

HELEN FAY STAMATI

MILIES

a village on Mount Pelion

ATHENIAN PRESS





Mount Pelion is one of the most beautiful places in Greece.
The climate is mild, the water abundant and the sea never very far away.
Its slopes are covered with chestnut and plane trees, oaks and beeches, laurel and walnut trees.
Olive groves spread their silvery green color, bushes of wild berries mingle with a great variety of wild flowers.
Climbing up the winding road, one reaches Milies, a village with a remarkable history and a fascinating traditional life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	9
Pages from the history of Milies	11
A walk through the village during the years of prosperity	69
The farmer's life	123
A farmer's worries	124
Cultivating olives	126
Cultivating apples	131
The traditional olive press	133
Wine and <i>tsipouro</i>	138
Traditional village craftsmen	145
The master builder	146
The stone carver	156
The woodcarver	160
The blacksmith	164
The tinsmith's craft	168
Building cobbled paths	172
The packsaddler and the farrier	175
The packsaddler and his workshop	176
The farrier and his workshop	182
The icon painter	190
Women's everyday life	197
A woman of Milies remembers her life	198
Homemade bread	202
Homemade <i>trachana</i>	208
Olive oil soap	212
Fresh tomato preserve	214
Table olives	215
White goat's cheese	216
Baklava	218
Village pie and <i>spentzofai</i>	220
Medicinal plants and herbs	221
Apple sweet and homemade liqueur	222
Yarn – natural dyes and the loom	224
A traditional wedding	233
Paintings	247
Bibliography	259
Recorded interviews and video tapes	265

*To all those who strive
to keep traditions alive*

*I wish to thank the people of Milies for all the valuable information they have given me, Philip Ramp for helping me with the initial drafting of the English version of the text, Sloane Elliott for his extremely valuable assistance through the final stage of my work on the English version of this book and for his painstaking editing and Elizabeth Lowe for her patience with the typesetting.
I would also like to thank Mimi Photiadou who helped me complete the bibliography, and the artists and owners whose works of art are included in the book.
This book however would not have been produced without the assistance of my husband who has supported my work from the very beginning. I thank him for his understanding and patience. Finally, I particularly thank my daughter Eva for giving to the presentation of my text and to the layout of this book her own personal creative touch.*

FOREWORD

Ten years have passed since I became interested in Milies. Until that time, I knew very little about the village.

Because I was born and raised in Athens, and was schooled in Egypt and Switzerland, my knowledge of Greek history was rather limited. My understanding of everyday life in a remote Greek mountain village was completely void.

When I first visited Mount Pelion, a few years after the terrible earthquakes that shook the area in 1955, I was not particularly moved. On the contrary, my preconceived view of the villages in Northern Europe made me want to forget about Milies. Nothing seemed to bind me to the village, although I had been told that this was the birthplace of my ancestors.

I returned after my husband and I inherited the old family home where the scholar, Daniel Philippides was born. After we restored part of this house, living in it made a great difference, for I now felt I had to learn something about the history of Milies.

Since then, the more I learn, the more I have become attached to this place. Many years have passed, but whenever I return to Milies, and I go there often, there is always something more to learn. I wanted to share the many things that I have discovered, and this is the reason that I created a small local Museum, and it is also why I have written this book. My book is not meant for scholars, but for all those who wish to discover Milies the way I did; reading and studying what others had written before me and talking for hours with the local people who helped me see Milies through their own eyes.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Thanaos", with a long horizontal line underneath it.

PAGES FROM THE HISTORY OF MILIES



The community of Milies played an important role in the cultural evolution of the Greek people, under Turkish rule during the Age of Enlightenment. Therefore, many well-known historians and men of literature were eager to present the remarkable achievements of the three local scholars, Anthimos Gazis, Grigorios Konstantas and Daniel Philippides, giving much detail about the famous School of Milies and its impressive library.

Much has been written about the revolutionary activities of Anthimos Gazis – the enthusiastic organizer of the Pelion uprising in 1821, and also about the local hero Kostas Garefis, who was a great warrior during the Macedonian struggle against the Bulgarian guerrillas.

Articles concerning archaeological finds offer information on the excavations undertaken in Koropi – the area close to the sea belonging to the community of Milies. It was there that systematic searches brought to light ruins of a sanctuary dedicated to Apollo Koropaios. Archives belonging to “The Friends of The Train Society” provide interesting data about the well-known Pelion train that once connected Milies to Volos.

In the historical presentation which follows, an attempt has been made to group the available information from most of these sources in chronological order, adding new facts concerning life in the village from the beginning of the century onwards, according to the evidence given by the local people so that the reader may have a more complete knowledge of the history of Milies.

Myth and legends

The history of the village of Milies has its roots in myth and legend. Mount Pelion was one of the most celebrated mountains in the ancient Greek world and was first mentioned by Homer and then by Hesiod, Pindar and Euripides.

Myths concerning the fear-spreading Centaurs, who lived in the forests on the mountain were among the best-known and the contests between them and Theseus, Heracles and the Lapiths inspired many ancient artists.

The wise and just Chiron was the single exception among the savage Centaurs; he taught man the secrets of how to heal the sick with herbs. Many of the heroes of mythology vi-

sited his cave, which the inhabitants of Milies claimed was nearby, to seek his advice. Jason, leader of the Argonauts, was also taught by Chiron, and the Argo, which sailed to Colchis to bring back the Golden Fleece, was built with timber from the forests of Mount Pelion. It was on Pelion, too, that the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, took place, attended by all the Olympian Gods, and, at which Eris, goddess of discord, threw down the apple, inscribed 'To the fairest'. Athena, Hera and Aphrodite all claimed it. So the contention was referred to Paris, handsomest of mortal men, and he awarded the apple to Aphrodite because she promised him Helen, Queen of Sparta and loveliest of all women.



*The Centaur
Chiron teaching
Achilles*

Archaeological exploration

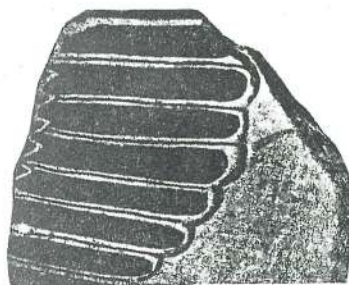
While Mount Pelion is rich in mythology, the archaeological excavations and explorations carried out in the coastal area of Koropi - present-day Boufa - which is a part of the community of Milies, have also yielded up many interesting artifacts dealing with its ancient history.

The German archeologist Lolling, who explored this region first, came in the spring of 1882. He discovered by chance a marble column with an inscription which mentions the existence of an oracle dedicated to Apollo Koropaios and is housed today in the Archaeological Museum of Volos.

A study of this inscription found by Lolling supplied valuable information about how the oracle operated. It revealed that the sanctuary of Apollo Koropaios was subject to the ancient city of Demetrias which had the responsibility of annually selecting, a priest, a secretary and a caretaker who stayed permanently at the sacred site to look after the temple and the sacred precinct. While the priest had to be from a respected family it was not necessary for him to have the gift of divination. The inscription also contained details about how the prophecies were made: all those who wanted to receive a prophecy, presented questions in writing to the priest who then inscribed the answers on potsherds. He then placed these broken pieces of pot in the temple and the next day divided them among the faithful who were waiting in the sacred precinct wearing wreaths of tamarisk. The inscription also detailed a sacrifice to the god and the offering

of a sum of money for the upkeep of the oracle.

These interesting facts prompted the Greek archaeologist Arvanitopoulos, to explore the Koropi region where he began systematic excavations in 1906. Almost immediately he began finding numerous ancient arti-



*Fragment of a
clay revetment
from the
Sanctuary of
Apollo Koropaios
(Volos
Archaeological
Museum)*

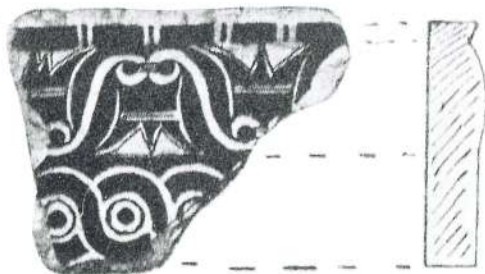
facts, but his attempt to secure the area officially failed, so today the site is still unguarded.

The main archaeological finds at Koropi are on a small plateau at Petralona and on a lower site known as *Ta Dyo Alonia*. Arvanitopoulos maintained that the acropolis of ancient Koropi stood at Petralona, while the ancient temple of Apollo Koropaios was at *Ta Dyo Alonia*. The excavations brought to light the temple enclosure and a section of the temple itself. Studies proved that the temple was built at two different times. The second, dated to around 550 B.C., was constructed of sandstone with a wooden entablature and columns. At the site were found pieces from the acroterian frieze including wings from sphinxes, broken clay metopes, and the clay dressing of the entablature with painted decoration, as well as many potsherds of superb design.

These finds are now in the storerooms of the Volos Museum.

The excavations did not bring to light any religious statues, although near the temple enclosure the foundations of a gallery were discovered, which was perhaps used as a guest house on the days of the festival and dedicated to the worship of the god. The excavations also extended beyond the present public road where two Roman tombs and an ancient marble floor laid with flagstones were

*Fragment of a
clay revetment of
the entablature
from the
Sanctuary of
Apollo Koropaios
(Volos
Archaeological
Museum)*



found. This find permits visitors to conclude that the oracle of Apollo Koropaios continued to function during the Roman period.

Although the excavations and subsequent studies by experts produced impressive results, the archeological explorations were not continued. The area of Koropi which may conceal other treasures, has been abandoned since 1906.

From the 2nd century B.C. to the Turkish occupation

There is no other information on the ancient history of this region of Pelion. We should remember, however, that all of Thessaly, including the

Mount Pelion peninsula was conquered by the Romans in the 2nd century B.C. In the 4th century A.D. it was annexed to the Byzantine Empire and until its conquest by Sultan Murad II in 1397, the region was subjected to successive invasions by the Goths, Huns, Slavs, Saracens, Venetians and Franks, whose ambition was to exploit the rich and fertile plain of Thessaly and to bring the strategic Pagasitikos Gulf under their control.

A map of Greece dating from 1421, made by Francesco Cesanis, denotes Pelion only by the word "Monastery". A few years later, in 1446, official Turkish documents listing all of the towns and villages in Thessaly which had been conquered, do not give any information concerning Mount Pelion. The mountain was sparsely populated and the Turks who settled in the border region of the Pagasitikos Gulf after 1397, preferred to live on the narrow plains near the sea, and in areas where communication was under government control. The mountain of Pelion was not of interest to them.

The founding of the Pelion villages

However, by the beginning of the 15th century immigrants from various regions in Greece began to arrive on Mount Pelion, finding refuge near the small monastic settlements which automatically became the nuclei for the later Pelion villages.

There is little information concerning the organization and the development of these villages because until the end of the 17th century formal

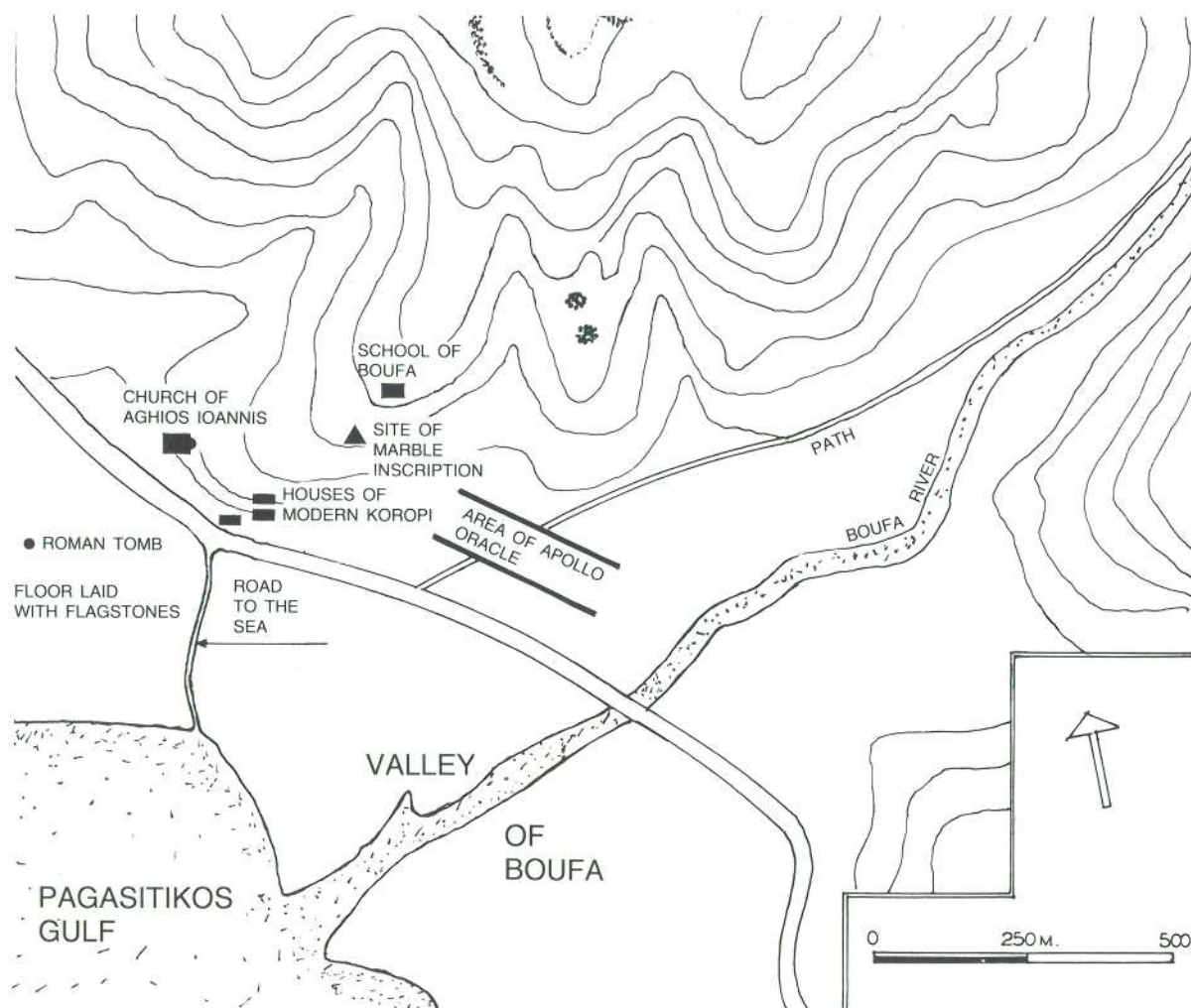
education in Greece was rare and the few books which were written had an exclusively religious content. There were no geographers and no historians.

The first Greek geographer, Meletios, was a resident of Athens, who lived at the end of the 17th century. In his work a large chapter is devoted to Greece and mentions valuable geographical and historical data although there are no details about the area of Mount Pelion.

Around 1750, the clergyman and geographer, Yeorgios Fatseas provided substantial information about

life in Greece in his book, however he made no mention of the Pelion area either.

Neoteriki Geographia (Modern Geography), a work by two scholars from Milies, Daniel Philippides and Grigorios Konstantas, was printed in Vienna in 1791 and written in the vernacular. This book gives important information about Milies. There are about thirty pages dedicated to the area of Mount Pelion. The *Meriki Geographia* (Partial Geography) written in 1815 by Argyris Philippides, the brother of Daniel, also contains valuable information.



Topographical map of Koropi showing the location of the sanctuary dedicated to Apollo.

The founding of the village

Μηλιαῖς, χώρα μὲ 300 σῶτα σχεδόν, παρακάτω
ἀπὸ τῆ Βιζιτζα εἰς χειμερινὰς ἀνατολὰς ὡς τρία τέ-
ταρτα τῆς ὥρας, μιάμιση ὥρα μακριὰ ἀπὸ τῆ θάλασ-
σα, μέρος ὀπίσω ἀπὸ ῥάχες καὶ αὐτὴ, ὅπου τὴν ἐμπε-
δίζων ὀλίγο τὸ θῶρι τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ βόρειο μέρος
ὅμως ἔχει ἓνα θῶρι ἐξαιρετό· ἐπειδὴ ἔχει ἐμπροσθὰ
τὴ ὕψερα ἀπὸ τὰ πωλαγινὰ ὅπου ἀκολυθῆν αἰετός, καὶ
δυσὶ ῥάχες ὅπου τελειόνει μισὴ ὥρα κάτω ἀπὸ τὸ χωριό,
μὴ παδιάδα ἀρετὰ μεγάλη, καὶ ὕψερα μὴ θάλασσα
μεγάλῃ ὥστε νὰ πωκιδῇ μόνο τὴν θέα, καὶ ὅχι νὰ χα-
νῶνται διὰ τὸ ἔχοντες αἱ ὄψεις εἰς αὐτήν· ὕψερα ἀπὸ αὐ-
τὴ τῆ θάλασσα ἔχει μέρος τῆς Μαγνησίας ὅπου τελει-
ώνει εἰς τὸ Αἰάντιο ἀκρωτήριο, καὶ μέρος τῆς Φθιώτι-
δος ἀριστερὰ κινάζωντας· ὀπίσω ἀπὸ τὴν Μαγνησίαν ἔχει
τὰ βυθὰ τῆς Εὐβοίας, ὀπίσω ἀπὸ τὴν Φθιώτιδα ἄλλα
βυθὰ καὶ τὸν Παρνασσὸν ὅπου ἐξέχει πολλὴν ἀπὸ πᾶν, καὶ
πάντοτε σχεδὸν κατὰ χιόνον· ἀπὸ τὸ δυτικὸν μέρος ἔχει
τὴν Πίνδον.

Extract of page
228 from the
book "Modern
Geography", by
Grigorios
Konstantas and
Daniel
Philippides,
which gives
information
about Milies

Drawing on these texts, readers learn that until 1615 the village of Milies was not registered in the official archives of Constantinople although an older document mentions the existence of a small settlement by the name of Panayia Kioi below the site of the present-day village. This settlement had twenty-seven houses and two small churches and its residents worked in the fields that belonged to the local monastery. These people later moved up to a higher location to be better protected. This new site drew immigrants from other subjected areas of Greece, from Souli and Kasos, Karpathos and Tinos, but principally from the village of Milies in north Euboea, which gave its name to their new homeland.

On a 17th century map of the district of Magnesia, the village of Milies is indicated at its present location.

The manor house
of the
Chryssochoides
family before it
was destroyed by
the great fire in
1943 (from the
Livanou and
Brissimi families
archives)

Title page of the
manuscript,
"Partial
Geography", by
Argyris
Philippides,
written in 1815

Like all of the villages on Pelion, Milies originally belonged to the subprefecture of Velesinon where the Turks had set up headquarters. Sultan Murad IV, however, taken by the great beauty of Mount Pelion, gave the villages to his mother, the Valide Sultana, as a present and forbade the permanent settlement of Turks on the mountain while giving relative autonomy to each of the villages. The result of these special favors was the development of a social order, economic and commercial prosperity, a building boom and the great intellectual flowering which followed.

In the middle of the 18th century Mount Pelion was one of the most important areas in Turkish occupied Greece. In the registers of the Ottoman Empire, Milies is shown as having approximately three hundred houses, five churches and two monasteries, fifteen fountains, six mills, an olive press and a small school which operated in the cells of Aghios Nikolaos. Moreover, most of the lanes in the village were paved with stones.

The oldest of these churches appears to have been that of Aghios Konstantinos which was already operating in 1510 with its own priest while it is said that the church of Aghios Yeorgios was built during the 1670's along with the monasteries of Aghia Paraskevi and *Pammegistoi Taxiarches* (The Blessed Archangels). The church of the *Pammegistoi Taxiarches*, which today commands the village square, has not been dated. However, an inscription on the east entrance informs us that it was renovated in 1741.

The houses of the village were built in the familiar Pelion architectural

style, combining security with comfort. The transport of materials was easy as the village had cobbled lanes called *kalderimia*. Around 1750 more roads were built to connect Milies with neighboring villages, and the sea. The longest *kalderimi* reached Tsagarada, which was three and one half hours away. Laborers from both villages worked for years to complete this easy means of communication.

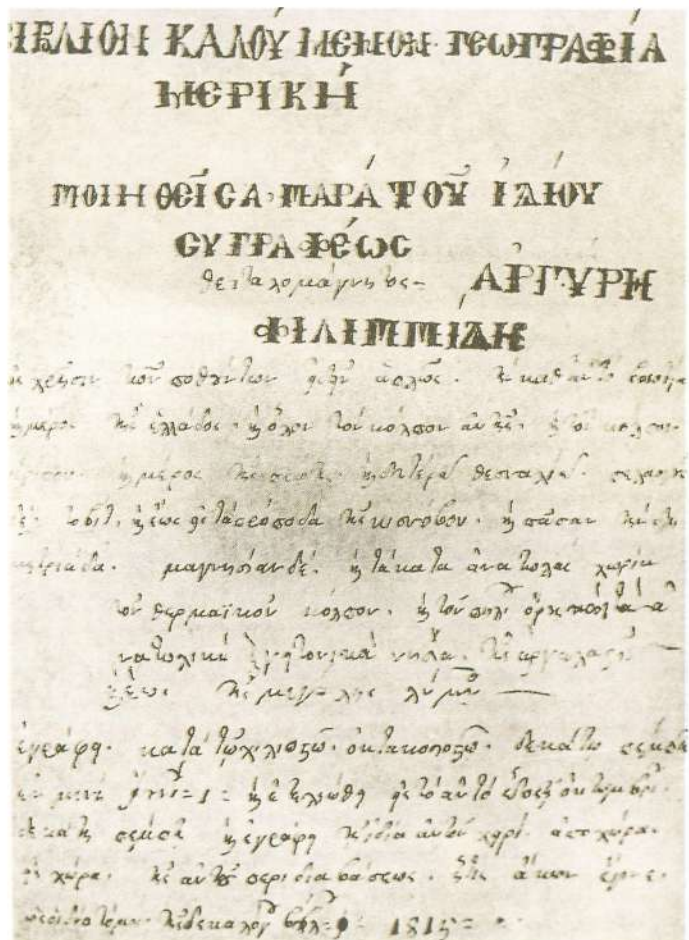
The institution of the village elders

The responsibility for the social organization of the village was held by the elders whom the inhabitants voted for on the feast day of Aghios Yeorgios by a show of hands. In Milies, voting took place out of doors next to the church of Aghios Nikolaos. Specially constructed rows of seats were used, reminiscent of the sites where the ancient Greeks used to hold their assemblies in the open air. There, the inhabitants celebrated festivals and weddings and up until a few years ago, school-children gave their gymnastic performances. Today the "stadium", as the Miliotes call it, has been declared subject to preservation and will be restored.

The village elders calculated the taxes each farmer would pay, and were held responsible for their assessment, collection and delivery to the Turkish authorities. They had the right to administer the property of the churches and monasteries, to appoint the teacher, the treasurer and in general all those who had responsible positions in the village. They settled prob-



ΤΟ ΣΤΑΔΙΟ ΤΩ ΜΗΛΕΩΝ ΚΤΛΕΝ ΠΡΟ ΤΟΥ 1800
ΕΚΑΝΕ ΔΥΟ ΤΟΙΣ ΓΕΡΜΑΝΟΙΣ 3 ΟΚΤΩΒΡΙΟΥ 1943



lems which arose between inhabitants and frequently acted as judges in small matters. They aided widows and orphans, paid the debts of the poor and looked after and supervised communal works.

By creating a new ruling class with special privileges, the institution of the village elders to a degree gave rise to a feeling of class exploitation at the expense of the poor. It is an undoubted fact that some of the elders amassed considerable fortunes by abusing the rights that had been given to them. Despite this, the institution was generally a good one and in contrast to the hardships suffered by the regions that were directly controlled by the Turks, Milies and the other villages on Mount Pelion certainly fared much better.

The economic development during the Turkish occupation

The progressive nature of Milies was enhanced by the arrival of immigrants from Epirus for many of them were brilliant craftsmen and brought their experience and their artistic sensibility to this new homeland.

The economy of the village was based primarily on farming. The Miliotes cultivated olives and wheat and had grapes and figs as well as mulberry trees for their silkworms. What they produced resulted in the building of small factories to process these products. For the harvest they built next to their olive groves, comfortable *kalyvia* (huts) with an oven and storerooms. The olive presses worked

non-stop and oil brought money to the village. The making of silk was one of the most profitable businesses and led to the organization of trade. The largest amount was exported to Chios where there was a silk fabric handicraft industry. A considerable number of hides were also processed to supply the tanneries of Volos.

Miliotes in boats from Zagora travelled all the way to the countries of Europe and the shores of Asia Minor, shipping their products and creating new centers for commercial exchanges. Some merchants acquired sizeable fortunes abroad and financially assisted not only their own families who stayed behind in Milies but the entire village, sending donations for socially beneficial works.

Hard times

It would be mistaken to conclude, however, that life in Milies in the 18th century was one of continual prosperity. On the contrary it should be noted that many letters, church documents and journals written by visitors from this period contain records of the damage caused to crops by bad weather and floods. Epidemics and diseases also swept through the region from time to time. There were many years when hunger was rampant and the anxiety over the taxes levied by the Turks became unbearable.

One of the worst calamities was the freeze of 1782 which killed many of the olive trees. Some Miliotes fled to Egypt and became involved in the cotton business, others went to the Peloponnese and on their return brought

back the cherry tree which has flourished on Pelion ever since. It took almost fifteen years for the village to recover from the great disaster, and it is said that some Miliotes were forced to sell even their copper kitchen utensils to pay their taxes. Despite, all this adversity, however, the productive activity and the development of small handicraft industries was by then an undisputed fact and contributed to the economic growth of the region.

The development of education

Miliotes involved in trade, travelled a great deal and felt the influence of other ways of life, the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment, and the new trends in education which they came upon in other European countries. Some of them sought a higher education so they could become bearers of the new spirit to their homeland.

Three Miliote scholars, Anthimos Gazis, Grigorios Konstantas and Daniel Philippides are the best known and most distinguished personalities of this period. Born in the 1750's and related to each other, they made a decisive contribution, to the intellectual flowering of literature and science, to the founding and the operation of the Milies School and to the part Mount Pelion played in the Greek struggle for freedom.

These three scholars were descendants of Argyris Philippou or Philippides. Anthimos Gazis through his mother Maria, the daughter of Argyris, Daniel Philippides through his father Philippos, brother of Maria, and

Grigorios Konstantas through his mother Syrago, granddaughter of Argyris. Gazis and Daniel were therefore, first cousins and Konstantas was the son of another cousin.

The first school in Milies

Each of these three scholars took their first lessons in the small village school which was housed in a vacant cell in Aghios Nikolaos. This school had been founded in 1760 by the Miliote cleric Anthimos Papantazis, who had studied at the Zagora School. There he had come to know the teacher Zacharias who was renowned throughout Mount Pelion. When the school in Milies opened, Zacharias decided to leave Zagora and teach there. During this period, when many parts of Greece were plunged in complete intellectual darkness, the children in Milies enjoyed the good fortune of having a famous teacher.

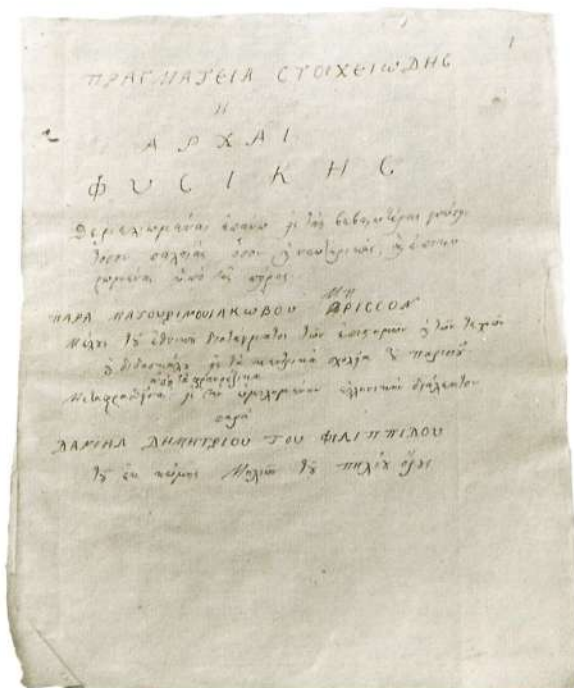
When Zacharias died in 1775, the operation of the School was continued by Father Anthimos until his death in 1810. He was succeeded by Grigorios Konstantas.



Daniel Philippides

Daniel Philippides is the least known of the three Miliote scholars, despite the eloquence and great scientific interest of his written works.

Title page of the manuscript of Daniel Philippides' translation of "Elementary Treatise or Principles of Physics", by Brisson (Milies Historical Library)



This may be due to his having lived a great part of his life far from his native land, in Romania, Paris and Vienna. After starting at the village school he continued his studies at the famous Zagora School and took holy orders. He then changed his name from Dimitris to Daniel and continued his studies, first on Mount Athos and later at the School of Aghios Minas in Chios. A restless spirit always seeking new opportunities to learn, he went to Bucharest where the most eminent men of literature taught, such as Neophytos Kavsokalyvitis and Dimitris Katartzis.

At that time many Greeks went to Moldavia and Walachia, two autonomous principalities officially belonging to the Ottoman Empire, which made travel formalities for them relatively simple. Moreover, their governors were distinguished Phanariotes of Greek origin, from Constantinople, and thus the influence of the

Greek spirit was widespread.

Daniel Philippides stayed in Bucharest for nearly ten years studying physics, chemistry, algebra, astronomy and ancient Greek. He was appointed teacher at the Iasion School, met the Greek patriot and poet Regas Pheraios, and discussed the problems of subjugated Greece with him. He also met the champion of the Greek demotic language, Dimitris Katartzis who prompted Philippides to follow the progress of western education. He was deeply influenced by the new methods of teaching which were based on the study of applied sciences and the use of the spoken language in order to free Greek education of its scholastic method of instruction.

The enlightened mind of Katartzis put its stamp on the personality of Daniel Philippides and later influenced Grigorios Konstantas. This is why these two Miliote scholars are frequently called "Dimitrieis", that is, the students of Dimitris Katartzis.

Until 1790 Daniel Philippides taught, studied and was occupied with the writing of learned texts. His most important work of this period was the *Neoteriki Geographia* (Modern Geography), in collaboration with Grigorios Konstantas.

Modern geography

This book, written at the end of the 18th century and printed in Vienna in 1791, was one of the first in demotic, the language now known as Modern Greek, and has been deemed one of

ΓΕΩΓΡΑΦΙΑ ΝΕΩΤΕΡΙΚΗ

Εκπιεθεύεια από διαφόρε Συγγραφεύς παρά
καυήλ ιερομονάχε κ Γρηγορίε ιεροδιακόνε
τῶν Δημητρίεων.

Νῦν πρῶτην τύποιε ἐκδοθεύεια ὁπιαύει τῶν ἰδίων,
καὶ διλοτὶμῳ χρηματικῇ συνδρομῇ τῶ
ἐντιμετάτε κυρίε

Ἰεε Δρῶσινε Χατζῇ Ἰεε τῶ ἐξ Ἀμπελακίω

ΤΟΜΟΣ ΠΡΩΤΟΣ

ΠΕΡΙΕΧΩΝ

Γῆν Εὐρωπείκη Τυρκίαν, Ἰταλίαν, Σπάνιαν, Πορτο-
γαλλίαν καὶ Φράντζαν.



ἘΝ ΒΙΕΝΝῃ.

Παρι τῶ εὐγενῇ κυρίῳ Θωμᾷ τῶ Τράττιερν.

1 7 9 1.

Title page from
the first volume
of the book
"Modern
Geography"

the most important texts of the Greek Enlightenment.

The book was to appear in three volumes, but only one volume was printed. It gives information on the history, geography and the way of life in Italy, Spain, Portugal, France and European Turkey. One chapter is devoted to the various languages and religions, another describes the capitals of the world, a third, life at the North and South Poles and the Equator.

The pages that refer to Greece give a faithful picture of life at that time, describing the harsh conditions of servitude which had aroused the Greek people. This text deeply influenced Regas Pheraios and helped him to a better understanding of the land and its problems.

Unfortunately, the other two volumes in manuscript were destroyed in 1795 by a fire that broke out in Daniel Philippides's home in Constantinople.

Other works of Daniel Philippides

After the book was printed, Philippides left for Paris. He stayed there for four years and experienced first hand the earth-shaking events of the French Revolution. He was welcomed into the group of young men of learning and he formed a friendship with the famous French geographer, Barbie du Bocage. He corresponded with him for many years and was engaged in research and translation.

In 1794 he met with his nephew

Konstantas in Padua and together they decided to return to Greece. He stayed for some time in Milies, observing and studying the various problems that his fellow villagers faced, realizing the need to modernize education and to inform the village elders of how people were living in free countries. He then left for Constantinople where he stayed for nearly a year, until the terrible fire which destroyed his house and his valuable library, containing the two unpublished volumes of *Neoteriki Geographia*. Troubled and bitter, he decided to return to teach at the Iasion School in Bucharest. At the same time he founded a library which contained a wide range of modern scientific books, dictionaries, geographical maps together with instruments used in physics, chemistry and astronomy. Among the books which he translated into Modern Greek so that Greek teachers could use them were Brisson's *Physics*, Condillac's *Logic*, Mauduit's *Arithmetic and Geometry* and Lalande's *Astronomy*. He also compiled five manuscript volumes of his philosophical essays.

Philippides was specifically occupied with the subject of language. He considered it unacceptable that the conservative Greek teachers and scholars used an archaicized form of the Greek language of which the general public was ignorant. He himself believed in the use of the modern Greek language, but for scholarly exchanges he promoted the idea of a language based on a set of symbols. Naturally, these revolutionary theories brought him into conflict with many of his Greek colleagues, in

particular Adamantios Korais, who devised *Katharevousa*, or the modern literary language.

In 1816 Philippides published *The History and Geography of Romania*, a work which the Romanians considered to be of fundamental importance to them. In 1819, after various trips connected with his advanced learning interests, he returned to the Iasion School once again, became a member of the *Philiki Etaireia*, or Friendly Society, a revolutionary

group, and closely followed the organization of the developing Greek War of Independence. At the same time he was kept informed on the Milies School that he had founded along with Gazis and Konstantas in 1814 and donated a large piece of property to help cover its basic operating expenses.

Little is known of his remaining years. He died in 1832 in Baltes, a town in Bessarabia near the Moldavian border and was buried there.



Ἔξω περισκοπῶν ἀνυομένων ἐναντιῶν.

ΕΠΙΤΟΜΗ ΑΣΤΡΟΝΟΜΙΑΣ

Συγγραφεῖσα ὑπὸ

ἸΕΡΩΝΥΜΟΥ ΛΑΛΑΝΔ

Διευθυντῆ τῆς Ἀστροσκοπικῆς τολεμικῆς σχολῆς, καὶ ἐφόρου τῆς σχολῆς τῆς Γαλλίας.

Μεταφρασθεῖσα εἰς τὴν καθωμιλημένην Ἑλληνικὴν διάλεκτον

παρὰ

Δ. Δ. τῆς ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΔΟΥ

τῆς ἀπὸ Μηλιῶν τῆς Πηγῆς ὄρεως.

Νῦν πρῶτον τύποις ἐκδοθεῖσα, ἐπισαΐα, συνδρομὴ καὶ διορθώσει τῆς Ἀρχιμῆδους.

ΑΝΘΙΜΟΥ ΓΑΖΗ.

ἡμῶν τῶν Φιλομούσων τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Γένους.

ΤΟΜΟΣ Α΄.

Ἐν Βιέννῃ τῆς Ἀστρονομίας 1803.

Ἐν τῇ τυπογραφίᾳ Γεωργίου Βενδότη.

