

ΑΡΙΣΤΟΤΕΛΕΙΟ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗΣ

## MASONS OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE IN THE AEGEAN

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ΑΝΑΤΥΠΟ ΑΠΟ ΤΟ Γ' ΤΟΜΟ  
ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΝΙΚΗΣ ΕΠΕΤΗΡΙΔΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΛΥΤΕΧΝΙΚΗΣ ΣΧΟΛΗΣ  
ΤΜΗΜΑ ΑΡΧΙΤΕΚΤΟΝΩΝ



ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ  
1986

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СИАМИКА МИОКИНА И АНОНГИЯ САНТОСА  
ПОДДЕРЖАЛА  
ЛОНГИ

В ЛЕВИЧИ  
МУЗЫКИ В ЧИСЛЕНИИ

MASONS OF VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE  
IN THE AEGEAN

Communication au Colloque sur l'ARCHITECTURE VERNACULAIRE AUX ILES DE LA MER EGEE: Rencontre des experts de CIAV (Commité International d'Architecture Vernaculaire), d'I.CO.M.O.S. (Commité International des Monuments et des Sites) et de l'I.B.I. (Internationales Burgen-Institut).

PHIRA DE SANTORIN (THERA): 14-19 Juin, 1981.

organisé par

Le Ministère de Culture et des Sciences en collaboration avec  
Le Laboratoire de Morphologie Architecturale de l'Ecole Polytechnique,  
Université Aristote, Thessalonique.



In Memoriam Kostas Biris

1. The presence of builders in the Aegean has been documented since the prehistoric era. During this period, the creators of buildings were the residents themselves, a fact that has always been a major feature of vernacular architecture. In one of the Early Helladic layers of Troy<sup>1</sup> as well as in certain Aegean settlements as the one at Thermi of the island of Lesbos<sup>2</sup> or the ones at Eutresis in Boetia<sup>3</sup> and at Haghios Kosmas in Attica<sup>4</sup> we find a herring-bone stone pattern, which gives evidence of skilled builders. The presence of this pattern should be considered as part of the construction of the wall and not as an additional decorative or morphological element for in certain cases it was covered with plaster.

The importance of the Aegean not only as a cultural center, but also as an area which encouraged the trend of builders' workshops is stressed even in popular legends. The Cyclopean walls in Tiryns, Mycenae and other locations, were built by Cyclopes, a group of builders originating from Asia Minor<sup>5</sup>.

During the classical era, it is well known that Ionia and the Ae-

1. Dörfeld (1902)  
Blegen a. o. (1950-58)  
Blegen (1963)  
Sinos (1971) 26
  2. Lamb (1936)  
Sinos (1971) 27
  3. Goldman (1931), pl. 2c  
Sinos (1971) 30, Abb. 74
  4. Mylonas (1959) pl. 7  
Sinos (1971) 31
  5. Geisau (1969)  
Papachatzis, II (1976) p. 42 n. I., p. 196 n. 2

gian did not only produce the Ionian style, but were also known for a great number of builders and craftsmen. The island of Samos was the birth-place of great craftsmen and architects, such as Rhoikos and Theodoros of the VI cent. B. C. Although both are considered as pioneers, there can be no doubt that they followed the tracks of a pre-existing important tradition. Before their era, in Samos, the first peripteral hellenic temple was built after 670 B. C. It was the second *Hecatomedos* (Hundred-foot temple), a temple of 100 feet dedicated to Hera<sup>6</sup>. In Lesbos, a great number of exceptionally skilled master builders and stone masons are believed to have flourished since the ancient Greeks already knew the special «lesbian structure»<sup>7</sup>. In Lesbos also was invented one of the three most important Greek architectural mouldings, the «lesbian moulding»<sup>8</sup>; also the «Ionian» (or egg-and-dart) moulding, therefore itself being a product of the same region. In Ionia, and mainly in the island of Samos and the cities of the opposite Asia Minor coastline of Miletos and Ephesos, the greatest Ionian temples were built in a particular variation of the Ionian style. In Chios and other islands a more particular style was created in the «anta» capitals and the base of the antis of the temples. The Parthenon and the other monuments erected during the same era, owe a great deal of their perfection to these Ionian craftsmen. Particularly the Parthenon, the most perfect architectural monument in the Doric style, is the best example of the Ionian influence.

