



## Nea Ekklesia

### Summary :

The Nea Ekklēsia is one of the most famous Constantinopolitan churches that disappeared without physical trace. Its appearance is known only through written sources and a few contemporary renderings. Its most interesting features were its five-domed structure and its quintuple dedication. The Nea's presumable form, interior arrangement, and meaning are important to understanding the ideas defining the transformation of architecture in the Middle Byzantine period.

### Date

Dedicated on May 1, 880  
Destroyed probably in 1490

### Geographical Location

Constantinople (İstanbul), within or next to the complex of the Great Palace

## 1. History

The Nea Ekklēsia (mean. "New Church") was one of the commissions of the Emperor [Basil I](#) (867-86).<sup>1</sup> It was built within or next to the [Great Palace](#), a short distance east of the Chrysotriklinos,<sup>2</sup> on the former [tzykanisterion](#). The construction had already begun by 877<sup>3</sup> and was personally directed and supervised by Basil.<sup>4</sup> According to some sources, a number of Constantinopolitan churches had been stripped off to provide the mosaic tesserae and marble slabs for Nea's interior decoration.<sup>5</sup> The *enkainia* (*εγκαίνια*, mean. consecration ceremony) of the church took place on May 1, 880 and was performed by the Patriarch Photios.<sup>6</sup> The new foundation was assigned with its own clergy and administration, and played an important part in ceremonies of the Palace.<sup>7</sup> By the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the church was converted into a monastery and was known as the New Monastery (Nea Monē). [Isaac II Angelos](#) (1185-95) deprived the Nea of many of its furnishings and liturgical vessels.<sup>8</sup> During the [Latin occupation](#) it served as a palatine chapel. It survived the [Ottoman conquest](#) of the city and was torn down probably in 1490.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Description in the Vita Basilii

Our knowledge of the Nea and its appearance depends on several written accounts and a few pictorial renderings prior to its destruction. The main literary evidence is the description of the church in the *Vita Basilii*, within the section addressing Basil's building achievements in the capital.<sup>10</sup> The church was dedicated to Christ, Archangel Gabriel, Prophet Elijah, the Mother of God, and St. Nicholas, as an expression of Basil's gratitude "for their benevolence on his behalf".<sup>11</sup> Its interior was decorated with polychrome [marble wall revetment](#) and [opus sectile](#) pavements, mosaic compositions on the vaults, silver-plated and gem-studded [chancel screen](#), altar table, and [synthronon](#), and silken-cloth hangings. The building was crowned with five [domes](#), covered with mosaic images inside and with "brass that resembles gold" outside. On the western side, there was an [atrium](#) with two elaborate fountains, made of porphyry and marble. Two [barrel-vaulted](#) porticoes ran along the north and south sides, and extended all the way to the new [tzykanisterion](#). The treasury and the sacristy of the church were built on the seaward side of this courtyard. Between two porticoes and east of the church there was an enclosed garden called Mesokepion.<sup>12</sup> The vault of the north portico was decorated with scenes depicting the martyrdom of various saints.<sup>13</sup>

Other sources provide little more information beyond that contained in the *Vita Basilii*. It should be added that the church stood on a terrace, under which there was a substructure.<sup>14</sup> Upon the entrance of the emperor into the naos, incenses were burnt within the substructure and aromatic smoke rose through openings in the floor.<sup>15</sup>

## 3. Reconstructions



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Only a vague idea of the plan can be extracted from the *Vita Basilii* and other accounts. Most scholars agree that the five-domed structure imply an arrangement with one dome in the center and the other four over the corners of a square plan, therefore assuming the use of some kind of **cross-in-square** plan, also employed in the contemporary churches of the [Lips](#) and [Myrelaion](#) monasteries.<sup>16</sup> Other scholars keep open the possibility that the church may have been of a cruciform plan, with domes placed over the arms of the cross, as it was the case in the [Holy Apostles](#) church.<sup>17</sup> However, the first solution seems more probable, given that cross-in-square was the predominant plan during this period and that there were five dedications, i.e. five sanctuaries. That means that, in addition to the main liturgical space, dedicated to Christ, there were four subsidiary chapels, each with its own dome. The chapels presumably occupied the **corner bays**. Such an organization resembles that of the Theotokos Church of Lips Monastery, with four chapels in the corners on the **gallery** level.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the four chapels and pertaining domes may have been accommodated within an **ambulatory**.<sup>19</sup>

### 4. Evaluation

No matter how scarce and obscure the sources are, the information they provide suggests that the Nea was an ambitious project. It was the main monument-statement of the [reign of Basil I](#), the New Era, which will bring back the glorious times of [Constantine](#) and [Justinian](#) and even surpass them. That was emphasized by the epithet 'Nea,' as well as with the more or less deliberate choice of the five-domed design. However, such a design was just an architectural expression of transformed and new beliefs, ideas, and needs, which were going to form art and architecture in the subsequent centuries. Its success in this respect and the popularity it gained are testified in the extraordinary diffusion of the five-domed design in Byzantium, Balkans, and Russia.

