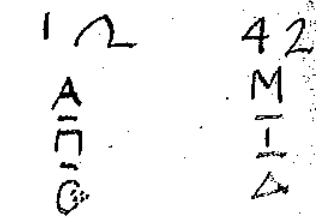


## CHAPTER 20 ANGARATHOS TO PEDIADA

From Candia to the monastery of Angarathos there are two roads. One goes by the Kaki Rakhi, the Bad Ridge, which used to be passed on the way to Kastelli [Kastelli Pediadas] before the new road avoided it. The other way is to go east from Candia by sea as far as Kartero and then turn inland, and go to the monastery by the villages of Elaia [Ελαία] and Episkopi. I have been both ways. Of Kartero and Kaki Rakhi I have spoken elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> The only notable place on this road is Episkopi, with several churches.

### EPISKOPI between Candia and Angarathos<sup>2</sup>

Panagia Phaneromeni in the village of Episkopi has over N. door



(left) IMG\_5231a Panagia Phaneromeni, Episkopi  
(centre) IMG\_5230 North door of Panagia Phaneromeni  
(right) Panagia Phaneromeni (interior) (from Internet)

Inside it is a double church with graves on the floor.<sup>3</sup> In the same village are the churches of Agia Paraskevi and Agios Panteleimon. I went into Agios Panteleimon; it has the characteristic Venetian ribbed vault. The doors of both are of the usual late Venetian type.<sup>4</sup>



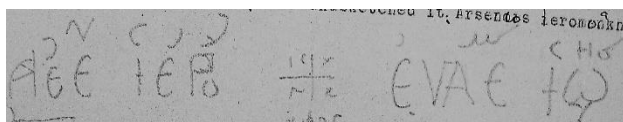
(left and centre) IMG\_5226 & 7 The doors of Agia Paraskevi, Episkopi  
(right) IMG\_5232 The W door of Agios Panteleimon, Episkopi

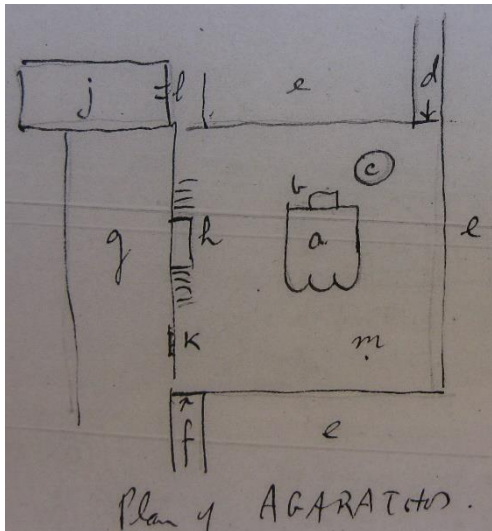
I was told that at both Episkopi and Anopolis there were massacres in 1896. The Turks got as far as Angarathos where they burned the buildings which stood where the *xenon* now is (the S side of the court). The eikon of the Prodomos<sup>5</sup> in the church of the *moni* also has 13 bullet marks on it.

#### [Angarathos Monastery/Μονή Αγκαράθου]<sup>6</sup>

The Moni Angarathos lies on a hillside sloping to the south. From the terrace there is a view of Yuktas and Ida. Near to S and W undulating country with villages and low hills shutting off the Mesara. To the east there are low hills near and beyond Dikte. As one approaches from the north one suddenly comes in sight of the *moni*: the court is indistinct and the mass of buildings looks like a village; all flat *domata* culminated by the high hip-roof of the new *xenon* with its red tiles, the only red tiles in the place except on the new church. From the confused mass of *domata* rise the belfry and dome of the new church built in the most theatrical new Byzantine style. But the court inside is charmingly irregular and old-looking with shrubs. Round about the *moni* are a lot of cypresses and olives. A beautiful open situation. The church is isolated in the middle of the court.

