

Marmara Greek School for Girls (Pantelidia)

Umut Almaç, Mustafa Akçaöz, Ioannis Papachristou

District of Marmara, Merkez Neighbourhood	Construction period/date: 1912-1914
	Current status: Recently abandoned, planned reuse as a museum.
GPS: 40°35'09.9"N 27°33'34.9"E	Ownership status: State Treasury
Registration date and number: GEEAYK 20.12.1975 - 8791 / TKTVYK 27.02.1987 - 3045 / Bursa KVTKBK 15.01.1996 - 4904	

History

In 1905, the Pantelis brothers and the shipowner Nikolaos Efstathiadis from Marmara Island established the brotherhood 'The Three Hierarchs' in Balat, Istanbul in order to raise funds to build a new school for girls in Marmara village (Xenophanis 2, 1905, 319). Captain Vasilis, Zannis and Dimitris (Pl. IV.14a-b-c), who were shipowners from the island's Pantelis family, built this Girls' School next to the old Greek cemetery with the funds raised during this period. The construction started in 1912 and was completed in 1914 (Pl. IV.13).

The architect of the school is unknown, but the similarities between Pantelidia School and Greek Boys' School in Erdek suggest that it was probably designed by the same architect, Patroklos Kampanakis from Istanbul.

The first director of Pantelidia (Greek Girl's School) was Anna Tserkezou. The school was closed during the World War I and reopened in 1920, when the Greeks of Marmara Island returned from exile. The educational institution maintained its function until the



Fig. 1: Southern façade

population exchange, after which it was used as a gendarmerie station and governmental office. Although it was decided to be used as a museum through the inter-institutional protocols, it remains empty.

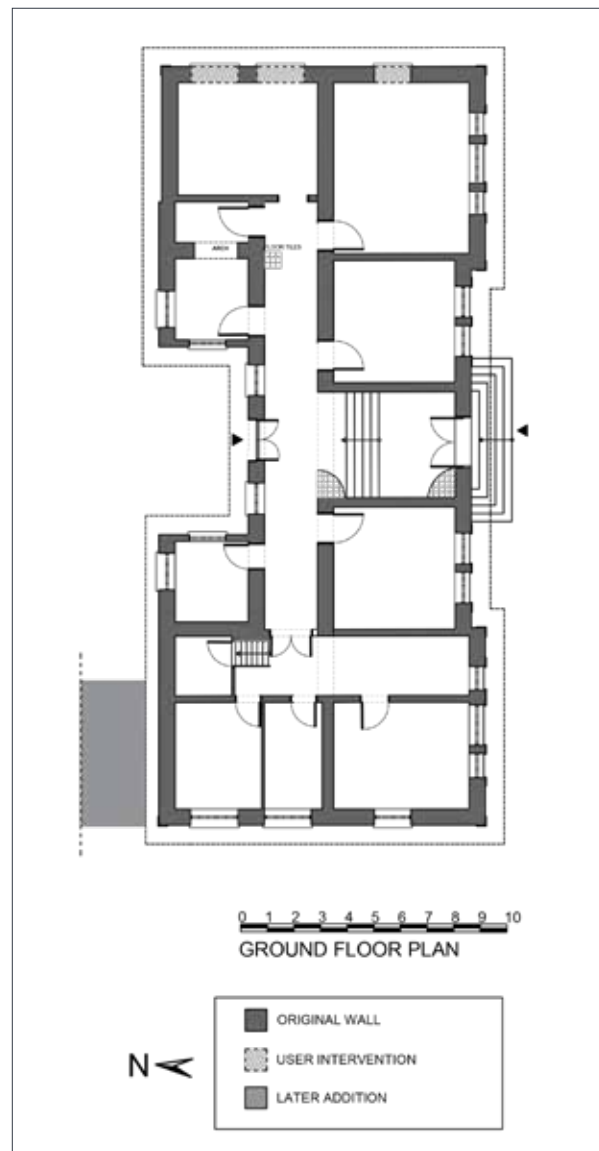
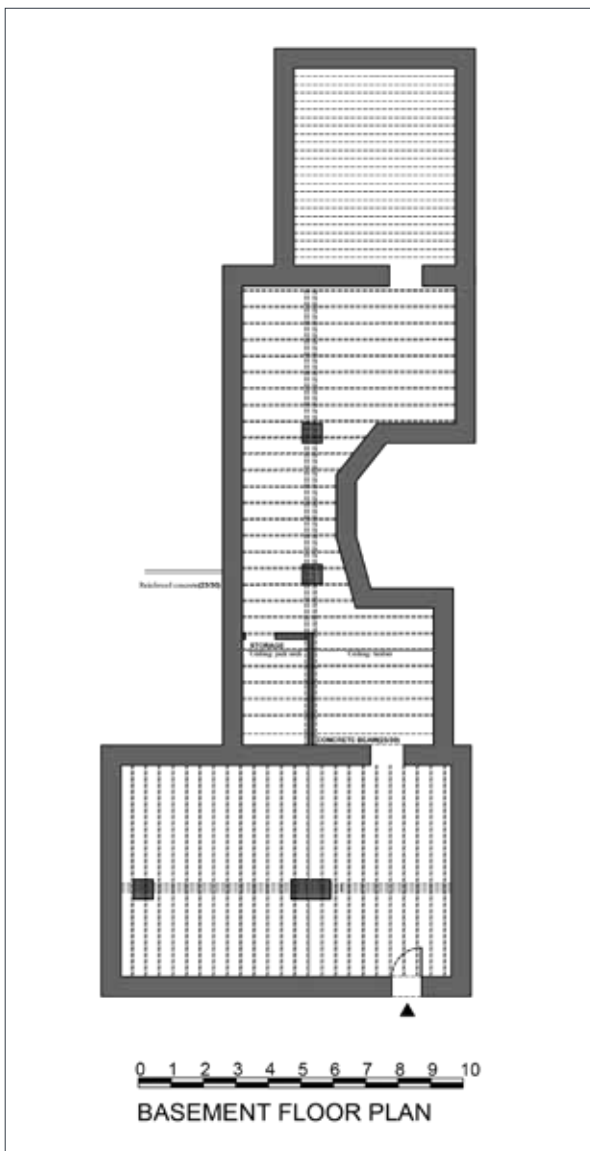
Architecture