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1. The *Vita Basilii* lists twenty-five churches at Constantinople and another six in the suburbs restored or built by Basil. Eight of those were newly built and all of them were inside the Imperial Palace, Mango, C., *Byzantine Architecture* (New York 1976), p. 196.
  2. Mango, C., "Nea Ekklesia," *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 2 (Oxford - New York 1991), p. 1446; Paul Magdalino cites Liutprand of Cremona, who described the church as standing "next to the palace, to the east," Magdalino, P., "Observations on the Nea Ekklesia of Basil I," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 37 (1987), p. 61.
  3. Jenkins, R. J. H. - Mango, C., "The Date and Significance of the Tenth Homily of Photius," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 9-10 (1956), p. 130, n. 35
  4. Mango, C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents*, (London <sup>2</sup>1986), p. 194; Magdalino, P., "Observations on the Nea Ekklesia of Basil I," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 37 (1987), p. 51
  5. According to the *Patria Konstantinoupoleos*, ed. Th. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum* 2 (Leipzig 1907; repr. New York 1975), p. 288, Basil took off the mosaic tesserae and marble slabs from Justinian's mausoleum in the Holy Apostles. Symeon Logothete is less precise: "The Emperor Basil took away many pieces of marble and mosaic cubes from many churches on account of the Nea Ekklesiā," see *Leonis Grammatici Chronographia*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn 1842), p. 257 transl. Mango, C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents*, (London <sup>2</sup>1986), p. 181, n. 1.
  6. Jenkins, R. J.H. - Mango, C., "The Date and Significance of the Tenth Homily of Photius," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 9-10 (1956), pp. 125, 130.
  7. Mango, C., "Nea Ekklesia," *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 2 (Oxford - New York 1991), p. 1446; Magdalino, P., "Observations on the Nea Ekklesia of Basil I," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 37 (1987), p. 61.
  8. Mango, C., "Nea Ekklesia," *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 2 (Oxford - New York 1991), p. 1446. According to Niketas Choniates, "he [Isaac II] also denuded of all its sacred furniture and vessels the famous church in the palace which is called the Nea monastery," cited after Mango, C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents* (London <sup>2</sup>1986), p. 237. Material and accessories acquired in this way were used for restoration of the church of St. Michael in Anaplous.



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9. Mango, C., "Nea Ekklesia," *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 2 (Oxford - New York 1991), p. 1446.
10. Theophanes Continuatus, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn 1838), 5.83-86, pp. 325-29; transl. Mango, C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents*, (London <sup>2</sup>1986), pp. 194-95. The *Vita Basilii* constitutes the fifth book of Theophanes Continuatus and was written ca. 950 by Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos or someone from his milieu. Another document, the Tenth Homily of the Patriarch Photios, was for long time regarded as containing an ekphrasis of the Nea Ekklesiā. R. J. H. Jenkins and C. Mango have argued that it was actually delivered on the occasion of dedication of the church of the Virgin of Pharos, Jenkins, R. J. H. - Mango, C., "The Date and Significance of the Tenth Homily of Photius," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 9-10 (1956), pp. 123-140.
11. *Vita Basilii*, cited after Mango, C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents* (London <sup>2</sup>1986), p. 194. Only here is Archangel Gabriel mentioned. Other relevant sources mention Archangel Michael instead of Gabriel, but they all date to the 10<sup>th</sup> c. or later. It seems that none of them is actually wrong and that the original dedication was to Gabriel with Michael taking his place probably during the reign of Leo VI, see Magdalino, P., "Observations on the Nea Ekklesia of Basil I," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 37 (1987), p. 56, n. 26.
12. *Vita Basilii*, cited after Mango, C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents*, (London <sup>2</sup>1986), p. 194-6.
13. *Vita Basilii*, cited after Mango, C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents*, (London <sup>2</sup>1986), p. 196. These are the only figural decorations mentioned at any section of the building. The text says nothing at all about the church's iconographic programme. According to the *Book of Ceremonies*, ed. J.J. Reiske, (Bonn 1829-30), pp. 118, 121, there was a portrait of the founder, Basil I, in the north aisle.
14. Krautheimer, R., *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (New Haven-London <sup>4</sup>1986), p. 355.
15. Majeska, G., *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington DC 1984), pp. 37-38; Krautheimer, R., *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (New Haven-London <sup>4</sup>1986), p. 356.
16. Mango, C., *Byzantine Architecture* (New York 1976), p. 196; Krautheimer, R., *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (New Haven-London <sup>4</sup>1986), pp. 341, 355; S. Ćurčić, "Architectural Reconsideration of the Nea Ekklesia," *Sixth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, Abstracts of Papers* (Ohio 1980), p. 11-12. Ćurčić suggests that the interior space was organized in a way similar to that of the church of the monastery of Nerezi, near Skopje.
17. H. Buchwald, "Western Asia Minor as a Generator of Architectural Forms in the Byzantine Period: Provincial Back-Wash or Dynamic Center of Production?" *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 34 (1984), pp. 278-79.
18. The chapels in Lips Monastery may have had their own domes elevated on drums, see Megaw, A. H. S., "The Original Form of the Theotokos Church of Constantine Lips," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964), pp. 279-98.
19. Jenkins, R. J. H. - Mango, C., "The Date and Significance of the Tenth Homily of Photius," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 9-10 (1956), p. 137, and Magdalino, P., "Observations on the Nea Ekklesia of Basil I," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 37 (1987), p. 51.