Frontispiece and title page of the book "Epitome of Astronomy", by Lalande, translated by Daniel Philippides and printed in Vienna in 1803 (Milies Historical Library)

Ανθίμης Γαζής



Portrait of
Anthimos Gazis –
Title page of his
"Greek
Dictionary",
printed in Venice
in 1809 (Milies
Historical
Library)

Anthimos Gazis

Of the scholars, Anthimos Gazis is the best known. His personality drew admirers not only from Greece but also from important centers of Hellenism throughout Europe. He was a son of Panayiotis Gazalis who died young leaving his wife with nine children to take care of. Despite many difficulties, however, he learned to read and write at the village school. His performance impressed his teacher who advised him to become a cleric and thereby be able to continue his studies at the Zagora School. On becoming a

deacon he took the name Anthimos Gazis. He first taught in the village of Vyzitsa near Milies and later went to Constantinople. This gave him the chance to study at the famous school there, and later he acquired a position in the Patriarchate. After he was ordained an Archimandrite, he was appointed in 1797, rector of the Greek church of Aghios Yeorgios in Vienna.

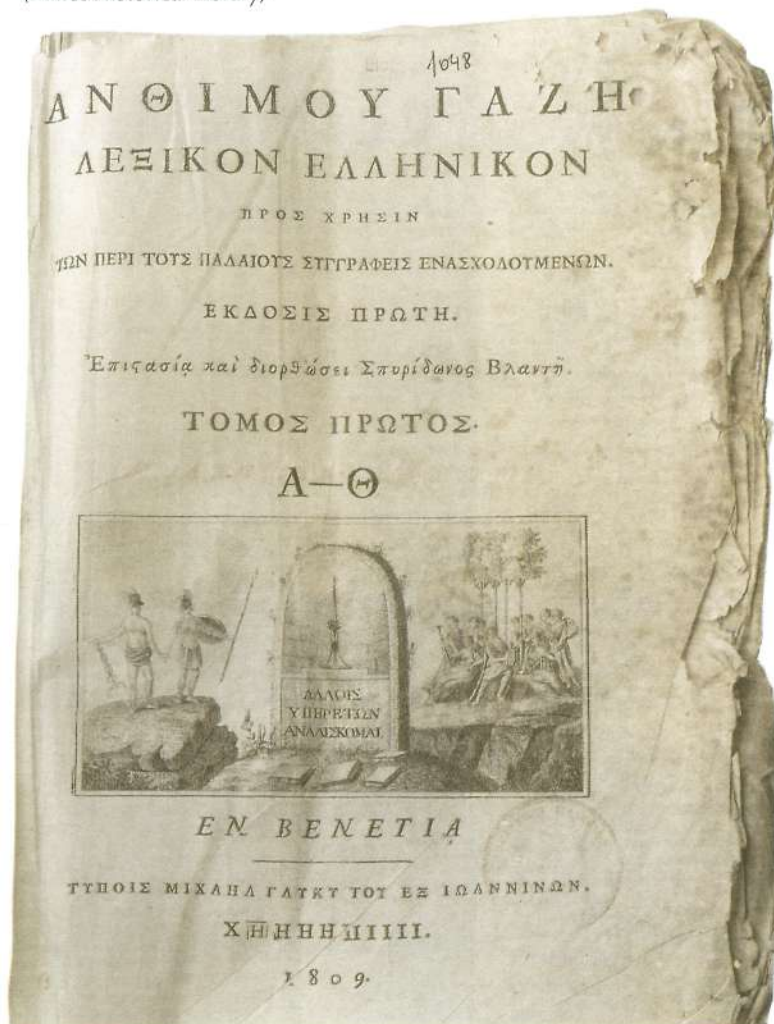
This appointment opened a new chapter in the life of Gazis because Vienna was then one of the major intellectual centers in Europe. Eminent men of literature were drawn there and he came into close contact with them. The famous schools and the superb libraries of the metropolis gave him the opportunity to continue his studies and to enrich his knowledge. He began to study philosophy, mathematics and astronomy. He also learned German and French so that he could translate works of foreign scholars into Greek.

In 1801 Gazis returned to Milies. During his stay in Pelion, he observed the difficult conditions which existed for the downtrodden population and became convinced that a revolt had to be organized. At the same time he was involved in the writing of a three volume dictionary of the Greek language and went to the flourishing Thessalian town of Ambelakia to ask the rich merchant Schwarz to assist him financially in order to complete the very costly publication of the large work. The printing of the dictionary began in 1809. By then Gazis was known for his translation of the *Grammar of Philosophical Studies*.

In Vienna in 1811 he published the first Greek periodical, *Ermis o Logios*

In 1815 Gazis, along with the future first chief of state of independent Greece, John Capodistria and other select Greeks, founded the *Philomousos Etaireia*, a cultural society set up in Vienna, which faithfully followed the example of its corresponding chapter in Athens. Its aim was the propagation of all learning in general, the publication of ancient authors and the financial support of Greeks who wanted to study abroad.

*Title page of the "Greek Dictionary", by Anthimos Gazis,
printed in Venice in 1809
(Milies Historical Library)*



889.5 781
ΕΡΜΗΣ

ὁ
ΛΟΓΙΟΣ.

1820.



Front cover of an
issue of "Literary
Mercury",
printed in Vienna
in 1820 (Milnes
Historical
Library)

ΕΝ ΒΙΕΝΝΗ, ΤΗΣ ΑΟΥΣΤΡΙΑΣ

Ἐκ τοῦ Τυπογραφείου Ἰω. Βλαβελ. Σχολίου.

The Milies school



ΣΤΟ ΧΩΡΟ ΑΥΤΟ ΒΡΙΣΚΟΝΤΑΝ
Η ΠΑΛΙΑ ΜΗΛΙΩΤΙΚΗ ΣΧΟΛΗ
ΟΠΟΥ ΔΙΔΑΞΕ Ο ΜΗΛΙΩΤΗΣ
ΔΑΣΚΑΛΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΓΕΝΟΥΣ
ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟΣ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΑΣ
ΑΠΟ ΤΟ 1814 ΩΣ ΤΟ 1821
ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟ ΤΟ 1834 ΩΣ ΤΟ 1844

Gazis' dream however was to found an academy in his village, in Milies, a comprehensive school based on modern principles of education where the students would have the opportunity to learn all the applied sciences, philosophy and literature. As the Turkish government did not grant the required permit, Gazis compromised by opening a simple school, though of high standing.

In order to cover the huge expenses of erecting the school and purchasing books and science equipment, Anthimos Gazis went first to the *Philomousos Etaireia* in Athens which had been founded in September 1813 with the aim of organizing and promoting Greek education.

With the moral and financial backing of the Society, the construction of the school was started in 1814 next to Aghios Nikolaos under the supervision of Grigorios Konstantas. In 1815,

Gazis wrote to Konstantas that he had secured a yearly income for the school so that it could meet some of its unforeseen expenses. He had collected 2,000 volumes by Greek and foreign authors, as well as maps, physics and chemistry equipment, a globe of the earth and a celestial globe.

Gazis arranged for the transport of the books to Milies. Caiques loaded with extremely heavy cases anchored in remote harbors in the Pagasitikos Gulf and at night the cases were clandestinely brought to the village on pack animals. In July 1814, Gazis composed the first charter of the Milies School in Vienna. Written in his own hand the text is today in the village library and states that each of the three Miliote scholars offered five hundred gold coins for the erection of the school, a respectable amount for that time, with Gazis also donating his comprehensive library. It also mentions that whoever contributed fifty gold coins to the School would be called *Musagetes*, or a sponsor of the Muses, and receive a gold ring engraved with the figure of a Centaur, the school symbol. Many people from Pelion shared an interest in the Milies School and assisted Gazis financially. The official opening took place on August 6, 1815 and it began to operate with Grigorios Konstantas as a teacher of students from Milies and surrounding villages.

The school was located in a lush green area. The building was comfortable with large classrooms and it had glazed windows which was unusual in Greece at that time. The richness of its library was unique. Among the 10,000 books that Gazis had helped send to

*Memorial plaque
in the wall of the
present Milies
High School*

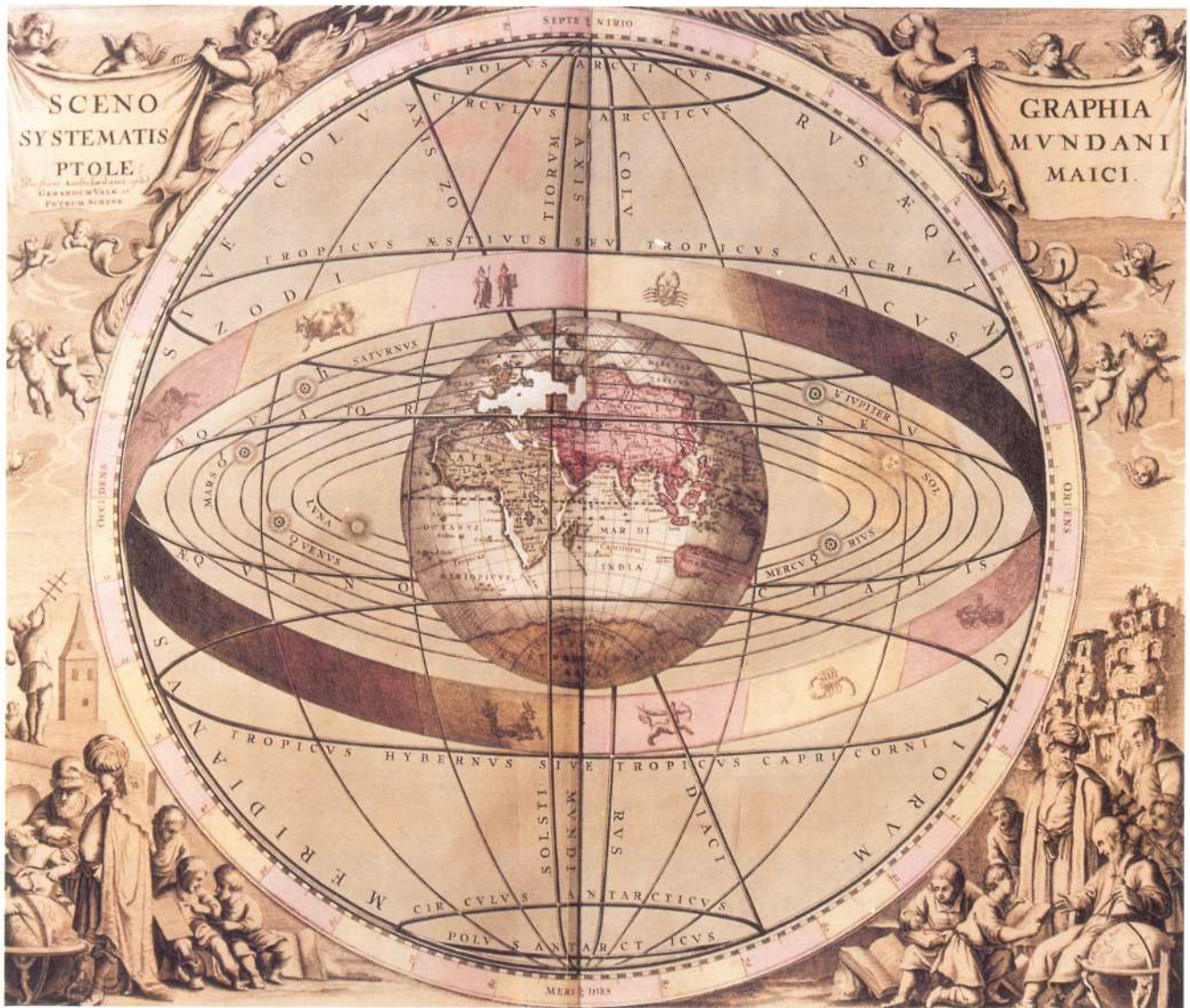
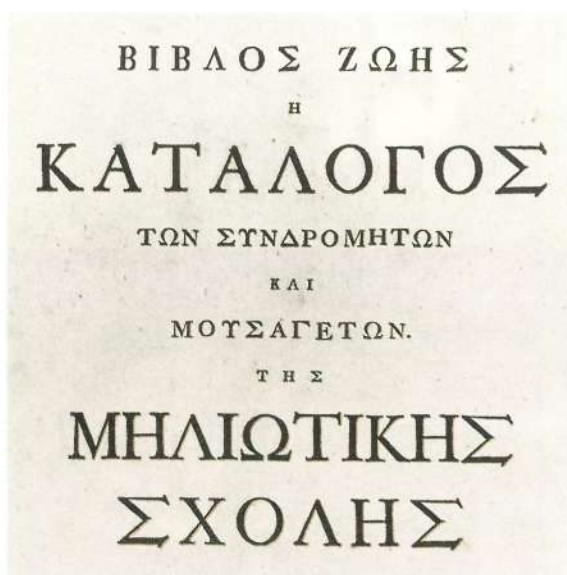


Plate from "Harmonia Macrocosmica", by Andrea Cellari Palatini, printed in Amsterdam in 1708 (Milies Historical Library)

Title page of the
Catalogue of the
subscribers and
sponsors of the
Muses of the
Milies School
(Milies Historical
Library)



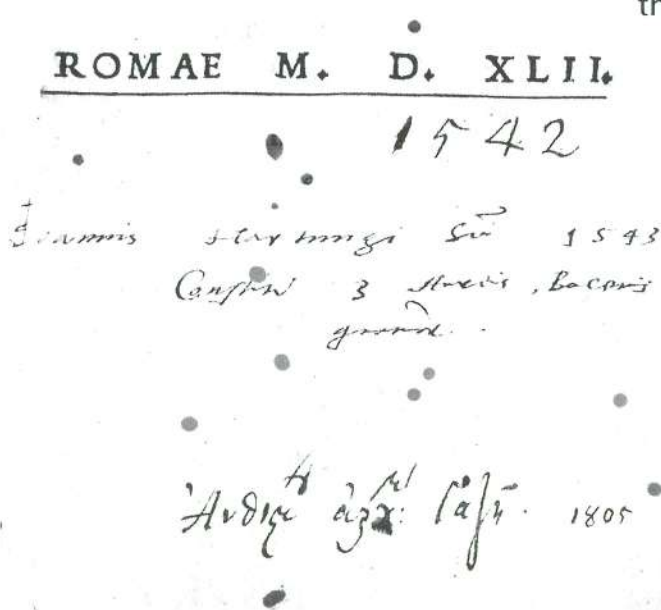
Milies were some very rare editions. These included a book by Theophrastos printed in 1497 with wooden type, a French ornithology printed in 1555, with hand-colored wood plates, the World Atlas by Brouckner printed in Vienna, a superb anatomy book printed in Dusseldorf, many books on

physics, chemistry, mathematics, astronomy and geography, the complete corpus of Greek classical and Byzantine literature, ancient writings as well as texts in French, Italian and German. Of these, 3,000 or so that survived a string of disasters are today in the village library along with the original inscription *Psychis Akos* (Cure of the Soul) that Konstantas had placed on the school.

There was also a bust of Homer that Gazis had brought from Vienna, ancient coins and two small bronze statuettes in the Milies School which formed the nucleus of an archaeological collection.

With its splendid library, the up-to-date physics and chemistry equipment and the systematic instruction which followed the new pedagogical program, the school became well-known not only in Greece but also abroad, and many intellectual figures believed that it had all the prerequisites to develop into one of the most important educational centers of the period.

Extract of a book
printed in 1542
bearing the
signature of
Anthimos Gazis
(Milies Historical
Library)



Impression of
the Milies School
official seal,
preserved in the
Milies Historical
Library



Τύχη ἀγαθή.

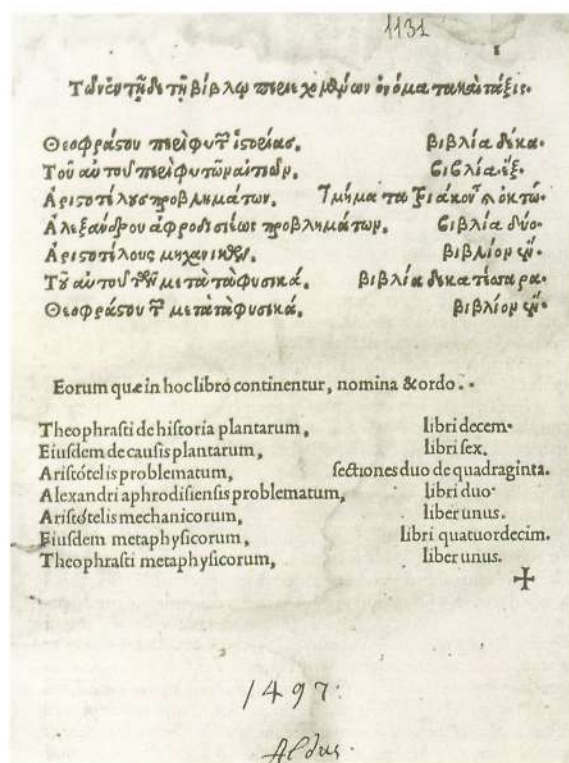
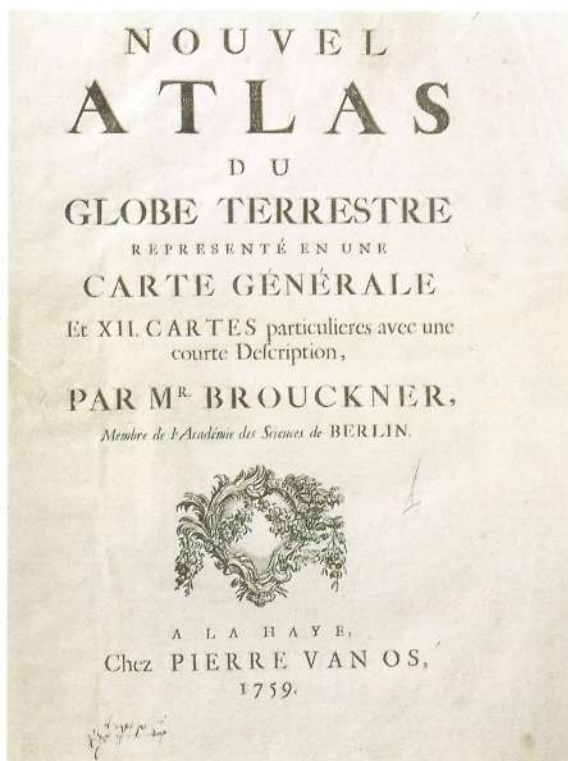
ἡ Καλὰ τὸ 1814. σωτήριον ἔτος, ἐν μηνὶ Ἰουλίῳ α΄.
 Γρηγόριος Γεροδιάκονος ὁ Κωνσταντῆς, καὶ Ἀνθίμος ἀρχιμαν-
 δρίτης ὁ Γαβρῆς· φιλοφρονέειν κινδύνους ἀποτρέψαντες καὶ δε-
 μιγνώσασιν σχολικὸν λαλῆμα ἐν τῇ πατρίδα αὐτῶν Μι-
 λιαῖς παχρμένην, κατὰ τὸ Πύριον ὄρος, πρὸς ἀναβολὴν
 καὶ διδασκαλίαν τῶν νέων τῶν ὁμογενῶν· καὶ διὰ τὴν
 βάλαν τὴν ἀφίερσαν ἑαυτοῖς ἐν αὐτῷ, ἐδομένῳ δὲ
 διὰ τὴν οἰκοδομήν· καὶ τὰ χροῖα τὴν ἀναγκῆν· ὁμῶς
 Γρηγόριος Κωνσταντῆς, κατέβαλεν εἰς μέλητα χρυσὸς
 Καισαρικὸς Πεντακοσίος. ὁ δὲ Ἀνθίμος ὁ Γαβρῆς ὁμοίως
 χρυσὸς Πεντακοσίος, καὶ ἔδωκαν τὴν βιβλιοθήκην
 αὐτῶν:—Ἐπὶ δὲ ἀφίερσιν εἰς αὐτὸ καὶ ὅτι τὴν ἐκδοσὶν τὸ
 Ἑλληνικὸν Λεξικὸν αὐτῶν:—

ἡ Σημ. Μισοφίλια χέρονται ὅσοι τῶν συνδρομητῶν συνεπέρχον
 ἐν τῷ ὑπὲρ Πατρίδος τῷ πατρὶ Πενήκοντα χρυσῶς καὶ ἐδότησαν,
 ὡς φιλοφρονέοντες εἰσαγαγεῖν καὶ Μόσαι παρὶν εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα, ὅπως δυ-
 νατοί· καὶ ὡς Μέγας τὸν σχολικόν· ἀρετὰν καὶ εὐφροσύνην ὡς ὅτι εἶχε.

The founding
 covenant of the
 Milies School
 compiled by
 Grigorios
 Konstantas and
 Anthimos Gazis,
 hand-written by
 Anthimos Gazis
 (Milies Historical
 Library)

Title page of the
"New Atlas", by
Brouckner, in
French, printed
in The Hague in
1759 (Milies
Historical
Library)

Table of contents
from an
incunabulum of
1497, printed in
Greek and Latin,
by Aldus
Manutius (Milies
Historical
Library)

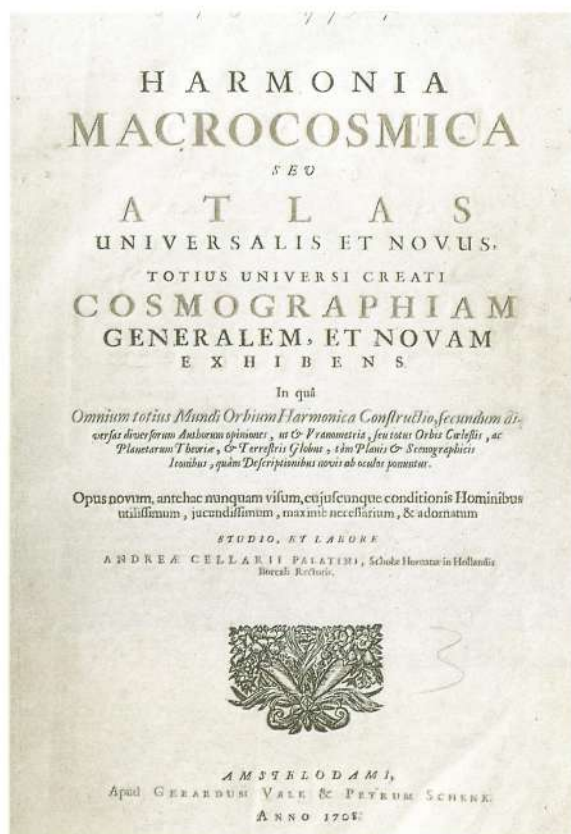


Title page of the
German
"Anatomical
Atlas", by M. J.
Weber, printed
in Dusseldorf in
1706 (Milies
Historical
Library)

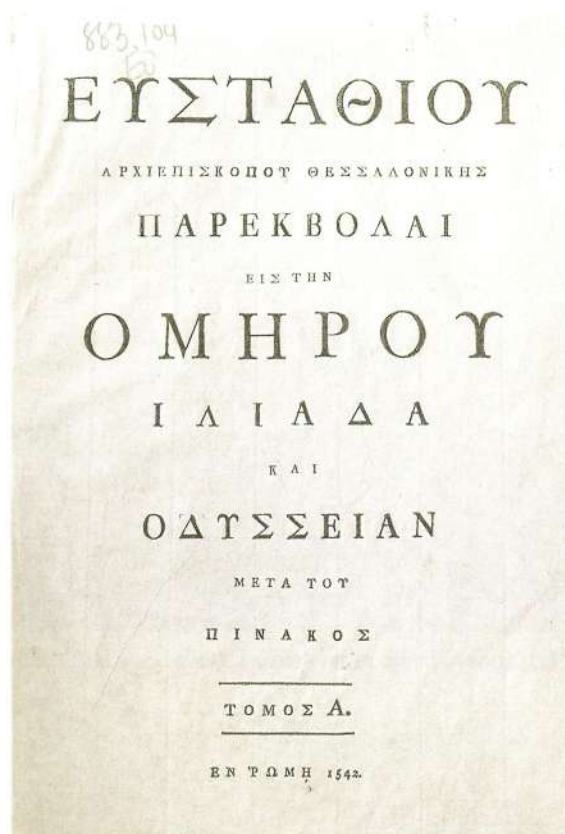




Inscription placed above the entrance of the Milies School by Grigorios Konstantas (Milies Historical Library)



Title page of "Harmonia Microcosmica" by Andrea Cellari Palatini, printed in 1708. (Milies Historical Library)



Title page of the "Critical Remarks on Homer's Iliad and The Odyssey", by Eustathius, Archbishop of Thessaloniki, printed in Rome in 1542 (Milies Historical Library)



Teaching equipment of the Milies School, bought by Anthimos Gazis (Milies Historical Library)



Grigorios Konstantas

The Miliote scholar Grigorios Konstantas was the son of a simple farmer. Forced to work in the fields as a boy, he first went to school at the age of seventeen. Yet he showed such a great aptitude for learning that his teacher suggested to his parents that they allow him to take orders in the church so that he would have the chance for further study.

Thus the young Konstantas was ordained as a deacon and sent to Constantinople to continue his studies. Later he decided to go to the principalities of Moldavia and Walachia to see his uncle Daniel Philippides and attend the classes of Dimitris Katartzis and Neophytos Kavso-kalyvitis. The latter was impressed by Konstantas' zeal and offered him the chance to teach at his school. After the death of Kavso-kalyvitis, the Miliote scholar was appointed director of the school in Moldavia where he stayed until 1787 and he worked with Daniel Philippides on the preparation of *Neoteriki Geographia*.

In 1790 he was in Vienna supervising the printing of their collaboration and stayed on to attend classes at various universities while at the same time studying in the splendid libraries. A year later he was in Italy at the University of Padua.

However, Konstantas' overwhelming desire was to return to his homeland and teach. Having experienced

life in free countries he now wanted to help his compatriots acquire their own independence. He believed that a prerequisite for victory was the education of the people. For this reason he refused to live abroad where he would certainly have been appointed to a major school, preferring to work in subjugated Greece.

The return of Konstantas to Milies in 1796 was considered a significant event because his fame had spread back to his birthplace and the pride the Miliotes felt in him was boundless. His former teacher Anthimos Papantazis welcomed him to the school and tried to persuade him to teach there. But Konstantas was appointed teacher at Ambelakia and instead he left for this important commercial center in Thessaly where he stayed until 1802, teaching not only ancient Greek and philosophy but also some of the applied sciences. Here children were taught for the first time in Modern Greek, helped along by many books and the necessary equipment.

He returned to Milies in 1810 and decided to teach there permanently. He informed Anthimos Gazis of his decision and was in complete agreement with the idea of the Archimandrite to create, at Milies, a comprehensive school using modern methods of instruction. This is why he enthusiastically accepted the supervision of its construction and was involved with its organization and operation. Immediately after its inauguration, Konstantas started teaching and continued to do so right up to the day when the Greek War of Independence against the Turks broke out on Mount Pelion.

The revolutionary activity of Gazis

Seal impression
of the
revolutionary
forces of
Magnesia, used
for the first time
by Anthimos
Gazis in May 1821

Thirst for freedom was the natural outcome of intellectual progress developed during relative economic prosperity, not only in Milies but in all the villages of Pelion. In the figure of the Miliote, Anthimos Gazis, the oppressed population would find the most enthusiastic organizer of the uprising against the hated Turkish rule.

Gazis had met with the members of the *Philiki Etaireia*, in 1816, and one of its founders, Nicholas Skoufas, recognizing his importance and learning, had offered him the leadership of the Society. The Archimandrite refused to accept this great responsibility, believing that the Greek people were unprepared for revolution. He promised, however, to return to Greece very soon to promote the work of the Society, give heart to the people and organize them.

In 1817 Anthimos Gazis left Vienna to meet the leaders of the *Philiki Etaireia*, Nicholas Skoufas, Emmanuel Xanthos and Athanasios Tsakalof in Constantinople. He then became an official member of the *Philiki Etaireia* and was appointed a member of the Supreme Authority for Northern Greece and Pelion, undertaking all the responsibility for the organization of the revolution in those areas. His role in this effect was decisive because of his inexhaustible enthusiasm, daring, and faith in the final goal which were feelings that he had the ability to pass on to the future freedom fighters for liberty.

The uprising in Pelion



Arriving in Greece, Gazis informed the Athenian members of the *Philiki Etaireia* about developments in preparation for revolution. He also asked for the assistance of Hydriot sailors and went to Milies where he was received as a hero and savior. From his base there, he methodically organized the uprising. He toured all the villages on Mount Pelion creating revolutionary bases everywhere and entrusting local leadership to reliable and courageous men. At the beginning of 1821 the people of Mount Pelion were already covertly in revolt and it did not require more than a rallying cry to send them to arms.

On Easter Sunday the Archimandrite Gazis wearing his gold vestments which had been given to him by the Tsar of Russia officiated at the divine liturgy in the church of the *Pammegistoi Taxiarches* and exhorted the faithful to chant after "Christ is Arisen", "Greece is Arisen". At this time the revolutionary leaders were gathering at Milies to receive from Gazis their final instructions in accordance with which, they would start the revolt as

soon as the boats promised by the Hydriots reached the Pagasitikos Gulf to assist them.

When the boats appeared in the nearby gulf with their flags raised on May 7th, Gazis declared from the Church of the *Pammegistoi Taxiarches* in Milies, the beginning of the great struggle for freedom, while Konstantas stood next to him and gave a patriotic speech. At the same moment a Greek flag, which had been sewn by Asimo, the sister of the Miliote freedom fighter Yiannis Dimos, was raised in front of the church. This sacred relic can be seen today in a special case in the village library and an exact copy adorns the entrance of the local museum.

The first battles took place at Lecho-
nia, a coastal region of Mount Pelion a

short distance from Volos where many Turks had settled. On May 9 some rebels surrounded the fortress of Volos while another group of fighters headed toward the town of Veles-
tinion. There, for the first time, Gazis used the seal of the revolution of the Province of Magnesia on an official declaration which called on all the Christians of Thessaly to rise up and drive out the oppressor.

But these early successes did not continue. Running out of ammunition, the rebels were forced to retreat and on May 25, Dramali, Pasha of Larissa, turned against them. Despite their daring and valor, they were forced to retreat and the Turks entered many villages burning and destroying houses, churches and crops. The entire region suffered under the



Copy of the banner used in the 1821 Revolution, exhibited at the entrance of the local museum

savagery of the enemy and the terrified inhabitants fled from their homes, many escaping to the nearby islands of Skiathos, Skopelos and to the isolated Trikeri peninsula.

The failure of the revolution was complete. The army of Dramali reached Milies with an order to burn down the village, home of Gazis and the official headquarters of the insurgents. However, the timely intervention of the notables saved Milies from merciless destruction.

The activity of Gazis in free Greece

As many held Gazis responsible for this terrible defeat, he was obliged to flee to Skiathos. From there he went to the Morea, transferring his many-faceted energies to that region.

At the end of 1821 Gazis was elected a member of the *Aeropagus* or revolutionary court, and the representative of Thessaly at the National Conventions of Epidauros and Corinth. From this position he kept in contact with the Pelion patriots sustaining their courage and directing their revolutionary activities. At the same time he kept the centers of Hellenism abroad informed about the aims of the revolution, asking for financial support. He worked closely with Alexandros Ypsilantis and the other members of the *Philiki Etaireia* and at each council fought for the continuation of the revolution on Mount Pelion. This point, however, was not shared by all the members of the provisional Greek government. Among those who re-

jected it was Konstantas, who during the First Convention was an ideological opponent of Gazis because he did not believe in the active continuation of the revolution on Mount Pelion. Feeling that the people, unarmed and unorganized, were unprepared for such a large-scale military undertaking, he foresaw that if it failed as the first one had, consequences for the Pelians would be disastrous. On the contrary, Gazis, enthusiastic and aggressive, firmly believed that no revolution could succeed without sacrifice and that Pelion had to rise up if it wanted to be free.

The gulf separating each man's point of view was wide, and would remain unbridged for the rest of their lives.

During the following years when the conservatives dominated the provisional government of Greece, Gazis' views were no longer respected and in 1825, disappointed by the negative stance of the administration, he occupied himself exclusively with the organization of education. Gazis visited Tinos and in 1828 Syros, in order to found and to observe the operation of schools. He died there penniless and forsaken. In his will he left his library and transferred ownership of several fields to the Milies school.

Deprived of the moral backing of Gazis, the freedom fighters of Pelion were left with only their own passion instead of freedom. They frequently organized small raids against the enemy without any positive result. Moreover, the savagery and humiliation which followed each uprising together with the crushing tax burden drove people to despair.

Life on Mount Pelion after 1828

In 1828, however, following the naval battle of Navarino and the establishment of the free Greek state, the Turkish government, in an attempt to prevent new revolutionary movements close to its newly established borders, treated Milies and nearby villages with some leniency, since Thessaly, and therefore the Pelion region remained part of the Ottoman Empire. The hostile raids ceased and in the 1830's life was reorganized. In Milies, the ruined churches and houses were repaired, planting became more systematic, production improved – especially the production of silk; – the small handicraft industries began operating once more and trade began to develop. Some Miliotes who had gone to work in Egypt in the cotton business began to send money back home. Life slowly became more comfortable. During this period Grigorios Konstantas returned again to Milies, to teach at the School.

The activity of Konstantas in free Greece

Konstantas had left the village immediately after the failure of the 1821 uprising. He had taken refuge in the liberated areas of Greece and had attended the first National Convention as a delegate from Magnesia. In August 1824 the provincial government appointed him *Ephor*, that is Superintendent of Education. The offi-

cial document of his appointment is today in the village library.

This position of high honor included heavy responsibilities and jurisdiction. The *Ephor* had to be familiar with every detail concerning the state of education in free Greece, to set forth a new system of instruction, appoint new teachers and give his opinion on the founding of schools.

With his many years of experience, Konstantas undertook this difficult task with zeal. He visited many regions of the country and founded schools in Syros, Paros, Naxos, Tinos and Sifnos, supervising them and making sure they functioned properly.

In 1828 the president of the provisional government, John Capodistria, recognizing the great contribution of this Miliote scholar to the organization of education, made him the administrator of the orphanage on the island of Aegina which attended to the care and the education of the children of the freedom fighters who had died in the Greek War of Independence.

After the assassination of Capodistria, Grigorios Konstantas withdrew from public life, and in 1832, being disappointed by the government's treatment upon him, he decided to return to Pelion, still under the Turks and re-open the Milies School. His return filled the people with optimism and enthusiasm and his fame brought many students to the school, from surrounding villages.

The school building had suffered severe damage during the eleven years it had stood unoccupied. Many books, maps and scientific instru-

1. Νοτιάς 1824
Σφ. 3782.

A
22

Πρωτοβουλία Διοικήσεως τῆς Ἐπαρχίας

τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν

Πρὸς τὸν Ἐφοροποιότατον ἀρχιεπίσκοπον Κωνσταντίνου

Ἡ Διοίκησης διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως αὐτῆς, ἀποφ. ὅτι καὶ διὰ
τῶν ὑποχρεώσεων τῶν νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως
ἐκείνων τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως
ἐκείνων τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως

ἐκείνων τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως
ἐκείνων τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως
ἐκείνων τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως

ἐκείνων τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως
ἐκείνων τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως
ἐκείνων τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως
ἐκείνων τῶν Νοτιοανατολικῶν τῶν Ἐπαρχιῶν, ὡς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἐκτελέσεως

Ἡ Ναυγία τῆς 22 Αὐγούστου
1824

Ὁ Ἐφοροποιότατος ἀρχιεπίσκοπος

Ὁ Ἐφοροποιότατος ἀρχιεπίσκοπος



Document of the
provisional
government of
Greece,
appointing
Grigorios
Konstantas
Superintendent
of Education, in
Nauplion in 1824
(Milies Historical
Library)

The Evangelinaki
manor house,
built during the
18th century



ments had been lost but despite these shortages the elderly teacher began lessons and attempted to convey to his students the principles of the new educational system.

Konstantas died in August 1844 at a very advanced age and was buried next to the School. His tombstone later bore the names of Anthimos Gazis and Daniel Philippides as well.

After his death the school closed for good although, after the liberation of Thessaly in late 1881, the village elementary school was housed there, but it was destroyed in 1943 when the Germans burned Milies. The present high school was later built on the foundations of the former building and only a marble plaque informs visitors that during the Greek Enlightenment three Miliote scholars founded a famous school at Milies.

