Dyrrachion (Epirus Nova). Among the coastal cities of Epirus Vetus, Buthrotum in the lower town displays a large basilica with a transept, and Nikopolis boasts at least three examples in Basilicas Alpha, Delta, and Epsilon (at nearby Margarona). The tripartite transept appears twice at Byllis (Epirus Nova) and in two consecutive phases of the basilica at Dodona as well as in the church at Paramythia (Epirus Vetus). Further east and north, it is found in the Transept Basilica at Caričin Grad and perhaps in Sveta Sophia at Sophia, the provincial capital (Dacia Mediterranea), and at Makedonska Kamenica (Macedonia Secunda). In Achaia, in addition to the enormous basilica at Lechaion, examples are found in St. Leonidas at

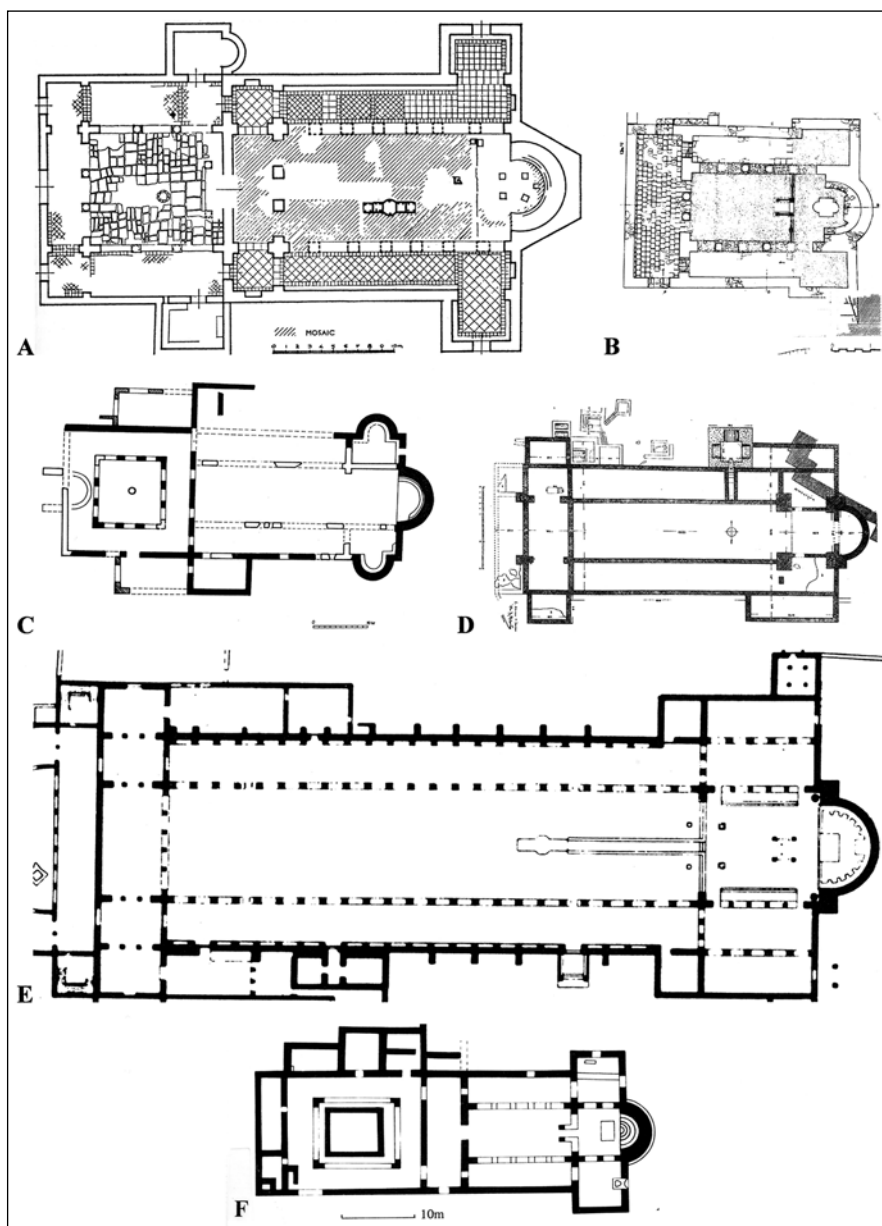


Fig. 5. Basilicas identified as having tripartite transepts. A. Caričin Grad, Transept Basilica. B. Makedonska Kamenica, Begov Dab. C. Arapaj, near Dyrrachion. D. Athens, Ilissos Basilica. E. Lechaion, near Corinth. F. Panormos, on Crete.