2. This paper does not intend to examine the entire group of ancient craftsmen or those of the late Byzantine and Medieval era. Besides, the anonymity<sup>9</sup> of the craftsmen of Byzantium, preserved as a result of the Christian worldview, is the reason of the preservation of only a few names<sup>10</sup>. We shall speak of the builders of vernacu-

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6. Gruben (1966) 318, fig. 255-257

7. Aristoteles, *Ethica Nikomachea* 11, 37, b30

Orlandos, II (1968), 127 ff

8. Weicket (1913), 8 ff

9. Drandakis (1972) 21

Pallas (1975-76) 160 n. 5 (cf 106 ff., 142)

10. In Olympia, in the early Christian basilica of Phidias' workshop an inscription was found with the name of the builder Andreas, who laid the marble floor of the church: (: Dittenberger / Purgold (1896), col. 673-674, no 657), between the years 435-451 A. D. (: Velissariou (1980), p. 166 (cf.

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lar monuments in the Aegean. We shall not only take into consideration the builders who were born in this area, but also those who worked on the Aegean islands and who originated from other areas.

3. These traditional builders did not work as isolated professionals. In certain areas we find them working in groups<sup>11</sup>. The causes of this grouping are mainly economic, although we should not exclude cultural factors.

The greatest number of builders and also the most active ones lived on the island of *Karpathos*. A number of builders from several villages of this same island<sup>12</sup> has spread throughout the Aegean. We find them in Symi, Kalymnos, Crete (fig. 1), southeastern Peloponnesos, Chalkis, Lafkos at Pelion, Samos, Ikaria. They travelled not only to other parts of Greece and Asia Minor (especially the west coastlines, region of Aidinion, Karia and Lykia), but also to the Near East and Persia as well, or to Ethiopia through Egypt and other branched to Congo, Sudan and to the remote island of Madagascar. The *Karpathiates* apart from their capacity as masons, practiced all the other specialities in buildings. Usually, they left the first Sunday following the Otrhodox Easter and returned to Karpathos in October so as to be there during the period of Sawing<sup>13</sup>.

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p. 162 no. 1). In Messene of Peloponnesos we know the name of the sculptor Galenos of the 6th century (?): Orlando (1969) 124-125. In Mani of the South Peloponnesos we have found about the eponymous works of the marble mason Nikitas, one of the dating from the year 1075 A. D. (Drandakis, 1972); in the same area, near the village of Fragoulia, we read the name of the builder «George the master builder», in an inscription of the middle byzantine period (Drandakis, 1967, 139-141: Petronotis, Maniot Masons (1980) 176). In a church of the town Ainos in Thrace, we know that «Kostis the master builder» has worked there in the year 1422-1423 (Samothrakis (1963) 53), as I have been informed by the byzantinologist Panayotis Velissariou, cf. Petronotis (1984), 14.

11. Moutsopoulos (1976)

Petronotis in «Armoloï» (1980), 53 ff

12. Such as Apéri, Volas, Mesochori, Spoa, Menetai, Pylai, Othos, Arkasa (: Wescher / Manolakakis, 1878, pp. 39, 40, 42, 43, 44) and Olumpos (: Center of Folklore, Athens Academy, Questionnaire for Agricultural works and traditional fires. Dodekaneses I, no. 43, see also no. 42, 45-48 for above villages).

