Ekinlik Greek School for Girls

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District of Marmara, Ekinlik Neighbourhood	Construction period/date: **1911**
	Current status: **Ruinous**
GPS: **40°32′46.1″N 27°29′08.9″E**	Ownership status: **State Treasury**
Registration date and number: **Bursa KTVKBK 18.08.1990 - 1297**	

History

A girls' school had been operational on Ekinlik Island since the beginning of 19th century. The codices of the Association 'Evangelismos' of the Koutalians, dating from 1870, reveal that the school was located behind the Church of Panagia (*aka* Koimisis tis Theotokou) and the boys' school (Fig. 1). The Association operated the girls' school and, for this reason, funded its reconstruction when the building burned down in a fire in 1906. The school operated in the houses of islanders (among them the house of Socrates Zacharof) rented by the Association between 1906 and 1910. On 3 October 1910, the Association decided to ask for an imperial *firman* to reconstruct the school, to bring an architect working on Avşa Island during that period to check the stability of the remaining walls after the fire, and to raise more funds for the reconstruction (*Praktika*, 1894-1911).

Fig. 1: Ekinlik Greek School for Girls, south and west façades

The construction of the new girl's school lasted three months in the spring of 1911 and the Association spent 48,959 *qurush* to build a magnificent three-storey building. For the reconstruction, they used 15,500 *oqqa* of quicklime from Çınarlı village (Marmara Island); additionally, 30,000 tiles, wood, and other materials were delivered from Istanbul (Pl. X-XI nos.42-43). The Association asked the notorious architect Periklis Fotiadis in Istanbul, whose origins were from Ekinlik Island, to design the architectural plan for the girls' school (Valsamis – Lampadaridis 1940, 146-153). However, the plan, found in the Ottoman Archives of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey (*Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi*), bears the signature of Christos Kalfas, who was most likely working in the architectural office of Periklis Fotiadis in Istanbul (Fig. 3).

The school was seriously damaged by the earthquake of 1935. It was never rebuilt or used again.

Architecture

The General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre lists the lot of Ekinlik Greek School for Girls as 'ruined school and lot' that covers an area of 456.84 m². The historic building, which is abandoned and in ruins today, was built to the west of the port of Ekinlik Island, in a detached order with its south façade directly on the coast of Marmara Sea.

The school has a settlement area of about 160 m² and a square layout. There is a level difference in the north-south direction (Fig. 1). The façade organizations of the basement and ground floor are discernible from the south. On the north façade, only the basement floor plan and traces of interior partition walls are distinguishable (Fig. 2). The entrance staircase to the west of the building provide access to the ground floor. The extant steps indicate that the stairs rising from the sea direction (south) to the north and turning east at the ground floor level connected to an opening on the western façade at the ground floor level.

Fig. 2: Ekinlik Greek School for Girls, partition walls in the basement and the southern wall of the ground floor

The continuation of the steps to the basement and lower levels cannot be observed due to dense vegetation.

Plan and façade drawings of the school are found in the Ottoman Archives of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey (Fig. 3). When these drawings are compared to the existing remains, the entrance and spaces of the basement floor are seen on the western façade. According to the drawing, there are only three spaces at this level, whereas four spaces are discernible at present. The space to the north is divided in two by a wall, unlike the archived plan. The entrance to the basement in the west opens to the western space in the northern section that is divided in two and measures 4.10x4.90 m. The dimensions of the eastern space in the north section are 4.10x5.70 m. The partition walls and the door opening between these two spaces are not seen in the archived plan. Such differences suggest that the building was either not constructed based on this plan or renewed later. According to the archived plan, the wet spaces, which protrude to the east, and the eastern rooms on the ground floor (upper floor) are reached by a staircase in the northeastern section. The traces of these wet spaces and the staircase cannot be observed today. The spaces to the south of the basement are accessed via the northern section. There is an opening with a depressed arch that is approximately 130x60 cm to the east of the southeastern space, which measures 6.00x5.12 m. There are three arched, 30x60 cm windows to its east. Through this section one reaches the southwestern space, which measures 5.12x5.12 m. An arched window opening is seen on the western façade of this space.

According to the archived drawings, there was another staircase in the ground floor entrance hall that provided access to the first floor (Fig. 3). This element has not survived. A staircase and landing across the ground floor entrance, leading to the basement, are also attested in the plan for this floor. Two separate rooms to the north and south can be accessed via this landing. The southern room could also be accessed via another door from the entrance hall. There is another space to the southwest of the entrance hall, with dimensions of 6.00x6.00 m.

The first floor has completely disappeared and can only be defined based on the archived drawings. According to these, the layout of the first floor echoed that of the ground floor. Along with the entrance hall to the northwest, there were three spaces to the northeast, southeast, and southwest.

The southern façade, which is the best-preserved section, faces the sea (Fig. 1). It has three small, arched windows on the basement level, close to the eastern edge. On the ground floor, there are four 120 cm-wide windows that are framed by jambs. There is a row of bricks in lieu of moulding between the basement and ground floor. The moulding between the ground and first floors is composed of three horizontal, profiled elements.