Сл. 5. Базилике са троделним трансептима. А. Царичин Град, Базилика са трансептом. В. Македонска Каменица, Бегов Даб. С. Арапај, близу Дирахциона. Д. Атина, Базилика Илосос. Е. Лехаион, близу Коринта. Ф. Панормос, на Криту.

Klapsi, at Daphnousia, and in the Ilissos Basilica at Athens.<sup>5</sup> Finally, on the island of Crete, the church at Almyrida Apokoronas and Ayia Sophia at Panormos also display transepts.<sup>6</sup>

According to Richard Krautheimer, a tripartite transept consists of a central bay continuing the nave together with wings, as high as the nave or lower, always separated from the central bay by colonnades.<sup>7</sup> The same scholar had provided an earlier definition of the feature, “in which the central area in front of the apse was separated from the arms by colonnades, huge arches, or, more simply projecting piers.”<sup>8</sup> In the majority of the basilicas listed above, the presbyterium is clearly divided from the north and south wings of the transept, by colonnades, chancel screens, piers, or other features. In all the churches listed above, the wings always protrude in rectangular or apsidal form outside the line of the aisle walls. These churches are variously dated, but mostly fall into the later 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Closer examination of the plans of these churches, however, leads to two observations, of which the first concerns communication. In most instances the transept wing, i.e., the space at the east end of the aisle, is accessible from the side aisle. In several examples a doorway in the east wall of the church or in the wall of the transept communicates with the exterior. The ease or difficulty of communication with the presbyterium varies and is frequently unclear.

The second observation concerns internal division of the transept wings. The basilica at Elbasan shows the south end of the south wing as a separate room, formed by a wall that continues the line of the south wall of the church and accessible by a doorway. On the north, a small apsidal chapel has replaced the original northern room in the wing. The basilica at Lechaion shows a very complex arrangement. Each wing is divided by a colonnade on the line of the exterior north or south wall of the church; in the corner where the exterior wall turns out to form the projecting part of the wing, a small room is formed just west of the line of the chancel screen on both sides of the church. In the basilica at Panormos on Crete, the northern wing is divided by a wall on the line of the north wall of the north aisle. The Ilissos basilica at Athens provides a fourth, uncertain example; the preserved foundations suggest a room in the east end of the aisle that was flanked by a longer narrow room outside the line of the exterior wall of the church.

<sup>5</sup> Krautheimer 1979, 128, identifies the Ilissos basilica as a cross transept. Unfortunately the building is preserved only in foundations, but the plan does not suggest that the colonnades and lateral aisles turned out to north and south.

<sup>6</sup> For additional examples, some uncertain and some disputed, see D. Pallas, “Οι χαρακτηριστικές και η ακτινοβολία της εκκλησιαστικής αρχιτεκτονικής της Νικόπολης,” *Nicopolis A'. Proceedings of the First International Symposium on Nicopolis, 1984*, Preveza 1987, 225-239, esp. 227-228; and I. D. Varalis, “Τα χαρακτηριστικά της εκκλησιαστικής αρχιτεκτονικής της Νικόπολης: Παράλληλεις και διαφοροποιήσεις/Characteristics of the religious architecture of Nicopolis: parallelisms and deviations,” *Nicopolis B'. Proceedings of the Second International Nicopolis Symposium 2002*, Preveza 2007, 595-607, esp. 601, footnote 53.

<sup>7</sup> Krautheimer, 1979, 545.

<sup>8</sup> Krautheimer, 1969, 59.