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	<b>Krautheimer R.</b> , <i>Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture</i> , 4 ed., Yale University Press, New Haven – London 1986, Krautheimer, R. – Ćurčić, S. (rev.)
	<b>Mango C.</b> , <i>Byzantine Architecture</i> , London 1986
	<b>Ćurčić S.</b> , "Architectural Significance of Subsidiary Chapels in Middle Byzantine Churches", <i>The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians</i> , τόμ. 36, αρ. 2, V, 1977, 94-110



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	<b>Συνεχισταί Θεοφάνους</b> , <i>Χρονογραφία συγγραφείσα εκ προστάγματος Κωνσταντίνου του φιλοχρίστου και πορφυρογεννήτου δεσπότης</i> , Bekker, I. (ed.), <i>Theophanes Continuatus, Joannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Monachus</i> , Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, Bonn 1838
	<b>Κωνσταντίνος Πορφυρογέννητος</b> , <i>Περί βασιλείου τάξεως</i> , Reiske, J. (ed.), <i>Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris de cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae libri duo, 1</i> , Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, Bonn 1829
	<b>Ebersolt J., Thiers A.</b> , <i>Les Églises de Constantinople</i> , Paris 1913
	<b>Ćurčić S.</b> , "Architectural Reconsideration of the Nea Ekklesia", <i>Sixth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, Abstracts of Papers</i> , Ohio 1980, 11-12
	<b>Kazhdan A., Cutler A.</b> , "Vita Basilii", Kazhdan, A. κ.ά. (ed.), <i>Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium 3</i> , Oxford – New York 1991, 2.180-2.181
	<b>Лихачева В., Любарский Я.</b> , "Памятники искусства в »Жизнеописании Василия« Константина Багрянородного", <i>Византийский временник</i> , 28, 1981, 171-183
	<b>Magdalino P.</b> , "Observations on the Nea Ekklesia of Basil I", <i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i> , 37, 1987, 51-64
	<b>Mango C.</b> , "Nea Ekklesia", Kazhdan A. κ.ά. (ed.), <i>Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium 2</i> , Oxford – New York 1991, 1.446
	<b>Mathews T.F.</b> , "Private Liturgy in Byzantine Architecture: Towards a Re-Appraisal", <i>Cahiers Archéologiques</i> , 30, 1982, 125-138
	<b>Ousterhout R.G.</b> , "Reconstructing Ninth-Century Constantinople", Brubaker, L. (ed.), <i>Byzantium in the Ninth Century: Dead or Alive?</i> , Aldershot 1998, 115-130

### Webliography :

	Cross-in-square - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross-in-square">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross-in-square</a>
	Nea Ecclesia <a href="http://www.byzantium1200.com/nea-eccl.html">http://www.byzantium1200.com/nea-eccl.html</a>

### Glossary :

	<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>atrium</b> 1. Antiquity: The large, open space within a building, which is envelopped by colonnades. 2. Byzantium: The forecourt of a church in early Christian, Byzantine, and medieval arcitecture. It was usually surrounded by four porticoes (quadriporticus).
	<b>chancel screen of presbytery</b> A short barrier between the bema and the nave. It had originally the form of a parapet that was later made of stone or of marble. It is generally an element of early Christian religious architecture, and it appears on ground plans either as a linear structure or forming a Π. It



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consists of small columns or pillars in the interspace of which slabs are inserted. Crosses and floral patterns are usually used for the relief decoration of the screen.