The final years of slavery

The Sultan's signature of the Greco-Turkish agreement for the concession of Thessaly to Greece



After the death of Konstantas, life in Milies remained relatively peaceful, though, the opening of the Crimean War in 1854 was enough to rekindle the sparks of revolution. Led by the Basdekis brothers, Filaretos and the Miliote Garefis, the villagers of Mount Pelion again organized an uprising which, without government backing, soon flagged and plunged the people into despair.

When in 1877 another Russo-Turkish war broke out, the people of Mount Pelion decided to form a provisional government with its seat in Makrynitsa and to attack the enemy on their own but the Turkish army besieged Makrynitsa and Mount Pelion was forced to capitulate.

The long-awaited day of liberation finally came in November 1881 when the Russians forced the Ottoman Empire to sign the Treaty of San Stefano which ceded Thessaly to Greece. Thus, after sixty years of struggle the villages on Mount Pelion were at last able to celebrate their freedom.

The village of Milies becomes the seat of a municipality

Immediately after the liberation, in accordance with the administrative organization of the Greek state, the villages of Mount Pelion were divided into municipalities and communities.

Because it was the home of the three "Teachers to the Nation", an outstanding intellectual center during the time of the Greek Enlightenment and of the operation of the Milies School and the revolutionary headquarters in 1821, Milies was considered by the government as one of the most important villages of Pelion. Consequently, it was made the seat of a municipality which included the neighboring villages of Vyzitsa, Pinakates, Kala Nera and Propan. The mayor of the village was selected to represent these five communities at the district of Larissa.

The inhabitants of the five villages elected the mayor. On election day the voters of each village formed

groups and holding flags and beating drums, passed through the village square calling out the names of the candidate they backed and they ended their parade at his mansion where a great feast awaited them.

The problems that each mayor had to face were many but, the primary one was education. As we mentioned above, the first school to operate in Milies was the Milies School, but later two others were founded. Now, two schools offered an obligatory four year curriculum, replacing the one that had closed. Health care, practically unknown during the Turkish occupation, was organized. The problems of private land ownership were pressing. Had the enormous tracts of land which belonged to the churches and monastery complexes been shared among the inhabitants, these problems might have been solved. Such a radical re-organization, however, was not carried out, nor the old system of ownership completely abolished. Thus many families were unjustly treated and class differences preserved causing widespread feelings of bitterness.

Immediately after the liberation a number of public works, supervised by the mayor, were begun in the village. Pack animals and caiques remained the usual means by which Milies kept in touch with Volos and the villages of Pelion. In 1884 the train line between Volos and Larissa was already in operation and later extended to Lechonia on the coast below Milies, but not to the rest of Mount Pelion.

Difficulties of communication with Volos and free competition with the

large handicraft industries in other towns led to a reduction in commercial activity. Quite a number of Miliotes left for Egypt where they created substantial fortunes in cotton. But repatriation and the regular summer holidays these rich Miliotes spent in their native village, had a positive effect on the development of the village.

At the end of the century mansions were built in the neo-classical style and before the ill-fated Greek-Turkish war of 1897 Milies had the look of a rich and prosperous country town.

1897 - The Turks return to Pelion

On April 26th of that year, the victorious Turks again raised their flag over Volos and the Pelian villages. Many Miliotes took refuge on the island of Skiathos to escape this new oppression and humiliation.

The occupying forces remained in the area for an entire year and only withdrew after a peace treaty had been signed between the two states in May 1898. The villages of Mount Pelion were free once more. The inhabitants returned and life resumed its normal rhythm.

The folk painter Theophilos in Milies

At this time the now celebrated folk painter Theophilos arrived in Milies. Very old villagers remember the figure



of the painter in his *foustanella*, who lived in the cells of Aghia Marina. He loved gathering small children around him and acting out the feats of Alexander the Great. In the evening, Theophilos frequented the small coffeehouses on the square and in return for a glass of *tsipouro* or a plate of food, he painted the walls with scenes from myths and legends and figures from ancient Greece, Byzantium and the Greek War of Independence.

Unfortunately, however, most of these works have been lost during the disasters, fires and the earthquakes which have befallen the village since. The only works to survive are the altar gate of the Iconostasis of Aghia Marina, three sections of a wall-painting that are today in the council house, a half-effaced representation on the portal of an old house and an inscription by an unknown artist that Theophilos restored.

The local train of Pelion

During the final years of the 1890's, through the efforts of Mayor Argyris Philippides, an important undertaking began in the village. This was the extension of the Volos-Lechonia railroad line to Milies. The mayor, who had also been a member of Parliament from the district of Magnesia, had demanded that the government allocate the required capital for this work, believing that easy communication with Volos would give an economic boost to life in the village.

The work was started by Italian engineers headed by the father of the



Wall paintings by the primitive painter Theophilos, from the old church of St. Marina, which was destroyed during the earthquake of 1955, now housed in the municipal building

well-known surrealist painter Giorgio De Chirico. Especially impressive features were the large arched iron bridge and the buttressing walls on the gradients. The twenty-eight kilometers of railroad line were first cleared with dynamite, shovels and pick axes.

The station at Milies was built in 1902 and the official inauguration of the train was celebrated two years later in the village "stadium" below the Milies School with all the inhabitants and many officials present amid the waving of Greek and Italian flags.

The gauge of the railroad was only sixty centimeters and the train with

five engines, "Jason", "Milies", "Pelion", "Tsangarada" and "Mary" travelled approximately twelve kilometers an hour. The coaches were made of wood and rather uncomfortable, unbearably hot in summer and extremely cold in winter and the smoke from the steam engines choked the passengers. However, the trip from Volos to Milies was very picturesque because the train travelled at first along the sea, then cut through groves of fruit and olive trees, passed up through gorges and along lush green hillsides and reached the village station huffing and puffing.

The arrival of the train brought a



The small Pelion train arriving at the village station (Photograph by Anna-Maria Voyatzaki, 1970)

tremendous change to the village because suddenly Milies became the most important commercial center in the region. The station was flooded daily by merchants and travellers who came on their animals from the surrounding villages to take the train to Volos. Approximately three hundred animals passed back and forth daily on the narrow lanes, loaded with merchandise for Volos or one of the many villages along the route. Next to the station two guest-houses and an inn were built, a mill worked non-stop in

the ravine and further up the line new shops opened, which were filled with goods not only from Volos but from Athens, as well. Customers increased, the number of jobs grew and the village experienced a period of great prosperity. On Sundays and holidays the train attracted visitors while during the summer it carried holiday makers who created the first tourist activity in the area.

Miliotes began travelling with their families to Volos and quite a number went all the way to Athens. The com-

Villagers celebrating the start of the train from Volos to Milies at the old 'Stadium' site, in front of the Milies School building (Photograph from the collection at the Milies Historical Library)



parative ease of communication between Milies and the capital decisively influenced the development of life in the town.

The train brought all kinds of merchandise to Milies. The bookseller always had Volos and Athens newspapers, as well as foreign magazines and Greek fashion magazines. The three textile stores sold luxury fabrics like velvet, taffeta, muslin and tulle and the dressmakers worked on patterns which arrived direct from Paris. There was an abundance of work in the

village for the three dressmakers and the two tailors, who made men's suits and shirts with stiff collars to order. Four shoemakers sold boots but also took measurements for the finest women's pumps. One could find all kinds of treats in the grocery stores while the bakeries worked steadily and the four butcher's shops always had customers, because besides the locals there were also foreigners going back and forth to the town – merchants, travellers and visitors who made Milies a bustling place.





A postcard of the
small train in
Volos
(Photograph by
Stournaras, 1905)



The small train
crossing the iron
bridge designed
by De Chirico
(Photograph by
Ron Cox – G.
Nathenas' archives)

The village at the beginning of the 20th century

At the beginning of the present century Milies was unquestionably the leading village in the region. It had nearly 3,000 inhabitants and over three hundred and fifty mansions. Four priests officiated simultaneously on Sundays and the feast days; three doctors, one pediatrician and a dentist resided there permanently along with two nurses and a midwife.

Milies had three schools, the junior high school which was housed in the old Milies School, the four grade primary school and the girls school. It had however, still not acquired a senior high school so that those wishing to continue their studies had to go either to Volos or Athens. There was also some cultural activity manifested by a society which was formed with the idea of preserving and promoting the customs, dances and songs of the region.

Many inhabitants were rich landowners who cultivated their large properties with thousands of olive trees. At harvest time around fifteen hundred semi-nomadic *Karagounes* from the plain of Thessaly with their families, a priest and a cantor, brought their animals and their households here, set up their huts in the fields and helped the local people collect the olives. The olive presses worked constantly and the bountiful produce left for Volos by train, and brought revenue to the village.

The village buzzed with life. All these people gathered at night in the

coffeehouses in the square with its huge plane trees, took a stroll to Lakkes or jammed the seats of the "stadium" to watch various performances. On feast days, the chapels and their courtyards could not hold all the faithful who came for vespers. The open areas overflowed with young and old who would gather early. Often the Volos Orchestra came up by train to honor the feasts and dances by its presence. The evening parties and the balls held in the large mansions equalled those in Athens, for the ladies of the house, dressed and bedecked in the latest word in fashion, gave sumptuous banquets embellished with embroidered tablecloths, silver candelabra and porcelain dinner services.

It is true that there were strong class distinctions but this period of great prosperity did not only further enrich landowners, but even the poorest could find work to satisfy their immediate daily needs.



All these details about the every day life in Milies during the first years of the twentieth century give us the appearance of a very lively town in full bloom.



Kostas Garefis,
fighter for the
cause of Greek
Macedonia,
depicted by the
primitive painter
Theophilos in
1909 (From the
collection of
Prof. B.
Kyriazopoulos)

The activity of Kostas Garefis

Unfortunately, this peaceful and happy period did not last long. During the following years Milies, like the rest of Greece, experienced repeated hardship. Already in 1901 the Macedonian Struggle against the Bulgarian guerrillas had begun. In this war Kostas Garefis, a descendant of one of the first families to settle in Milies, was distinguished for his valor. Eager, hot-tempered and fearless, Garefis by 1905 had enlisted in the forces of the Greek army officer and guerilla leader, Pavlos Melas. In March of the following year he returned to the village and organized his own corps.

After the church service on the Feast of the Holy Spirit, which was held every year in the Chapel of *Aghia Triada* (Holy Trinity), Garefis left for the campaign with his young men. All the inhabitants, the mayor and the authorities had gathered at the church to bid him farewell.

On May 6 in a clash with the Bulgarian *Comitadji*, near the village of Tsernetsovo northwest of Salonica Garefis slew their leader, Karataso, but was fatally wounded himself. The Miliotes honored him as a hero. Tsernetsovo was renamed Garefion and the folk painter Theophilos immortalized him in a painting. In 1920, General Mazarakis caused a plaque to be placed on the Garefis family home informing passersby that it was the hero's birthplace. A few years later a marble bust was erected next to the Milies School and another monument of his decorates the courtyard of the Chapel of *Aghia Triada*.

1912-1922 War and disaster

In 1912 disaster struck the village. In the middle of autumn a continuous downpour transformed the small streams into raging torrents which overflowed, sweeping away retaining walls, buildings and animals. The Boufa valley was covered with wreckage, tree trunks and mud. The water continued to rise and the train could not get to the station because the level of the river had reached the top of the bridge. This terrible calamity left most of the houses uninhabitable, the crops ruined and many animals drowned. It was a very difficult year because Miliotes were away fighting in the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. After the Balkan wars the government reorganized the administrative structure throughout Greece and abolished municipalities in small settlements. The four villages adjacent to Milies thus acquired an independent structure and the town was reduced to a simple community.

This decision struck a blow to life in Milies, but its sting was lost amid the more general misery of World War I when Miliote men again left for the front, and the women, the elderly and the children had to face alone the daily problems of life. These became even more intolerable when the Anglo-French blockade causing near famine, closed all ports of royalist-controlled Greece. A severe winter followed. The situation worsened further with the war of 1920-1922 and the Asia Minor catastrophe. Quite a few refugees came to Milies seeking protection and work.

Prosperity in the 1930s

After this turbulent period of almost continual war, the inhabitants of Pelion resumed the old rhythm of daily farm life and these relatively peaceful years lasted till the eve of World War II.

In 1925 the nearby area of Lakkes was planted with pine trees and in a few years the village had acquired a new forest. Two years later the central square was paved with Pelion stone; the old buildings once used as guest houses were pulled down; the cemetery in the churchyard was moved and on its site a large bell-tower was erected and a flower garden was laid out. The square was extended but at the same time two of the four plane trees were cut down and the old coffeehouse known as *Kivotos* (The Arc) with wall paintings by Theophilos was demolished in order to build the *Aigli*, a more luxurious establishment.

The village library donated by Krystallia Oikonomaki

The same year the village also acquired an important cultural center. A

Miliote woman, Krystallia Oikonomaki, offered to build a library which would house the treasures of the Milies School, the valuable manuscripts, codices and maps, the physics and chemistry instruments along with the 3,000 old books which had survived the disasters of the past. Display cases also contained the vestments of Anthimos Gazis and the folded flag of the Greek War of Independence which had been raised in Milies in 1821, the seal and the school registry and the document appointing Grigorios Konstantas as *Ephor* of Education in the first administration of the newly formed Greek state. The donation came just in time for the old school had been on the verge of collapse, and efforts to move the valuable books to another location had been continuous since the last years of the previous century.

So now, the village could boast of possessing a local "ethnological museum" which in the years that followed was visited by many scholars and particularly students of the Greek Enlightenment, to admire the work that had been achieved by the three Miliote scholars.

Ταχυδρομ. Βόλον 12/12/53

«ΤΑΧΥΔΡΟΜΟΣ» ΣΕΛΙΣ 3

ΣΗΜΑΝΤΙΚΟ ΑΠΟΚΤΗΜΑ ΤΗΣ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΗΣ ΚΩΜΟΠΟΛΕΩΣ

Πώς ἔγινε ἡ βιβλιοθήκη Μηλεῶν

Η ΔΩΡΗΤΡΙΑ Κ. ΚΡΥΣΤΑΛΛΙΑ ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΑΚΗ, ΗΛΙΚΙΑΣ 103 ΕΤΩΝ, ΑΦΗΓΕΙΤΑΙ

Clipping of the
newspaper
"Volos Courier",
dated December
12, 1953

Important projects in the village

While the library was being built the motor road connecting the station with the village of Tsangarada was opened. A branch of this road led to the main square of Milies. Even though for many years it was merely a narrow dirt road with many dangerous curves it at least made access by train to Volos easier. The connection brought about a change in the life of the village because it somewhat reduced the activity at the station. A second road, started in 1935, connecting Milies with the coastal area of Boufa, did not bring about immediate change since bus service took a long time to be established. Thus, for another fifteen years the train remained the only way of getting to Volos.

During this period electricity was introduced, supplied by a small generator set up as a private enterprise by Yiorgos Fappas. In the evening the narrow lanes were illuminated and many houses were no longer dependant on oil lamps. A silent movie theater in the hall of the *Aigli* coffee-house regularly showed the films of Greta Garbo and Rudolph Valentino to a packed house.

By the end of the 1930's the village had an Agricultural School, whose aim was to provide students with solutions to the various problems of cultivation and stock-raising. An agriculturalist gave lessons in forest management and bee-keeping. The practical lessons took place at a model farm set up in 1912 when the community ceded to

the state a large tract of land on which to create a nursery from which every farmer on Mount Pelion could buy, at very low prices, all kinds of young fruit-bearing trees to increase tree planting and cultivation in the region. This highly important school operated, unfortunately, for only a brief period and the model farm stands deserted today. It is worth noting that the community recently ceded the farm to the University of Thessaloniki for the creation of a modern university annex although this project has not made any headway due to a lack of funding.

Although commercial activity in Milies had somewhat lessened, the village on the eve of World War II still proudly maintained its old grandeur. No one had forgotten the three great Miliote scholars, the accomplishments and the fame of the Milies School, and the declaration of the Greek Revolution on Pelion in the village square. Because this rich historical past had left a strong mark on the small village, the news of its nearly total destruction by the Nazis on October 4, 1943 was one of the most shocking moments during that horrible period of the German occupation. The events of those sickening days are still vividly remembered by the elderly inhabitants of the village and they can recount them in complete detail.

World War II

At the start of the war, most of the Miliote men again headed for the Albanian front and only women, chil-

dren and old men were left in the village. It was a hard winter and the harvest difficult because of the lack of hands.

In November 1940, after an Italian aerial attack on Volos, and another by the Germans a short time later, many of the city's inhabitants took refuge in the villages of Pelion. Families from Volos, some of them Jewish, sought security at Milies and its population jumped to over 5,000. Unfortunately, however, due to the capture of Volos by the Germans, food supplies in Milies grew scarce and with the increase in population and the poor harvest which followed the situation became worse every day.

In May 1941 Italian occupation troops appeared in the village and camped at Lakkes. They stayed until Italy's capitulation in September 1943. Abandoning Volos, the Italians left storerooms full of food, arms and ammunition. This material was hurriedly carried away and large quantities transported to Milies by train and from there, under the supervision of the partisans, it was loaded on mules and taken to secure hideaways. These suspicious movements, however, were observed by the Germans who had by then set themselves up in Volos, and a systematic attack on the villages of Mount Pelion was organized.

The burning of the village

The resistance, reacting sharply to the enemy, set up ambushes. On Sunday September 26, 1943 a German

column set off for Milies; an officer and a soldier moved ahead but before reaching Milies they were shot at by the resistance fighters and in order to escape hid in a cave waiting for the column to appear. From his hiding place the officer shot and killed a guerrilla, but the sound disclosed their hiding place to the partisans and the two Germans were killed by a guerrilla hand-grenade.

When the column reached Milies and did not find the two Germans, they were assumed to have been made prisoners and the Germans waited in the village until Friday October 1 demanding the release of the two missing men. Having no response to this, they returned to Volos taking with them eleven Miliote men as hostages and leaving an order with the president of the community to deliver the captives.

As soon as the Germans left, the Miliotes went into the fields, found the dead men and the next day a German mission arrived at the village to get them. By then, the fate of the village had been decided. At dawn on October 4, a column set off from Volos and a few hours later the village was burning. In reprisal, the Germans would burn down Milies and execute all men between 16 and 60.

"I'll remember that day as long as I live" an old Miliote said. "We had gone off without a worry to the fields, to our vineyards, when we heard the bells sounding the alarm. By the time we got back there were fires everywhere. Soldiers threw some powder in through the windows of our house, shot at it and the place went up in flames. Soon the sky was stained a



Ruins of an old wind-mill and a hotel near the station, destroyed in the fire which was set by German troops on October 4, 1943 (Photograph taken in 1981)

Lawrence Benjamin

[illegible]

*Letter sent from
Milies on
November 10,
1943 describing
the great disaster
which struck the
village on
October 4, 1943
(From the B.
Giannoutsikos
archives)*



*Monument
erected in
memory of the
inhabitants of
Milies, who were
executed by
German troops
on October 4,
1943 (Photograph
taken in 1981)*

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑ
ΝΟΜΟΣ ΜΗΤΗΝΣΙΑΣ
ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΣ ΜΗΛΕΩΝ

Π Ρ Ο Σ
ΤΟ ΣΤΟΝ ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟΝ ΠΡΟΝΟΙΑΣ

Αριθ. 473

Α Θ Η Ν Α Σ

Report sent by
the president of
the
administrative
committee of the
Milies
community to
the Minister of
Social Welfare,
dated November
2, 1943,
describing the
destruction of
the village by
German troops
(From the B.
Giannoutsikos
archives)

Ο ΠΡΟΕΔΡΟΣ ΤΗΣ
ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΕΩΣ ΤΗΣ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΑΣ
ΜΗΛΕΩΝ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ

Π Ε Ρ Ι

"Παροχής όσον τό δυνατόν
μεγαλυτέρας ύλικής άρωγής
εώς τών πυροπαθείς κατοί-
κους."

Αμφάβω τήν τιμήν νά άναφέρω ύμιν ότι τήν 4ην
Οκτωβρίου 1943 Τάγμα Γερμανικού Στρατού έκ Βό-
λου προερχόμενον έκυρκόλησεν περί τās πεντακοσίας
κατοικίας τής κομποδέας μας και έξετέλεσε διά
τυφεκισμού μεν είκοσι όντώ συνδημότας μας διά καύ-
σεως δέ έντός τών κατοικιών των έτέρους τρεις.
Τά άποτελέσματα του πλήγματος τούτου είναι εύκό-
λως κατανοητά διά τόν μετέπειτα χρόνον. Δέν παρα-
λείπω δέ νά αναφέρω ύμιν ότι έκυρκολήθησαν προσέ-
τι και άπαντα τά δημόσια καταστήματα και Γραφεία
(Συμβολαιογραφείον, Υποθηκοφυλακείον, Είρηνοδι-
κειόν, Πτοισματοδικείον, Αγρονομείον, Γραφείον
παλαιόν Κοινότητος μετά του Αρχείου, Γραφείον
εώς τών Δασονόμου, Γραφεία Δικηγορικά δύο, Σχο-
λεία δύο, Αρχείον Εκκλησίας μετά τής Εκκλησίας
ήμικαμμένης), ως και τά ιδιωτικά μαγαζεία πώσης
φύσεως. Η έντεϋθεν προκύψασα συμφορά και ζημία
είναι τόσον τρομακτική διά τούς πληγέντας συνδη-
μότας μας, όσον δέν είναι δυνατόν νά περιγραφῇ.

Άρκει νά τονίσωμεν ότι τήν ήμέραν τής καταστροφής (Δευτέρα) δόλοκληρος ό
πληθυσμός, λόγω τής έργασίας, είχαν εκχυθῇ τελείως ήσυχος και άμέριμνος
εις τούς άγρους και δέν είχαν άπολύτως τόποτε μεταφέρει έξω τής οικίας του.
Διά τούτο και η καταστροφή ήτο ολοκληρωτική διά τούς πληγέντας πυροπαθείς.
Ούτω έστερήθησαν και τής έλαχιστοτάτης ποσότητας τροφίμων, ειδών ένδymασίας,
υποδύσεως και λοιπών ειδών βιοτικής ανάγκης, έχοντας ως μόνον διασωθέν πρῶγ-
μα τά χειρότερα ένδύματα άτινα έφορούν εις τās άγροτικές έργασίας των και

ΣΧΕΤΙΚΑ ΜΕ ΤΗΝ ΚΑΤΑΣΤΡΟΦΗΝ ΤΩΝ ΜΗΛΕΩΝ

177

Μηλέαι 18/10/1943

Α. Φιλίππιδης

Επιστολήν. Φιλίππου Φιλιππίδη πρός τήν Δ/νίδα "Αννα Φαραντότου

Copy of letter
written by Dr.
Phil. Philippides,
dated October
18, 1943, relating
to the
destruction of
the village (From
the B.
Giannoutsikos
archives)

Από τό κεντρικό χωριό δέν έμειναν παρά έλάχιστα σπήτια. Τό Βενε-
δοχείον Σταθμού του Δήμητσα και του Κώστα Βογιατζή εσώθησαν, από μετ' έως
του Γερέση κανένα. Σώθηκαν τής Παγώνα έπειτα τής Όλγας, όλα τά άλλα έως
τη Πλατεί δέν υπάρχουν. Στη Πλατεία σώθηκεν η Αίγλη τό σπήτι του Γιάννη
Φιλιππίδη και του Κουκοβίνη, έπειτα εις τās λήκμες μόνον τό σπήτι του Στρον-
γυλίδη και του Αντωνιάδου με τη Σηλετα του Αγίου Νικολάου, επίσης σώθηκε
τό σπήτι του Ιωαννίδη τό παλιό της Μαργίτας Φιλιππίδη και της Ολυμπι-
άδας Φιλιππίδου (Βαρβέρη). Στόν αμαξητό δρόμο μόνον του Κίμωνος και τό μι-
σό του Γορδάνη. Έπειτα σώθηκαν όλα τά τσιλικοδμεϊνα και μέρος από τās πε-
τράτες, καίμεν τό μεγάλο Σχολείο και τό σχολείο των θηλέων, επίσης καίμεν τό
σπήτι του άγροκηπιου και τό εκκλησάκι. Στόν άγιο ταξίδαρχη μικρά ζημία.
Η βιβλιοθήκη μηδέν ευτυχώς την εσεβάσθησαν. Αυτή εν ολίγοις η περιγραφή
από τα Γυφτακείνα κανένα. Ευτυχώς εξησφαλίσαμεν για τρεις τεσσaras μήνας
λειτουργείαν συνιτίου δια 1200 άτομα με μερίδα φαγητού και 100 δρ. ψωμιο
έλλιπω νά συνεχισθούν επί μακρόν. Μας λείπουν βεπάσματα ρούχα παπούτσια
κρυώνουν, κανουμε ότι μπορούμε κινηθήτε και σετς απ' εκεί, κατι μπορείτε νά
ανακουφίσετε τό κόσμο τό χωριό θα σας ευγνωμονεί. Εγώ τούς πήρα από τό
Κομάρχη για πρώτη δωσι 20.000.000, από ένα μικρό έρρανο 2.600.000, και πεί-
ραμε είδη ρουχισμού, πρόγορα ότι κανεντε.

horrible red, the animals were bellowing, the roar of the burning wood and the crack of the collapsing walls were awful. The entire village was gutted. They had destroyed us. But what was really unbearable was the slaughter at the station. There amid the flames the Germans executed our fellow villagers in groups of five. The next day we buried twenty-nine in a common grave and today a simple marble monument records for the visitor the names of those we lost."

The first help came from the International Red Cross. It organized meals and distributed clothing; it tried to deal with the spectre of winter but only a few inhabitants stayed in Milies immediately after the disaster. The rest went down to the huts they had in the olive groves or were put up in neighboring villages, in Volos and in Athens.

It was another bad winter. Even at the end of March it was still snowing. Once again the Germans began combing the whole area of Mount Pelion; they came as far as Milies and pillaged the area, arresting men, executing them on the spot or taking them captive. This second blow suffered by the villagers in such a short period led to great despair. The end of the war, now so close, came too late for Milies.

The disasters continue

As if all this were not enough torrential rains began on September 14, the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, lasting for days and inundating the village. The rushing water

swept away the burnt ruins and uprooted trees.

An entire area from the *Tsilikodimeika* and to Aghia Marina was obliterated by a landslide. The large bridge collapsed, carrying away everything in its path. The village square, the surrounding area and its narrow lanes were all covered by a thick layer of mud. The village presented a picture of biblical destruction.

A quote from the Volos newspaper *Thessalia* in its edition of July 23, 1946 summed up the situation: "going up the lanes from the railroad station to the central square, one finds nothing but ruins." Milies was mired in poverty and even after the liberation, armed conflicts, skirmishes and attacks continued in the area during the Greek civil war which didn't end until 1949. In those ten years beginning with World War II, Miliote families mourned one hundred and six dead and three hundred and sixteen wounded, twenty-five of whom remained invalids. This was a remarkably high price to pay in pain and suffering for a village the size of Milies.

Years of reconstruction

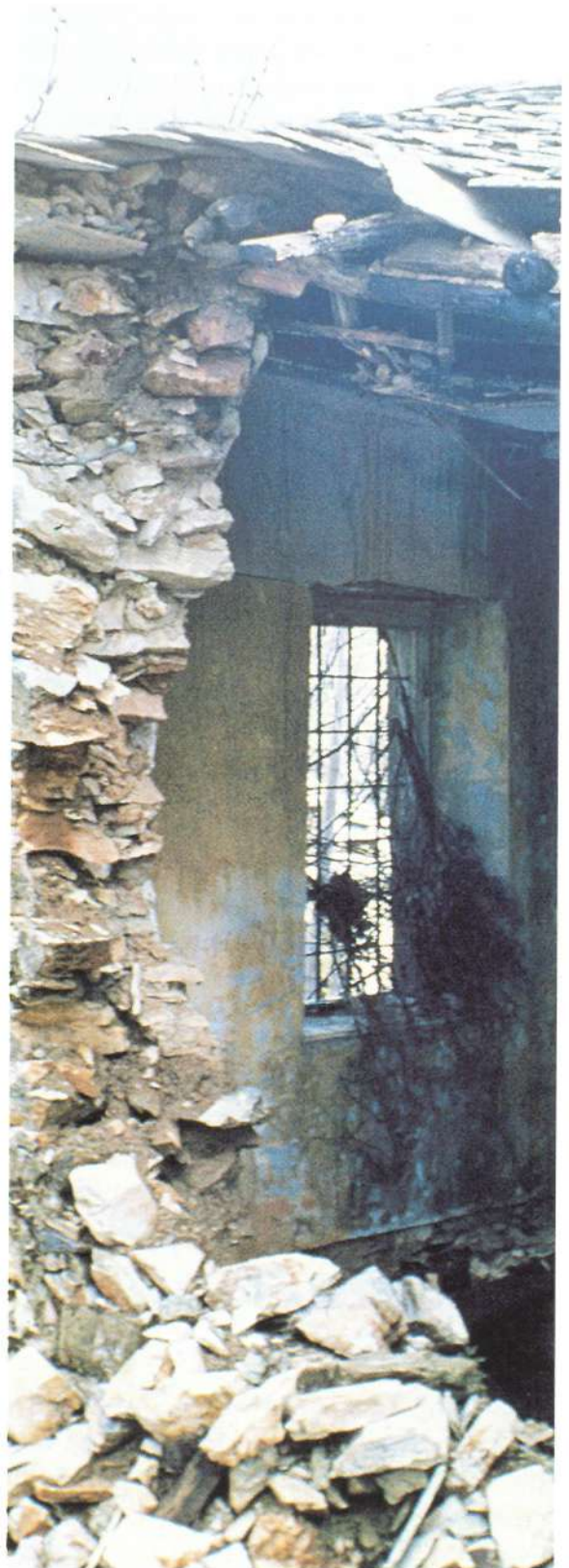
Yet, life went on. The following years were a time of reconstruction. With state assistance and money from the indemnities paid by the enemy as well as from plots of land donated by owners or bought and shared out by the community, they began to rebuild whatever had been left of their ruined village.

The inhabitants sought from the state organized medical care, housing loans at low interest and direct telephone communication to Volos and tried to get the abandoned motor road that went down to the sea repaired so that the journey would be easier and quicker. The entire village assisted in this work and the first bus arrived at Boufa in 1951. This line was of great service to the inhabitants of the eastern Pelion area and dealt a blow to the operation of the train mainly because the bus trip was shorter. As a result, activity at the train station lessened, the customers at the market thinned out, the inn and the hotels were frequently empty. The village ceased being the most important commercial junction of the surrounding area. However, the inhabitants of Milies itself often travelled on their local train.

The earthquake of 1955

Then suddenly another great disaster struck Mount Pelion. On Easter Day of the year 1955, terrible earthquakes shook the district of Magnesia. In Milies not only did many of the half-ruined mansions collapse, but also many of the makeshift homes, leaving the Miliotes homeless once again while the aftershocks, which lasted for days, caused anguish and fear.

Immediately after the earthquakes the government undertook a comprehensive rebuilding program setting up earthquake proof buildings so that the enormous housing problem could be dealt with. In consequence the char-





*Ruins caused by
the earthquake
of 1955
(Photographs
taken in 1980)*

acter of the genuine Pelion house was inevitably lost. A few of the old mansions that were still left, the church and a couple of fountains were now the only reminders of a lost popular architectural tradition.

The freeze of 1957

A nightmarish calamity followed the severe winter of 1957. The freeze killed off the olive trees and the harvest of the next ten years was lost in a single night. The beauty presented by the once lush fields was destroyed. Suffering irreparable damage, many landowners small and large lost heart completely, abandoned the village forever and sought work in Germany or distant Australia.

Life during the 1960's and 1970's

An improvement in the standard of living began to appear early in the 1960's with the inauguration of certain communal works. Among the most important was the completion of the water supply line and the arrival of electricity. In 1963 the inhabitants had water in their homes and courtyards. The daily hauling of jugs and cans and washing of clothes at the fountain were now just a memory. A short time later the first eighty telephones were installed in houses, offices and shops. The village was connected by road

with neighboring Vyzitsa and the road leading to the sea was widened.

In 1964 celebrations in honor of Anthimos Gazis were organized. On November 8, a bust of the rebel scholar was unveiled in the forecourt of the library in the main square. The celebration began with a service at the Church of the *Pammegistoi Taxiarches* performed by the Metropolitan of Dimitrias and continued with parades and the placing of wreaths, with lectures and artistic performances and ended with a feast and dance in the hall of the Cultural Center. This celebration, the first after so much suffering, would remain in the memories of all who attended it and when the trees which had been damaged so badly finally began to bear fruit, the Miliotes could again face the future with some optimism.

The public works continued and in 1972, the village High School opened; it was built with a grant from Kostas Grammenis on the ruins of the Milies School. The grant also provided for a scholarship for the best student. That same year the church of Aghios Yeorgios next to the station, was rebuilt, a second floor was added to the library and work on the three-storey Municipality Building was begun on a lot which had been donated by Yiannis Philippides. On May 9, 1971 the church of Aghios Nikolaos the Younger was completed and began services; construction had begun in 1926 by a grant from Anna Farandatou. These works unquestionably improved the living standard of the inhabitants and the village appeared to have overcome the terrible disasters of the past years.

Θεσσαλία 4/7/71

ΣΕΛΙΣ 3

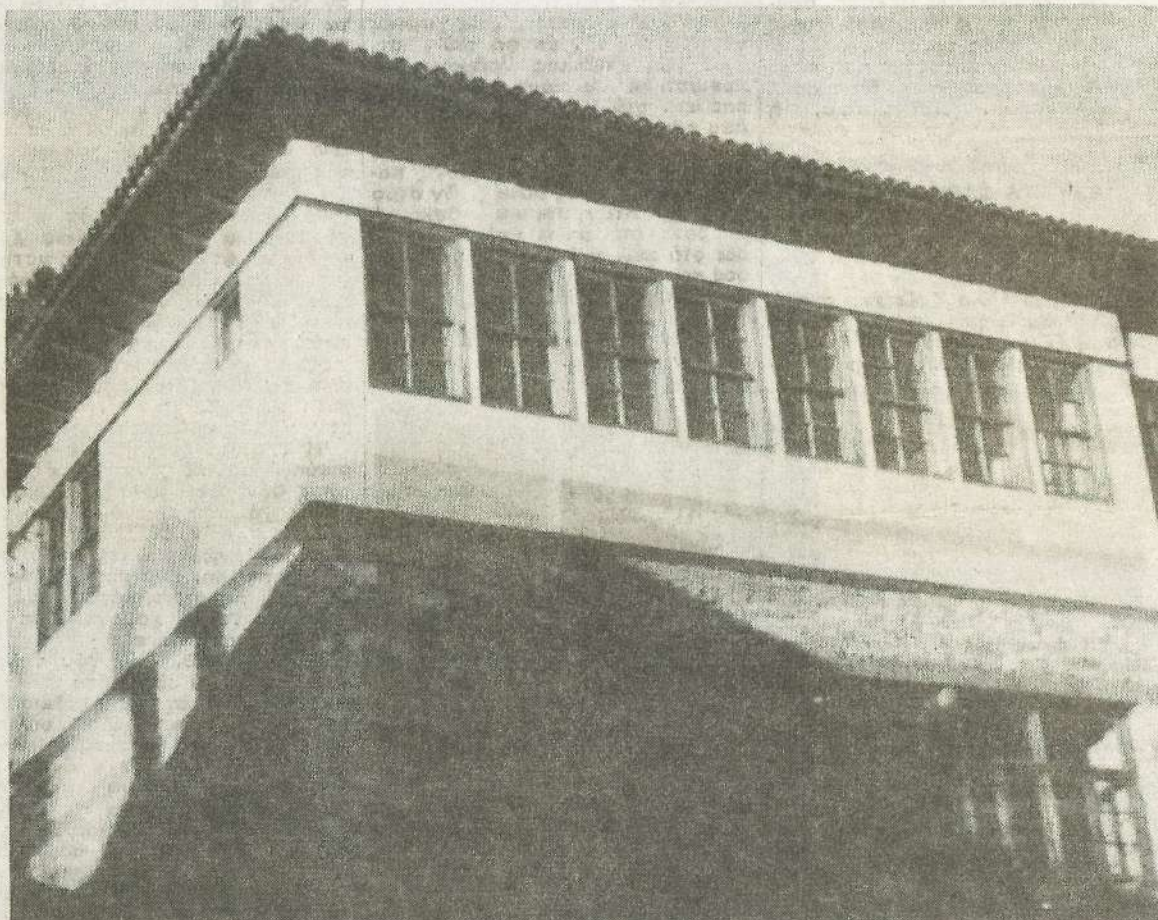
3

Ἐπίσκεψι σὲ μιὰ ἱστορικὴ κωμόπολι

--- ΜΗΛΙΕΣ ---

Περίφημο πνευματικὸ κέντρο ἄλλοτε,
προσπάθειες γιὰ ἐπιβίωσι σήμερα

Ἀπαραίτητη ἡ ἵδρυσις γυμνασίου



Αὐτὸ τὸ θαυμάσιο οἰκοδόμημα, προορισμένο νὰ λειτουργῇ γήση ὡς γυμνάσιο κι ἔτοιμο ἄδῳ κι ἕνα χρόνο περὶ
που, ἐξακολουθεῖ νὰ παραμένῃ κλειστό...