13. Rangabes (1854) 449

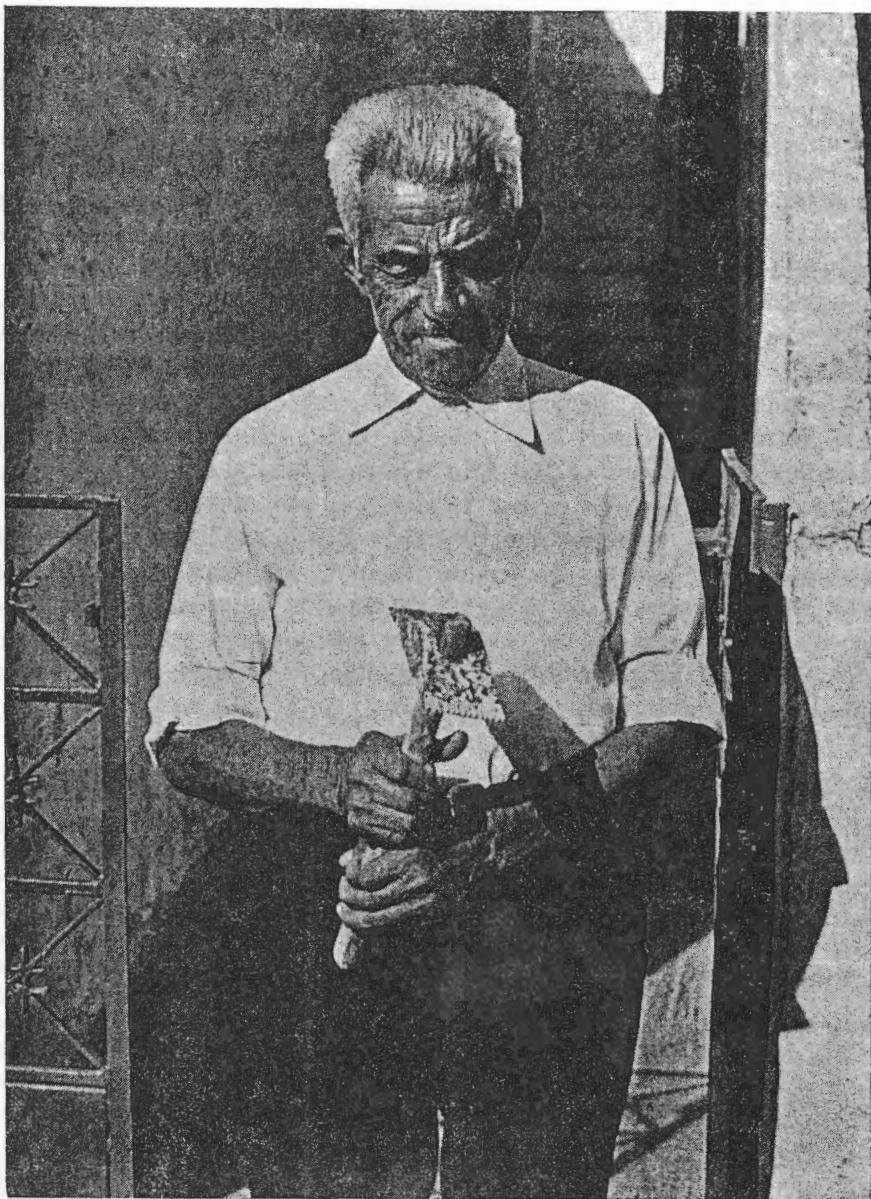


Fig. 1. The head mason Yiannis Chr. Kallis, islander from Karpathos (village Mainetés), worked in Crete, where he settled at Moires of Messara. In his hands he holds a *(tsapétas)* a sort of toothed claw for stone-hewing, 1981.

4. According to Kostas Biris, researcher in the neohellenic architectural style, the island of *Skopelos* is said to have had the best builders. This judgment is based on the comparison of the works by the builders of Skopelos to those by other Aegean islanders who contributed in the creation of the new Greek capital, that is Athens during the 19th century of our era. Unfortunately, there has been no research and bibliography concerning these masons is not extant. *Skopelites* builders must have built the old town of Skiathos after the tradition; it was abandoned in the year 1828<sup>14</sup>.

5. The group of the Cyclades (Andros, Mykonos, Anaphi, Naxos, Tenos), were also famous for their buildings workshops and other craftsmen. According to a venitian source, in the islands of Tenos, Andros and Mykonos lived a great number of masons in the middle of the 17th century and about 1666 the Venetians used them for the reparations on the walls of Candia in Crete<sup>15</sup>.