The door of the *moni* in the SE corner has a date of α φ ξ ε (1565) written below a cross with I C N K. The door is thus: in the NW corner of the court, is of the same C N K has the date α φ π γ (1583). On each date there is an inscription which I could not read, though I climbed a ladder and sketched it. Arsenios *Ieromonakhos* seems to be in it.<sup>7</sup>

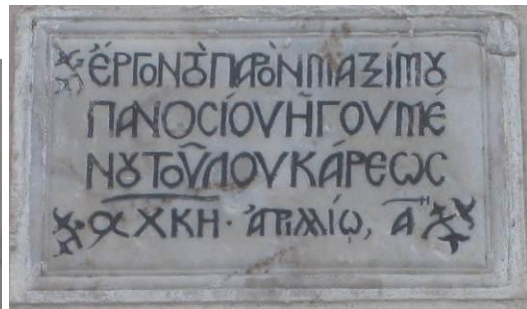
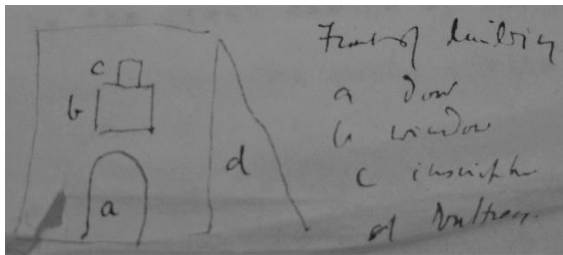




- A. Church
  - B. Belfry
  - C. Well head with inscription
  - D. Main gate with date 1583
  - E. *Kellia*
  - F. Gate with date 1565
  - G. *Xenon* with terrace in front
  - H. Double flight of steps leading up to terrace in front of *xenon*
  - J. Storehouse with Loukaris inscription over door at L
  - K. Good old double window with arches over each light and probably same date as doors, i.e. late sixteenth century
- Several bits of late Venetian sculpture about
- M. Base of a column with a piece of a lion; other fragments are built into the steps and terrace in front of the *xenon*

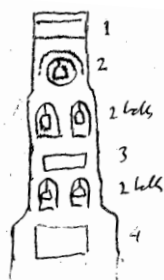
The SW corner of the buildings is occupied by a long vaulted building clearly Venetian and now used as a store house with a door at the N end. Above it is a terrace or, rather, its flat roof serves as a terrace. Over the door is an inscription and inside the door one goes down several steps to the floor. This Maximos L was, I was told, a brother of Cyril Loukaris who was himself perhaps not at the *moní*.<sup>8</sup>

The inscription runs



IMG\_3125 Inscription on warehouse ["The present [building] is the work of Maximos Loukaris, holy abbot, 1628, April 1"]<sup>9</sup>

The church was built in the eighteen nineties.<sup>10</sup> The key to the whole history is in the inscriptions on the present church and on the west front of the tall belfry which rises above the west front of the church.<sup>11</sup> At the top are the words: (1)



"When Dionysios was Bishop of Khersonnesos". Below this is a circular opening with a bell in it. Round this is inscribed (2) "And it shall be for thee to rouse men to the assembly". Below this are openings for two bells and below them again and half way down the belfry is the inscription in capital letters: (3) "On the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1893 this belfry was blown down from the foundations by the wind and after three months was rebuilt and made more lofty when Gennadios was abbot". In spite of the words "from the foundations"

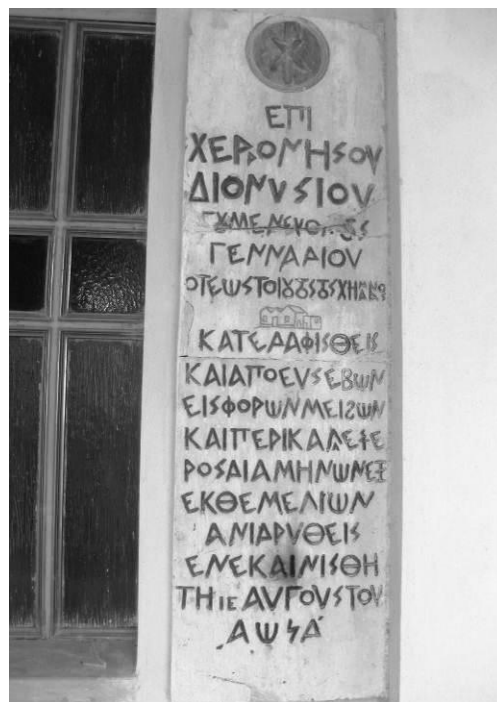
the part below this is earlier and dates in fact to 1865, as we read in another inscription. Below the third inscription are the openings for two more bells and then the following in hexameter verses: (4) "The tower for the holy bells was reared on high; their voices break forth from lips of terror; listen to their divine sound and rise up ye people, coming hither to worship at the temple of God. [Omitted by Dawkins:

During the primateship of the bishop of Chersonnesos Meletios and the abbotship of the *ieromonachos* Meletios Paigniotakis. ΑΩΞΕ (1865)]”

Then the monks seem to have thought the old church too low in proportion and destroyed it and put up the present ugly building. In fact one monstrosity, the present belfry, produced another to the great damage of the appearance of the monastery. The monks admire both.