Clipping from
the newspaper
"Thessalia",
dated July 4,
1971, referring to
the necessity of
operating a high
school in Milies

*The Milies
Historical Library
(Photograph
taken 1982)*



*The new building
which houses the
office of the
Milies
municipality and
the local
museum
(Photograph
taken 1988)*



The local train comes to a halt

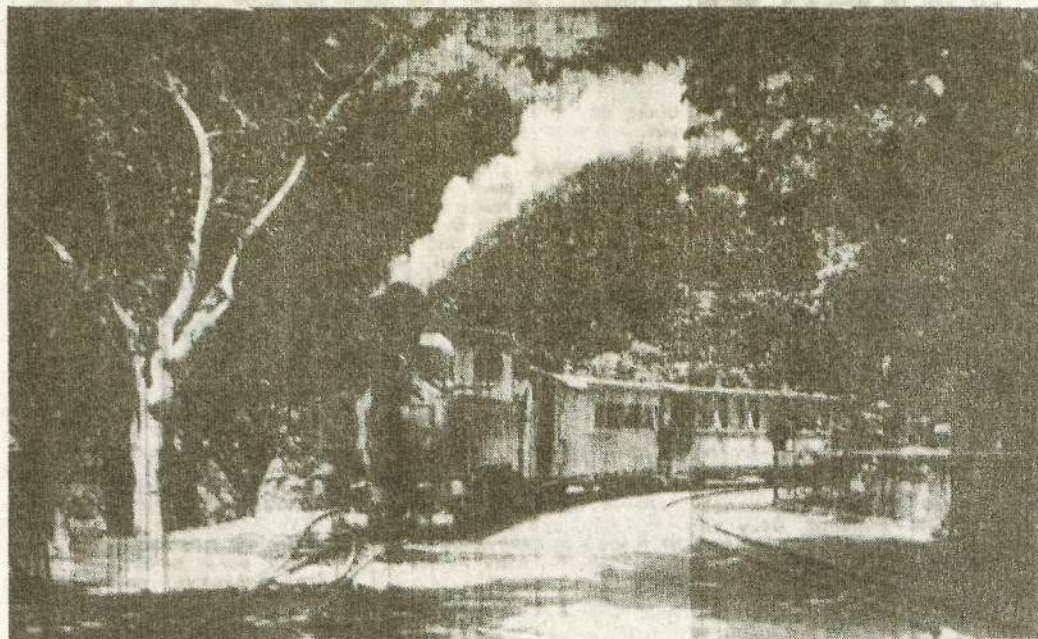
In this relatively calm and optimistic atmosphere, the decision of the authoritarian Greek military government to suspend the operation of the local train upset the Miliotes. In June 1971 the legendary train, the *Moundzouris* (Old Sooty), climbed the slope of the mountain for the last time. The decision was irrevocable; the operation had been deemed unprofitable. The

station, the market and the surrounding area which had once bustled with life were suddenly deserted. The train sat motionless in the station at Volos and one of its engines was transferred to the Greek Railroad Company Museum in Athens. Many Miliotes, however, continued to yearn for it and the "Society of Friends of the Train" was created in Volos and fought to make it operational again. In August 1987 the train made a trial run around Volos and it is expected that, soon, it will once more come up to Milies.

Ε
Επίσκεψη σὲ μιὰ ἱστορικὴ κωμόπολι

--- ΜΗΛΙΕΣ ---

Ματιὲς στὴν ἀγορά τους. Καὶ μὲς γιὰ τὸ τραῖνο ποὺ... χάθηκε!



Τὸ τραῖν τῶν Μηλιῶν. Αὐτὴ ἡ τόσο γνώριμη φιγούρα καὶ αὐτὰ τὰ φορτωμένα μὲ ἀναμνήσεις καὶ νοσταλγία βαγόνια του, ἔπαψαν ἄδω κι ἕνα μῆνα κόμουν τὴν ἐμφάνισί τους. "Ἀς ἐλπίζουμε πῶς τὸ τραῖν δὲν ἔφυγε γιὰ πάντα καὶ πῶς σύντομα θά... ξανασφυρίξει.

Clipping of a
Volos
newspaper,
referring to the
government's
decision to stop
operating the
Pelion train

Recent times

At the beginning of the 1970's some visitors, charmed by the great natural beauty of the village and its rich tradition, decided to acquire houses in Milies, giving new building and economic impetus to life in the area.

In 1982, under private initiative, a local museum was created with the aim of presenting to visitors (both Greek and foreign), the history and the folkloric wealth of this beautiful village of Mount Pelion and honoring the memories of the past as well as the living traditions of today. Through exhibits, talks and a yearly two-day fes-

tival which is organized with the cooperation of all the inhabitants, Milies is promoted not only in Greece but also abroad. Today the museum belongs to the community and is housed in the Municipality building which was built in accordance with the traditional architecture of Mount Pelion.

At the same time the Athletic and Cultural Associations started bringing to the people of Milies a variety of entertainment. The folk-dancing group, one of the best in the area, is the pride of the village.

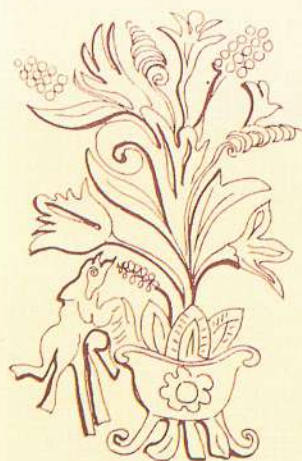
The end of 1988 found Milies in full bloom, viewing the future optimistically with only the normal problems of daily life, large or small, left to be faced.



*Boys and girls
from Milies
dancing Greek
dances in the
main square
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

ΖΗΣΤΕ ΤΗΝ ΠΗΛΙΟΡΕΙΤΙΚΗ ΠΑΡΑΔΟΣΗ

25-26 / 6 / 1988



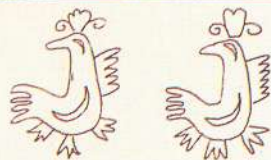
Ελάτε στις ΜΗΛΙΕΣ



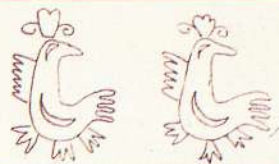
θα βρείτε

- εργαστήρια και σπιτικά ανοικτά
- εκθέσεις και ομιλίες
- οπτικοακουστικά προγράμματα
- ελληνικούς χορούς

ΟΡΓΑΝΩΣΗ ΑΠΟ ΤΟ ΤΟΠΙΚΟ ΜΟΥΣΕΙΟ



OPEN VILLAGE
ACTIVITY
ON MOUNT PELION
MILIES



ΜΕ ΤΗΝ ΣΥΝΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ ΟΛΟΚΑΗΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΧΩΡΙΟΥ

Poster for the annual "Open Village Activity", held during the last week of June, which is organized by the local museum with the collaboration of the village people

A WALK THROUGH THE VILLAGE DURING THE OF YEARS PROSPERITY



The earliest and best documented description of Milies is given by the two local scholars Grigorios Konstantas and Daniel Philippides in their book, *Neoteriki Geographia* (Modern Geography), printed in Vienna in 1791. In the chapter dealing with the Province of Thessaly, the authors, using the simple everyday Greek language give a remarkably detailed description of their native village, attempting to portray not only the social conditions but also the economic problems faced by its inhabitants.

A few years later, Argyris, brother of Daniel Philippides, in his book *Meriki Geographia* (Partial Geography) provides additional information which completes the general picture of the village at the beginning of the 19th century. Since then, those who have studied Milies have focused their interests on important historical events while the actual evolution of this village has not aroused their curiosity. A few rare photographs that have been saved, though valuable evidence, cover only certain aspects of the history.

Furthermore, the terrible disaster which struck the area during the war in 1943, followed by the great earthquakes in 1955 were both so extensive and brought about so many changes that it is difficult for any visitor today to imagine what Milies was like before.

The description which follows, and which aims to bring back to life this long forgotten aspect of the village has been based exclusively on interviews with local people. These records are particularly valuable since some of these people are no longer living.

Milies in the 1930's

In those days Milies was the commercial center of western Mount Pelion thanks to the local train which ensured easy communication with the nearby city-port of Volos. About 3,000 people lived in the village, among them rich farm owners producing olives and olive oil, figs, apples, wine, wheat, corn and silk. There were over 350 large family houses most of them built according to the local architectural tradition, whilst others displayed neoclassical features following the style prevailing in the second half of the past century. Today very few of these homes have survived and not

one of them is occupied the year round because nearly all the wealthy families abandoned the village after it was burnt by the Germans during the war and they had nowhere to live. Many houses were then left in ruins, shops never reopened, cobbled paths were uncared for, olive presses and mills closed down.

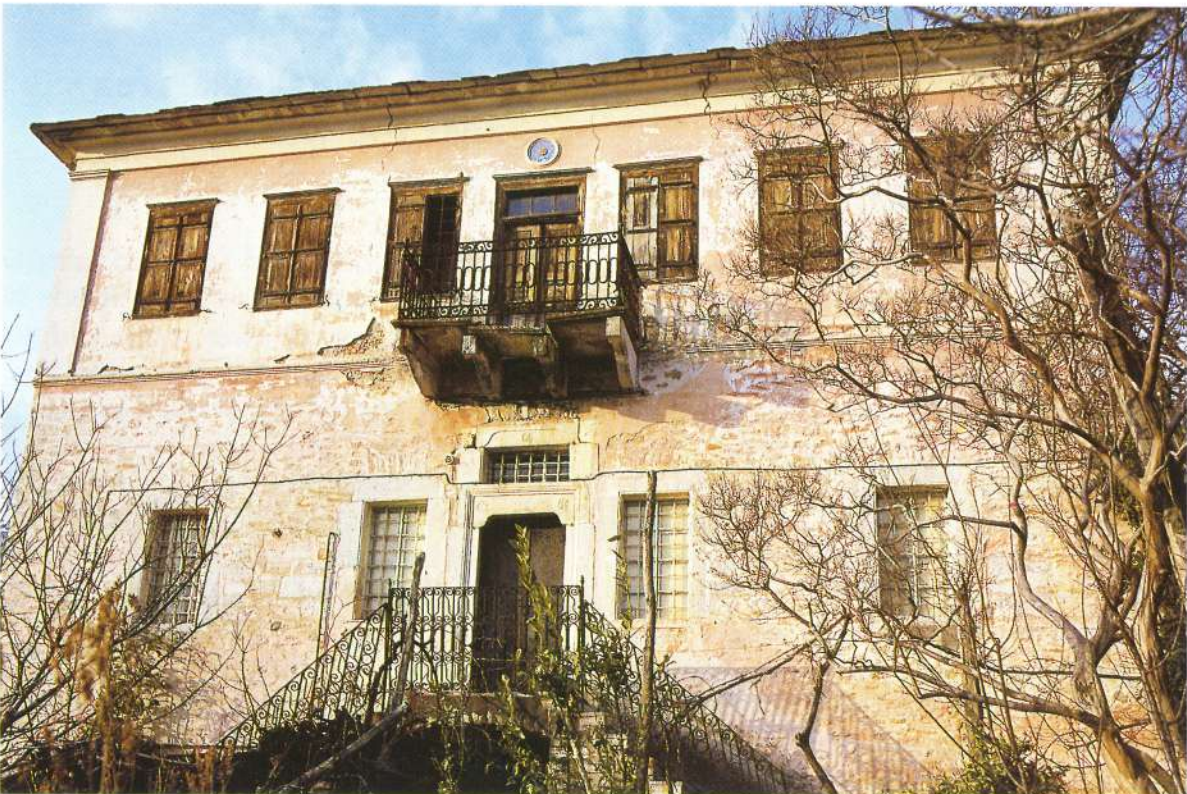
When reconstruction started after the great earthquakes that shook the area in 1955, it was adapted to the limited resources of those who had remained in the village: people who needed an earthquake-resistant, cheap and safe building to house their family as soon as possible and who could by no means afford to build a traditional Pelion house.



View of Milies in 1926 (Photograph by Stournaras – offered to the local museum by the late author Kostas Tachtsis)



The family home of Constantine Philippides dating from the end of the 19th century, which was donated to the community (Photograph taken 1981)



The family home of Yiannis Ioannides, showing distinct neo-classical influences, was one of the few homes spared during the great fire, and earthquakes (Photograph taken 1981)

Memories of the elderly Miliotes

Although the layout of the village was preserved, each neighborhood now looked quite different and it is only the elderly Miliotes who still remember how their village once looked. Even though it often saddens them to talk about the old days, they don't object to give all the information they can, knowing that they are our only link with the recent past. With these recorded conversations to guide us we will now try to find out how the village developed and how it looked in the 1930's.

The oldest neighborhoods in the village

The oldest part of the village was located close to the cemetery next to the chapels of Panayia, Aghios Athanassios and Aghia Kyriaki, while the first neighborhood must have been built around 1500 by the monastery of Aghios Konstantinos. A document written in 1510, said to have been found in that church, confirms that the village was already developed as early as that. "A lot has changed in this neighborhood since I was a boy" a villager recalls. "Next to the monastery was the old tannery and I was really scared of that place because my mother would often threaten to leave me with the tanners if I didn't obey her. No traces are left of these work-

shops now because the fire and the earthquakes destroyed them all and the old craftsmen left. As years went by the little square around the plane trees fell in ruins so did the fountain with its beautiful stonework. Not far away was the house of Anthimos Gazis, our great scholar; nothing but a wall remains today, you pass by without even a glance. Only the fountain named after him has been repaired but with no water springing out for us to drink and with the old inscription brought from the lintel over his door hidden behind the overgrowing bushes. Among the very few old Pelion houses that were spared from the fire in this neighborhood was the one bought by the National Tourist Organization. It's been restored and is now used as a little hostelry, for guests to enjoy."

The Gyftakeika area near the railway station

This neighborhood suffered greatly from the fire and the terrible floods in 1945 which swept away two bridges and many of the ruined buildings. "The area got its name from the Gypsies who camped there and traded with our forefathers in the open-air bazaar. How full of life and movement the whole place was back then!" The church at Gyftakeika was dedicated to Aghios Yeorgios. Devastated by the earthquakes, it stands today on the same site and looks just as it once did. Large Pelion houses were near the cobbled path that led down to Kala

Nera - the small bay on the Gulf of Volos - three hotels were later built and shops to serve the people who went back and forth on the little train connecting Milies to Volos. "But at the end of the 1920's, when the new road was opened fewer passengers

came by train because some would take the bus. I still remember the day when our "Old Sooty" carried up the slope the very first truck. What a thrill it was! It was the talk of the day! Having a road certainly changed our way of life."



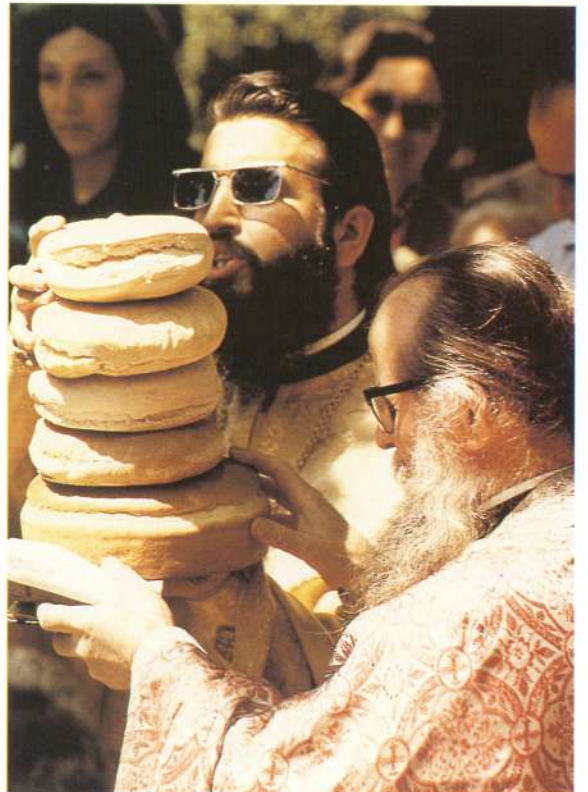
*The fountain near the house of scholar Anthimos Gazis, with the inscription which was once on the lintel over his door
(Photographed during the 1960's – offered by Odysseas Papazachariou)*

The Aghia Marina area

The neighborhood of Aghia Marina took its name from the monastery. Theophilos, the well known naive painter lived for a while in one of the cells of the monastery. "Wearing his *foustanella*, the Greek equivalent of the kilt, he was always carrying with him his paints and brushes ready to work. Most of his drawings were destroyed during the war, others were simply whitewashed by the owner who couldn't appreciate his talent. We just managed to save three frescoes from Aghia Marina and the double-leaf door to the altar before the church collapsed during the earthquakes. A new church has replaced it, the neighborhood has changed, but we still think of the days when all the village gathered to celebrate in the open the name-day of Saint Marina." "We would hang flags all around the courtyard and bring acetylene lamps to light the place. We set up benches to serve wine and *tsipouro*, musicians played the lute, the clarinet and the *sandouri* and we would sing and dance. All this is gone now, but we do come for vespers every year on the 16th of July."

Just below the chapel is an 18th century fountain. "The fountain of the Holy Baptism we call it because every year on Epiphany, the 6th of January, our priest would dip the Cross on its basin to bless the waters and let us take home a bottle for luck. In 1961 the spring serving this fountain was used to supply the neighborhood and housewives no longer had to fetch water for their household."

Celebrating the name-day of Aghia Marina in front of the chapel that bears her name (Photograph taken 1985)



Blessing the loaves of bread (Photograph by Eva Maria von Destinon, taken in 1984)

The chapel of Aghia Marina (Photograph taken 1980)

Vespers on the eve of Aghia Marina's name-day (Photograph taken 1985)





*The now
abandoned
neighborhood of
Tsilikodimeika
(Photographs
taken 1987)*

Tsilikodimeika

Tsilikodimeika could be considered part of the Aghia Marina quarter. The place got its rather strange name from a man called Tsilikodimos who owned a very large property there. This was the only area left unscathed by the fire, probably because it was separated from the rest of the village by a ravine or maybe because the enemy

had run out of gunpowder by the time the soldiers reached it. Yet it was still to be destroyed because during the floods in 1945 there was a huge mud slide that caused great damage to the foundations of the houses and when the earthquakes shook the place, the area was so dangerous that all the residents were forced to leave their homes and move elsewhere. A new neighborhood was then created at the far end of Milies and Tsilikodimeika was abandoned.



The church of the *Pammegistoi Taxiarches*

It was said that the church of *Pammegistoi Taxiarches* was built on the site of an ancient altar once dedicated to the winged god Hermes. This may explain why the church was dedicated to the winged archangels Michael and Gabriel. An inscription found on the wall of the narthex reads that the church was restored in 1741, indicating that it was built much earlier. It is a three-aisled basilica with a pitched roof and has two altars and a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin at the right of the altar. Originally the main entrance faced the altar but when the cells were demolished, a second door was also opened on the south side. The wooden iconostasis in front of the altar, a masterpiece of its kind, with uniquely rich carvings was made in Epirus in the 18th century and carried to Milies on mules. The frescoes were equally beautiful showing portraits of saints and rare scenes of the Bible along both aisles. Most of them, however, were considerably damaged by humidity and by earthquakes that opened cracks in the walls.

In 1955 a first attempt to clean the frescoes was ill-conceived and gilding the iconostasis in order to preserve it was an unfortunate idea. Nine years later, parts of the inner walls had to be propped up to help support the roof. A recent study of the frescoes by specialists revealed the original bright colors which had been hidden by a thick layer of candle soot.





The gilded wood carved pulpit and a partial view of the richly carved iconostasis of the church of Pammegistoi Taxiarches – excellent examples of the wood carving art that flourished in the 18th century (Photographs taken 1981)



The church of the Pammegistoi Taxiarches in the main square (Photograph taken 1986)

The village square

The square, or rather the bazaar as most elderly Miliotes call it, has changed during the course of time.

"Right next to our church of the *Pammegistoi Taxiarches* there were a number of cells for the monks, and a cemetery which was later moved lower down into the village. Nowadays a simple monument marks the spot where all of our ancestors were buried. The bell tower was built in 1929, the year we planted the flower garden which is just in front of it. We planted a fir close to a palm tree showing that both could grow in this lovely climate which we enjoy in Milies."

"In those days there were four plane trees in the square and merchants would bring their goods here selling wheat and straw for the animals, spades, boots and heavy capes, everything a farming village needed. The square was a busy place and the town crier would often pass by announcing auctions and spreading the news."

"At the right end of the square was a large *kafeneion*; the Kivotos - full of paintings, by Theophilos, our great self-taught painter. His drawings were amazing! Sometimes he would play with us; dressing us up in funny-looking *foustanellas* made of straw. He gave us long canes and we pretended that we were soldiers of Alexander the Great!"

"In 1927 the old *kafeneion* was demolished and replaced by a modern one. That same year the square was laid with slabs of Pelion stone, and

most important of all, native-born Krystallia Oikonomaki offered to build the library to house the books that Gazis had sent for the Milies School. Thanks to her - God rest her soul - those rare books and manuscripts remained here. This library is visited by a great number of guests every year."

The Manolaki neighborhood

Beyond the main square, one finds other neighborhoods including Manolaki which took its name from the nearby fountain. A well-known local verse goes like this:

*Some say the water of Manolaki
is full of leeches
but what I've found is girls
pretty as peaches.*

"...and it seems like yesterday when we young lads walked up to Manolaki on those May evenings to sit and wait till the maidens were seen coming. Oh yes, they were pretty as peaches, they were the pride of the neighborhood."

"Climbing higher up we would reach the farmers' orchard with a spectacular view all the way down to the sea. The sunsets were incredibly beautiful and I loved to watch the lights of the fishing boats twinkle in the gathering dark. Oh, what fun it was to tie a swing to one of the plane trees up there and swing back and forth as if we would fly off into the sky! The orchard was a great help to all of us growers because the agronomist who worked there always gave us good advice. What a pity it was not to keep the orchard."



*Detail of the
fountain in the
Manolaki
neighborhood
(Photograph
taken 1987)*

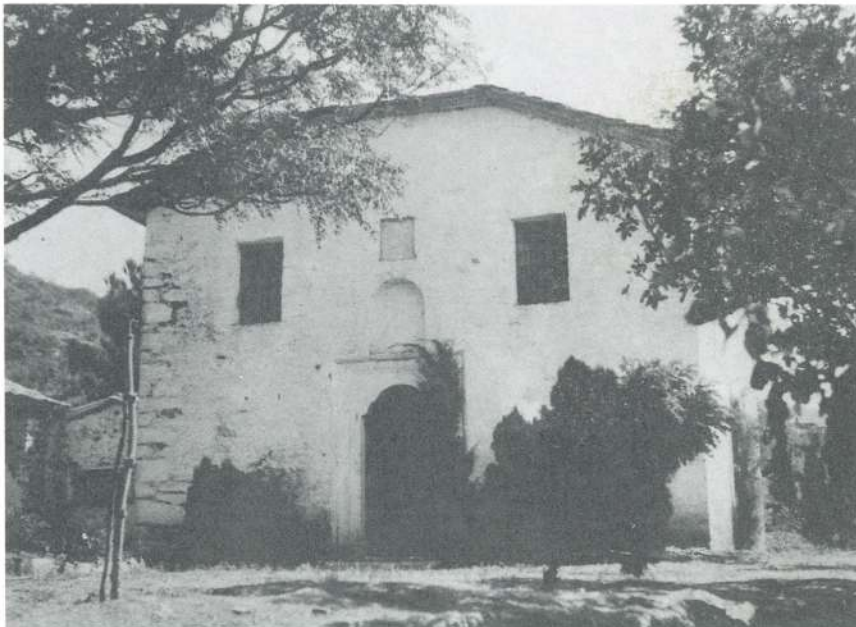
The monastery of Aghia Paraskevi

The monastery of Aghia Paraskevi nestles nearby in a lush green setting. The church was recently rebuilt but the cells where the monks once lived are still in ruins. Tucked away up on the mountain slope, the monastery was built when the village was still quite small, spreading mainly around the area of Aghios Konstantinos. The monastery was a prosperous one, making quite a bit of money by growing mulberry trees to cultivate silkworms. The monks often helped the villagers when times were hard, so this maybe the reason why the main religious feastday in Milies is celebrated on July 26, Saint Paraskevi's name-day.

Although the celebration now takes place at the main square, villagers climb up the path on the eve of the feastday for vespers.

The area close to the schools

A few minutes walk down the path from Aghia Paraskevi was the monastery of Saint Nicholas. In the mid-18th century, a small school was housed in one of its cells and this is where the Miliote scholars, Gazis, Konstantas and Philippides learned to read and write. The famous school of Milies was later built there and today both the primary and the high school of the village are located in that area. The high school, donated in 1971 by Kostas Grammenis, stands right on the ruins of the great school. The old monastery was demolished in 1924 and in its place a bright new church was built with funds donated by painter Anna Farandatou. Behind the sanctuary lies the tomb of Konstantas, and in the schoolyard a monument to the Miliote freedom-fighter Garefis.



*The church of
the Aghia
Paraskevi
Monastery
before it was
destroyed by the
earthquakes
(Photograph
taken 1936 –
offered by
Chrysanthi
Gourioti)*



Eleni Sakellariou and Stathis Athanassiou with their 6th grade pupils (Photograph taken 1935)

School children with their master in front of the old school (Photograph taken 1931)





*The old
Agricultural
School
(Photograph
taken 1932 –
offered by
Chrysanthi
Gourioti)*

The area called Lakkes

Leaving the schools behind, one can either return to the main square by the old stadium or walk down towards Petrates and Lakkes, two rather new neighborhoods both quite densely populated. Petrates gets its name from its rocky soil – *petra* in Greek meaning ‘stone’. Lakkes developed rapidly only after the war when homes were built with government funds for those who had lost their property in the fire of 1943. At this far end of the village a grove of pine trees was planted back in 1925 and it was always nice and cool. Three little tavernas drew a large number of villagers who loved to come here on a long promenade, taking the main cobbled path that led from the railway station up the main square and still higher up towards the neighborhood of Lakkes.

This is the path we are now going to follow letting the old Miliotes with their memories help us imagine how the main part of their village looked in the 1930’s when Milies was a country town in full bloom.

Near the railway station

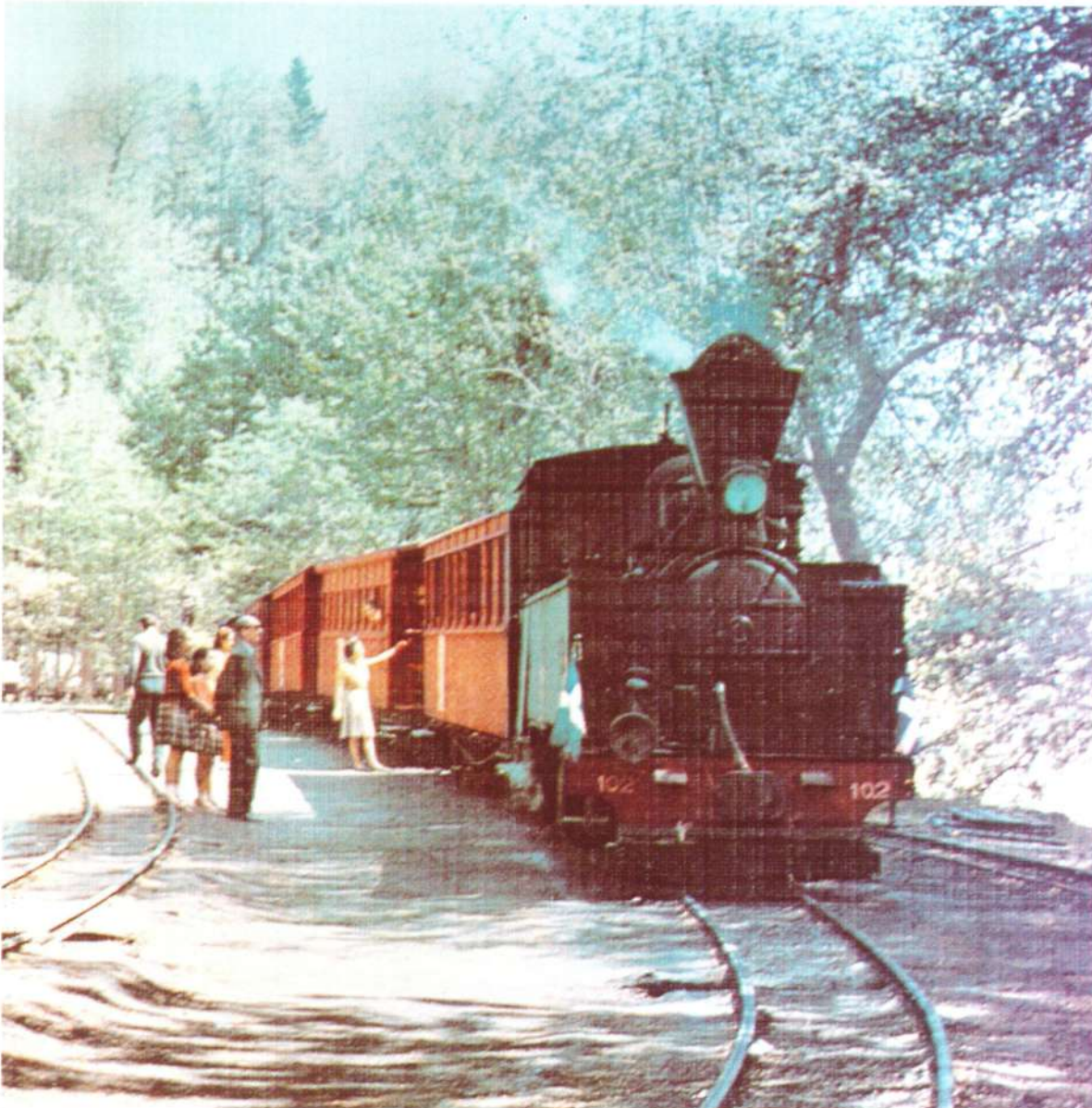
The main cobble path was always very busy because it led to the train which served not only the people of Milies but also those living in the nearby villages of Tsangarada, Mouressi, Kissos, Lambinou, Propan and Nechochori. They all hurried up or

down the way, either on foot or on pack animals to catch the train to Volos. The train came twice a day to Milies. The morning one was heard whistling around ten and a few minutes later a swarm of people poured out of the station. Local children came running down the path eager to carry a basket, a suitcase or a small trunk for a few drachmas. Muleteers had their animals ready to take passengers up to Milies or to one of the next villages, while others, waiting patiently until the crowd had left, loaded on the train all the goods they had carried from afar: goatskins full of wine and olive-oil, olives and fruit, chestnuts and walnuts, or sacks of flour from the mills. Peddlers were heard shouting their wares and the two newspaper boys were passing out that day’s edition of the Volos press and yesterday’s from Athens. The whole area buzzed with life and bustling people. But with the great fire, everything changed when in just a few hours all the buildings went up in flames, and even though the little train kept operational until 1971, the area around the railway station was never the same again.

Today visitors go there to admire the iron bridge designed by the Italian engineer de Chirico, father of the surrealist painter or simply to enjoy the beauty of the landscape. The natural surroundings are peaceful yet majestic at any time of the year, particularly in autumn when the leaves of the tall, slender trees begin to change color and gleam in the light of the sun. In the old days next to the station was the fountain of Dimitsas and an inn where travellers could spend the night waiting to catch the morning

train. Dimitsas also had a little restaurant and a grocery store which enjoyed a good business. A bit further on was a larger hotel owned by Athanassiou and the well-known taverna of Karavoussianis. Here, under two enormous plane trees, visitors would always find a table and its owner eager to please. As they sat in the open they

could hear the sound of the mill down in the ravine grinding wheat and the endless flow of the water. Now the mill stands in ruins, half-hidden in the trees reminding us of the terrible fire, but most of the other buildings are being restored and the new hotel and restaurant of Stathis Youliotis are once again welcoming guests.