*Tenos* was known for its excellent marble-cutters and hereby we refer both to the known sculptors and the unknown workmen, those simple marble-cutters who taught the craft to others and whose work is still admired. The Tenian marble-cutters were skilled in constructing various marble works and belltowers. These had a special morphology, regardless of the area in which they were built. The building workshops on Tenos developed as a consequence of economic and social as well as several cultural factors<sup>16</sup> (fig. 2: A Tenian marble-cutter today).

On *Naxos* island, we find masons from the middle of the 18th century<sup>17</sup> and well-known diggers, who specialised in laying foundations and in constructing wells. They also worked as quarrymen; many of them came from the village of Moné. The builders of the island *Andros*

Manolakakis (1896)

Koukoulis (1905-6) 448

Zervos (1927-28), no. 131, p. 2

Zapheirou (1947) 86

Philippides (1973) 32: Karpathos occupational structure in the 1890s

14. Information of Kitsos Makris, from Volos (in Thessaloniki, 7 April 1981).

15. Information of J. D. Psaras, University of Thessaloniki, Spring 1981

16. Philoppson (1901) 27

17. Bardis (1928)



*Fig. 2. Apprentice in marble Panayiotis Voudouris, village of Pyrgos on the Tenos island, Philippotis workshop, 1980 (Photo Archive Alekos Florakis).*

were good lime-plasterers, marble-cutters and carpenters<sup>18</sup>. Those from the island *Mykonos* were good lime-plasterers and were skilled in building ovens; some master masons of Mykonos must have been renowned outside Greece. The builders of the island *Anaphi* were notable for the perfection of their work in fitting and joining.

6. The builders from the Cyclades and other islands of the Aegean worked mainly in the area of the Greek capital during the 19th and 20th centuries and many settled permanently there<sup>19</sup>. It is still possible to find the neighbourhood *Anaphiotika* on the north slope

18. Kamilakis (1980)  
See par. 6 and note 7,1

19. Biris (1943) 100

of the Acropolis. These were builders from Anaphi who came in the middle of the 19th century and settled close to the Acropolis<sup>20</sup>. The neighbourhood *Mykoniatika* of people from Mykonos in another section of Athens and a third one with the characteristic name *Neapolis* ('new town'), formerly *Proastio* ('suburb'), which, later on, became the center of those builders who arrived from the Aegean islands<sup>21</sup>.

In Athens, the overwhelming presence of builders from Tenos and Andros, gave reasons for some people to say that they were the ones who «had built the world».

7. It is important to add here, that such folk-beliefs are found in other Greek regions as well and refer to famous builders from various regions. In the region we are examining for instance, this was also said of the builders who came from Karpathos.

The builders from Tenos have not only worked in Athens but also in Smyrna, Peloponnesos, Messolongi, Stylos etc. Those from Andros have worked in Constantinople, Smyrna, Alexandria etc. Furthermore, the presence of builders from Mykonos in the Caucasus in Russia is documented by two inscriptions dated 1818 and 1821<sup>22</sup>.

8. The larger islands of the eastern Aegean, Chios and Lesbos, had famous craftsmen as well. In *Chios*, we find expert quarrymen and from both Chios<sup>23</sup> and Lesbos, and especially *Lesbos*, we find head-artisans whose names are known. Some of them were employed by the Sultan as architects in Constantinople. It is worth mentioning two builders from Chios, Ioannis Kalfas and Petros Sgoutas Kalfas who worked in Constantinople in 1798<sup>24</sup>. Their surname, «*Kalfas*», means generally the builder who is next to the head artisan in skill and experience, but here in Chios, Lesbos, Constantinople this one head artisan. Komnenos Kalfas, from the island of Mytilene (Lesbos),

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20. Biris (1971) 19  
Dontas (1976) 4