The school is built in rubble and brick masonry. The construction techniques of the southern, eastern and western façades of the basement and ground floor are discernible. Evaluation cannot be made about the flooring or staircases since there are not any extant traces.

The basement level was explored during the field survey (Fig. 2). The northern wall has a thickness of 81-82 cm, whereas the thickness of partition walls varies between 52 and 55 cm. The construction technique of the masonry wall changes towards the ground floor. The thickness of the stone masonry walls decreases by 30 cm on the ground floor level, and supports walls made of face bricks with six holes. The brick masonry is composed of two courses of full bricks with dimensions of 20x9.5x6.5 cm, followed by a course of one full and two half brick alignments. The transition between the basement and the ground floor is accentuated by a moulding made by the 4 cm protrusion of the bricks measuring 22x10x6 cm.

Traces of timber bands or lintels are found in the rubble masonry walls. A timber band of 6x6 cm is noted close to the ground level, by the door opening on the western façade of the basement. Original timber elements are also found in the southern main wall of the basement. On the eastern wall, there is a gap for a lintel with a cross-section of 16.5x20 cm above the door leading to the wet spaces.

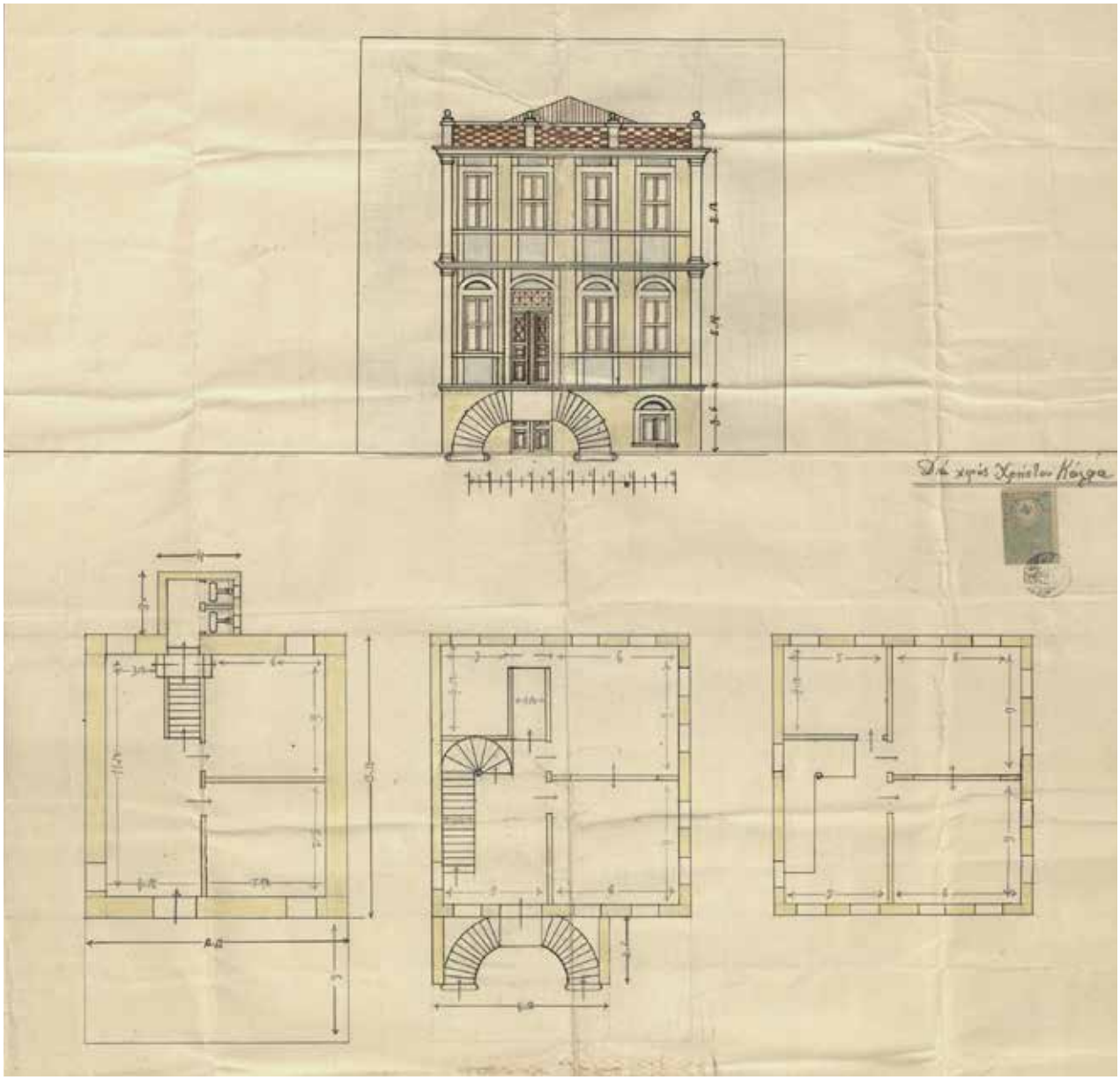


Fig. 3: Drawings of the building from the Ottoman Archives of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey