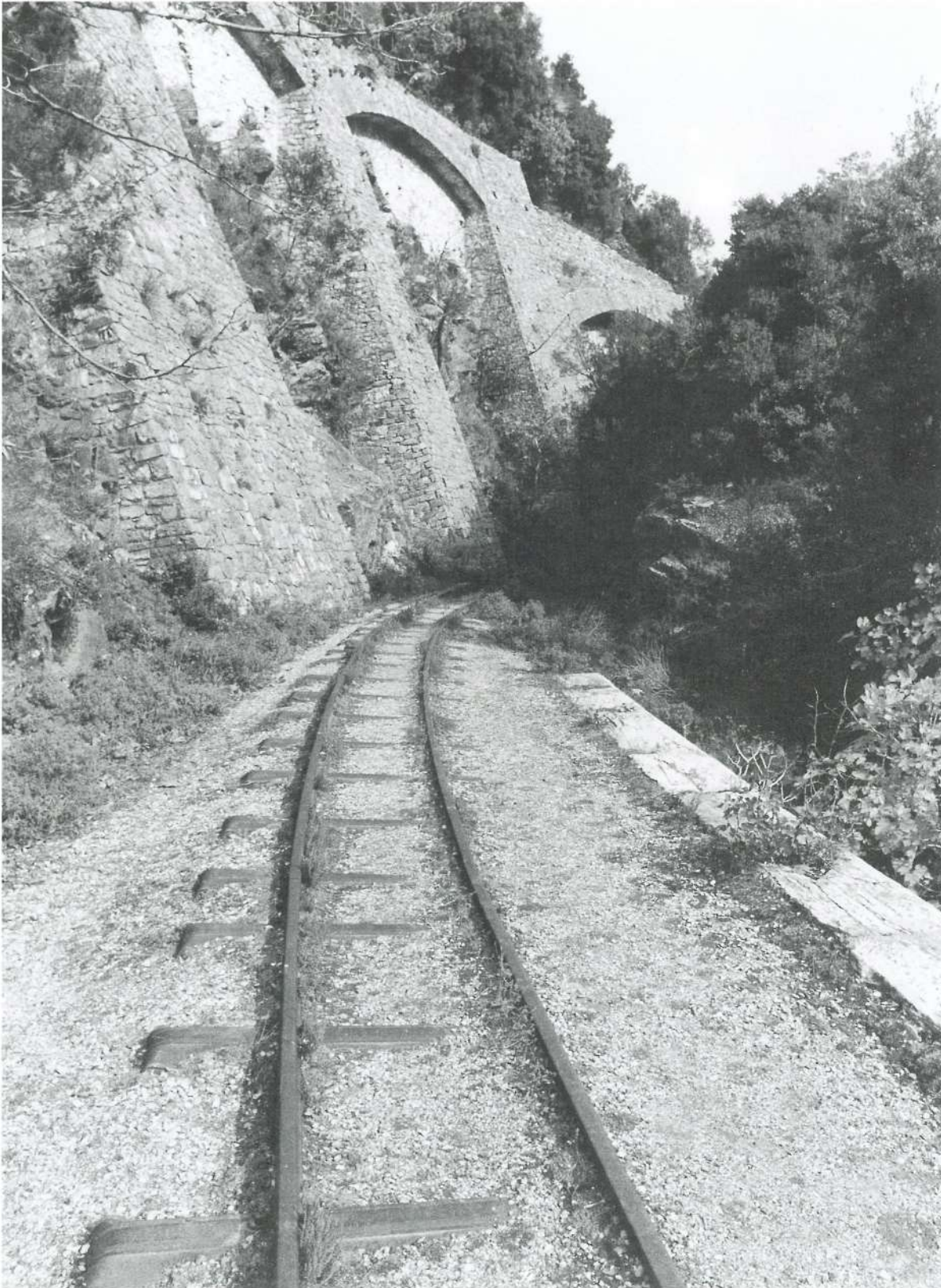
*The local train
ready to leave
Milies for Volos
(Photograph by
Stournaras taken
1970)*



The train crossing the bridge at Lechonia, 12 kilometres from Volos (Postcard, printed in 1905)



The railway station at Milies (postcard, photograph by Stournaras, in 1905 – offered by Demos Garoufalias)



*Retaining wall
along the railway
line close to the
Milies station
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

*Pages 90, 91:
The railway
station in Milies
lies abandoned
after the
operation of the
train was
suspended
(Photographs
taken 1981)*





Walking along the main cobbled path

Taking the cobbled path that led to the main square, visitors passed by the church of Aghios Yeorgios and would often be greeted by the local priest resting in the courtyard. A little further up, to the left, was a fountain

reminds all visitors that this is where the great hero of the Macedonian war was born. A few years ago the fountain was restored and a tin saucer hanging from a chain invites anyone who feels thirsty to have a drink of water. A few steps further on one had to cross a small bridge and there on the left was the olive press of the Gouriotis family while a smaller path



Marble inscription over the door of the Garefis house, which is now in ruins
(Photograph taken 1986)

with crystal-clear water gushing from three mouths, and one more grocery store with two or three tables to serve a glass of *tsipouro*. From here on the path grew steeper and older people found it hard to climb. About two hundred yards away was yet another fountain right next to an impressive Pelion house belonging to the family of Kostas Garefis. Today over the door of the house in ruins, a simple marble inscription half hidden behind the ivy,



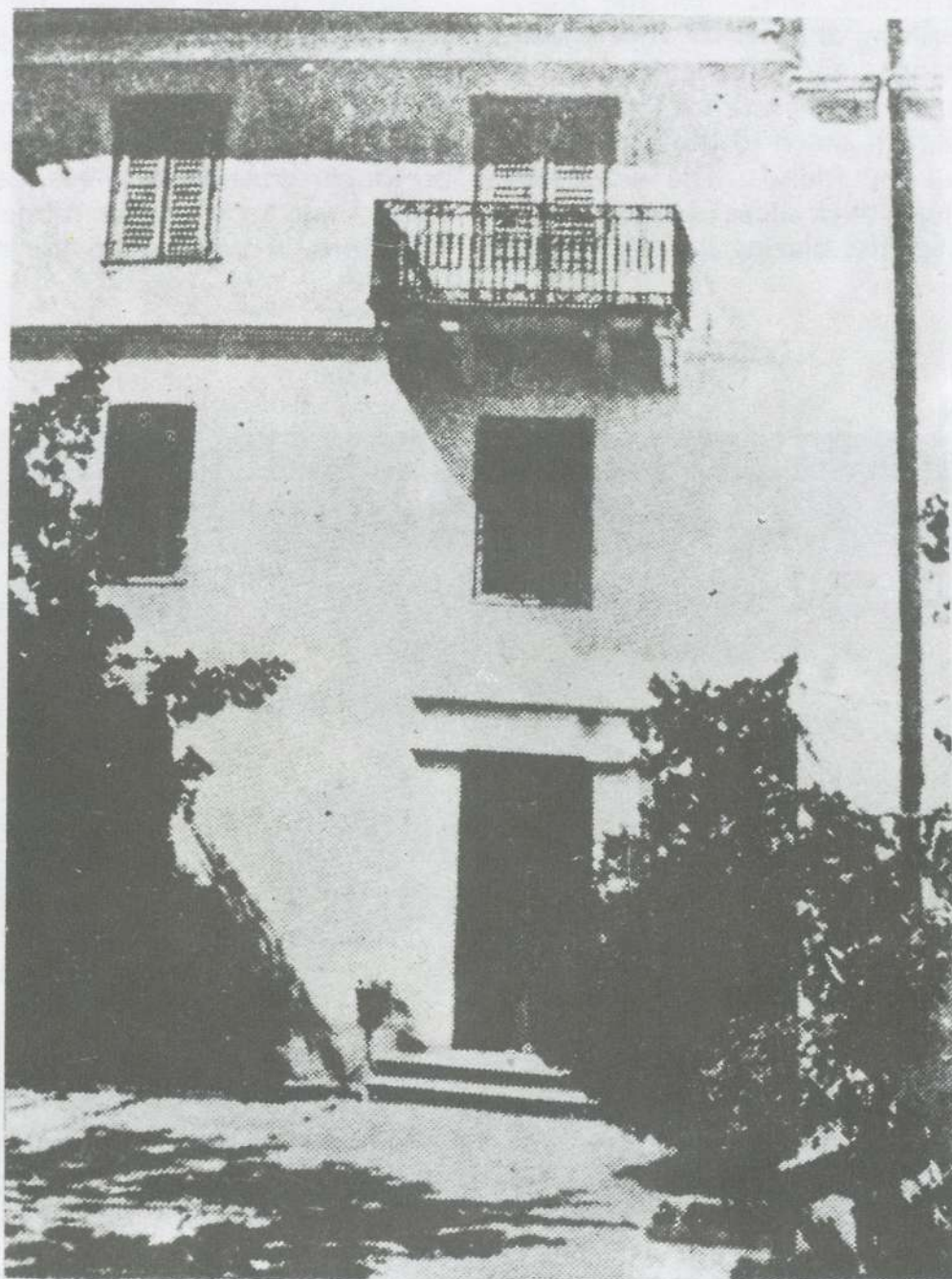
led to the Girls School. "I went to school there" an elderly Miliote woman recalls, "and when the press was crushing the olives with those heavy stones and squeezing out the oil, I could hardly wait for the bell to ring, to rush down to the press with some of my friends. The workmen would toast thick slices of bread for all of us over the blazing fire and let us

dip them in the freshly pressed olive oil. My, that tasted so good!"

During picking season the press was very busy and though there were two more in the same neighborhood, the owner often ran two shifts to fulfil the demand. Nowadays the olives are no longer crushed in Milies. Farmers bring their crop to the modern installations in Volos or to the nearby



*The
Karavoussiani
fountain close to
the railway
station
(Photograph by
Zimeris)*



The house where
Daniel
Philippides was
born, which was
burnt by German
troops on
October 4, 1943

Τὸ σπίτι ὅπου γεννήθηκε ὁ Δημήτριος Λαυρέλ Φιλιππίδης, στὶς Μηλιές, ἀνα-
καινισθὲν τὸ 1881 ἀπὸ τὸν Ἀργύριο Φιλιππίδη καὶ πυρποληθὲν ἀπὸ τοὺς
Γερμανοὺς τὴν 4ην Ὀκτωβρίου 1943.

town of Agria, so two of the three old presses have been sold while the third one, out of use, is now visited only as a reminder of the past.

"Next to the Gouriotis press was a small power station run by Yiorgos Phapas. Thanks to his initiative our village had electricity certain hours a day and as soon as darkness fell street lamps would light our cobbled paths. Facing the power station, Apostolis, the cobbler, had his workshop and it was very handy to have him around because he would repair all our old boots and shoes. Next door was the forge of Pliariyas. My husband said he was an experienced blacksmith, so that's where he went to have his tools fixed."

Left and right of the cobbled path large Pelion houses would cast their shadows, among them that of the great scholar Daniel Philippides. All were devastated by the fire and the earthquakes. Some still stand deserted, half in ruins; others have been restored but the area is nearly always quiet now except during summer months when the new owners come to spend their vacation. Half way up the last bit of the cobbled path before reaching the square, was the Karachalidis bakery on the ground floor of a three-storey house and one more bakery a bit higher up. None of them is operating now but back in those days they had a lot of customers, selling crisp loaves of bread to all those who came on the little train from Volos. The place always smelled deliciously of the food that was baking with olive oil and spices in the huge wood burning oven.

Above one of the bakeries was the

Post Office where people waited for hours to place a call on the only telephone in the village. Over the other bakery was a restaurant and the large grocery store owned by Pantazis where almost everything could be found...

Doctor Tsiroyiannis lived above the grocery and this is where his patients came and where he had his own little pharmacy. Fardellos the dentist was also in this neighborhood.

"Five doctors were living in Milies before the war; we had a mid-wife and a nurse. Now when I'm sick, I've got to go to Volos because there's only one doctor for the whole village working five days a week, seven hours a day, visiting other villages as well. So you must think twice before falling ill on a holiday or on a weekend ..."

The last bit of the path came to an end at a crossroads in front of an enormous plane tree planted in 1900 to celebrate the turn of the century. This was a very busy spot indeed where one could find all kinds of shops: a small tobacconist who sold every brand of cigarettes on the market, a haberdashery and a barber's shop, a small taverna and two coffee shops, a smithy and a packsaddler's workshop - these two craftsmen were always very busy because every family in Milies had more than just one animal that needed to be shoed once a month and have the old packsaddles repaired. There was also a tinsmithy and a small shop where village people took their brass and copper things to be mended and polished and fishermen would bring their fish out here to sell next to the growers selling fresh fruit and vegetables.

The village feast held in the main square

The village *paniyiri* - the local festival - has always been celebrated in the main square of Milies on the 26th July which is when Saint Paraskevi is honored by the Orthodox Church. On the eve, vespers were held at the monastery which bears the saint's name and the following day people would start coming to the square as early as possible to reserve a table for the evening dance.

"Friends and relations knew we would be happy to offer them hospitality during the *paniyiri*, so they often came and the village was really buzzing with life. In my days the *paniyiri* began as soon as the church service was over and lasted the whole day. We had our own band: a good clarinet, a lute and a violin which played our favorite folk songs and we would stand up and dance in a circle all together hand in hand. Whoever wanted to lead the way had to walk up to the musicians and stick a banknote on their forehead asking them to play the tunes he preferred. *Paniyiria* were a great joy for everyone and a good time for matchmaking. Often engagements and weddings were announced within the next few weeks."

"I can still remember the very first time our square was decorated with colored light bulbs lit by the local generator making the whole place glow as the lamps swayed in the evening breeze! Our *paniyiri* sometimes went on till dawn and the little train

made extra trips bringing visitors up the slopes from Volos and the surrounding villages. Peddlers would come to sell their goods spreading them out on huge benches set beside the church. They had all sorts of trinkets and toys, shoes, pants, shirts and underwear, cheap jewellery and sweets. This was a chance for us to get new clothes and coax father into giving us a few drachmas to spend."

"Everyone dressed up for the dance at the *paniyiri* looked smart and elegant. Heavy woven fabrics were the fashion in my days, long dresses with low cut décolletages and many of us held a delicate little fan and a beaded purse that sparkled in the night. Young men had manners in those days, coming to ask our parents' permission to have the pleasure of a dance with us. French was the language spoken by the upper classes and both "merci" and "pardon" were heard quite often all around. Our *paniyiria* were chic, not like today when everyone just joins in wearing just a shirt, a pair of jeans and sandals, with no manners at all. Times have changed."

"It's true that we, the older ones, look back at our *paniyiria* sentimentally. There was not only the "Aigli" at the time, but another *kafeneion* as well, called "The League of Nations" which was the gathering spot of the liberals. The first floor above the *kafeneion* was occupied by the municipality office and next to it stood the shop of Savvas, the man who took orders for commissions from Volos and would fetch anything one could think of."



A couple from
Milies at the end
of the 19th
century
(Photograph by
Rafanides)

The "AIGLI" kafeneion

The main square in the village was and still is one of the most beautiful in the whole of Pelion, a plane shaded balcony overlooking the gulf of Volos. Visitors who came to admire the view would often stop for a glass of lemonade at the "Aigli", a very elegant coffeeshop, facing the church. Waiters in black trousers, spotless white shirts and a bowtie came to take orders and serve their clients out in the open at heavy marble tables. In the evenings people played cards and billiards or they would gather to watch a movie with the famous actors of the time, or enjoy a performance of *Karaghiozis* - a popular Greek shadow show - or a play by a theater company from Athens.

*Aglaia Hadzi with
her daughter
Irini around 1920
(Photograph
offered by Irini
Malamaki)*



*The mayor of
Milies and
member of
Parliament
Argyris
Philippides with
his family in 1897*





The family of C. Evaghelinakis (Photograph taken 1904)



Dimitris Nikoles and his wife at the turn of the century

*The family of
Athanassios
Yiannoukos in
1935*



*The family of
Spyros
Aravandinos and
Yiannis
Adamandiadis in
1915*



*Eleni Pavlides, daughter of Argyris Philippides wearing
the local costume at the beginning of the century*



The AIGLI
"kafeneion" in
1938 (Photograph
by Rafanides-
Zimeris)



View of the main
square in the
1930's
(Photograph
offered by
Chrysanthi
Yourioti)

Towards Aghia Marina

Walking to the end of the square, passing by the *kafeneion*, there were a number of shops changing ownership frequently and by the municipality office one reached the cobbled path that led to the neighborhood of Aghia Marina. On the left hand side was yet another small coffeeshop and beyond that, one of the best grocery stores in the village run by Stathis Papademitriou who kept one or two tables in his shop on which to serve a glass of wine or *tsipouro*. "Every grocer reserved a small space because it was the habit for men to stop by and have a drink

along with some roasted chick-peas and raisins, two or three salted sardines out of a barrel, a bit of goat cheese and olives." Next door was Voyiadzis the shoemaker and Yiannakouras' bookstore with all kinds of newspapers and magazines, school books and pencils. Last on the line was the tailor Nikoles and a bit higher up doctor Sgardonis kept his office and his pharmacy. "We'd often see the good doctor's mare fully harnessed ready to take her master to any patient who needed him. The doctor never refused to pay a visit and never charged a fee if he knew you were hard up. "Some other time," he'd say with a comforting smile "I'll wait till you sell your crop."



A group of
Miliotes at the
"kafeneion"
owned by the
Municipality in
1938 (Photograph
offered by
Thomas
Papademitriou)

The Library

Above the square is the Library built in 1927 with the donation by Krystallia Oikonomaki. The second floor, added in 1973, was financed by the government. The Library houses all the valuable books from the famous School of Milies and the banner of the Revolution against the Turks. The ground floor is a lending library with works by modern authors.

"We are very proud to have such an important library here in Milies. I've taken my children to see it and I always bring our guests there to show them all those old books and manuscripts, the flag, the desk and chair used by our great teacher Konstantas.

And we were all there when they brought the bronze bust of Gazis to be put up in front of the main entrance. It was in 1964, the 8th of November and it had been raining for days. The whole place was draped in white and blue, the colors of our flag. Myrtle and laurel were hung throughout and the metropolitan was invited from Volos to conduct the service in the main church. The army band had come to play and patriotic speeches created an atmosphere of enthusiasm. Between 1964-65 many works were carried out around the square, the court house was built, the road to the neighboring village of Vyzitsa was opened and Milies was connected to the national power network.



The ceremony of the unveiling of the bust of Anthimos Gazis at the Library front porch (Photograph taken November 1964)

On the way to the schools

Before the road was opened through the center of the village, the cobbled path coming from the railway station continued on up the hill towards the schools. To the right was the bakery of Grammenaina facing a fountain and a forge. The blacksmith would often start working in the very



*School children
with their master
in front of the old
school
(Photograph
offered by
Chrysanthi
Yourioti)*

early morning, trying to please all of his customers. Still further up was Pliarigas, the best shoemaker in Milies. In his shop you could find the finest women's pumps and good, solid double soled men's shoes. Not too far away was the house of Mrs. Paraskevi who rented out two or three rooms to travellers. Women would often visit her to order one more piece for their dowry, since she was known to create the most beautiful needlework and lace as if done by the

hand of a fairy, with stitches as fine as a spider's web. Next door was the police station and court of justice. In between them was a small shop that dared to sell tobacco that had been smuggled through! Just a few more steps up was a haberdashery. The place was later rented to a farrier and when he moved away, the owner decided to sell the house. The new owners restored it and made it into a tiny local museum which was inaugurated in 1982.

The cobbled path becomes steeper from there on, and elderly people find it hard to climb. "You need a mule to help you up", the old teacher Grigorios Konstantas would say as he struggled along the way to reach the School of Milies.

Right below the school was the "stadium" with seats built in rows as public assemblies were the ancient times. This is where men gathered during Turkish rule to vote with a show of hands. This place was, however, also used for celebrations after a wedding or for dancing during a feast. Until quite recently, schoolchildren would display here their gymnastic accomplishments at the end of the school year.

A stroll to Lakkes

The entire area around the "stadium" is still quite densely forested today. A great many pine trees reach all the way to the neighborhood of Lakkes. This is where the cobbled path splits in two. One part continues to the next village, the other ends in

Lakkes. Many years ago, this area was a favorite spot for a stroll, by people of all ages. The young and old would often go there to sit and relax in one of the local coffee houses. There was, however, a dance floor and a raised platform for an orchestra. "That stage, small as it was, could boast of having invited some of the best-known singers of the time. We even had a record player and a barrel organ that Alekos Pliarigas carried on his back, while the neighborhood echoed far into the night with the latest popular songs."

"Lakkes was a romantic spot. I loved to go and sit there enjoying the

view, caressing with my eyes the dark green slopes which rolled down to the sea. The silver images of olives and the more brilliant green of chestnut and oak trees separated here by the black straight lines of cypresses. Most of all, I wished to be there to see the sun setting in the most glorious of skies, waiting for the moon to rise or for the lights of the fishing boats to start flickering in the distance."

This unlimited view, enjoyed from nearly everywhere in the village has, and always will remain one of Milies' most precious assets, since no matter where you look, the view is overwhelming you.



Celebration after a wedding at the old Stadium, at the foot of the famous school of Milies (Photograph offered by Chrysanthi Yourioti)

Other areas around the village

The community of Milies comprises quite a large territory spreading all the way down to the gulf and up the slopes towards the village of Vyzitsa. Beyond Lakkes is an area called Lykomangano, facing Pezoula while further down one reaches Stavromana, Koromilades, and Taratses. Close to the sea is Boufa, the ancient site of Koropi, once only a marsh. The valley today is a fertile plain cultivated with pear trees. A network of cobblepaths

connected these various locations to the main village. Today roads are being built which will allow farmers to reach their groves easily. As a result most of the older paths have been abandoned. However, they still offer an enchanting, and unforgettable walk through a natural setting.

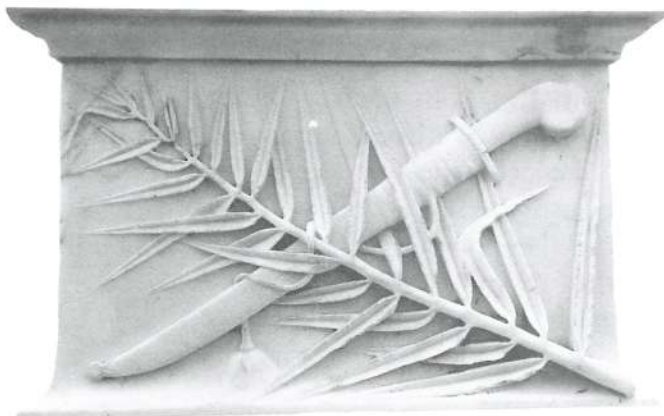
The chapel of Aghia Triada

"On the edge of the village on the road leaving to Tsangarada, one finds the Chapel of Aghia Triada. Our teacher once told us that in ancient



*A stroll
to the area
of Lakkes
in the 1930's*

times there was a temple of Zeus and one to Artemis here. I remember it as though it were yesterday, the day when our hero Kostas Garefis set off with his men to fight the Bulgarians in Macedonia. It was the 27th of May in 1906, and the whole village had gathered in Aghia Triada. The children had come with their schoolteacher. There was a Mass, and Garefis with his men swore an oath of brotherhood and took Holy Communion. Then we all stayed on to a hearty meal, singing patriotic songs and dancing. When twilight fell the men departed on a boat that had been anchored in the bay, to take them up North."



Part of the marble monument dedicated to Kostas Garefis, next to the primary school of Milies (Photograph taken. 1989)



Οἱ κάτοικοι τῶν Μηλεῶν Πηλίου καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ μετὰ τῶν διδασκάλων των, προπέμπουν εἰς πανηγυρικὴν συγκέντρωσιν τὸν Μακεδονομάχον συμπατριώτη των Κώσταν Γαρέφη, ἀναχωροῦντα διὰ Μακεδονίαν μὲ τό τριακονταμελὲς ἐθελοντικόν του σώμα (1906).

The whole village assembled near the Chapel of Aghia Triada to bid farewell to Garefis and his men (Photograph from the collection of the Milies Library)

The monastery of Aghios Nikolaos

In the area of Pezoula, near Pavlakia, stands the monastery of Aghios Nikolaos. Today it can be reached by a country road, though it is worth taking the cobble path that goes through the ravine. It is not always an easy walk, but to see the landscape and to



hear the song of the nightingales is worth the effort.

It is said that the monastery was built when the village had not yet developed and that it owned vast tracts of land, large olive groves and vineyards, mulberry trees to raise silkworms and dense forests. The monks who lived there were known throughout the Balkans for their beautiful work in book-binding. They created carved covers for the Gospels in walnut wood which were works of art, and some were sent to the churches

*Traces of
deterioration in
the Monastery of
Aghios Nikolaos
(Photograph
taken 1981)*

of Imperial Russia. The church is today, half hidden behind bushes and the ivy and the roof is only visible from a distance. This roof is made of Pelion slates as fine as the scales of a fish.

On entering the church, one is struck by the impressive wall paintings that cover practically all of the interior. High above, Christ Pantocrator seems to survey his congregation, while the image of the Virgin Mary with outstretched arms dominates the aisles. Other portraits of saints and prophets have been rendered in all their detail and every inch of available space has been covered with garlands of flowers or complicated geometrical patterns. Although some of the paintings show obvious traces of deterioration, most of the colors used by the unknown artists are still preserved and amaze the visitor with their vividness.

The monastery has not been used for years and all of the cells have gradually fallen into ruins. Even the door of the church was left open and shepherds would enter to find shelter in the bitter cold during winter, leaving traces from the fires that they lit to keep warm. Recently, however, the door was locked and a first attempt at restoration has been made by a team of experts commissioned by the Ministry of Culture.

Further away, out in the Pavlakia, is a half-forgotten chapel which was dedicated to Saint Vassilios, (Basil). It has been years since anyone has gone there to whitewash it and clean it up for the name-day of the saint on the first day of the year, no doubt due to the bitter cold at this time of year.



*Jesus Pantokrator
on the dome of
the monastery
church
(Photograph
taken 1981)*



Wall paintings in the Monastery of Aghios Nikolaos, which show signs of deterioration (Photograph taken 1981)

Protective bands used for restoration by specialists on the same fresco (Photograph taken 1988)

A fresco on one of the alcoves before the first attempts at restoration (Photograph taken 1981)





*Partial view of
the interior of
the church of
Aghios Nikolaos
(Photograph
taken 1981)*



*Saint Methodios
and Saint
Voukolos
(Photograph
taken 1981)*



*The figure of the
Virgin Mary at
the church altar,
which shows
signs of
deterioration
(Photograph
taken 1981)*

The chapel of Ai-Yiannis at Stavromana

The chapel of Ai-Yiannis Prodroimos at Stavromana, which celebrates its name-day on August 28th, can be easily reached since it is not far from the main road. Each year on the eve of the saint's name-day, vespers are held there and the front porch quickly fills up with groups of worshippers. Some

bring olive oil to light the lamps in the church, others offer a bottle of wine. Women carry a dish of boiled wheat sprinkled with lots of powdered sugar or baskets full of loaves of bread to be blessed by the priest and divided among the participants. Everyone enters the small freshly whitewashed chapel, passing under the door decorated with myrtle and laurel, to light a candle and kiss the icon which is standing on a pulpit, surrounded by a garland of flowers.

Vespers at the chapel of Aghios Ioannis celebrated on the eve of his name-day (Photographs taken 28 August 1985)





Other small chapels

Vespers are celebrated in every chapel once a year, on the eve of their patron saint's name-day. In Milies there is the chapel of the Maccabei located close to the main road that climbs up from Volos and the chapel of Profitis Ilias, two chapels dedicated to Saint Demetrios and one to Saint Charalambos whose little church was hurriedly built in 1830 to protect the



local people from a terrible cholera epidemic that was rapidly spreading in the neighboring village of Vyzitsa. Perched way up at the highest point stands the tiny chapel of Aghios Athos and down in the olive groves lies Aghia Sotira.

"Not many of us go to Aghios Athos because the path is too steep and you can easily become lost in the overgrowing shrubs. But it's so peaceful up there, so quiet, so beautiful. I take my sister sometimes in the summer to light a candle and we just sit there and look around and it's as if God were among us!"

*The chapel of
Aghios Ioannis,
at Spastira
(Photograph
taken 1981)*

The little chapel was built at the turn of the century by Katerinelo, a poor old soul who had managed to save up all that money gathering a few pennies now and then, bless her.

"More difficult to find is Aghios Taxiarchis, hidden behind the rocky landscape near the railway station. Climbing some thirty steps cut right in the rocks, you come to a very narrow path overlooking a precipice and with your back to the wall, not daring to look down, you have to keep going a bit further on before actually reaching the chapel. In my day a miracle once happened that I'll never forget. It was when a little boy walking up the way for the evening service holding a loaf of bread and a dish of wheat, suddenly slipped and fell into the gorge. We thought him dead but when they found him, there he was standing up right, still clutching the holy bread!"

"When I went to school, one day my friends and I decided to go to the chapel on our own. Our teacher had been speaking about the cave of Chiron, where Jason and, later, Achilles had come to stay with the wise Centaur and we were curious to find the place. Though we did find it, all we had was a flashlight and the cave was so dark that we became really scared.

A cobbled path leading to the sea

Near the railway station beyond the neighborhood of Gyftakeika, a cobbled path led down to the port of Kala Nera and from there you could take a caique to Volos. "Before the train

came to Milies this was the only way to reach the sea. Mules and donkeys went up and down heavily loaded with all kinds of goods, muleteers took visitors back and forth. Then again during the war when the bridge was destroyed and the train couldn't reach Milies, we all had to use the path. Nowadays, walking downhill is a real pleasure because you find yourself in the most picturesque landscape. Listening to the rushing water in the ravine, to the song of the birds and the bells of a few goats, you are tempted now and again to pick one of those delicate wild flowers that grow all around."

Living in the olive groves

Across the ravine the area is filled with olive groves. At Stavrodromi and

Palatia one still finds today many solidly built houses with a large living space, an oven and storerooms for olive oil and olives. Village people who could afford it had built them in the olive grove to be close to their land during the picking season, without having to go back and forth to Milies every day. They would start working in the early morning, keeping an eye on the men who harvested the olives and surveying as well the women who gathered them up.

Quite often when the crop was plentiful, rich landowners would bring in workers from other areas.

The Miliotes usually moved down to their *kalyvia*, as they call these winter homes, in November. One after the other the *kalyvia* welcomed the family, small shops were once again in business, the olive presses started working, the priest greeted the congregation in the local church.



Farmers houses
in the olives
groves
(Photograph
taken 1981)

"Water was our only real problem. There wasn't any in the area and we had to carry it from a spring on mules and donkeys and we had to keep rain water for washing up and watering the trees. There was no electricity of course but we didn't mind because in the evening we'd light the kerosene lamp and little lanterns that burnt with olive oil. All children went to school, leaving early in the morning, often on foot, sometimes riding a mule or donkey. Psari, our mule, would carry two of us on the packsaddle and two more on his withers! We took our lunch with us in a basket because we had lessons in the afternoon back in those days and we would often return by moonlight.

"It was often bitter cold when we came home. Our noses and ears were frozen, our hands grew stiff from car-

rying satchels with books and slates, so mother would give us a good rub and a hot soup to warm us up."

Today most of the *kalyvia* have running water and there's a telephone line, but all the old traditional presses that crushed the olives with heavy stones have closed down. Pick-up trucks can easily reach Stavrodromi and transport the olives to a modern press.

The village today

"So life has changed down at the *kalyvia* these last years. Life has changed up here in Milies as well, and most of us miss the old days. We long for the old way of living. That's for sure. Of course we can't ignore all the

The house of
Varelaki family,
example of
remarkable
restoration by
local craftsmen
(Photograph
taken 1987)





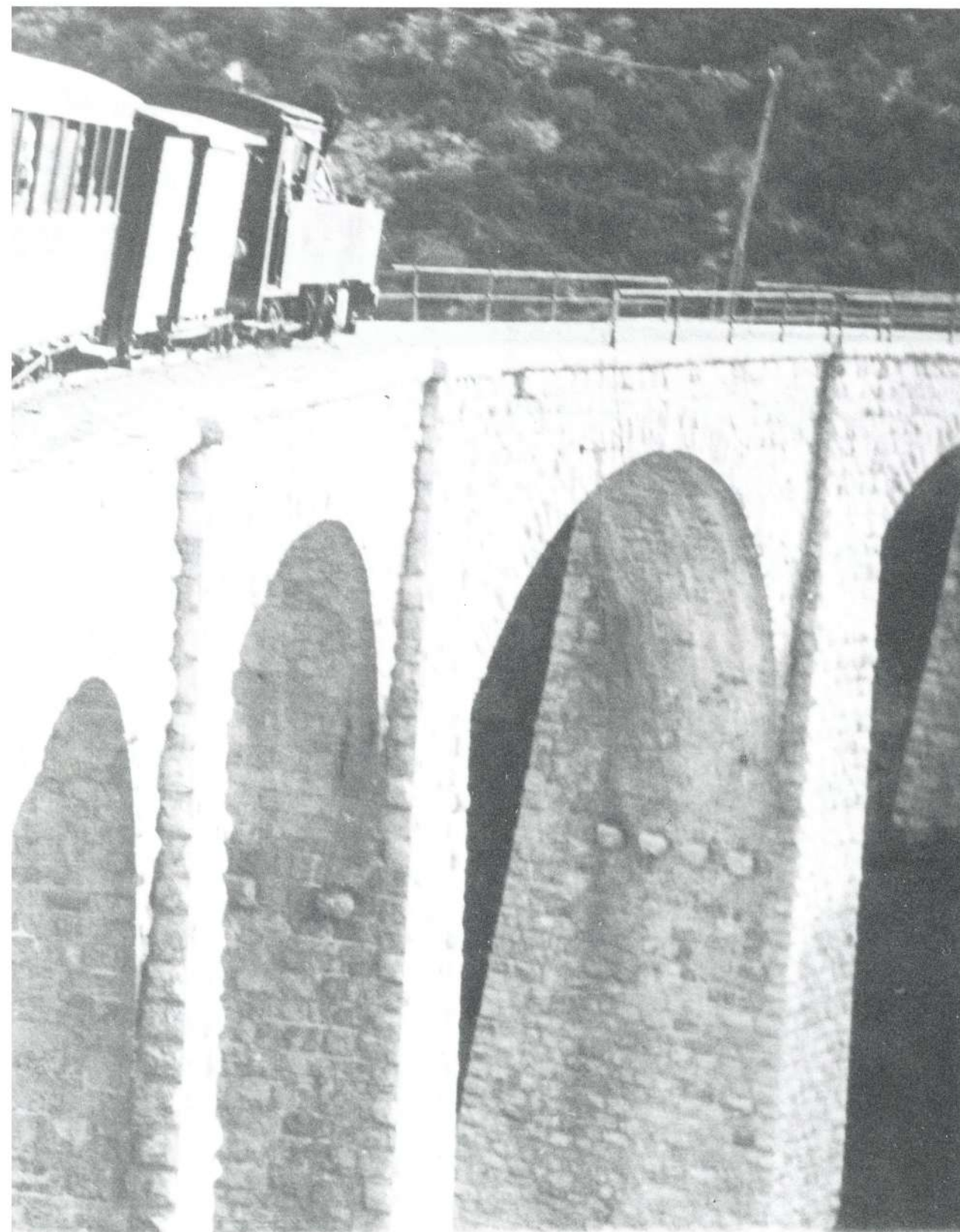
*The fountain
near the chapel
of Aghia Marina,
before
restoration
(Photograph
taken 1981)*



*The same
fountain after
restoration
(Photograph
taken 1987)*

good things that have happened recently even though we may grumble sometimes. We like seeing that some of the ruined houses are being restored and our fountains repaired. It's good to have two restaurants now in the main square even if we do miss the small taverna Thomas once kept, and we certainly enjoy watching the children play in the new playground nearby. As for the young people who've learned to dance our Greek folk dances, they certainly are a joy to watch. Then there's the new Municipality building next to the Library. No other village up here on Mount Pelion has one like it and who would have thought that we would have here in Milies a local Museum. Small as it is, we are all proud of it. Proud to see so many people come to visit it along with the Library, to learn about our history, our customs and our crafts. More and more people discover the beauty of our village. They say it's beautiful and they're right. You've only to stroll down to the railway station to feel it, and if by chance you happen to be here walking along one of the cobbled paths through the olive groves, when the sun is setting you'll surely say that this is a blessed place on earth. Yes, our village is back on the map and what gives us real pleasure is to see how many visitors of different ages and nationalities are eager to learn more about our traditional way of life and come to Milies on the weekend when we have our Open Village activity each year. Just think of when the village train will come whistling up the way! I'll be one of the first to ride on it with all my grandchildren. That's for sure."





*The Pelion train
crossing the five-
arched bridge at
Gadzea
(Photograph by
D. Metaxas,
offered by G.
Nathenas)*

THE FARMER'S LIFE



The economy of Milies depends almost entirely on agriculture, the main local products being olives and olive oil, apples and pears. Out of the eleven hundred inhabitants only thirty-five have taken up a craft and as many are civil servants, while nearly four hundred are farmers. Urbanization is a well known phenomenon and many of us wonder what will happen if the farmers abandon their fields. The problem certainly exists and this is why it may be of interest to look deeper into the matter, hearing their point of view and learning from them more about their life.

We are not concerned with the few wealthy landowners who have the means to pay others to work in their fields, but rather with the vast majority of farmers who have to make a living off what they harvest, cultivating their own land or the field they have rented from the community. All these farmers are working alone assisted, whenever necessary, by members of their family or very often with the help of only their wives.

Local farmers admit that life has somewhat improved during the past few years but it is still a very tough one. "We are all slaves to the hoe," they like to say. When watching them work in the fields and by understanding their worries – mainly over unforeseen changes in the weather which in a few hours can destroy an entire year's crop – it is not difficult to see why some of them sell their land or decide to move to a town or city in search of a job with a steady income, a five-day work week, and a full month of paid vacation to enjoy a carefree holiday.

a farmer's worries

The greatest worry for the farmer remains the unpredictable weather. A heavy snowfall that may freeze the trees down to the root or break their branches by bending them under the weight, a drought just when the sap is rising or a hailstorm when the fruit is ripe are the hazards every farmer must endure. No merchant will buy blemished fruit, and damaged olives are only good for oil. A strong wind in August can cause a lot of damage, knocking down tons of ripe apples and pears in a few hours and a heavy rainstorm at harvest time can be equally bad.

"We depend so much on the weather," Tassos Liandzouras says. "Most of the time we can't foresee it and there's nothing we can do to avoid it. We feel absolutely helpless. Bad weather always means more work and less money. We live in a house without a roof. That's the bitter truth. But that's not all. Trees are often stricken by a disease, so we have to keep a close watch and spray the very moment we see the smallest bug. Every hour counts. No Sunday relaxation for us; no holidays for the farmer."