21. See note 6,1

22. This is the case of George M. Skardanas from Mykonos: Kalfoglou (1908)  
84

23. Blastos, II (1840) 117  
Kanellakis (1890) 505

24. Melissinos (1913) 60

was also a head artisan and the chief architect of the Sultan: he was responsible for the rebuilding of the destroyed temple of «Anastasis» (Resurrection) in Jerusalem, in 1810<sup>25</sup>. In 1820, Dupré, draws an islander head mason in characteristic attire from Mytilene and gives him the professional name «yapitzes» (fig. 3). There is one more famous artisan from Anemotia, Efstratios Karétos<sup>26</sup>; his fame was so great on Lesbos, that an entire family on Agiasos, received his surname<sup>27</sup>. But long before him a succession of master builders in found in the years 1727, 1767, 1815, as far as we know today<sup>28</sup>. In Chios, there is today a large number of good builders (the master builder Takos or Goulas from the village Thymiana had built eleven bellfries, his son, mastro-Antonis, one more<sup>29</sup>) and the «astrakarides» (*αστρακάριδες*) the masons who cover the vaults of buildings and do their roofs flat using the «astrakia» (*αστρακιά*), a brownish-red concrete<sup>30</sup>.

9. In addition to the islands we have already mentioned, building workshops were found on other islands of the Aegean as well. These were of course, of lesser importance and fame. For example, Rhodes<sup>31</sup>, Télos (whose builders worked mainly in Asia Minor<sup>32</sup>), Syme (whose sponge divers worked as builders in winter, when they were not out at sea<sup>33</sup>), Kythnos<sup>34</sup>, Patmos; Théra (today Santorini), had several distinguished workmen (in building vaults which are a characteristic feature of the roofs of houses<sup>35</sup>); indeed Théra (Santorini) has not only an old tradition dating from at least the 17th century<sup>36</sup>, but

25. Magiasis (1938-39) 17

26. Kontis (1973) p. 204 and note 134, p. 194 fig. 81

27. Paraskevaidis (1936) 47

28. Kontis (1973): 199, 199, 198

29. Xyda (1973) 60

30. Smith (1962) 35

31. Chatziphotis (1975) 18; mention of an «architect» from Rhodes in the year 1783

32. Koutelakis (1973) 175

33. Grigoropoulos (\*1877) 58-59

34. Ballindas (1882) 15

35. De - Kigala (1850) 84-85

36. Orlando (1961) p. 200, no. 13: in an inscription from the Paros island of year 1633 «Georgilas Abazos mason»



*Fig. 3. An islander head mason in characteristic attire from Mytiline/Lesbos, a «yapitzes», by Dupré, 1820.*

also has many renowned builders today<sup>37</sup>.

The small island of Spetses, which was a significant naval center, had builders who worked for the most part on the nearby coasts of the Peloponnesos<sup>38</sup>.

10. These are in briefly, the main points concerning builders from the Aegean. We shall now examine the workshops which were active in the Aegean and which included builders from the mainland and other countries. On the large and fertile islands, such as Lesbos, we find workshops which originated in northern Greece. Workmen from *Epirus*, the «kalpaklides» (*καλπακλίδες*), have been known since the middle of the 18th century, and a second group of builders from Epirus arrived on Lesbos immediately after the earthquake of 1863<sup>39</sup>. On the same island, we find builders from the northern part of *Macedonia*, known by the peculiar name «saravala» (*σαράβαλα*)<sup>40</sup>. The presence of Macedonian, Epirotan builders on Lesbos may be inferred from several morphological characteristics of local houses and churches. The houses have balconies of Macedonian style, e.g. «constructions en saillie» as been exemplified in the architecture of Petra<sup>41</sup>, while the churches are basilicas with hipped gable end on their ridge roof.

11. On the island Aegina, we find certain samples of vernacular architecture that give evidence of the presence of *Varvarites*, a group of builders from the village Agia Varvara (or Barbara) of *Kalavryta*, a region in the northern Peloponnesos<sup>42</sup>.