The spaces at the east end of the aisles in Basilica Beta at Nikopolis,<sup>9</sup> which has five aisles, have been identified as transept wings, even though they do not protrude beyond the north and south walls of the basilica. This church, together with several others, forms a group of five-aisle churches with transepts. Included are the episcopal church at Palaionpolis on the island of Corfu, the episcopal basilica at Naupaktos, and St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki;<sup>10</sup> the last church was mentioned above under cross transepts and should perhaps be considered a combination of types. These churches are discussed elsewhere in this volume and therefore will not be considered in detail here.<sup>11</sup>

Given the definitions provided by Krautheimer and a number of examples, how does one identify a transept? The continuous transept and the cross transept are fairly clear, but how does one identify a tripartite transept? There has been discussion of the height of the transept wings relative to that of the nave and of the form of the roof,<sup>12</sup> but in most of the examples listed above the architectural historian is faced with a scatter of architectural blocks and with walls preserved no more than a meter or two high, if that much. Reconstruction of superstructure and roof remains hypothetical.

The pier may provide one clue. In many but not all of the examples of the tripartite transept, including the five-aisle basilicas, substantial piers are found, at the west corners of the transept wings. Cruciform, T-shaped, or rectangular, these piers mark either the eastern end of the colonnades dividing nave and aisles or at least a change in the rhythm of the colonnades. A substantial *anta* found against the east wall of the church usually marks the end of the line of the colonnade. In some churches no stylobate or column bases appear between the pier and the anta, but in other examples a stylobate and/or column bases are found.<sup>13</sup> Thus the possibility of a large and high arch supported by the pier and anta, with or without a line of shorter columns between them, remains uncertain.

The purpose of the wings of the tripartite transept has been problematical.<sup>14</sup> The question rapidly becomes entangled in the larger issue of the function of rooms located at the east ends of the side aisles,<sup>15</sup> whether or not they take

<sup>9</sup> For recent work in this church, see V. Papadopoulou, "Βασιλική Αλκίσωνος. Η ανασκαφική έρευνα των τελευταίων ετών/The Basilica of Alkisson. The archaeological research of the last years," *Nicopolis B'. Proceedings of the Second International Nicopolis Symposium 2002*, Preveza 2007, 609-635.

<sup>10</sup> P. Lemerle, P., «Saint-Démétrius de Thessalonique et les problèmes du martyrium et du transept,» *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellenique* 77 (1953) 660-694.

<sup>11</sup> See the article by I. Varalis, "Reverend Prototypes? Constantinian Churches and their Later Imitations in the Balkans," in this volume.

The basilica at Epidauros, with five aisles and rooms at the east ends of all four lateral aisles, is dated ca. 400 AD and is not included in this group of much later churches.

<sup>12</sup> Pallas 1987, 226; Varalis 2007, 601.

<sup>13</sup> See Pallas 1987, 226; Varalis 2007, 601.

<sup>14</sup> Krautheimer, 1969, 60-64, lays out the types of evidence that must be considered for the function of the transept wings and laments, 67, that scholars do not want to consider the planning of churches in relation to liturgical functions.

<sup>15</sup> Y. D. Varalis, "Prothesis and diakonikon: searching the original concept

the form of transept wings. In this presentation the issue of function is being avoided, but it appears that the transept wing should be seen as an architectural feature that could be used for a variety of purposes. The function of the transept in each church must be determined by examining the communications or barriers among transept wings, presbyterium, side aisles, and the exterior, as well as the evidence of floor decoration in the transept wings and adjoining spaces. The recent discovery of several elite tombs, probably of clergy, in the transept arms of Basilica Delta at Nikopolis<sup>16</sup> has thrown doubt on some of the earlier interpretations of the transept at Nikopolis.

### *Basilica Gamma at Philippi*

Since the 1970s, excavations have been conducted in a church known as Basilica Gamma or the Museum Basilica at Philippi (Fig. 6).<sup>17</sup> The second phase of this basilica has been dated to the second quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps ca. 530 AD. This church is of interest for a number of reasons, e.g., the separate base for a screen preserved beside the stylobate in the north aisle. What concerns us here, however, is that the north stylobate stopped at a large T-shaped pier several meters short of the east wall of the church. A stylobate runs from the north wall of the church partway across the north aisle and supports a column base; apparently the room at the east end of the aisle was accessible from the aisle between the column and the T-shaped pier. No columns stood between that pier and the short anta against the east wall; the opus sectile decoration of the floor is well preserved and extends almost to the north side of the lateral clergy bench.

Basilica Gamma presents a situation in which the stylobates end in piers at the west corners of rooms that are set off at the east end of the lateral aisles. The rooms do not protrude outside the line of the north and south walls of the church, and they are separated from the presbyterium only by the chancel screen and the lateral clergy benches. The lack of a colonnade between these rooms and the presbyterium could have given the east end of the church a more uni-

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of the subsidiary spaces of the Byzantine sanctuary,” in *Hierotopy: the Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, edited by Aleksej M. Lidov, Moscow, 2006.