Having enough water in the field, whether for irrigation or for spraying, is another great problem some farmers have to face. Many areas on Mount Pelion are dry and about one-eighth of the arable land must be irrigated. The irrigation system is being improved but it is not unusual for a farmer to carry water from a nearby spring or stream to his plot of

land in barrels loaded on a truck or on pack animals if there is no farm road leading to his field. His task becomes even harder and time consuming if during the hot summer months the source dries out and he has to fetch water from an even greater distance. Ploughing, watering, spraying, pruning and harvesting keep most local farmers on the go day in, day out. This is so because few farmers in Milies have a single large field to tend. Most of them own many but small-size patches of land scattered here and there in different areas, some of them acquired through marriage as part of a dowry, others purchased whenever the family had a bit of extra money to spare. However, having to go from one field to the other means more work, greater expenses and less profit.

"We often start the day working in one field and nightfall finds us still busy somewhere else. Down by the sea, orchards and olive groves are easier to take care of, while up here in Milies, bad weather can damage them more severely and cultivation is difficult."

"To cover our family's expenses we need to sell at least 20 tons of apples a year and hope to harvest five tons of olives every other year when the crop is good, which means we have to own about 100 apple trees and as many olive trees. Taking care of all these trees with no help is very hard work indeed."

In the last few years many farm

roads have been opened though there is still a considerable number of fields in out-of-the-way areas and some farmers have not yet been able to save enough money to buy a pick-up truck.

"Life was even harder when I was a boy," Yiorgos Kosmas says, "Our wages were very low then. We worked twelve to fourteen hours a day to buy flour for ten loaves of bread and it took eight days of work for a new pair of shoes. Most of our fields were small and far from Milies. Few of them had water for irrigation. Nobody had cold storage facilities. I remember how we had to cover up our apples and chestnuts with ferns so they wouldn't rot, and if they did we'd feed them to the animals. Nothing was thrown away and nothing was wasted.

Everyone in the family worked in the fields, even the children came along. There was no going to high school in my day; it was a question of even finishing primary school. Children worked in the olive groves, the fruit orchards and the vineyards. They were sent out alone to the pastures to keep the goats and sheep. Our work was never done. Back from the fields we had to finish the daily household chores – just as we do today. Hauling fresh leafy branches for the goats, cutting wood for the stove, fetching hay for the animals, watering the vegetable garden, bringing the mule to be shod, lugging heavy shopping home... There's no end to it. That's why it is still true to say that a farmer's life is absolute slavery."



*Carrying fresh branches to feed the goats
(Photograph taken 1987)*

cultivating olives

Work in the olive grove begins in the middle of February when farmers start pruning the trees; pruning the branches that block the new sprouts and those that will make it difficult to collect the fruit. After this brush has been burned in the field, the soil has to be ploughed and fertilized.

"The right thing to do is to dig up the soil around each tree, add manure and then cover it up. If you don't take the trouble to cover the manure, it will simply dry out without doing any good to your tree. In my day we used to hire a team of oxen to pull the plough. There were twenty four such teams in the village and the ploughmen worked them in our fields for a daily wage. My, if only you could have seen the animals at work! How they could plough! Now we just use the hoe and buy chemical fertilizers. Manure is a thing of the past."

Most olive trees flower in May and that's when farmers will have to start spraying. An agriculturist appointed by the State supervises each area and warns them as soon as any disease appears because olives infected with disease are not marketable. They will not sell for a good price and they will produce high acid, low quality olive oil.

"Years ago we used to hang up acetylene lamps to draw the insects to the light and carrying heavy tanks on our backs, we sprayed the trees with a solution of arsenic. Spraying is an added burden, yet we must do it if we want to save our crop. Most of the time our wives come along to help

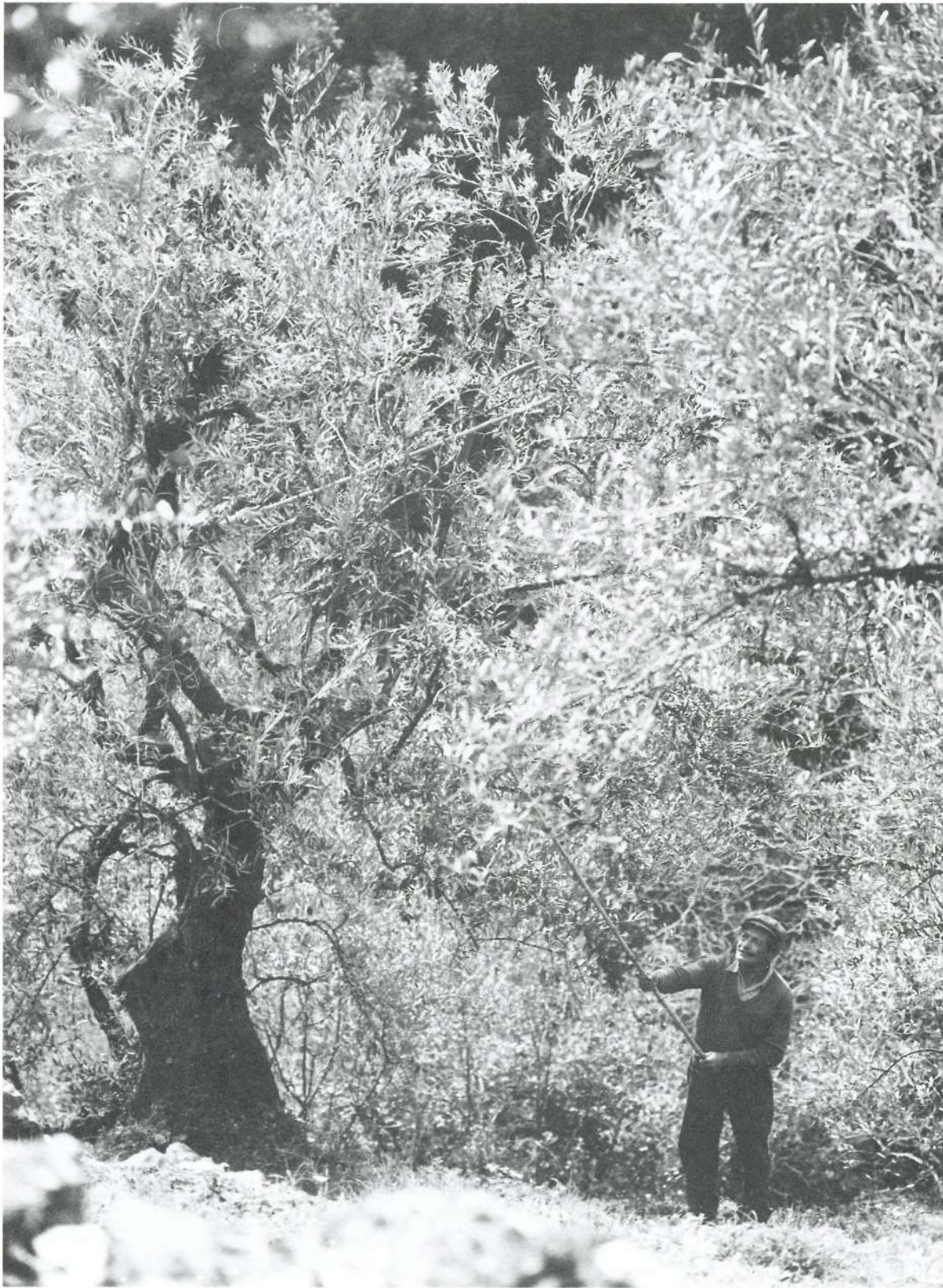
and they are there each time we have to water the fields until the fruit is ripe."

In August, before the harvest, farmers clear the ground under each tree and cut the weeds so the olives won't be lost or damaged as they fall. Others spread cloths under the trees to collect all the fruit with less effort.

The harvest begins in October and often continues right up to Easter because olives, unlike other fruit, don't ripen all at once and it is in the farmer's interest to sell the olives when they are large and ripe – the glossy ones – which bring double the price of olive oil. A kilo of top-quality olives is sold for 150-200 drachmas while oil sells for 500 drachmas, but to get one kilo of oil you have to press seven kilos of second grade olives.

"Very often on a single branch you get many kinds of olives, both ripe and green, bruised and tiny ones. For this reason, whoever knocks them off the tree has to know what he's doing. He's got to have an eye for the job. Before we actually start harvesting, small injured olives that may have fallen off the tree are sent to the press for oil, and green olives picked by hand are stuffed with pimento or blanched almonds."

As the fruit continues to ripen in November, farmers beat the branches with long sticks trying to knock off only the black olives, while women – some of them wearing long aprons with the ends lifted and tied to their waist – bend over hour after hour collecting them off the ground one at



*Knocking olives
off the trees with
the "louros" – a
long stick –
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



Women wearing
"ladopodia" –
aprons used for
gathering olives
(Photograph
taken 1985)



*Women carrying
olives in aprons
and a small
basket
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

a time. When their aprons are full, they dump the olives in big baskets which are then carried by pack animals or by pick-up trucks to the sorting room. There, other women sort them; small, bruised and shrivelled olives will be taken to the press, all the big, juicy ones are placed in huge tubs with water and salt till the merchant comes to offer a price and put them on the market.

During the winter the tree does not soak up water so olives tend to shrivel and it is not worthwhile for the grower to collect them. He therefore waits until the end of February when the sap begins to rise and the fruit swells up again. However, the job is more difficult then because grass and weeds keep growing under the trees and many olives are lost unless the land is frequently cleared.



*Two large empty
olive-gathering
baskets and one
small full one
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

cultivating apples

Along with the cultivation of the olives, farmers in Milies have to tend their apple and pear trees. Most pear orchards are near the sea around Boufa, where the climate is milder, but apple trees are also planted near the village, higher up on the mountain where they do better. In autumn many farmers whitewash the trunks of the trees up to where the first branches start, while others strip off the dry bark so worms won't find a place to nest. They also start breaking up the soil around the trees mixing it with fertilizers. Proper care requires a second hoeing in winter or in early spring to keep the soil well aired and help the roots soak up moisture.

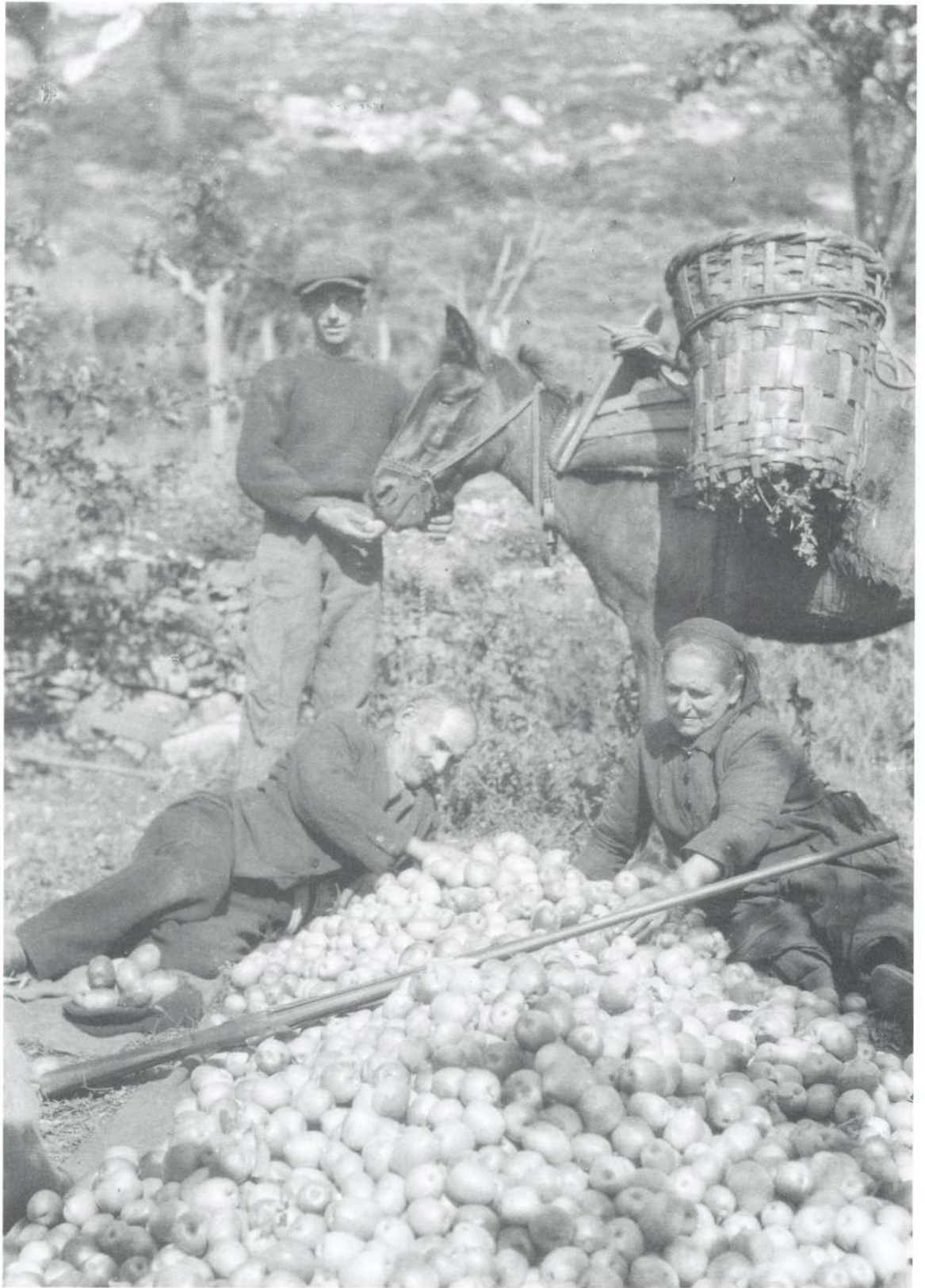
New trees are generally planted in January or February and the tender saplings must be protected not only from the frost but from all small animals – hares for instance – that feed on them. Farmers used to tie fern shoots around each sapling but nowadays sprays have killed the ground cover and hares have nearly disappeared from the area poisoned by eating the sprayed weeds. In spring, as soon as the sapling develops and buds begin to open, the spraying starts and will be continued throughout the summer every 15 or 20 days because the apple tree is prone to many diseases.

In June a great number of tiny apples start to bulge on the branches. In

order to help the tree produce less though higher quality fruit, suitable for the market, most of these apples will be cut off. Usually the grower leaves the largest apples on the branch, one every 15 centimetres. This has to be done very carefully so as not to damage either the fruit or the bark. The picking season for apples and pears does not last long. Farmers start gathering their pears down in the valley of Boufa in the middle of August. A month later you see them picking apples and before the end of October the harvest is over.

"Unlike olives, pears and apples ripen all at once and many hands are needed so we have to hire workers to help us. It's no easy job to gather 20 tons of apples off the trees. Every fruit that falls on the ground gets bruised, so we've got to pick them by hand, one at a time. Pears are even more delicate. As soon as the fruit is collected it has to be carefully packed and put into cold storage. We no longer carry them in sacks or baskets. We use wooden or plastic crates instead, which are lighter and more convenient. We work fast because during the picking period a heavy wind or rainstorm can wipe us out."

As soon as the apple harvest is over the olives start ripening and so the never-ending work of the farmer starts all over again.



Gathering apples
in the 1930's
(Photograph
offered by
Chrysanthi
Yourioti)

the traditional olive press

Olives and olive oil are the main agricultural product of Milies. Farmers sell about 275 tons of fruit and 55 tons of oil each year.

"We have a good crop," a local olive grower says, "when we gather those big, ripe juicy olives of the very best quality, that sell well at the market". Olives used for oil have a much lower price. Olives are a delicate fruit, easily nipped by the frost, often shaken off the tree by a strong wind, or damaged by moths. "Edible olives must look good or the merchant won't buy them. The rest of our crop will end up in the press. For this reason, until we have finished picking every olive from the grove, we can't help worrying how much we are going to receive from the whole year's labor".

To extract the oil you must crush the olives and press the pulp. There was a time when farmers simply stamped on the fruit as it is done with grapes, or they would empty the olives in a hollowed piece of stone and roll a heavy stone to and for crushing the olives under the great weight.

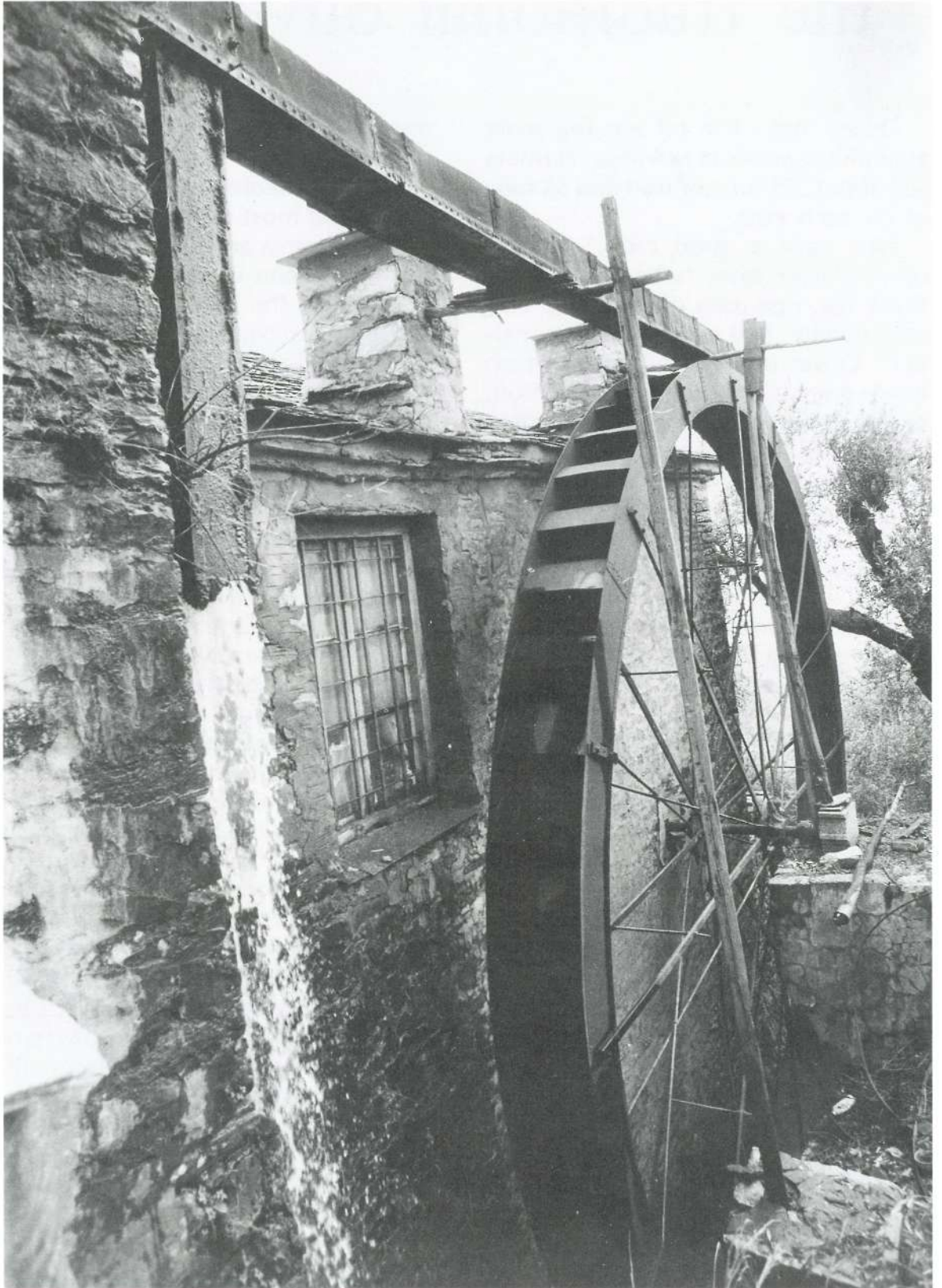
Up until World War II, many rich farmers in Milies owned an olive press, but as the years went by their operation was no longer profitable so they were closed down. Most of them were sold; others have fallen in ruins. However, one old press is still there with all its equipment and, though it has not been working for years, it helps visitors understand how a hand-

operated olive press functioned. This press could be listed for preservation.

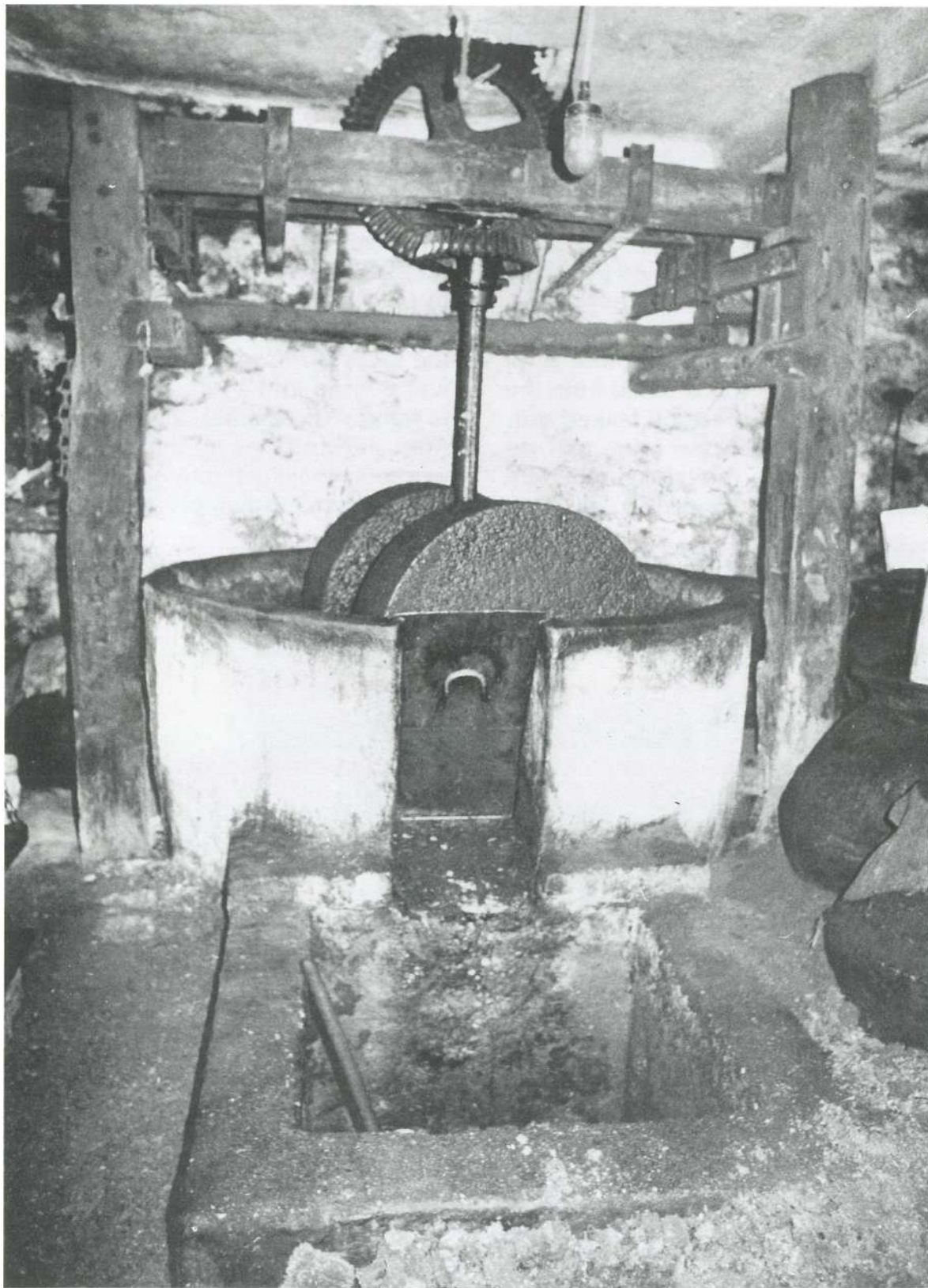
Yiorgos Nikoles was a farmer who had spend most of his life working in this olive press and liked to remember the days when it was in operation.

"We had the press going from the beginning of November when farmers started gathering the olives that had already fallen off the tree and kept it open till Easter if the harvest was good. Olives used for oil were carried from the storing room in large baskets and emptied in those storage pits right next to the press. We needed about five hundred *okades* of fruit – approximately seven hundred kilos – to fill the basin and start the two huge grindstones turning, crushing the olives into a thick pulp."

This traditional olive press functioned with waterpower which gave a rotating movement to an enormous iron wheel built outside the press and connected to the stones in the basin. As the iron wheel turned, it made the grindstone move round and round. "These enormous granite stones," says Doxa Nikole, "were quarried on the island of Aigina and sent to the port of Piraeus on a caique. They came to Volos by train where they were loaded onto our local train that brought them all the way up to Milies. But to get them from the station to the olive press we had to yoke three pairs of oxen to do the job!" Once the olives were crushed, a worker lifted the barrier that blocked the side opening of the basin which allowed



*"Fteroti", an iron
wheel of a hydro-
powered olive
press
(Photograph
taken 1983)*



An "aloni", a
huge basin and
"litharia",
grindstones
(Photograph
taken 1983)

the pulp to pour out. Using a bucket, he would feed the pulp into special sacks woven of goat's hair into the shape of a large envelope. Twenty such sacks were placed on the press before two workers began operating it by lowering the cross piece which pressed the sacks further and further, squeezing out more oil.

When the men had pulled the press down as far as it would go, they used a long piece of wood which served as a lever and lowered it even more until every drop of oil was drained from the sacks. When no more oil leaked out, the workers raised the press and removed each of the sacks that had been squeezed, breaking up with

their hands, the cakes of olive pits, that had been formed inside. Then once again they would restack the sacks on the press, pouring a bucket of boiling water over each one of them before starting the second pressing by following the same procedure. At the end of this second pressing, there was almost nothing left in the sacks but the pits which were used to feed the fire that heated the water in the boiler. The oil that leaked out of the sacks along with the boiling water was poured into a tub. The oil, which is lighter than water, floated above. After allowing time for the liquid to set workers would carefully scoop out the oil with a wooden or metal utensil



Pottery jars for storing olive oil partially buried to keep them cool (Photograph taken 1986)

which measured it and pour it into one of the large earthen jars which were specially designed for olive oil. They could hold 120 to 600 kilos.

"These jars came by caique from Chanakkale on the Asian side of the Dardenelles to one of the small bays in Pelion. We then carried them up the slopes to the village. Men carried them on their shoulders or tied them to a log and dragged them up the cobbled paths until they finally reached the storeroom of the press. We buried most of these jars half a metre deep in the earth to keep them steady and cool."

"When we had to deliver olive oil to one of the merchants, we would take

it out of the jars and pour it into goat-skin sacks or large cans which were easy to carry. Olive oil had no fixed price. Merchants paid us according to the quality we offered. Poor quality olives gave poor quality oil, which unusable in cooking, had to be used in industry. Its price was very low. Sometimes, after an entire year's hard labor of cultivating, harvesting, and working at the press all we received at the end were a few cans of oil for the family. However, we didn't complain because it could have been worse as, sometimes, an unexpectedly bitter frost would kill trees down to the root and we would have to wait for years to get a real crop."



*Dionissis
Athanassiou and
Anghelis
Apostolis
carrying an
earthen jar
(Photograph
taken 1988)*

wine and *tsipouro*

Until a few years ago, many farmers in Milies cultivated large vineyards, and the village supplied the local tavernas and those in Volos with high quality Pelion wine.

"We used to have nothing but grapes around here," Aphroditi Passia says, "but today there's a shortage of field help; wages are high and our vineyards are no longer profitable, so most of us have planted apple trees instead. We've only kept a few vines to make wine and *tsipouro* for the house."

Cultivating vineyards and making wine and *tsipouro* keeps the farmer busy all year round. Work begins in January when last year's plants have been pruned. During the next two months, the soil around each plant is dug up, hoed and fertilized. If the weather is mild, the vines begin to sprout in April and the fields must be sprayed three or four times until each grape begins to ripen.

"We must keep a close eye on our vineyards because grapes are affected by a great number of diseases," far-

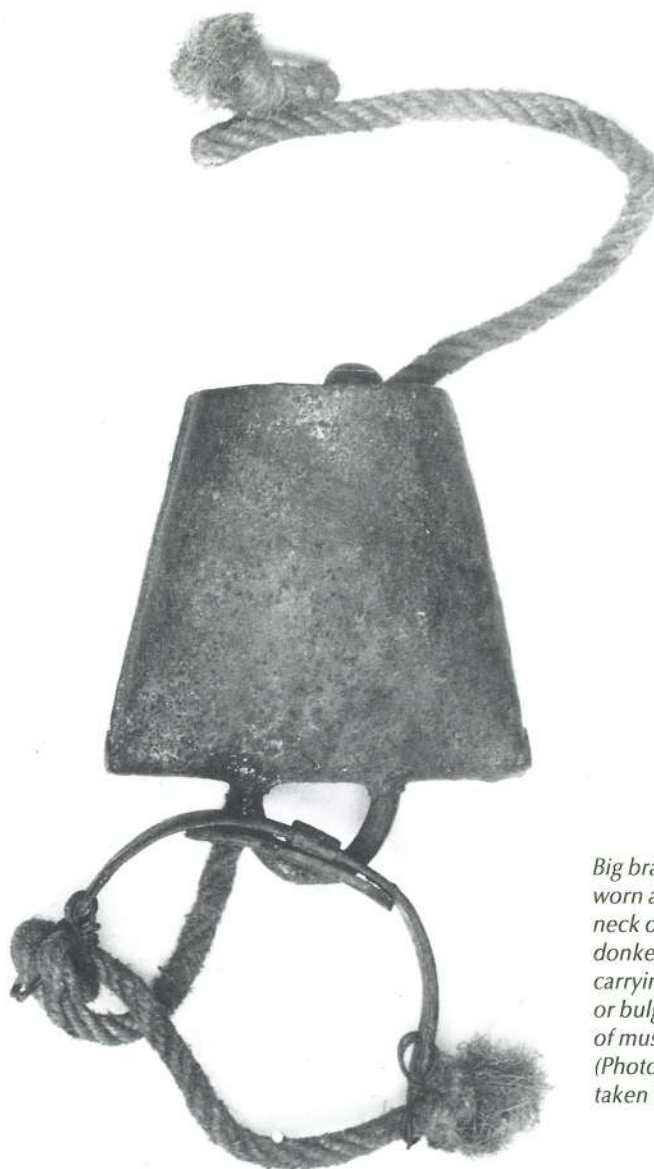


A small vineyard in early spring – a farmer has clipped off weaker shoots to allow stronger ones to flourish (Photograph taken 1986)

mers will tell you. "As new shoots begin growing, farmers clip off the feeble ones, leaving the strong ones to grow. Later in the season they will clip off small green bunches of grapes, allowing the plant to produce a better quality of fruit. As the grapes grow, each vine is propped up with a stick to help it carry the extra weight. In September, grapes ripen and by the end of October harvest time is already over."

"In times past when many farmers had large vineyards, harvest time lasted well over one month. Today, it only takes about one week to gather the fruit," Aphroditi continues. "Back then we received help not just from Milies but also from Kissos and Mouressi. The pruning is done by my husband and I and many years ago we used to start out at the crack of dawn with a loaf of bread and a bit of cheese, with our baskets and our pruning scissors and large blankets that we'd spread near the vines. As each bunch was carefully cut off at the stem, we would clip off any green or rotten grapes; those that had dried up or had been nibbled by a bird, a fox or a badger.

As we filled goat-skin bags with our grapes, we would stamp the fruit right there on the spot. Muleteers, coming and going all day long, would leave the vineyard, heading for the village, bringing the must of the grape home to be stored in the barrels. Every mule and donkey wore a big brass bell around their necks, each with its particular sound. While we worked one could hear them in the distance and it was easy to tell who was harvesting that day. As we often worked late at



Big brass bell worn around the neck of a mule or donkey when carrying grapes or bulging bags of must (Photograph taken 1986)

night, the music of these bells warned others to keep the narrow paths clear.

"Grape picking wasn't all that tiring, mind you. It was fun, too. We had a lot of young people with us, cheerful and full of life. While we worked we told jokes and sang songs, popping a few grapes in our mouth now and then, pausing for a bit of salty fish which would take away the sweet taste."

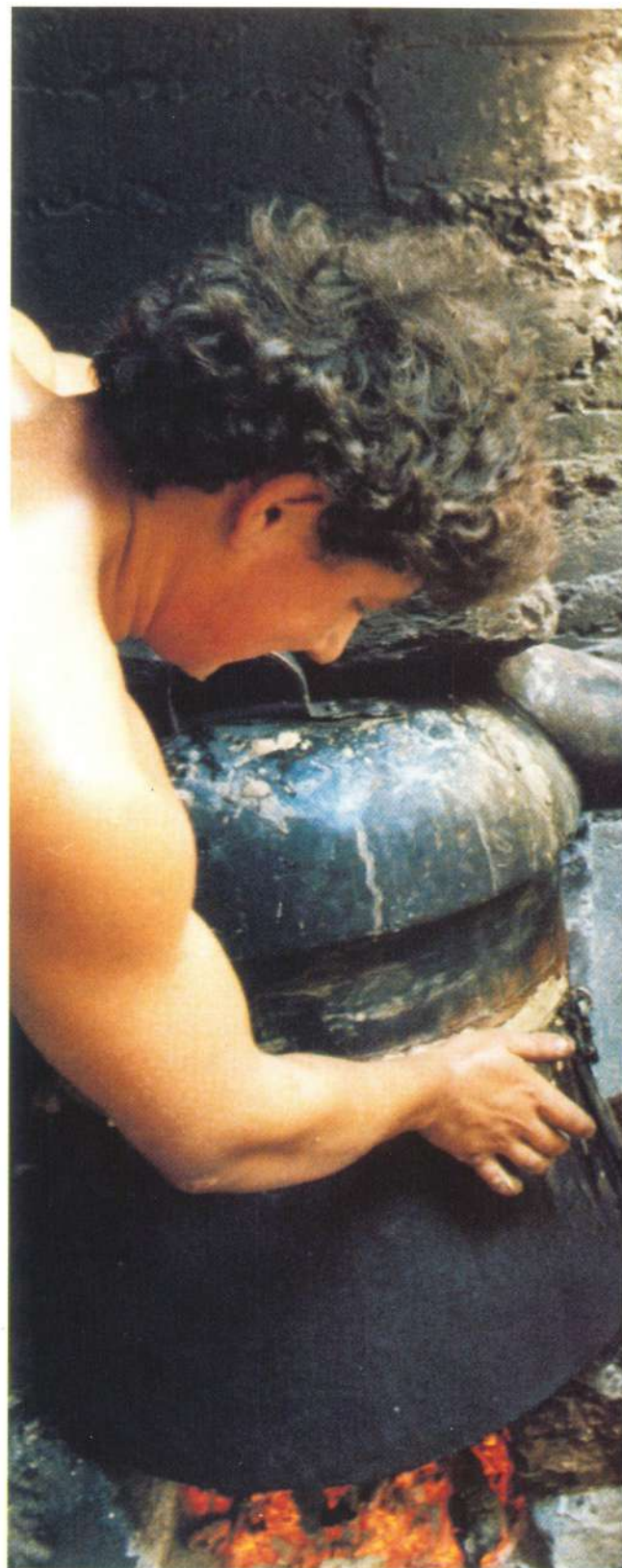
Not so long ago most farmers brought the must directly to the barrel. Today they take their grapes to the wine press and stamp the fruit with their

bare feet. Afterwards, juice, skin, seeds and stems are all poured into a big wooden barrel from the big opening at the top.