On the island Salamis, much is said about the «Tsousides» (*Τσούσηδες*), whose origin has not yet been confirmed<sup>43</sup>. On Thasos, one of the northern Aegean islands, builders arrived seasonally from neigh-

37. As the families Patatas (the father mastro-Nikolas +1975 and his sons Tiannis, Vagelis and Petros), Bousoulis, Sigalas and others

38. Petronotis in «Armoloï» (1980) p. 59, no. 6

39. Information of Miltos Paraskevaidis, Athens, 28 May 1981

40. Anagnostou (1903) 140



Paraskevaidis (1936) 106

41. Kontis (1973) 218

42. Cf. Petronotis in «Armoloï» (1980) p. 57, no 2

43. Cf. Petronotis in «Armoloï» (1980) p. 60, no. 10b

bouring countries, i.e. Bulgaria<sup>44</sup> and possibly, Albania.

12. From what has been said until now, we may conclude that there were many building workshops in the Aegean, characterised by great mobility. This feature was determined by several economic factors and also, by the individualism of the builders themselves. As has already been stated, the builders practically always came from poor and barren islands. It is worth noting that the large and fertile island of Crete, which had close to 1400 settlements has —to our knowledge at least— not one single «mastorochori», village with building workshops. In contrast, there are 960 settlements throughout the rest of Aegean. Of course, the professional builders found in the large cities of Crete are excluded, because they were neither creators nor carriers of local vernacular architecture: they build according to the Venetian style<sup>45</sup>.

13. There is a significant difference between the builders of the mainland and those of the Aegean. The former have always worked as organised groups of builders with a well defined hierarchy and used a secret professional language<sup>46</sup>. These elements have not been found amongst the builders who come from the islands. Only the builders of Karpathos seem to have formed workshops and likewise, on Chios, the builders were organised together in corporations<sup>47</sup>.

14. A more general difference between the builders of vernacular architectural monuments from the Aegean and those from the mainland, concerns the degree to which they were carriers of morphological influences. Although this is a topic that requires speculation and research, we shall present our views bearing in mind, that they are open to criticism since the existing material has not yet been fully analysed. It is not possible, in the first place, to overlook the fact that the building workshops were carriers of new cultural ideas and especially of new architectural styles which were connected to the mobility of the builders. It is no coincidence that some of them gave their lives

44. Vakalopoulos (1969) 153, cf. 149, 150

45. Dimakopoulos (1977) 235-241, cf. 39

46. Cf. Moutsopoulos (1976), Petronotis in «Armoloi» (1980) 53 ff

47. Kopsidis (1973)

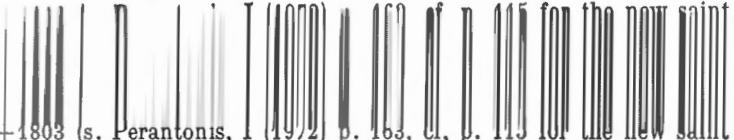
during the Turkish occupation in such a distinguished manner and impressive way as to be proclaimed saints and martyrs<sup>48</sup>.

15. On continental Greece, the builders have not always carried their established recognisable architectural morphology. This view has been supported in relation to several cases in Macedonia; in particular, it is maintained that in addition to the general similarities amongst Macedonian houses, there are also certain differences amongst neighbouring cities, such as Siatista and Verria<sup>49</sup>. We find similar examples in the Peloponnesos; in Mani, towers built by workmen from Langadia and in Arcadia rural houses built by *Zoupaniotes* (i.e. masons originating from the village Zoupani, now Pentalofos, in western Macedonia). In all these cases, one observes a consistency between the olders and more recent morphological characteristics.

16. The question now is what happens with the builders of the Aegean. With some hesitation, since the investigation has not yet been fully carried out, we may propose that those builders carry a special architectural morphology. Examples:

- a) In building urban houses on Lesbos, Macedonian builders used certain features which derived from Northern Greece, such as enclosed balconies, the «sahnisia»<sup>50</sup> (see fig. 2).
- b) On the same island, builders from Epirus and Macedonia, introduced the hipped gable and to the roofs of the churches.
- c) On Thasos, both the Bulgarian and Albanian builders put up stone covered roofs which have their own style while the local builders make roofs in a different manner which has always been used in the area.
- d) The builders from Spetses have introduced a new vernacular architectural style into eastern Peloponnesos. As a result of the fact that they worked together with builders from Tsakonia, in Arcadia of the Eastern Peloponnesos, they created an architectural

48. As it is said for the new saint Demetrios of Tripolis (Tripolitsa) in Pelopon-



nesos, + 1803 (s. Perantonis, Georgios of Chios).