<sup>16</sup> Chalkia, E., 2002. “Συμπληρωματική ανασκαφή στη βασιλική Δ Νικοπόλεως–νεα ευρήματα/ Additional excavations at Basilica D, Nicopolis. New Finds,” *Nicopolis B. Proceedings of the Second International Nicopolis Symposium 2002*, Preveza 2007, 659-666.

<sup>17</sup> In addition to reports by E. Kourkitidou-Nikolaïdou in *Archaiologikon Deltion* beginning in 1973, see E. Kourkitidou-Nikolaïdou and Euterpi Marki, “Des innovations liturgiques et architecturales dans la basilique du Musée de Philippi,” *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband 20*, 2 (1995) [= *Akten des 12. internationalen Kongresses für christliche Archäologie, Bonn, 1991*], Bonn, II, 950-957.

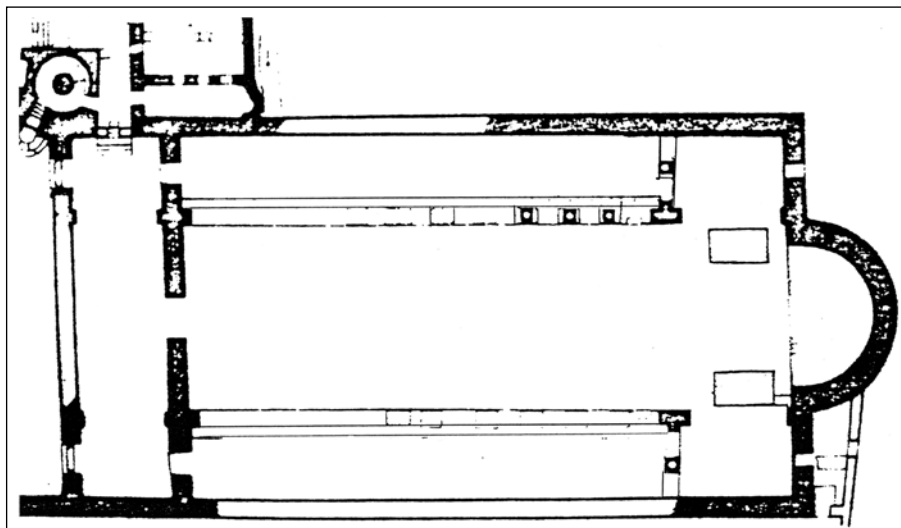


Fig. 6. Philippi, Basilica Gamma, second phase.

Сл. 6. Филипи, Базилика Гама, друга фаза.

fied appearance than the east end of a church with a tripartite transept divided by colonnades. How should the east end of Basilica Gamma at Philippi be described?

### *The Episcopal Basilica at Stobi*

The Episcopal Basilica at Stobi, also known as the Basilica of Bishop Philip or the Basilica on the Terrace, appears at first glance to have nothing to do with either the Via Egnatia or with transepts. Located in the northern part of the province of Macedonia, in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century Stobi became the capital of Macedonia Secunda. As noted above, two Roman roads crossed near the city. The earliest identifiable episcopal church at Stobi was built ca. 400 AD and is not under consideration here. The Basilica on the Terrace occupied a terrace ca. 4 meters above the earlier church and displays two major phases of construction. The first phase has a *terminus post quem* of ca. 475 AD; the date of the second phase is less certain but probably falls into the second quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>18</sup>

The Basilica on the Terrace appears to be a fairly standard three-aisle basilica (Figs. 7, 8), with some exceptions such as the crypt under the apse.

<sup>18</sup> See the preliminary reports on the work of the Yugoslav-American Stobi Excavation Project, by J. R. Wiseman and Dj. Mano-Zissi, in *American Journal of Archaeology* 75 (1971) 395-411; 76 (1972) 407-424; 77 (1973) 391-403; and in *Journal of Field Archaeology* 1 (1974) 117-148; 3 (1976) 269-302; 5 (1978) 391-429; and most recently J. R. Wiseman, „The early churches and the Christian community in Stobi, Macedonia,” *Acta Congressus Internationalis XIV Archaeologiae Christianae, Vienna, 1999*, Vienna and Vatican City, 2006, 795-803.