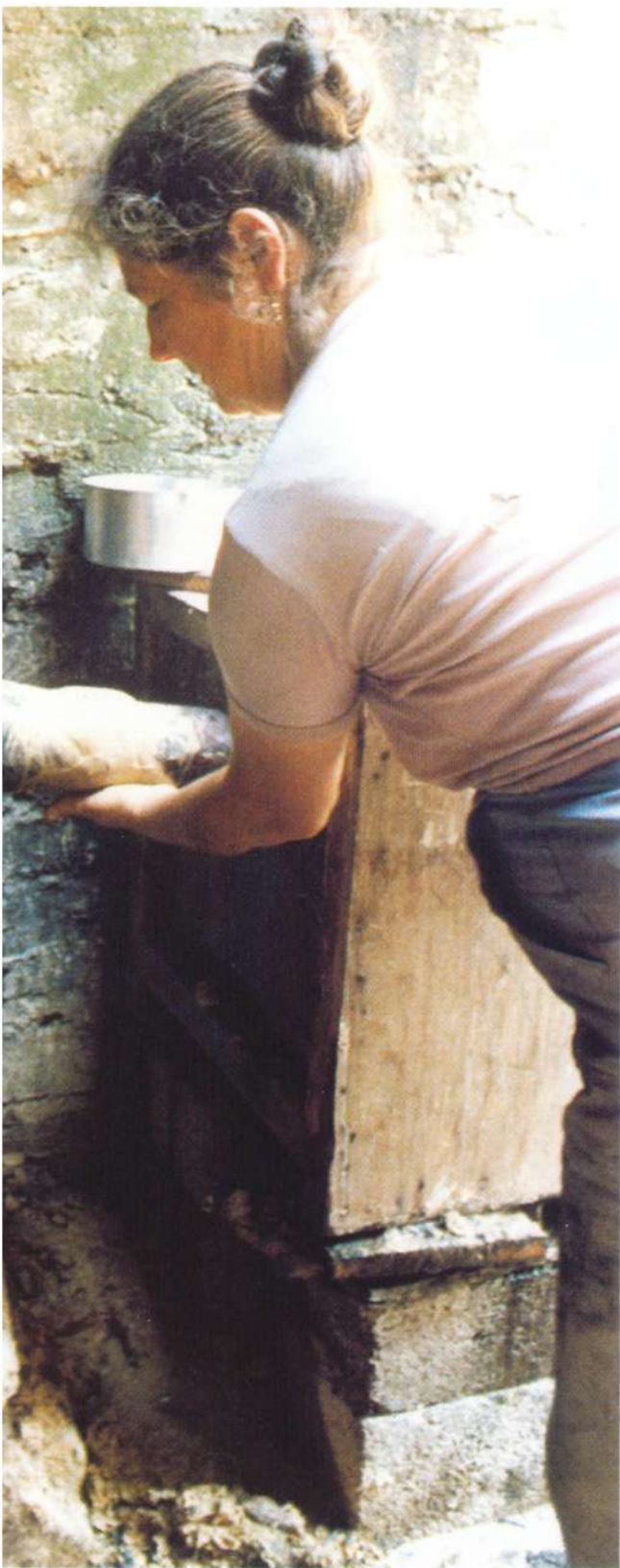
"Into the barrel, which is always kept in a cool place, we usually put different varieties of grapes to give our wine a better taste. However, we don't fill it to the brim because with fermentation the crushed fruit begins to bubble and can easily overflow."

"As soon as the must is in the barrel," Spyros Passias says, "we take a sample to check its alcohol content. If it's over 13%, we add water, if it's less than 12%, we add sugar. This checking is very important because if the must does not have the right amount of alcohol, the wine will surely go sour."

From the moment the must begins to bubble we try to keep it from overflowing. Two or three times a day we stir and push the grapes to the bottom of the barrel with a long wooden stick. Up and down, back and forth, we keep pushing like rowers in a boat. We continue this for two weeks. If the must keeps bubbling at the end of twenty days, it is a sign that our wine won't be of good quality. It won't, as we say, reach a good age. To determine if the fermentation has stopped, I light a candle and put it right inside the barrel; if it stays lit and the flame doesn't flicker, it means there are no vapors. Then I open the tap to let out about 100 to 200 liters of juice; pouring it again into the barrel, along with 1 kilo of salt for every 1000 kilos of grapes, gives the wine a special flavor. I stir the must one last time and seal the barrel tight. For years I used a thick paste made of flour, bran and



*Apostolis
Maitianos helps
his mother seal
the boiler lid for
the distillation of
"tsipouro"
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



olive oil but mice would come and nibble on it, so now I use cement and no air can pass through to turn the wine sour."

In about forty days the new wine is ready to drink. By the end of November the farmers will open the tap to let the wine pour into bottles of many different sizes, adding a bit of olive oil to prevent the wine from having contact with the air.

"During the hot summer months we have to keep an eye on the barrels because the wine may start bubbling again. This is why we leave it in a cool place, on the ground floor or in the basement. We must remember to check it regularly to see that it is not overflowing."

"From grapes we produce wine as well as *tsipouro*. *Tsipouro* is what you get if you distill what remains after the wine has been removed from the barrel. Not everyone in the village is allowed to make *tsipouro*," Grammenos Maitianos explains. "Each producer has to get a special permit from the Chemical Board and the lid of every boiler has to be registered with the Municipality and the Police. Once a year, for forty-eight hours, I am allowed to unseal my lid and start distilling. When this time is up, I must bring the lid back to the Police and have it sealed again. During these forty-eight hours I continue working non-stop, day and night. It surely is a painful task, what with the heat from the fire and the fumes from the grapes, but I've got my *tsipouro*!"

"Days before our permit is due, we carry home large bunches of dried branches which we will use in the boiler. The fire has to be kept going,



*After processing
the dregs,
Maitianos uses
the mash for
flower fertilizer
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

distilling one batch after another. When we are ready to begin, we spread an armful of dry twigs at the bottom of the boiler to prevent the dregs from sticking to the hot and burning metal. We then add one or two buckets of water. After this we place the lid on the boiler and seal the joint with a thin coat of mud made from white earth and bran."

The remaining must is distilled twice. Out of the first distillation comes a liquid called *souma*; about 100 kilos of left-over must provides approximately 20 liters of *souma*. When all of the dregs have been processed, *tsipouro* producers clean their boiler thoroughly and carry on with the second distillation, adding certain ingredients to the *souma* to give their *tsipouro* a special flavor; a bit of barley, some salt, anise, a few orange peels, or mastic. Out of 100 liters of *souma* the second distillation provides nearly 3 liters of pure alcohol and twenty-five to thirty liters of *tsipouro*.

"When my children caught a cold I used the alcohol to give them a good rubbing on the chest or back, and if they had the sniffles, I'd sprinkle some over their head. It works miracles and I'm never without a bottle. Nothing is wasted from the grapes. I even use the remaining portion of must from the grapes, once it has been distilled, for my flowers. The mash is an excellent fertilizer."

When the barrel is empty it must be thoroughly cleaned. The grower crawls inside and, using a hard brush and plenty of water, he scrubs it completely and then leaves it to dry. A few days before the next grape harvest, he



"Vyzachtari", a
lead "tsipouro"
flask
(Photograph
taken 1986)

starts wetting down the barrel twice a day to allow the wood to swell back to its original shape. He will get inside once again with a burner in one hand to scorch the inner surface with paraffin wax in order to seal any small cracks, just as a fisherman does before letting his boat into the water after the long winter months. In this clean scrubbed barrel he will pour his grapes from the next year's vintage and the entire process begins all over again, giving him homemade wine and *tsipouro*, to treat his family and friends.

THE TRADITIONAL VILLAGE CRAFTSMEN



Everyday life in Milies these last few years has undergone a slow change, as people in the village, although still bound to many traditional ways, are at the same time accepting and following new customs and attitudes. The availability of machine-made products is undeniably influencing their needs and demands. As a result, some of the old crafts and professions are slowly disappearing. There is no cobbler in Milies today, no tailor, cooper or tinker and the tinsmith is the last one left in the whole area, while the woodcarver and the stonecarver work more for the love of it than for a proper living.

Despite this obvious change, certain other crafts will probably be maintained for many years to come. Because of cobbled paths, all transportation in Milies is done by mules or donkeys and so the packsaddler and the farrier will have to keep their workshops open. Because the village has been listed for preservation, all craftsmen working on a traditional Pelion house will be in demand. A master builder with experience, a good carpenter and a blacksmith will not be out of work. Young people are tempted to learn these crafts and so they will survive. Generally speaking, craftsmen are experiencing a decline in their clientele, finding it hard to earn a living.

The younger generation is gradually becoming aware of this situation and quite a few boys and girls see no future in pursuing any of the old crafts. They tend to go on with their studies, eager to follow a profession with a steady income, leaving the village to establish themselves in the nearby city of Volos or any other urban center.

the master builder

*A local master
builder's trowel
(Photograph
taken 1986)*



Master builder Georgios Tsitsanis is gone, and though more than a year has already passed since his death, people in the village still remember him because he was one of those typical craftsmen of the old generation: sound, steady and loyal, with the eye of an artist and a deft hand with his tools. Similar craftsmen are now working in Milies; Zafeiris Papazachariou, Stavros Kornoutos, Kostas Vanghelas and younger men who will carry on the profession.

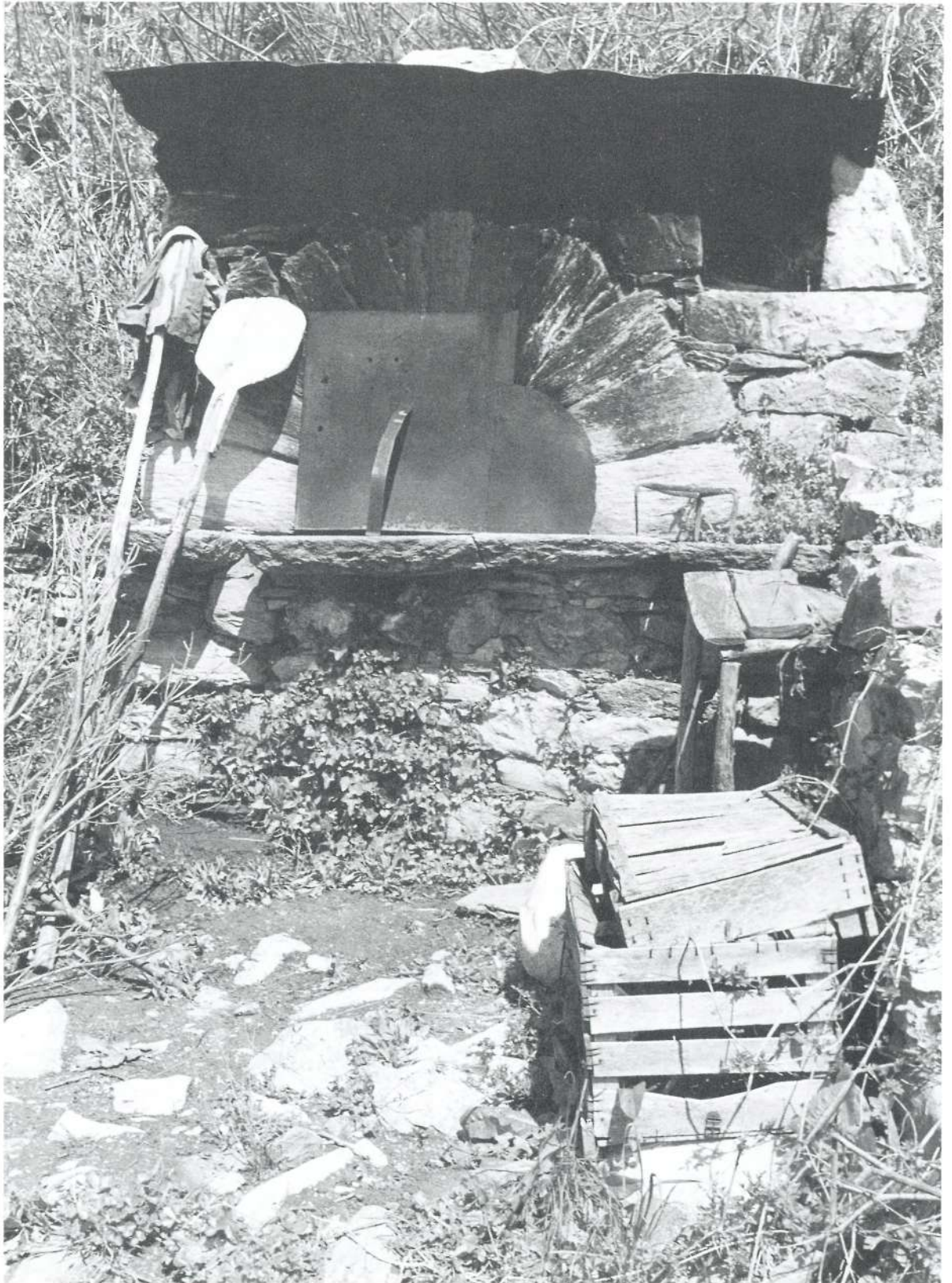
"You've got to start learning the job when you're still a kid," Master Tsitsanis used to say, "working next to a good master, with a hammer and a chisel in hand, although young people today think they know it all. In my day we learned to build with stones and slates. After the earthquakes in 1955, all of us had to work fast using cheap materials, concrete blocks for the walls and tiles for the roof. That's how our local tradition was lost. To

build a beautiful old Pelion house you had to master so many details. You needed many years of experience and a tremendous amount of practice."

The large Pelion family house was usually a sturdy three-storey building with thick stone walls and a slate roof. The front door was rather small, made of wood but reinforced with iron bolts and it opened with a huge heavy key. The house had a few openings on the lower floors protected by bulging iron bars. The third floor had many windows over which one could generally admire beautifully painted, so-called false windows. The ground floor, cool and rather dark, was used as a store house. This is where the olive jars and wine barrels were kept, where meat and sausages were hung to dry, where fruit, vegetables and potatoes could be easily reached. There was also room enough to keep hay for the animals and wood for the stoves and fireplaces.



Repairing a 18th century Pelion house, to be used as a guest house by the National Tourist Organization (Photograph taken 1985)



*Katardzis family
outdoor oven,
still in use today.
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

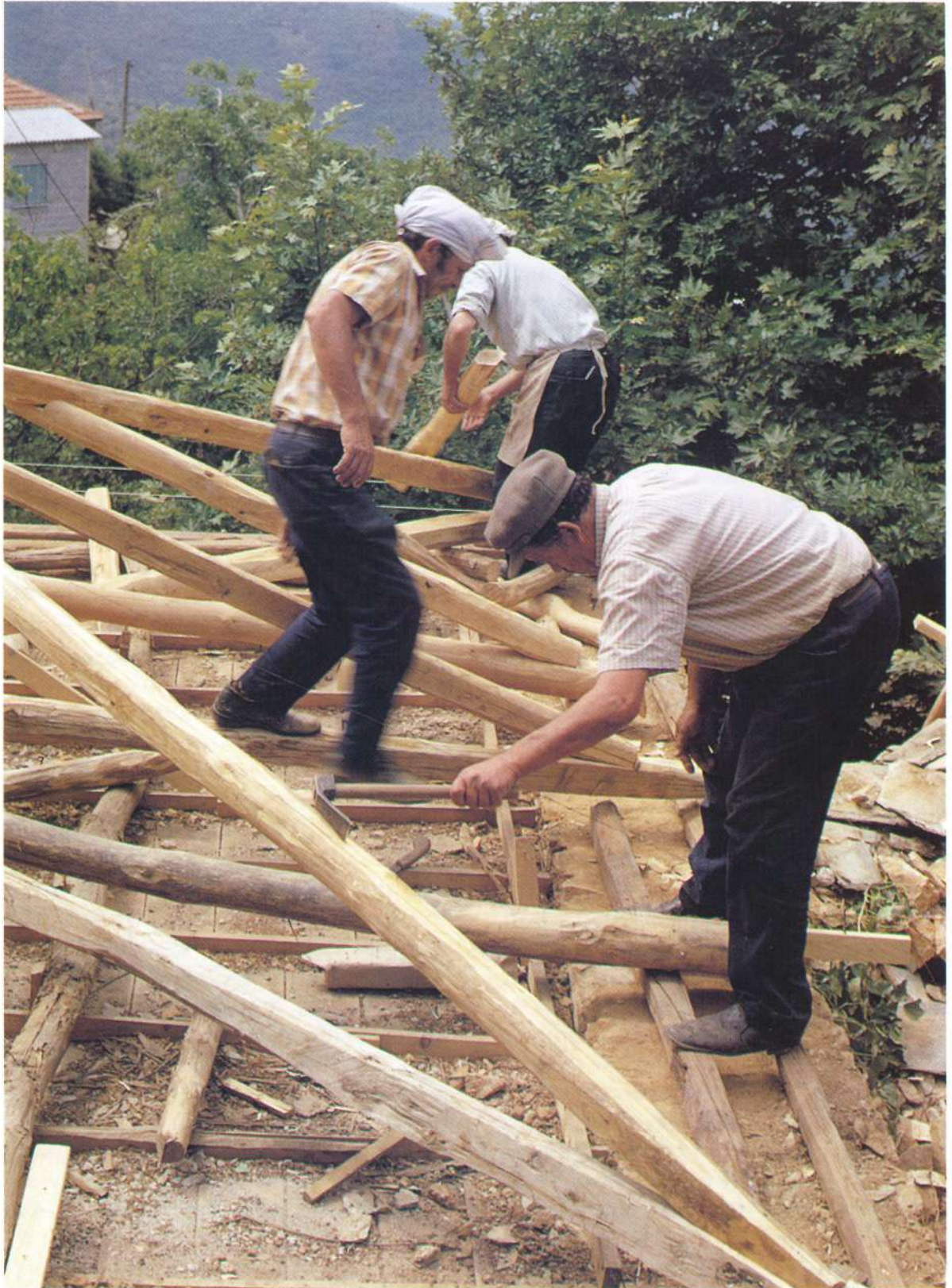
From the ground floor, a wooden ladder led to the first floor, to the low-roofed winter rooms, each with a fireplace, and the kitchen. From there one climbed to the parlor. This room was brightly lit and impressively decorated with carved ceilings and painted walls. Homes had few facilities, no running water and no proper bathroom. The fountain, the water closet and the oven were built in the yard outside the main house.

"It's no easy thing to build an oven," Master Zafeiris points out. "I make them big or small depending on the family's needs but one of average size will have room for seven big loaves of bread. I start with the base which is usually square and about one meter off the ground so women can use their oven without having to bend over. Only the outside walls are made of stone. The hollow part I fill with cheap stuff to save money. The oven, built above the base with broken bits of bricks and clay tiles mixed with a mortar of red soil, has the shape of a dome. The large opening in front of an oven is called a "mouth" and the small hole on the right side is called an "ear". Every oven must have an "ear". Housewives leave it open when they light their oven to let the air in and get the fire going but they seal it the minute they put their loaves in to keep the heat in. When the dome is dry, I spread a thin layer of mortar over the bottom of the oven smearing it with a cloth soaked in olive oil to avoid any cracks from high degrees of temperature. Quite often I would add a grill and a sink right next to the oven so housewives could cook the family meal outdoors and wash the dishes,

too. So when the weather was nice the family would bring out a few chairs and eat in the open."

"I'm not saying it didn't take a lot of skill to make an oven," Master Tsitsanis would say smiling, "but having to build a Pelion house was a great responsibility. I had to find the best materials, to hire the best craftsmen available and the most promising young helpers. We got plenty of good quality stone right here in the village but slates for the roof were brought all the way from the quarries in Propan, a village on the other side of the hill. I often went there myself to make sure I got the very best quality and I would also go to choose the huge wooden beams of chestnut wood. Everything had to be carried to the site on pack animals, and muleteers would guide their heavily loaded mules and donkeys up and down the cobbled paths all day long."

"I kept by team working hard, there was no fooling around, no wasting time. Work had to be done and done well but I praised them all if they deserved it. Building a house was no small matter and I believe that's why it was the custom to have a little feast the day we were to lay the very first stone of the house – a good size stone with the cross of Christ chiselled on one side. My men were all there, the family came with friends and neighbors and the priest was summoned to give his blessing. We drank to the health of the owners and they would give me a few coins to share with my workmen. Then again, when we'd finished working the frame of the roof, we'd nail a wooden cross at its very top with a little wreath of flowers



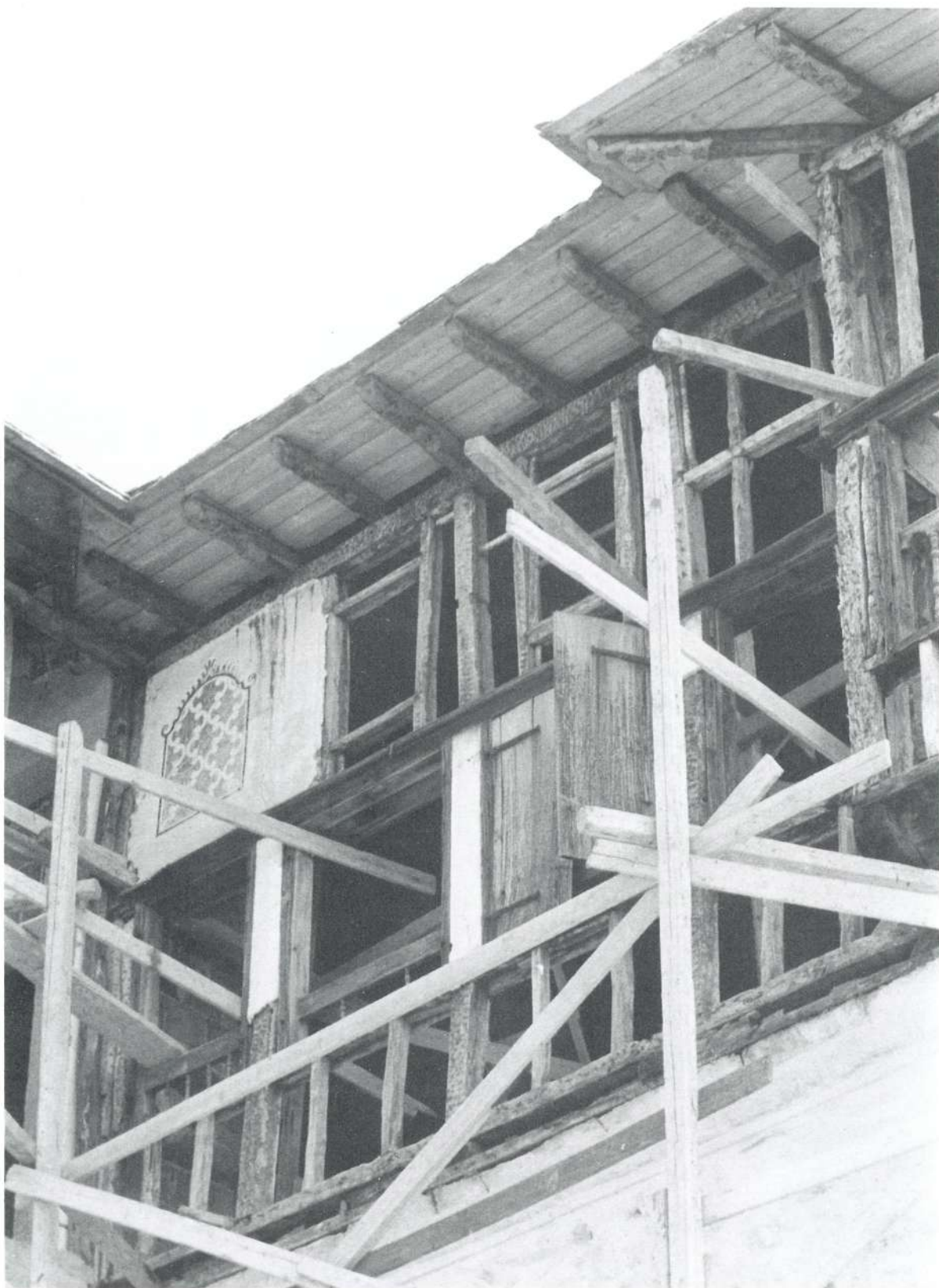
*Nailing beams
for roof truss
(Photograph
taken 1986)*



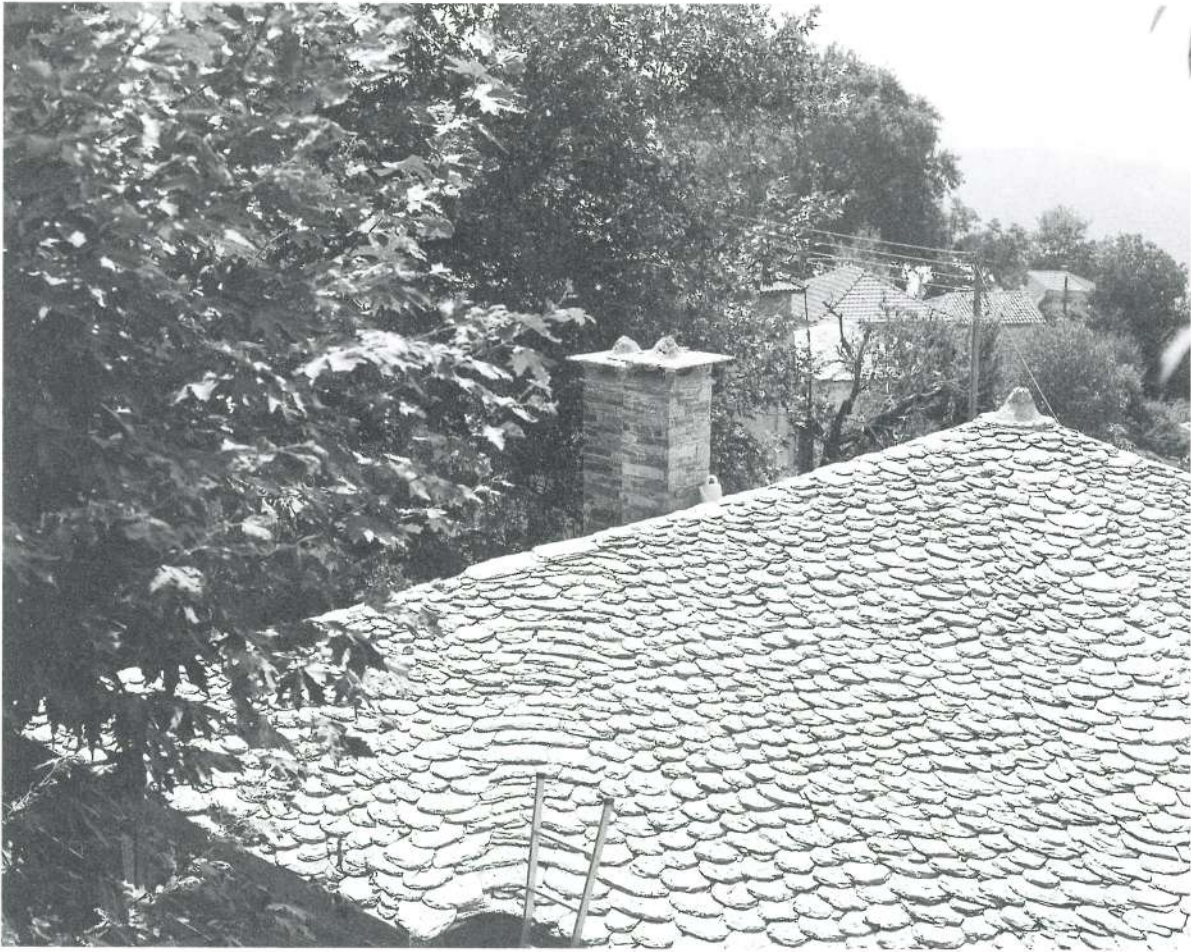
*Craftsman
nailing a cross
decorated with
flowers to the
peak of the roof
truss
(Photograph
taken 1978)*



*Master Stavros
Kornoutos with
an apprentice
repairs the roof
of a Pelion house
(Photograph
taken 1979)*



*A detail from the
restoration work
on the
Evangelinakis
house; note the
characteristic
handpainted
false windows
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



Pelion slate roof, Sakellariou house (Photograph taken 1984)

around it, drawing God's protection to the new hearth. The owner would hand out more coins and new shirts for the men, a gift for their good work."

"Builders have a dialect of their own," Zafeiris Papazachariou will add with a grin. "We use words and phrases no one else can understand.



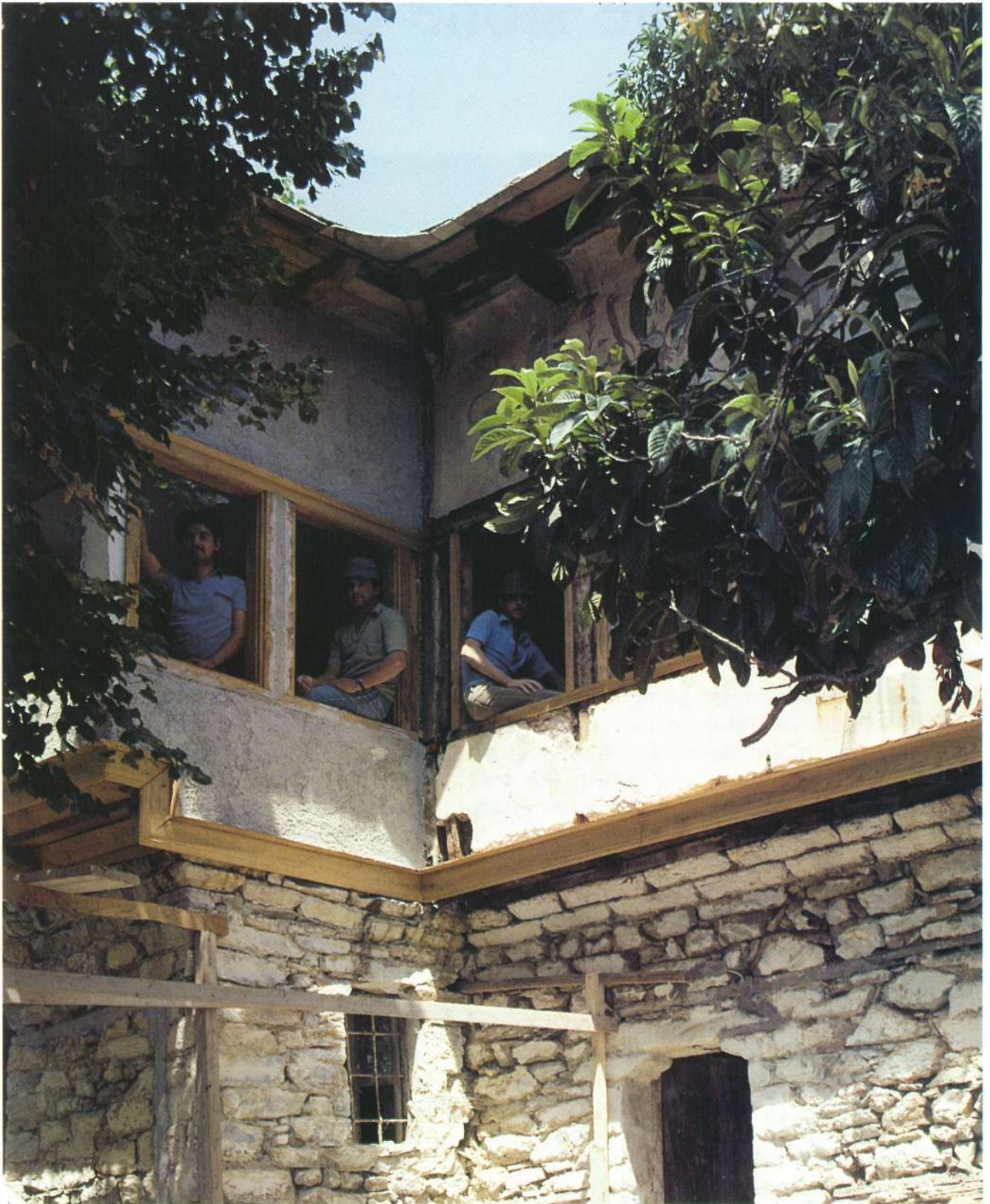
*Detail of a
partitional wall
made of
interwoven
twigs,
Kapetanyianni
house
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

*Local craftsmen
repairing the
typical Pelion-
style house of
Despina Politou
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

So we can chat along even if the Master and his wife are around or if a pretty girl passes by!."

"I love this job of ours," Master Tsitsanis would end saying. "I've spent my whole life with a trowel in hand through good years and bad. I'll never forget the great fire and the earthquakes in Milies. To see our beautiful Pelion houses in ruins broke my heart. I never thought I'd live to see my village recover from such disasters. Never. Yet today with all that's going on around me, all these new

houses springing up, and old ones being restored, I can't help feeling a kind of sadness that my time is through and I'm no longer young, that I no longer have the strength to build just one more house, one more traditional Pelion house with walls almost a meter thick, each stone chiselled with my own two hands, each corner-stone carved by my best stone cutter. I wouldn't have partitions made with bricks like those they have today. Instead I would cut fine slender twigs to weave them in and out of wooden planks two inches wide nailed upright to the floor, same as my old master did so long ago. And I would spread the walls with plaster made with good sifted soil and bits of straw not with the trowel but with the palms of my hands. I'd like to work up on the roof again, nailing strong chestnut beams to give the frame its perfect shape. It takes great skill to get the heavy slates up high, and fit them well so that the roof won't leak. If only I could get started tomorrow; climbing right at the very edge, to start laying the first slates along the eaves. Thin slates chiselled one by one to give them a slight curve, careful to add a little stone here and there to bring them to the right level... Covering a roof with slates is hard work and it takes days to finish. During the summer months it's sizzling hot up there and in the winter, the wind can blow you off. Your hands get stiff from the cold but no matter, even though tiling goes much faster, there's nothing like a well-built Pelion slate roof. Yes, our craft is not an easy one but if I had to start all over again, there's nothing I would do instead."



the stone carver



*Stone carver's
tools, for etching
designs on stone
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

Stone carving is a craft with a long tradition in the Pelion area but in Milies only a few outstanding examples have been spared from the great disasters of war and earthquakes. So when visiting the village today, one shouldn't miss going by the tiny chapel of Aghia Marina next to the main square to look at the carvings on the stone slabs that adorn the wall behind the altar and to the monastery of Aghia Paraskevi to enjoy gazing at the elaborate decorations on the lintel over the narthex.

As one strolls along the cobbled paths seeing now and again old Pelion houses in ruins with their stone walls and elaborate cornerstones, or with a marble lintel still in place and a pair of beautifully carved supports, or stopping by one of the many fountains where water still springs out of a bowl-shaped stone basin, he can't help being impressed by the skill of the native stone carvers. In the old days,

the village had its own quarries which produced high quality stone and marble. Once hewn from their bed rock, the blocks were split and trimmed in Volos. As the demand increased, supplies were also brought in from the quarries in Syki, a small community about 20 miles away, or even from Volos. That's where Panayiotis Demou gets his material today, since the local quarries have all closed down.

Panayiotis is the only stone carver in Milies. He makes his living working beside a master builder, chiselling stones and corner stones but in his spare time he spends hours in his workshop bent over a marble slab, carving scenes of everyday life or local Pelion designs copied from the old masters. He may also have to work on a stone fountain basin since he is the only one around who knows how to make them. He is a self-taught craftsman, always eager to learn more because he loves what he is doing.



*Three-mouthed
fountain found
near the railway
station
(Photograph
taken 1987)*

*Panayiotis
Demou carves
traditional
designs on a
marble slab with
a chisel and
hammer; nearby
a completed
fountain basin
(Photograph
taken 1986)*



"When I was a boy," he once said, "I liked to look at books with pictures of ancient statues and when I once went to Corfu and saw the statue of Achilles, I couldn't draw my eyes away from the arrow in his flesh. It looked so real! If I were young again nothing would stop me from going to the School of Fine Arts."

Panayiotis' workshop is right next to his house on the main road leading to the square. That's where he stores the blocks and slabs he brings from Volos - good white stones with no ridges; that's where he has his bench and all his tools. When he makes a basin for a fountain he uses a pick and a heavy hammer to remove all the rough bits, then works with a chisel and a mallet to carve out the bowl and smooths off the surface with an electric

polisher.

"It takes me about three days to finish a basin because most of the work is done by hand. The polisher is the only machine I use."

"What I really like doing is to carve designs on marble slabs, creating shapes on the flat surface of the stone. It thrills me to work with my chisels first on the outline, then on the background to make it rough and give some contrast, then on the details. It takes a good deal of patience and skill but above all you've got to have a feeling for what you are doing. If young people here in Milies had a chance to learn the craft I believe that quite a few would join the class. Not to take up stone carving as their main job but as something on the side for a bit of extra money."