49. Moutsopoulos (1976) 358

50. Kontis (1973) 218

style which combines elements from the morphology of both the Greek islands and the continental regions of the country.

- e) The same, perhaps, may be said for the morphological influences brought to the southeastern Peloponnesos by builders from Karpathos.
- f) A representative example of the work of the Aegean builders, are the bell towers of Tenos. These are always built according to a specific pattern, regardless of the location where they are being erected. Indeed, we find identical bell towers on the island of Tenos, Smyrne, Stylos, Tripolis, Hydra. On the latter we also find architectural monuments built before the revolution of 1821, one of them in 1806, others still older than that, such as Castellan's drawings, in 1797<sup>51</sup>.
- g) The most notable of the relevant cases seems to be the persistence of neoclassical morphology in small islands, and not only on those which had urban centres, such as Syme in the Dodecanese, but also, on those which were mainly rural, like Olympos, a village of the island of Karpathos.

It may therefore be said that to a certain extent, the architectural forms in the Aegean, are readily transferred and accepted.

17. Finally, we should like to mention the time when the building workshops first appeared in the Aegean, with the characteristics we have listed. The material we have collected is not adequate enough to let us ascertain the characteristics of this period. We only know that marble cutters had been working on Tenos since the 16th century and that masons appeared on Chios in the 17th century. Builders from Karpathos and other islands of the Dodecanese, worked at Mylissa in Asia Minor, in the beginning of the 17th century<sup>52</sup>.

We hope that a satisfactory answer to these questions will be soon formulated following further future research in depth.

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51. Castellan (1808) vol. I, p. 90, pl. 14

52. Koukoulis (1905-6), p. 448.

ΜΑΣΤΟΡΟΙ ΠΑΡΑΔΟΣΙΑΚΗΣ ΑΡΧΙΤΕΚΤΟΝΙΚΗΣ  
ΣΤΟ ΑΙΓΑΙΟ

ΑΡΓΥΡΗΣ ΠΕΤΡΟΝΩΤΗΣ και ΠΑΝΑΓΙΩΤΗΣ ΚΑΜΗΛΑΚΗΣ  
Αρχιτέκτων Λαογράφος

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

**A'.** Θέμα μας δεν είναι μόνο οι δημιουργοί της λαϊκής αρχιτεκτονικής που κατάγονταν από τα νησιά του Αιγαίου, αλλά και εκείνοι οι μαστόροι που εργάστηκαν εδώ, ενώ προέρχονταν από περιοχές έξω από αυτό. Οι πρώτοι ήταν οι πιο πολυάριθμοι, οι δεύτεροι λιγότεροι, κυρίως μαστόροι από την Ηπειρωτική Ελλάδα και κάποτε πιο έξω (συνήθως βορειότερα) απ' αυτήν.

**B'. Προέλευση**

Οι μαστόροι που χτίζουν δεν ήταν μεμονωμένες επαγγελματικές περιπτώσεις. Συμβαίνει ορισμένοι τόποι να έβγαλαν ομαδικά μαστόρους. Έτσι στο Αιγαίο η νήσος Κάρπαθος είχε τους πολυπληθέστερους και πιο δραστήριους. Από τη νήσο Σκόπελο ίσως προέρχονταν οι πιο καλοί χτιστάδες. Η ομάδα των Κυκλαδών, όπου κυρίως ακούγονται τα νησιά Άνδρος, Μύκονος, Ανάφη, Νάξος, Τήνος έβγαλαν ομαδικά μαστόρους. Το τελευταίο νησί έβγαλε και βγάζει τους σπουδαιότερους μαρμαράδες σ' όλη την Ελλάδα. Ανάμεσά τους οι πιο ξακουστοί γλύπτες και άλλοι δάσκαλοι της μαρμαρικής τέχνης. Το μικρό σε έκταση αλλά γνωστό για τους καλούς ναυτικούς νησί Σπέτσες, έβγαλε μαστόρους με δικό τους τρόπο χτισίματος σπιτιών. Το μεγάλο νησί Χίος είναι γνωστό για σπουδαίους τεχνίτες και η Λέσβος για τους «καλφάδες», τους πρωτομαστόρους σειράς ξυλόστεγων τρίκλιτων βασιλικών με πειόσχημο χαριάτι.