 [corner bays](#)


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.

 [cross-in-square church](#)

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.

 [dome](#)

A characteristic element of Byzantine architecture. The dome is a hemispherical vault on a circular wall (drum) usually pierced by windows. The domed church emerges in the Early Byzantine years and its various types gradually prevail, while they are expanded in the Balkans and in Russia.

 [gallery](#)

The upper level of a house where the women resided. In ecclesiastical architecture it is the corridor above the aisles and narthex of a church, from where women attended the Liturgy. Originally (in the Byzantine period) the gallery, having a special entrance, was used exclusively by the emperor and the members of the royal family.

 [marble revetment](#)

The facing of a wall with slabs of marble

 [opus sectile, the](#)


Technique of floor or wall decoration. Thin pieces of polychrome marble are carved or joined so that a decorative motif could be depicted.

 [synthronon](#)

Rows of built benches, arranged in a semicircular tier like a theatre, in the apse of a church. On these benches the clergy sat during Divine Liturgy. The bishop sat on the cathedra at the top of the synthronon.

 [tzykanisterion](#)

A stadium-like courtyard when the tzykanion was played; this was a ball game played on horseback (polo-like), imported from Persia (Pers. *tshu-qan*).

 [vault](#)

A semi-cylindrical roof.

## Sources

Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, 5. 83-86 [*Vita Basilii*] ed. I. Bekker, *Theophanes Continuatus* (Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, Bonn 1838), pp. 325-29, transl. Mango C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents* (London <sup>2</sup>1986), pp. 192-99

Symeon Logothete, *Chronographia*, ed. I. Bekker, *Leonis Grammatici Chronographia* (Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, Bonn 1842), pp. 257, 262-3

Pseudo-Codinos, *Patria Konstantinoupoleos*, ed. Th. Preger, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum 2* (Leipzig 1902; repr. New York 1975), p. 288

Constantine Porphyrogenitos, *De ceremoniis*, ed. J.J. Reiske, *Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris De ceremoniis aulae byzantinae* (Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, Bonn 1829-30), pp. 118, 121

Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. J. van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae historia* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae. Series Berolinensis 11.1, Berlin 1975), p. 443, transl. Mango C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents* (London <sup>2</sup>1986), p. 237

Majeska G., *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington DC 1984), pp. 37-38, 247ff.