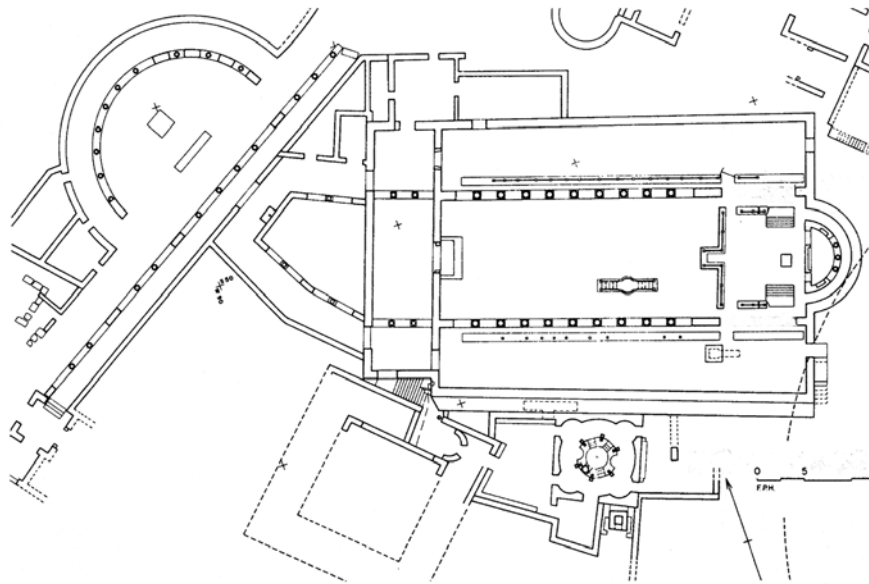


Fig. 7. Stobi, Episcopal Basilica on the Terrace. Reconstructed plan of Phase II, by F. P. Hemans.

Сл. 7. Стоби, Епископална базилика на тераси. Реконструисани план Фазе II, Ф. П. Хеманс.

Existing buildings and streets and issues of property ownership probably dictated the slightly odd shape of the complex, e.g., the form of the Baptistry and associated buildings on the south side and the triangular atrium at the west.

Cuttings preserved on the north stylobate allowed us to determine that the colonnade dividing nave from side aisles had eleven columns in the first phase. Other cuttings demonstrated that screen slabs had been placed on the stylobate between the columns in order to form a barrier between nave and side aisles.<sup>19</sup>

The position of column bases in Phase II could also be determined up to a point but, annoyingly, a large pier had been constructed at some time on the north stylobate near the west corner of the presbyterium. Furthermore, the marble blocks resting on the stylobate wall and forming the stylobate proper had been removed between that large pier and the *anta* at the east end of the colonnade. In this second phase, however, a separate base for screen slabs had been placed in the side aisles. In the north aisle, where these features were well preserved, that separate base continued as far as a small room against the east wall, except for an apparent gate in the screen near the west corner of the presbyterium. A doorway to the exterior was located in the east wall of the aisle.

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of the evidence from the north stylobate and a statement of our knowledge ca. 1980, see C. Snively, "Articulation of Space in the Episcopal Basilica: the Colonnades," *Studies in the Antiquities of Stobi* III (Titov Veles 1981) 163-170.



Fig. 8. Stobi, Episcopal Basilica. Nave, stylobate, screen base, and north aisle. From the east.

Сл. 8. Стоби, Епископална базилика. Централни брод, стилобат, основа преградног зида, и северни брод. Изглед са источне стране.

Those of us working in the Episcopal Basilica at Stobi in the 1970s spent a great deal of time and thought trying to understand the arrangement of the colonnades at the east end of the church during the second phase. The pier, which now consists only of two marble blocks resting on the stylobate, had showed on its upper surface traces of a reddish mortar with brick chips; that mortar is characteristic of the second phase of the basilica. The west end of the pier stands where the tenth column (counted from the west end) should have appeared. Thus we concluded that the colonnade had included a pier instead of a column at the west corner of the presbyterium, but the arrangement of the colonnade beyond the pier toward the east remained a mystery because the blocks of the stylobate were not preserved in situ. One proposed solution included the pier followed by three columns to the east.