Αλλά και ξακουστοί μαστόροι από την Ηπειρωτική Ελλάδα δούλεψαν στα νησιά. Στη Λέσβο (και στη Χίο) έρχονταν Μακεδόνες, Ηπειρώτες και Αρβανίτες μαστόροι (λεγόμενοι εδώ «σαράβαλα», ιδιαίτερα ίσως οι Ηπειρώτες «καλπακλήδες»). Στην Αίγινα παρουσιάζεται αρχιτεκτονική, που είναι χαρακτηριστική του πιο παλιού και ξακουστού τοπικού οικοδομικού

εργαστηρίου της Πελοποννήσου, δηλ. των Βαρβαριτών μαστόρων. Στη Σαλαμίνα ακούγεται για τους μυστηριώδεις «Τσαούσηδες» μαστόρους, εδώ στο νησί άγνωστης καταγωγής. Μήπως ήταν κι αυτοί από τη Βόρεια Ελλά-

δα ή τη νότια Αλβανία; Στη Θάσο φαίνεται να εργάζονταν Αρβανίτες μαστόροι, Βούλγαροι μαστόροι, και ντόπιοι. Κάθε ομάδα απ' αυτούς στέγαζε με διαφορετικό τρόπο τα σπίτια.

'Ενα βέβαιο χαρακτηριστικό των μαστορικών συνεργείων είναι η μεγάλη του, κινητικότητα. 'Εχτίζαν οπουδήποτε εύρισκαν δουλειά. 'Ετσι οι Μακεδόνες μαστόροι, όχι μόνο έρχονταν στο Αιγαίο αλλά έφευγαν πέρα απ' αυτό και έφταναν και στην Περσία. Εκεί, στην Εγγύς Ανατολή, ταξίδευαν και οι Καρπαθίτες μαστόροι που η παρουσία τους σημειώνεται στη Μαδαγασκάρη ακόμα. Μυκονιάτες, Ανδριώτες, Τηνιακοί χτίσανε την ανοικοδομόύμενη Αθήνα τον 19ο αιώνα. 'Ετσι έμεινε ο παροιμιακός λόγος ότι «Αντριώτες, Μυκονιάτες, Τηνιακοί χτίσανε τον κόσμο».

Τι είδους μέρη ήταν απ' όπου προέρχονταν οι μαστόροι; Σχεδόν πάντοτε από φτωχά και άγονα νησιά και χωριά. Είναι χαρακτηριστικό ότι στην πλούσια μεγαλόνησο Κρήτη με τους 1402 οικισμούς της δεν υπάρχει, απ' δύο τουλάχιστο ξέρουμε, ούτε ένα μαστοροχώρι (εκτός 30 οικισμών που διαθέτουν μαστόρους), έναντι των 960 νησιώτικων λοιπών οικισμών όλου του άλλου Αιγαίου. Η Τήνος πρέπει να μελετηθεί και σαν ένα ιδιαίτερο πολιτιστικό φαινόμενο. Ίσως και η Χίος.

Ανάμεσα στους μαστόρους της Ήπειρωτικής Ελλάδας και στους ντόπιους μαστόρους του Αιγαίου υπάρχει μία σημαντική διαφορά. Οι πρώτοι συγκροτούν τουλάχιστον από το 18ο αιώνα οργανωμένες συντεχνίες (τα «συνάφια») και μιλάνε μυστικές επαγγελματικές γλώσσες. Ενώ οι δεύτεροι δε χαρακτηρίζονται ούτε για το ένα ούτε για το άλλο.

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