The Greek School for Girls in Marmara village, known as Pantelidia, is attached to the eastern edge of a lot with an area of 1789 m² along Karakol Street. The school yard is surrounded by rubble masonry walls and accessed from Hükümet Street by an opening elevated by two steps.

The Greek School for Girls is an independent building that extends along the east-west direction, with a floor area of approximately 300 m² (outer dimensions are about 12x28 m). The structure has a central unit (approximate

length 13 m), which consists of a ground floor and basement, and wings (approximate length 7.5 m) attached to the east and west of this unit. These sections protrude by about 50 cm out from the central unit (Fig. 1).

The southern façade of the building, facing Hükümet Street, is more elaborate than the others (Fig. 1). It is in symmetrical order with a length of about 28 m and it is articulated by the entrance in the centre and the triangular pediments on the east and west wings. Artificial stone cladding (plaster shaped to imitate stone), which was frequently used –especially on exterior façades– in Istanbul at the turn of the century, was also utilized in this building. Pilasters extending from the ground to the roof, profiled floor and roof mouldings, and decorative elements around the openings accentuate the southern façade.



The building's ground floor is accessed from the southern façade, while the basement has an entrance on the western façade. The two-meter level difference between the northern and southern sides of the lot is balanced by the stairs between the garden and the building, and those in the building's entrance hall. The landing of the main entrance on the southern façade is reached from the garden by a five-step marble staircase. After entering the building through a double-winged, iron door, there is the entrance hall and a corridor on the east-west axis, elevated from the hall by five steps. The corridor is 2 m wide and 15.5 m long. It is covered by a jack-arched system and has a floor covered by terrazzo tiles (Fig. 3). The spaces on the ground floor open into this corridor. On the middle axis, opposite the main entrance, there is a double-winged door with a lintel that allows access to the backyard to the north. There are two spaces, facing south, on either side of the entrance hall. The corridor connects to two spaces in the eastern wing of the building. In the western wing, there is a second corridor in the north-south direction with three spaces opening into it. The wings protrude on the northern façade as well as on the southern one and have two windows each (Fig. 2).

On the eastern and western façades there are three windows, two to the north and one to the south. On the southern façade, there are two windows on both sides of the entrance at the ground floor level and three windows on the wings, wherein the central ones are larger. At the basement level of this façade are small windows, lined up similar to the ground floor arrangement. All openings on the façades have flat lintels.

The walls of the building are constructed in stone masonry technique. The main walls of the basement are rubble masonry. There are also brick posts on this floor, which support the flooring system. As understood from the areas where plaster is lost, the wall material changes to brick at the ground floor level. The historical photographs from the beginning of the 20th century show that solid bricks are used in the walls of the southern façade. The flooring of all the ground-floor spaces is timber, except for the corridor, which is paved with terrazzo tiles topped by a jack-arched flooring system (Fig. 3). The spaces on the ground floor are covered by the same system. The southern wall of the corridor is one of the main load-bearing axes inside the building, along with the façade walls. The I-beams of



Fig. 2: Northern façade



Fig. 3: Ground floor corridor with concrete tile flooring and jack-arch ceiling



Fig. 4: Basement, reinforced concrete intervention

the jack-arched flooring system are also connected to this wall in the north-south direction. The building has a timber, hipped roof covered by Marseille tiles.

Current Condition

The building was used as the Town Hall for years until it was recently abandoned. It was noted that there are no security precautions around the building and it is possible to access it directly through the entrance on the ground floor.

There is not any serious structural damage that can cause total collapse in the building. However, there are vertical cracks and disintegration in the courses of the brick posts due to the concentrated load transferred from the floor. Probably in relation to these damages, reinforced concrete elements have been added in the basement (Fig. 4). Moreover, the I-beams of the jack-arched flooring show signs of serious corrosion, especially in the basement, and have lost their mechanical properties at certain points.

Risk Assessment and Recommendations

The building is the only surviving girls' school on Marmara Island. Designed as an educational structure at the beginning of the 20th century, the building preserves its

authenticity to a great extent despite past interventions and changes. The building is a cultural property and has documentary value in terms of its scale, original function, construction techniques, and materials.

The building's current condition should be documented and a conservation project should be prepared for its reuse with a function that will not harm its original features. Until the preparation of such a project, the roof should be repaired and the environmental safety of the building should be ensured to protect it from further damage.

The brick posts in the basement should be temporarily supported by a reversible intervention, until more extensive conservation measures can take place. Moreover, the I-beams in the basement that are severely corroded should be examined one by one in order to identify their cross-section losses and load carrying capacity, and determine the necessary structural interventions. The conservation approach should adopt minimum interventions by using traditional materials/techniques. New materials and details can be used if necessary for the building to regain its original bearing capacity and strengthen structural elements, but they must be used without damaging its original features since the building is a cultural property.