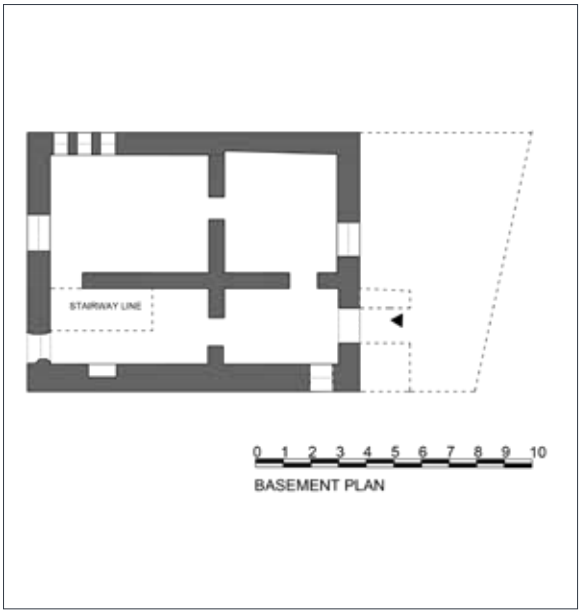
Current Condition

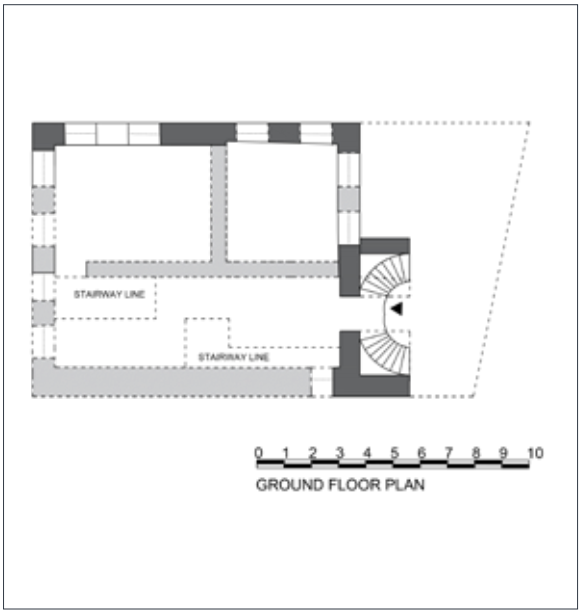
The main walls of the first floor, flooring, and roof structure of the historic building have not survived. Although the southern façade of the ground floor still stands, the walls of the other façades have largely fallen. The main and partition walls of the basement are extant. Loss of materials and structural cracks are attested on the southern façade. Access to the building is not controlled, and there is no information panel. Plant growth is seen in the building, especially in the basement, and around it.

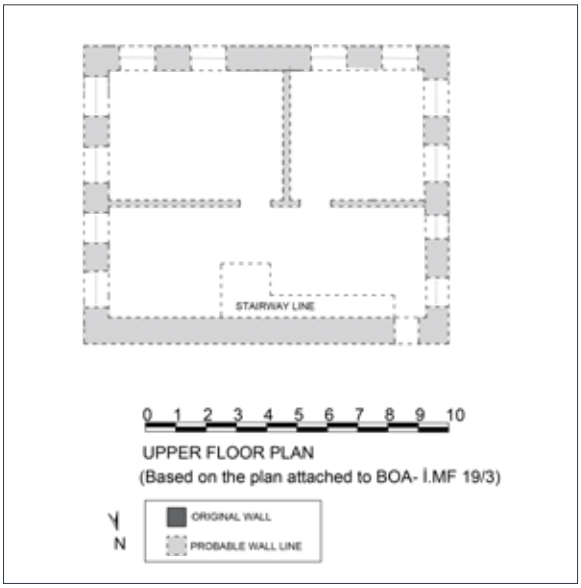
Risk Assessment and Recommendations

In historic masonry buildings, it is expected that the walls will be connected to each other and the structure will behave like a box. However, since only the southern façade of the ground floor has survived with no connection to the others, it has carries increased risk of damage. The deep cracks and loss of material attested on this façade are indicators that the brick walls deteriorate day by day. The southern façade of the basement is adjacent to the Marmara Sea, reducing the durability of the materials here. That the rubble walls are exposed to exterior conditions poses a risk for the structure.

Consolidation work is recommended for the surviving parts of the building. ICOMOS Turkey Charter for the Conservation of







Architectural Heritage defines consolidation as 'the prevention/slowing down of cultural asset's deterioration process by increasing the durability of its material and/or structural system, and improvement of its existing physical and mechanical properties.' The reintegration of structures whose building elements have been largely lost is controversial. The conservation/ design problem of the building is to re-establish the box behaviour of the southern façade, which is highly vulnerable, by integrating it with original material.

The reuse of the Greek School for Girls as a public space on Ekinlik Island is important for the continuity of the building. Its new function should be determined by participatory conservation methods involving the stakeholders. The building, which is a rare example of educational structures on the Southern Marmara Islands and the only one on Ekinlik Island, should be evaluated based on its economic, architectural, aesthetic, and documentary values with participatory and preventive conservation measures. It is necessary to plan new design approaches while preserving the original elements and appearance of the building.