To proceed to the church. It is a three-apsed building standing free in the middle of the court. It has three altars, *koimisis*, *prodromos*, *metamorphosis* [Dormition, John the Baptist, Transfiguration], and from the drawing on it one can see that the older church was the same. The inscriptions are on the south door. Over the door is written:

“Enter thou the all-glorious church of God and His mother”.<sup>12</sup>



IMG\_3130 Inscription dated 1894. The two halves of the inscription, which were either side of the church door when Dawkins saw it, have now been placed one above the other in the narthex, to the left of the west door. The incised sketch of the old church, mentioned below, is visible about half-way down the slab.

On the left side of the same door is an outline sketch of the old church incised on the stone, and above it is inscribed: “When Dionysios was Bishop of Khersonnesos and Gennadios was abbot the aforetime church whose form was as is here shown – then comes the sketch – was pulled down”. Then the inscription continues on the right-hand side of the door: “and by pious contributions was raised up anew bigger and more beautiful. August 15<sup>th</sup> 1894”.<sup>13</sup> In the Greek, the letters are in capitals and in a zigzag style of lettering intended, one may suppose, to look quaint and archaic – an engaging mixture of BC and Byz and fancy work. The monks, that is to say, built the new church only a year after the destruction and renewal of the belfry. The red tiles of the roof and of the new guesthouse are further blemishes on the monastery, which only as short a time ago as 1893 must have been extremely beautiful.

West of the church in the court is a round well-head inscribed in capitals: “In the time of the abbot Meletios Paigniotakis, priest and monk 1862”.<sup>14</sup>

Over the door of the old cells  $\alpha \phi \frac{16}{\nu} \frac{x}{\kappa} 02$ . The first letter is odd but by the style of the building it must be a muddled  $\alpha$ , and the date is 1577.<sup>15</sup>

By the wall of the church is a pomegranate bush said to be grafted upon a stock of *Angarathia* and transplanted to its present position when this new church was built. The *Angarathia* is the Jerusalem Sage, *Phlomis fruticosa*, and whether such a graft is even possible I do not know. Nor do I know at all why the monastery is called after this plant, which is of course common in all rocky parts of Crete. In Greek it is called *σφάκα*, which means /// flower.<sup>16</sup>

The *moni* is *idiorrhythmo* and at the backs of their *kellia* the monks have built little courts and yards which from the outside give the *moni* an irregular appearance rather like a village. 17 or 18 monks in all, but only two are *ieromonakhoi*. I was there on Kyriaki tou asotou and noticed the clear and good singing.<sup>17</sup>

There are no old books in the *moni*. The Turks burned the *kellia* where the *xenon* now is in 1846 or so; but I was also told in 1896 (see above).<sup>18</sup>

From Angarathos there are two choices – I have done both – either to go to Kastelli Pediada<sup>19</sup> and so on to Lasithi, or to go south-east by way of Thrapsanos [Thrapšanó], the potters' village, to Emporas [Εμπόρος] and Viano.<sup>20</sup>

A short distance to the west of Angarathos are the villages of Upper and Lower Astraki [Αστρακοί]. I have no notes concerning them, but about Lower Astraki Khourmouzis gives a story worth excerpting. Near the village, he says, is a Cave of the Nereids, a *Nereidospilos* [Neraidóspilios].<sup>21</sup> Here a shepherd was playing on his little fiddle (*lyra*) and met a Nereid. He held her firmly through all her changes of form until the cock crew and in this way won her for his wife. She went home with him and they had a baby. But the fairy wife never uttered a word. To make her break her silence the husband took the advice of an old woman and pretended to be about to throw the baby into a heated oven. “What do you think, sir? Do you think that the people who live a thousand or fifteen hundred years don't take a long time to grow up?”

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### Peter Mackridge's notes

<sup>1</sup> In ch. 1 and ch. 25.

<sup>2</sup> We visited Episkopi on we visited 19 October 12. None of the Episkopi churches is mentioned in Gratiou's book.