The excavation and eventual publication of Basilica Gamma at Philippi provided the clues and the analogous arrangement needed to explain the situation at Stobi. In Phase II of the Episcopal Basilica on the Terrace, the colonnades ended at the piers near the west corners of the stylobate. Exactly how the superstructure would have been supported between the pier and the *anta* against

the east wall is not clear, but a large arch is certainly a possibility. At floor level the east end of the church would have appeared to form a unit, from the north wall of the north aisle to the south wall of the south aisle. The only barriers to vision and communication would have been the screens on their separate bases in north and south aisles and the lateral clergy benches and chancel screen of the presbyterium. A gate in the separate screen in the aisle would have provided access to a broad corridor between that screen and the chancel screen of the presbyterium. From the corridor it would have been possible to enter the underground crypt beneath the apse of the church, which has been described and published elsewhere.<sup>20</sup>

The similarity between the Episcopal Basilica at Stobi and Basilica Gamma at Philippi lies in the arrangement of the stylobate or perhaps we should say in the lack of a stylobate at the east end of the church. There is little evidence at Stobi to indicate that a separate room was created at the east end of the aisle<sup>21</sup> as at Philippi; the separate screen base continues nearly to the east wall. In fact, it seems clear that communication from the aisles to the exterior and to the corridors leading to the crypt was the important factor at Stobi. Thus an architectural arrangement served two different purposes in the two churches.

This arrangement at the east end of the church, in Basilica Gamma at Philippi and in the Episcopal Basilica at Stobi, was called a pseudo-transept in the abstract for this paper. The interruption of the stylobates created a transverse space at the east end of the church that might be considered a tripartite transept. On the other hand, this space did not protrude beyond the line of the north and south walls of the church, which continued to look much like an ordinary three-aisle basilica. It is unclear whether the rooflines of the church would have been affected; at Stobi there is evidence for galleries and thus a two-story side aisle in Phase II. This arrangement allowed a church to have what looked from the interior like a transept but without most of the more complicated construction issues that an actual transept would have required.

### *Conclusions*

First of all, given the location of Philippi on the Via Egnatia and that of Stobi further north in the hinterland, and because the relative dates of the two churches cannot be determined more precisely, it seems likely but not proven that Basilica Gamma provided the earlier example of an architectural arrangement that was then adapted at Stobi for a somewhat different purpose. It will be interesting to see whether additional examples of such arrangements will be found in new excavations or will be identified in already known basilicas.

<sup>20</sup> C. Snively, "Apsidal Crypts in Macedonia: Possible Places of Pilgrimage?" *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband* 20, 2 (1995) [= Akten des 12. internationalen Kongresses für christliche Archäologie, Bonn, 1991] 1179-1184.

<sup>21</sup> A very short wall stub was indicated on a pre-World War II plan of the basilica, but no trace of it was visible when the Yugoslav-American project began work at Stobi in 1970.

Far from defining the transept and its characteristics in Early Byzantine church architecture in the Balkans, this examination of churches identified as having transepts seems to have obscured rather than clarified the issue. If we leave aside the continuous transept, which seems not to exist in the Balkans, and the cross transept, which presents its own questions, we can concentrate on the tripartite transept. Usually its wings extend beyond the side aisles of the church, except that they do not do so in the examples at Stobi and Philippi or in the five-aisle churches. Although piers at the west corners of the transept wings are frequent, no standard arrangement of the east end of the colonnade can be determined. Information both about the height of the wings relative to that of the presbyterium and the side aisles and about the roofs of those three parts of the basilica would be useful in defining the transept, but that information is rarely available. In the small number of examples in which either subdivisions of the wing or its pavements are preserved, they suggest varying internal arrangements and possible uses of the space. The number of doorways, gates, and open spaces between columns leading into the transept wings indicates that whatever functions they served, in many instances it involved a fair amount of traffic. A detailed study, for which there is neither time nor space here, of communication between the transept wings and the presbyterium might pose questions about liturgical actions as well as architecture.

We can attempt to understand the tripartite transept or, in fact, its wings from several points of view. First of all, did the inclusion of this arrangement affect the construction of the church? Protruding transept wings, interruption of the colonnades with piers and perhaps large arches, and separate roofs certainly had to be taken into consideration in the preliminary planning of the church construction.