## Quotations

The Nea Ekklesia built by Basil I



## Nea Ekklesia

Ἀλλὰ τί στρεφόμεθα περὶ τὰ μικρὰ τῶν ἐκείνου, εἰ καὶ πάνυ μεγάλα καθέστηκε, καὶ οὐ προστιθέαμεν τὸ μέγα ἔργον καὶ ἀξιάγαστον, ὃ κατ' αὐτὰς τὰς βασιλείους ἀλλὰς αὐτὸς ἐπιστατῶν τε καὶ αὐτουργῶν ᾠκοδόμησεν; ὅπερ ἀρκεῖ καὶ μόνον τὴν τε περὶ τὸ θεῖον αὐτοῦ δηλοῦν ὁσιότητα καὶ τὸ πρὸς τὰ ἐπιβαλλόμενα μεγαλοργόν τε καὶ θαύματος ἄξιον. ἀμειβόμενος γὰρ ὥσπερ τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν εὐμενείας τὸν δεσπότην Χριστὸν καὶ τὸν πρῶτον τῶν ἀγγελικῶν δυνάμεων Γαβριὴλ καὶ τὸν Θεοβίτην Ἥλιαν τὸν ζηλωτὴν, ὃς καὶ τῆ αὐτοῦ μητρὶ τῆς πρὸς βασιλείαν τοῦ υἱοῦ ἀνυψώσεως ἐχηρημάτισεν ἄγγελος, εἰς ὄνομα τούτων καὶ μνήμην αἰδίων, ἔτι δὲ τῆς θεοτόκου καὶ Νικολάου τοῦ ἐν ἱεράρχαις πρωτεύοντος, θεῖον καὶ περικαλλῆ ναὸν ἐδομήσατο, εἰς ὃν συνῆλθε τέχνη καὶ πλοῦτος καὶ ζέουσα πίστις καὶ ἀφθονωτάτη προαίρεσις, καὶ τὰ πανταχόθεν συνέδραμε κάλλιστα, ἃ τοῖς ὁρῶσι μᾶλλον ἢ τοῖς ἀκούουσιν οἶδα τυγχάνειν πιστά. ὃν ὡς νύμφην ὠραϊσμένην καὶ περικεκοσμημένην μαργάρους τε καὶ χρυσῶ καὶ ἀργύρου λαμπρότησιν, ἔτι δὲ καὶ μαρμάρων πολυχρῶων ποικιλίαις καὶ ψηφίδων συνθέσεσι καὶ σηρικῶν ὑφασμάτων καταστολαῖς, τῷ ἀθανάτῳ προσήγαγε νυμφίῳ Χριστῷ. (84) ὃ τε γὰρ ὄροφος ἐκ πέντε συμπληρούμενος ἡμισφαιρίων στίλβει χρυσῶ καὶ εἰκόνων ὡς ἀστέρων ἀστράπτει κάλλεσιν, ἔξωθεν μετάλλοις ἐμφεροῦς χρυσίῳ χαλκοῦ καλλυνόμενος, οἳ τε παρ' ἐκάτερα τοῖχοι τῷ πολυτελεῖ καὶ πολυχρῶ τῶν μαρμάρων καταποικίλλονται, καὶ τὰ ἄδυτα τοῦ ναοῦ καὶ χρυσῶ καὶ ἀργύρῳ καὶ λίθοις τιμίοις καὶ μαργάρους καταπεποίκιλται καὶ καταπεπλούτισται. καὶ αἱ τῶν ἐκτὸς διείργουσαι τὰ θυσιαστήρια κιγκλίδες καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς περιστυλα καὶ τὰ ἄνωθεν οἶον ὑπέρθυρα χρηματίζοντα οἳ τε ἐντὸς θᾶκοι καὶ αἱ πρὸ τούτων βαθμίδες καὶ αὐταὶ αἱ ἱεραὶ τράπεζαι, ἐξ ἀργύρου πάντα περικεχυμένον ἔχοντος τὸν χρυσὸν καὶ λίθοις τιμίοις ἐκ μαργαριτῶν ἡμφιεσμένοις πολυτελῶν τὴν σύμπηξιν καὶ σύστασιν ἔχουσιν. αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ἔδαφος σηρικῶν ὑφασμάτων ἢ Σιδονίων ἔργων ἐφηπλωμένων δόξει τυγχάνειν ἀνάπλεων· οὕτω πᾶν ἐξωραΐσται καὶ καταπεποίκιλται τῷ πολυχρῶ τῶν ὑποκειμένων ἐκ μαρμάρων πλακῶν καὶ ταῖς πολυειδέσι τῶν ταύτας περικλειουσῶν ψηφίδων ζώναις καὶ τῷ τῆς ἀρμογῆς ἀκριβεῖ καὶ τῷ περιττῷ τῆς περιθεούσης ἐν ἅπασιν χάριτος. ἔνθα καὶ πλῆθος ἀδόντων ἐξυπηρετουμένων ἀφώρισε καὶ προσόδους ἰκανὰς ἀπέταξεν, ἃς φιλοτίμως καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶς διανέμεσθαι τοῖς προσανέχουσι τῷ τοιούτῳ ἰλαστηρίῳ προσέταξεν, ὑπερβαλέσθαι σχεδὸν τοὺς πρὸ αὐτοῦ πάντας τῆ περι τὰ τοιαῦτα μεγαλοδωρεᾶ φιλοτιμησάμενος.

*Vita Basilii*, in *Theophanes Continuatus* 5.83-86, ed. I. Bekker, CSHB (Bonn 1838), pp. 325-26 [transl. Mango C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents* (London 1986), pp. 194]

The Nea Ekklesia stripped from furniture and vessels by Isaak II Angelos

καὶ τὸν ἐν τῷδε τῷ ἀνακτόρῳ περιώνυμον ναόν, ὃς Νέα κικλήσκειται, θείου παντὸς ἐπίπλου καὶ ἱεροῦ σκεύους ἐψίλωσε.  
He also denuded of all its sacred furniture and vessels the famous church in the palace which is called the Nea monastery.

Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, ed. J. van Dieten, CFHB 11.1 (Berlin 1975), p. 443 [transl. Mango, C., *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents* (London 1986), p. 237]

### Chronological Table

May 1, 880: dedication of the church

by the 12th c.: converted into a monastery

1204-1261: (during the Latin occupation) served as a palatine chapel

late 15th c.: destroyed by Ottomans