<sup>3</sup> The church was locked when we visited. The inscription is difficult to decipher, but the year must be 1642. Such a date would fit with the baroque “broken pediment”, which is unusual in Crete. (Gerola too [IV 510] was unable to interpret the letters, but he read the date as 1642.) The church itself presumably dates from well before this.

<sup>4</sup> The interior walls of Agios Panteleimon are bare, but Agia Parakevi has wonderful frescoes.

<sup>5</sup> ‘The Forerunner’, i.e. John the Baptist.

<sup>6</sup> Dawkins visited on 2-3 March 1918 and 2-3 August 1918; we visited on 13 May 2011. See also the brief description of the monastery in Gerola III 183.

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<sup>7</sup> The inscription is copied by Gerola IV 511. It translates as “Jesus Christ is victorious. 1583. Arsenios Evdaimonoioannis ordained monk.”

<sup>8</sup> The Cretan Cyril Loukaris was Patriarch of Constantinople for most of the period from 1620 until his execution in 1638. He commissioned a handsome translation of the New Testament into vernacular Greek, published in Geneva in the year of his death.

<sup>9</sup> The inscription is copied by Gerola IV 512.

<sup>10</sup> The present church was built in 1940 (and has been recently restored), after the 1890s church had been demolished,

<sup>11</sup> The tall belfry mentioned by Dawkins is no longer there. The blocks bearing the inscriptions have now been built, separately, into the walls of the church. Dawkins’ transcriptions of the Greek texts of all these inscriptions are on a typescript sheet, but there is no need to quote them here.

<sup>12</sup> This inscription is no longer there.

<sup>13</sup> In an earlier draft, Dawkins writes: “The inscriptions record the destruction of the old church and the building of the present domed horror, ostensibly to match the height of the new belfry at the west end; this bears three inscriptions which are not legible in the morning light, and in the evening I neglected to note them, but it is late 19<sup>th</sup> century.”

<sup>14</sup> The well-head with the inscription is still there.

<sup>15</sup> Gerola IV 511 records that this inscription is outside the refectory.

<sup>16</sup> In Greek *phlomis* is called *angarathos* as well as *sphaka*, according to D. Phitos and Kaity A. Argyropoulo, *Wild Flowers of Greece* (Athens 1965) [JW]. For more on the *angarathos* see ch. 33.

<sup>17</sup> The Sunday of the Prodigal Son, celebrating the Jesus’ parable (Luke 15.13-32), is a moveable feast falling in February.

<sup>18</sup> When we visited it on 13 May 2011 the monastery was looking spick and span. The Venetian-era warehouse with the Loukaris inscription has been well restored on the outside (we didn’t go inside). The friendly Brother Silvestros told us the story about the *αγκαραθιά* under which the icon was found, and that a pomegranate plant was then grafted on to it – a miracle, he said, because such a grafting has never been achieved before or since – and there it is, still growing next to the wall of the church at the east end, a century after Dawkins’ visits to Angarathos monastery (2-3 March and 1-2 August 1918). Silvestros said that it had been transplanted from the site of another church (presumably meaning a previous church built on this site).



IMG\_3126 The vaulted tomb

In addition to the round well-head (now to the north of the church) there is a curved-vaulted tomb standing against the west wall of the courtyard, with the inscription: ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΥ / ΚΟΛΙΒΑ / ΑΦΝΔ΄ [Of Theodoros Kolivas 1554]. (Gerola IV 511 misreads this inscription, which must have been well cleaned since his day. He also records an inscription dated 1551 [p. 510] that is not mentioned by Dawkins.) This tomb is not mentioned by Dawkins. Inside the narthex, on the right of the church door, is an inscription recording the rebuilding of the church in 1940. On the north wall of the church is the stump of the now destroyed belfry, with the lowest of the four inscriptions recorded by Dawkins. The frescoes inside are well done and quite recent, but they have already been badly damaged by damp.

<sup>19</sup> See ch. 24.

<sup>20</sup> Thrapsano has been famous for centuries as a village of potters. We drove through the village on 13 May 2011; it looked rather grim, in contrast to the attractive Margarites. It had been destroyed by the Germans, but maybe at least one old church survives?

<sup>21</sup> The Neraidospilios is situated in the Astrakoi gorge, to the east of the village of Myrtia. We haven't been there. In ancient times the cave housed the temple of Athena Tritogenia. The cave is one of the sources of the aqueduct of Astraki, which has been supplying Herakleion with water since the early 20th century.