Secondly, once the space was available at the east end of the aisles, how was it treated? Whether or not the space extended beyond the wall of the aisle, however the space was roofed, whatever arrangement of the colonnade existed, how and why was it visually and practically divided-or not divided-from the rest of the aisle? Short or low walls, columns, screens, or some combination of these items were sometimes used to separate the wing from the aisle and the presbyterium. Internally the space could be divided by furniture, more walls or screens, and patterns in the floor pavement.

The third point of view is that of function, which undoubtedly can affect the overall architectural form as well as the degree of isolation of the wings and their internal divisions, furnishing, and decoration, but which should not be confused with the large or small scale architectural form and arrangement. Certain functions can be identified, of which burial is the most obvious,<sup>22</sup> but it would be a serious mistake-in the present state of our knowledge-to attempt to correlate this particular architectural arrangement with particular functions in all cases.

Perhaps it is premature to suggest that the term "tripartite transept" be retired,<sup>23</sup> at least from the discussion of Early Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture

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<sup>22</sup> See Varalis 2007, 602.

<sup>23</sup> The problem of terminology is complicated by the different terms used in various languages to refer to the transept.

in the Balkans. Nevertheless, given 1) that the tripartite transept is not a single unit but consists of two lateral spaces and the presbyterium that separates them, 2) that the three parts may or may not function together for liturgical purposes, and 3) that a definition and a clear set of characteristics cannot be determined, it is not unreasonable to question the term and the concept it represents. It may be time to subsume the discussion of at least the purpose of the transept wings into the larger consideration of the functions of the rooms at the east ends of the lateral aisles in the basilica.

Каролин С. Снајвли

#### ПОПРЕЧНИ БРОД У ЦРКВЕНОЈ АРХИТЕКТУРИ ИСТОЧНОГ ИЛИРИКА И ЕПИСКОПАЛНА БАЗИЛИКА У СТОБИЈУ

Пре много година, Ричард Краутхајмер је указао на попречни брод Базилике св. Димитрија у Солуну као модел из којег су се варијације развиле до Дирахиона (Драча) ка западу, до Бутротума и Никополиса на обали Јадранског мора, као и до Тасоса и Филипија ка истоку. Концепт попречног црквеног брода ширио се дуж римских друмова, као што је Егнацијева пут, као и морем, на шта указују примери откривени углавном у градовима поред овог пута или у лукама.

Континуални попречни брод појавио се у Базилици св. Петра и на другим местима у Риму у IV веку. Крстасти попречни брод настао је касније у провинцији Македонија, у Базилици А у Филипију, Крстастој базилици на Тасосу и вероватно у Светом Патапију у Верији, као и у петобродној базилици св. Димитрија у Солуну. Све ове цркве датирају из касног V века или још каснијег периода.

Троделни попречни брод се релативно често јављао у провинцијама Епирус Вегус и Епирус Нова, а има примера и у Ахаји и на Криту. Даље на северу, редак пример је Базилика са трансептом у Царичином Граду. Иако је за више цркава из касног V и из VI века у овим крајевима утврђено да су имале троделне трансепте, тешко је на основу тих примера установити дефиницију или скуп карактеристика. У неким случајевима крила трансепта штрче изван бочних бродова; стубови могу прекидати колонаде у западним угловима крила трансепта, али понекад је колонада непрекинута; крило може и не мора имати комуникацију са олтаром, спољашњим простором и/или бродом; а тешко је наћи информације о висини крила и њихових кровова у односу на висину и кровни покривач централног и бочних бродова. Некада се не може распознати крило трансепта нити просторија на источном крају бочног брода.

У архитектури Базилике Гама у Филипију и Епископалне базилике у Стобију, велики стубови су прекидали колонаде и вероватно су подупирали западне крајеве великих лукова чији су источни крајеви били ослоњени на *antae* - продужетке источних подужних зидова цркве, без помоћних стубова. Да ли овакав архитектонски распоред треба сматрати троделним трансептом, иако простори не излазе ван линије бочних бродова и не утичу на облик крова цркве? Можда је време да се термин "троделни попречни брод" повуче из расправе о рано-византијској архитектури на Балкану и да се макар започне разматрање сврхе крила трансепта у оквиру ширег истраживања функције просторија на источним крајевима бочних бродова.