The upper part of a marble monument close to the church in the main square (Photograph taken 1985)

the woodcarver



*Carving by the
local wood
carver, Kostas
Gouryiotis
(Photograph
taken 1984)*

The art of woodcarving flourished in Mount Pelion in the middle of the 18th century when certain wealthy landowners and merchants who had built up their fortune by selling olives, olive oil, silk and leather, were eager to decorate their new house or the village church with elaborate woodcarvings. The best known craftsmen were sent for from Epirus - an important center during the Turkish occupation - bringing with them new designs and techniques.

Homes built in those days had beautiful wooden ceilings with geometric or flower-like carvings

often painted with bright colors. Doors, window shutters and cupboards were also decorated. Furniture was scarce. Yet one could admire lovely wooden chests, stools, round tables and beds, all of which had rich carved finishings.

Unfortunately in Milies nearly all those old lovely homes were burnt during World War II, or destroyed in the earthquakes so there are very few examples of excellent craftsmanship left to admire. However the iconostasis, a work of art in the church in the main square, by an unknown artist, which dates back to the end of the

18th century has been preserved intact and is a masterpiece of its kind with exquisite carving work which shows a variety of subjects often giving a sculpture-like effect.

Mount Pelion with its dense forests has many kinds of trees, mainly chestnut and walnut. Woodcarvers need to work with a very good quality of wood which won't warp or split with age.



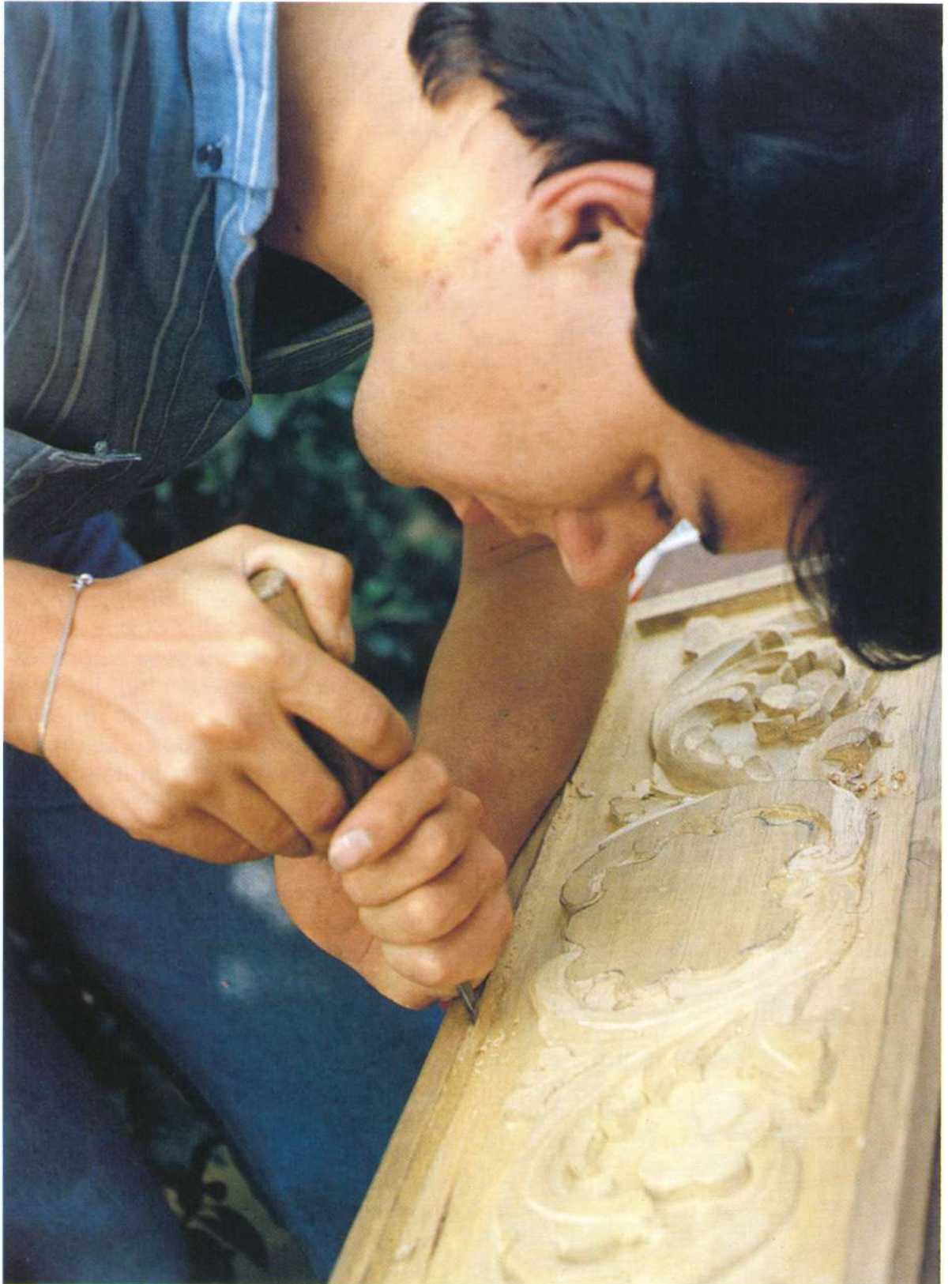
"You must make sure wood has been chopped down in winter," they say, "when the sap is down at the roots. If sap is in the log, then worms will hatch their eggs and feed on the sap."

"In the old days it took two strong men to work the huge saw, cutting down the timber and splitting the wood. Mostly chestnut wood was used, and we would harness a pair of oxen to drag the logs to the railway station. There was a big demand for chestnut wood because it is the best wood for carving. Large quantities were sent with the local train to our clients in Volos."

One can find in the market various qualities of wood. Some are more resistant than others, easier to carve. "Wood must be dry," Kostas Gouryiotis insists, "otherwise it shrinks so it often needs to be processed in a kiln." Kostas learned the craft next to a very good master in Volos and carried on his studies at one of the Schools of Fine Arts in Italy. He is now teaching in the woodcarving section of the Greek Handicrafts Organization in Athens.

"Once my students choose the design they want to carve, they draw it on a piece of paper and trace it on the smooth surface of the wood. Beginners start by simply engraving the pattern on a flat surface while more advanced students chisel the wood around the design leaving the pattern to stand out. A more skilled artist will then start working on the details, creating shapes and forms, giving movement and life. Years of practice and personal sensitivity turns each carving into a unique object of art."

*The wood carver chipping away at a pattern with his chisel
(Photograph taken 1984)*

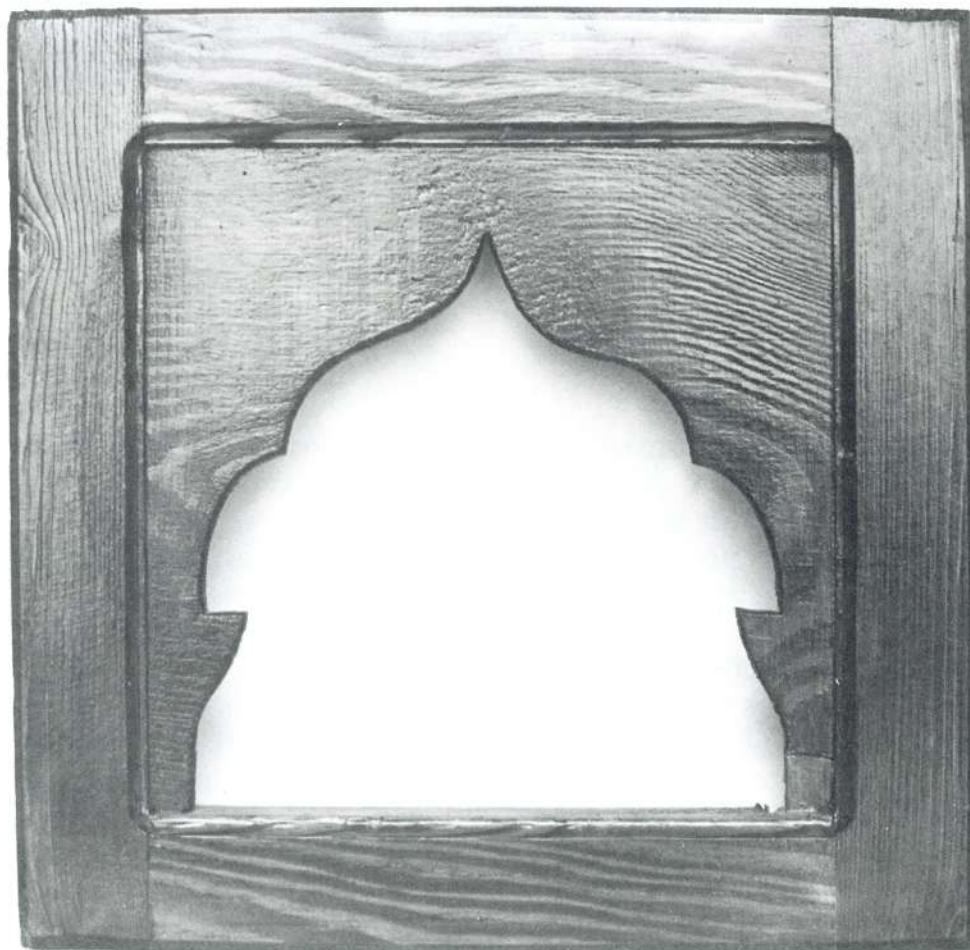


*Timoleon
Demou – an
apprentice –
carves a
traditional Pelion
design
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

A woodcarver needs to work on a steady bench and uses all kinds of clamps and clips to hold the piece of wood he will be carving firmly fixed. He uses drills to open holes, rasps, scrapers and different sizes of chisels. By simply pressing the chisel on the surface of the wood the carver gets a shallow carving. For a deeper carving he uses a wooden hammer to push the chisel deep into the wood's surface.

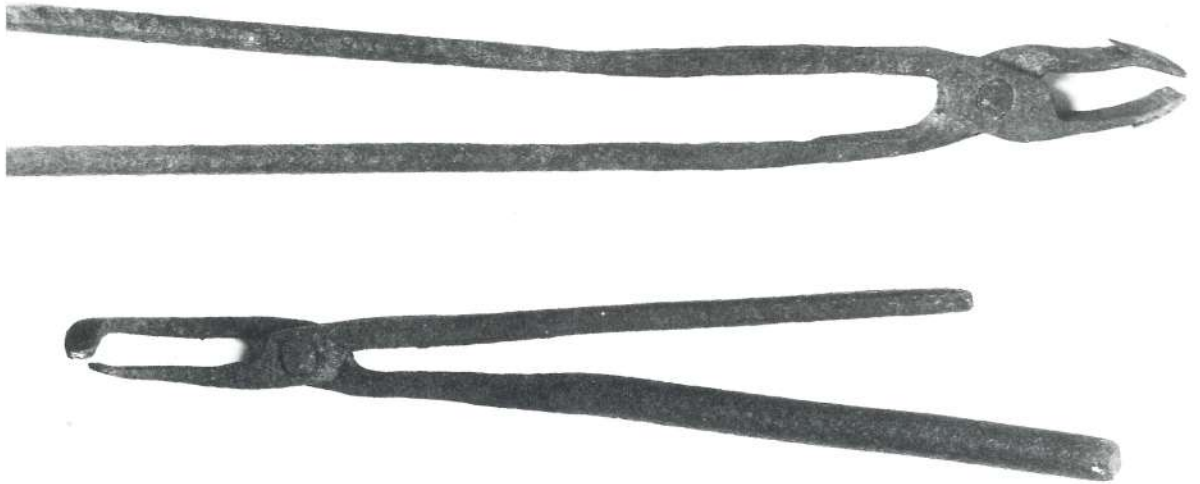
In Milies traditional woodcarving had been practically forgotten because after the war and the earth-

quakes very few people could afford to pay the price of an elaborate woodcarving. However, recently old homes have been bought and restored so there's a great demand for woodcarvers. Takis Hadziyiannis who had been working in Athens decided to come back to the village. Paschalis Samaras and Demos Gaitanas are never without work and young Timoleon Demou is learning the craft. "But there is no technical school in Milies, not even in Volos," his father says bitterly. "So how can our children be tempted to learn?"



*Cupboard panel
carved by Takis
Hadziyiannis
(Photograph
taken 1984)*

the blacksmith



A blacksmith was an important figure in the village because he made and repaired many of the tools used by both farmers and craftsmen, pick-axes and axes, adzes, hoes, knives, hatches, to name only a few. He also forged hinges and latches, bolts for doors and bulging bars for windows, locks and heavy keys, huge nails and tongs for the fireplace and stove. In the past there were four blacksmiths active in Milies. They were all busy then as cultivation and crops were the main occupation of the villagers and

there were many farm tools to be repaired. Today, however, nearly everyone buys ready-made tools and household equipment and Nikos Kolovos, assisted by his son Christos, owns the only forge in the region.

His smithy is still equipped with a furnace topped with a chimney. Though the old hand-operated bellows have been replaced by an electrical blower, he still buys coal to light the fire and works only with iron and steel. Master Niko uses different types of tongs to hold the hot iron and a

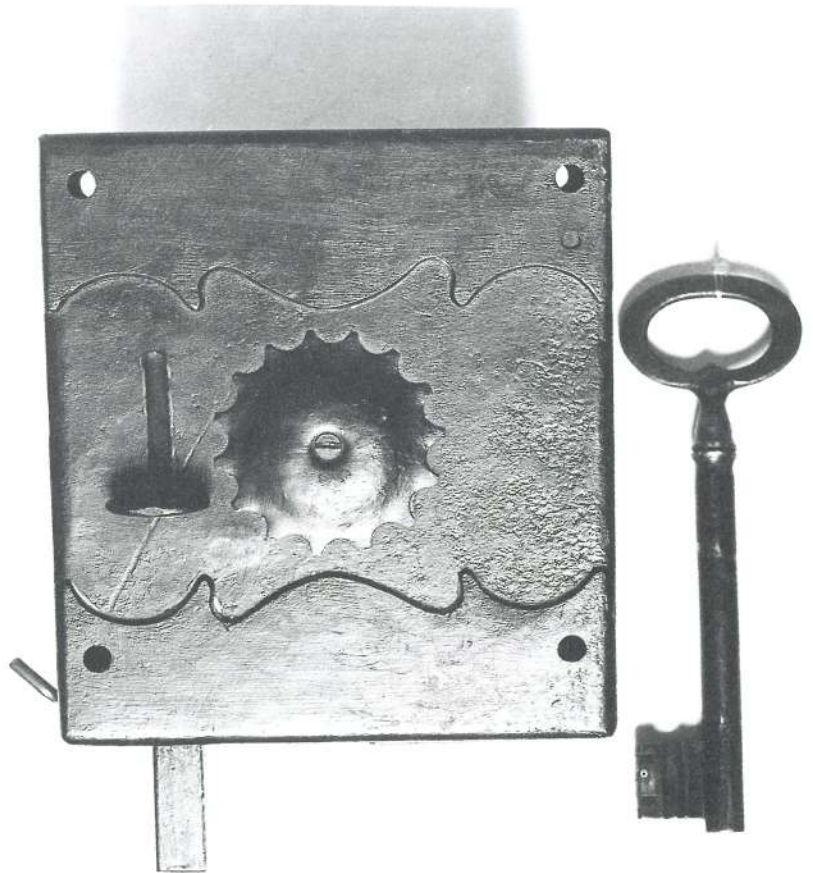
*The blacksmith's
tongs
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

variety of hammers to work the metal on the anvil. A large sledge hammer is essential when a striker is assisting him. Rivets and punches are needed for making or enlarging holes - chisels of many types to cut the metal. Metal working methods include cutting, forging, twisting and bending, spreading and welding.

Today most blacksmiths don't use the forge, preferring new easier methods, although in Milies welding and tempering are still done the old way. Through years of experience and practice the local craftsman knows by looking at the color of the metal glowing in the fire if it has reached the correct heat and with rapid hammering he can produce a perfect welding. Tempering by heat is another of his skills, giving each cutting tool the sharpest edge.

Starting off with a simple iron bar, he is capable of creating an amazing variety of designs. He is also an expert in copying local traditional patterns with the help of the moulds he has made, and he is one of the very few blacksmiths who can produce a hand-made Pelion lock and the complicated mechanism of a hunting gun.

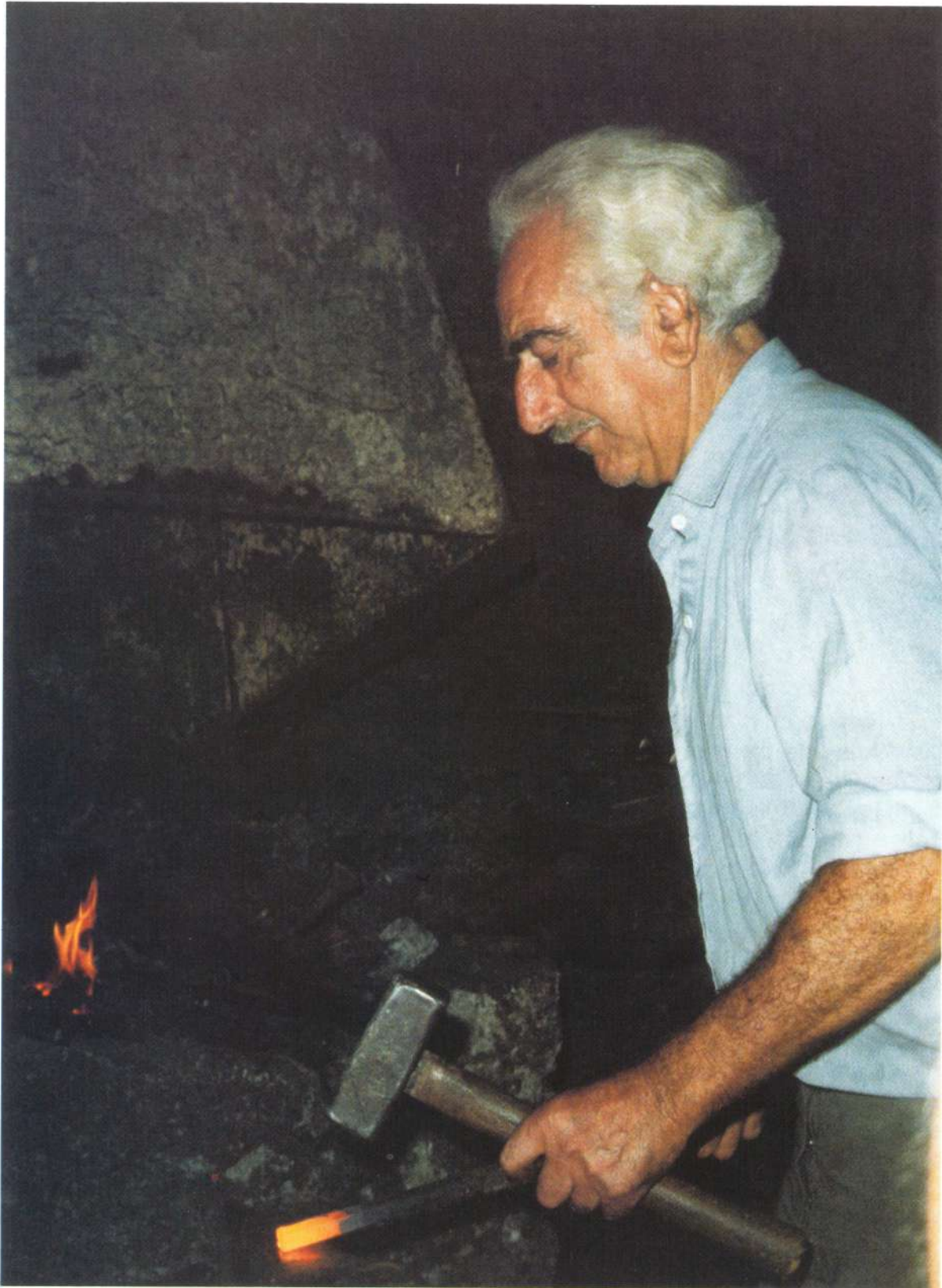
It takes years of training to learn this craft and many village craftsmen carry on a family tradition, the skills passing from father to son. Master Niko has taught both his sons, but because the old smithy in the village is small and far from the main road, they will soon be moving out. "But we'll keep the old forge going now and then, to serve the villagers. I don't have the heart to close it down. I've spent too many years of my life in here..." the old craftsman says.



*Handmade iron lock and key forged by the local blacksmith, Nikos Kolovos
(Photograph taken 1985)*

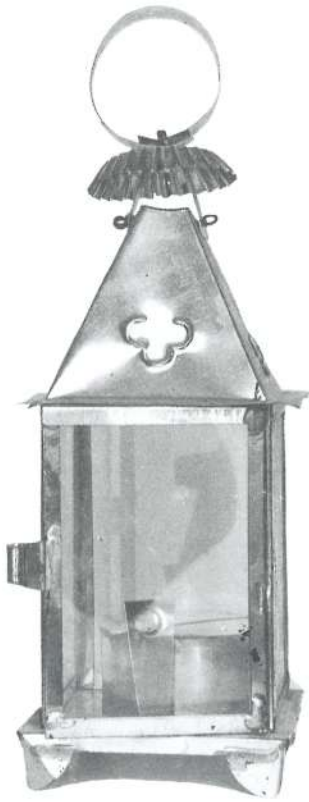
*One of the last
remaining
craftsmen, Nikos
Kolovos keeps a
furnace going in
his workshop
(Photograph
taken 1985)*





Working on the anvil the red hot iron, the local craftsman creates an amazing variety of patterns (Photograph taken 1985)

the tinsmith's craft



This is a craft that has tended to disappear. In the nearby city of Volos until a few years ago, one could find as many as thirty workshops. Today only seven of them remain. In the Pelion area, Nikos Tsangarakis, the tinsmith from Milies, a man who should retire before long, is one of the few left and though he has tried to teach his craft to a young boy, no one in the village wants to follow this profession. "Our work is very limited now," he says "because plastic and aluminium have replaced sheet metal and anything hand-made is poorly paid. Progress has ruined us."

Years ago he had a lot of work. He made all kinds of tin boxes and cans, in many sizes for olive oil, sweets and paints. He sold buckets, dust-pans

and water-cans, funnels, strainers, measures for wine and oil, all sizes of coffee pots for Greek coffee, feeding troughs for rabbits and churns, lanterns and oil lamps. He remembers making over a thousand lanterns a year when Milies had no electricity and at twilight housewives went about the house lighting one in every room. He also made small water canisters to hang over the sink when homes had no running water. He was also a tinker and asked to do repairs: he welded the handle on a bucket, patched the hole in a cauldron, fixed the old pan.

Each of the items sold in Master Niko's workshop is done by hand. Because of years of practice he has a quick eye and very skilful hands. "I never use a pattern. I've got it all up here in my mind. There is no room for mistakes in our craft. You've got to keep trying to do better, to keep your hands steady."

For Niko, life is hard because today people come to him only for rain pipes and drains, chimney flues and stove pipes. "There is no future in my craft. No young man can make a proper living. I keep my workshop open only because it's mine and I really love the work I do, and I might still be useful to someone in the village." His workshop is on the main road not too far from the square. It is still full of raw

*A lantern crafted
by the local
tinsmith, Nikos
Tsangarakis
(Photograph
taken 1983)*

material, sheet iron, black and galvanized, and french tin plate. In the adjoining room he has two hand-driven machines, a cylinder that bends the sheet metal and one that adds relief decorations on the surface of the tin. A large wooden work bench next to the window holds his tools all in order. Pincers and pliers, all sizes of scissors and chisels with which to cut tin plate, wooden hammers that leave

no marks on the fine metal, tongs and a punch to make openings and holes. To the left, on a rather low table, he has his gas-run blowtorch used for welding. Nothing is missing. "I'll tell you what's missing. Customers are missing! However, since a small gift shop has opened in the village I'm thinking of making one or two lanterns to sell to the tourists. A souvenir of the good old days!"



*Nikos
Tsangarakis'
weathervane and
lantern
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



*With tinsmith's
scissors, Nikos
Tsangarakis cuts
a tin plate in his
workshop
(Photograph
taken 1986)*



*The local
tinsmith adding
finishing touches
to a small oil
lamp
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

building cobbled paths

In Milies cobbled paths used to be the only easy way of travelling to the surrounding villages. Within the community a well designed network connected one neighborhood with another. A large paved path led to the small harbor on the gulf – some six miles down the valley - passing right through the groves of grey-green olive trees and vineyards following the course of a stream until it reached the sea. Others climbed up the slopes which were full of chestnut and oak trees, to the villages on the other side of the mountain. Many led to the fields scattered all around and village people, on horses, mules and donkeys, quite often on foot, could travel extensively throughout the area. However, progress was to bring an inevitable change. With the turn of the century Milies was connected to the nearby port city of Volos by a narrow gauge train and a few years later new roads were opened and journeys by bus and car were faster and more convenient, so traffic on the cobbled paths decreased and was gradually abandoned.

Not so, however, in the village itself, where cobbled paths remain the only way of reaching the neighborhoods; cars, trucks and motor bikes have to park close to the main square and from there on everyone has to walk or ride a mule.

"These old paths add to the charm of our village and they should be maintained at any cost," says the Miliotote craftsman Spyros Kolovos. "We should take the trouble to repair them and not just fill the holes with cement as we see them doing all over the country these days. This job must be done by one of us who knows how to do it properly."

When we decide to make a cobbled path, we start by tracing the way and levelling the ground wherever it is possible. If there is no slope, the lane will be flat but if the path goes uphill or downhill we have to add steps. The steeper the way the closer the steps."

"Our paths should be built with large size stones set upright in the ground along with smaller stones to fill in every inch of empty space without of course adding any mortar or cement."

"A good craftsman will avoid laying stones the flat side up not only because they wear out faster but also because mules and donkeys can't get a steady grip on them as they go up and down with heavy loads and when it rains those flat stones can be very slippery. Water has to trickle off the path either downhill or from the edges without making unpleasant puddles.

"When I am building a cobbled path I take special care to use the best chiselled stones at the sides all along



A "kalderimi" –
cobble path –
with steps
(Photograph
taken 1985)

the way to get a good finishing touch, to make my work look neat and well done and if the slope is too dangerous I add a protruding stone at the edge to keep the animals from tripping."

"Quite often right beside the path, irrigation water flows along a narrow channel to the vegetable gardens of the neighborhood. A full time municipal employee keeps checking and changing the water-flow according to a daily program so when we build the

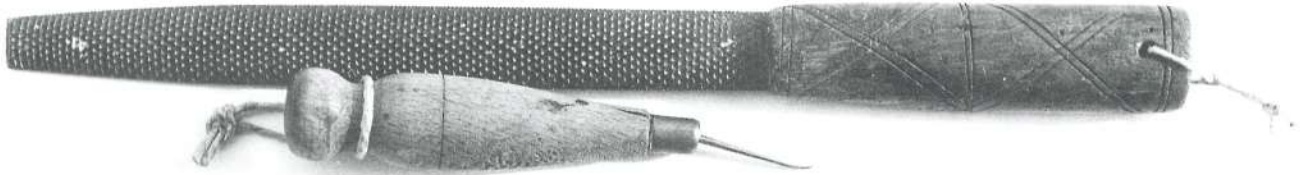
channel we have to bear that in mind and leave certain openings to allow for fitting in a stone that will block the water and change its course whenever necessary."

"Our job seems to be an easy one but we've got to think of all these details that may seem trivial but they surely make all the difference in the end. So as long as we are still around, it will be a great pity not to repair our cobbled paths."



*Pack animals
hauling all the
materials needed
for Demos
Tsitsanis to lay a
front yard with
slate
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

the packsaddler and the farrier



Vanghelis Katartzis the packsaddlemaker and Yiannis Ghekas the farrier are still working in Milies. They are both needed because the village has many cobbled paths and many farmers keep a mule or a donkey to carry home heavy loads or to get to their fields if no farm road reaches the vicinity. Customers keep coming to their workshops from further away not minding the long journey so long as they know they've come to the best craftsmen in the area. These two have been friends for years. Working and caring for animals has brought them close. "Donkeys need packsaddles but they also need horseshoes" they both agree nodding their head.

Years ago when most families had two, or even three pack animals, both craftsmen worked very hard. Right after the great fire, and later when the earthquakes destroyed the village and muleteers went up and down the paths loaded with all kinds of material, they worked without a break for hours in a row.

"We even worked by lantern light," they remember. "Deep in the night

and more than once we would get going before sunrise to reach a village with no packsaddler or farrier. Customers waited for us in a queue and we'd work there all day long coming back home dead-tired, riding our horses side by side on the dark lonely paths."

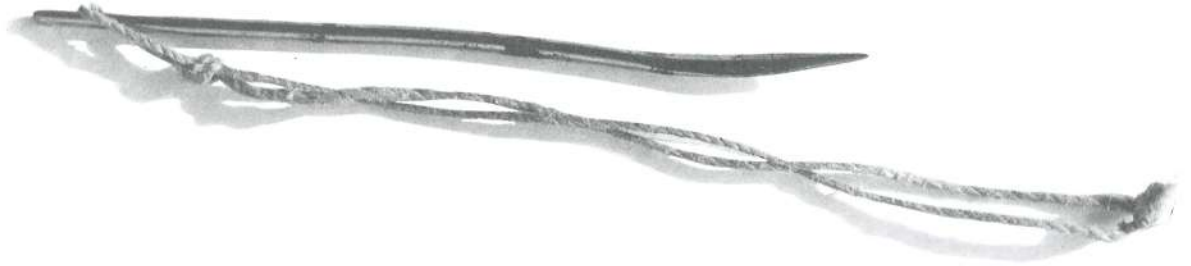
"Today there are no more than eighty animals here in Milies. It doesn't pay to sit and wait all day for a customer. Yet I can't charge more for shoeing because farmers will probably think twice before bringing their animals to me."

"I make fewer packsaddles nowadays," Master Vanghelis adds, "but I have many repairs. I haven't put my prices up but all the material I use is now more expensive and farmers find the price too high."

"Yet village people can't do without a mule or a donkey so both our crafts will be needed, that's certain, and maybe those who'll carry on our jobs once we are gone will get paid by the hour and customers will be on the waiting list. Who knows?" Yiannis Ghekas says with a grin.

*The farrier's file
and the
packsaddler's
bradawl
(Photograph
taken 1989)*

the packsaddler and his workshop



When Vangelis Katardzis first opened his workshop he chose to be close to the railway station which was then full of life and farmers with mules and donkeys kept passing by. After the earthquakes he decided he wanted to be near the family so he moved right next to his home. His workshop is small but very tidy and he has everything within arm's reach. Hanging from the wall are all the spare parts for the wooden frame of the packsaddle, rough woolen cloth and sackcloth for the mattress is neatly folded on one of the shelves facing the entrance, and an armful of straw is piled in the corner. He keeps all kinds of amulets and colored beads, brass nails and pegs in old tin boxes and he

*Needle for
sewing
packsaddle
mattresses*

has all his tools right beside him in a small wooden case.

"I learned this craft in my very young days and I've been making packsaddles ever since, working in the old traditional way," he tells us. "I believe I've mastered almost every secret of the job and that's what I've tried to teach a young boy who came to learn the craft."

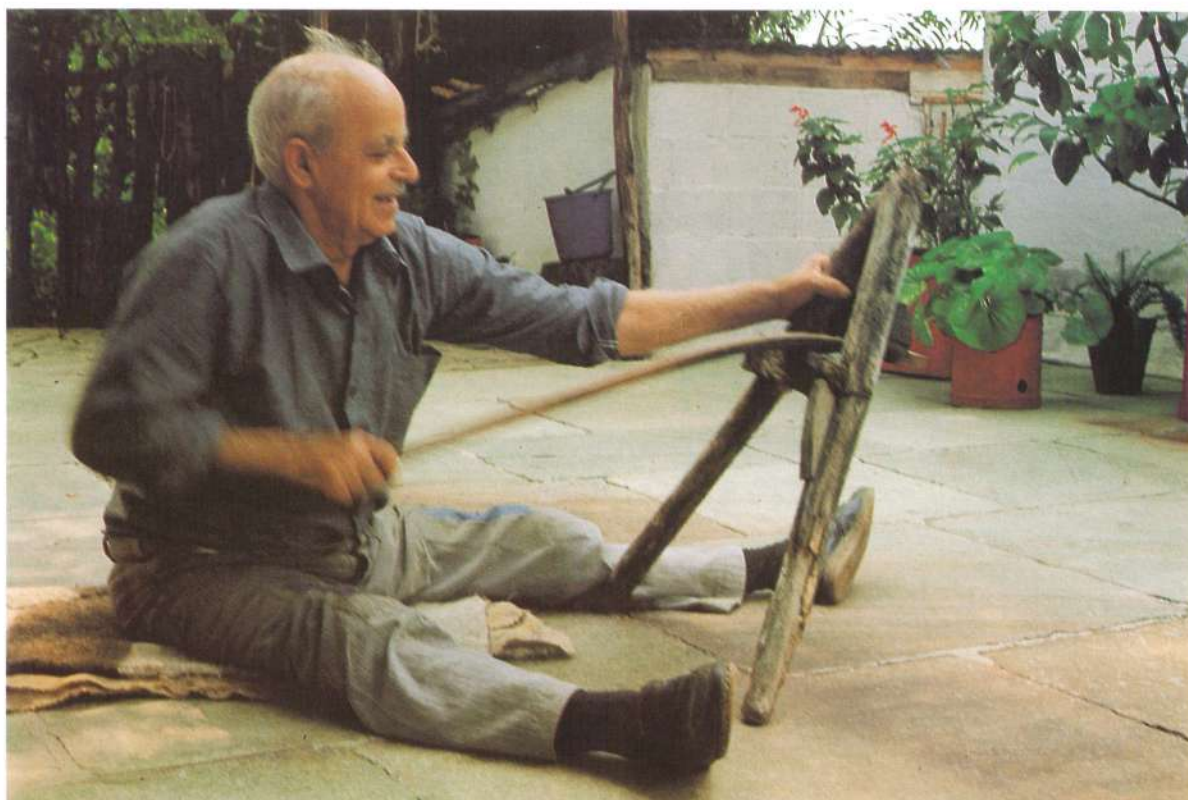
Every packsaddle is made to measure, so when a farmer wants to order one for his donkey or his mule he has to bring the animal to the workshop.

"I never start making a packsaddle without measuring the animal because the wooden frame and the mattress have to fit perfectly," Master Vangelis explains. "Just think how



Vangelis
Katardzis, local
packsaddler in
his workshop,
carving a
wooden frame
for a packsaddle
(Photograph
taken 1981)

*Using a small wooden ladder the craftsman bends the side rib of the frame
(Photograph taken 1981)*



*Holding a finished back of a frame
(Photograph taken 1981)*



*Vanghelis Katardzis working on the front part of a packsaddle frame
(Photograph taken 1981)*





*The packsaddle
mattress is fitted
into the wooden
frame
(Photograph
taken 1981)*

*Two cushions
filled with straw
bulge on either
side of the
mattress to
prevent the
packsaddle from
sitting heavily on
the animal's back
(Photograph
taken 1981)*



painful it can be for a mule to go up and down the cobbled paths heavily loaded, wearing a packsaddle that's too tight."

The craftsman begins working on the packsaddle by assembling the various parts of the frame. According to his measures he carves the front piece to go over the neck of the animal and the back piece to go over the hind. Then he adjusts the three pairs of ribs, two of which bend to fit the animal's belly while the upper pair forms a comfortable seat for the rider.

"To give each rib the right curve, I leave the wood to soak in water for two whole days, then I heat it over a fire and work it between two rungs of a small ladder pressing it gently until it gets the shape I want it to have."

When the frame is assembled, wooden pegs are used instead of nails that rust all too quickly and a coat of varnish is added for even greater protection. The case of the mattress, made of thickly woven woolen material and sackcloth sewn tightly together, is cut to fit the size of the frame and a large buttonhole is opened in the centre to let a bit of air pass through and keep the animal from sweating when carrying the heavy loads. The case is filled with straw. Long stems go into the neck part and the rear while bits of straw are used for the sides and seams are sewn here and there to prevent the straw from shifting. When the mattress is ready, the packsaddler covers the sackcloth side with leather which is more resistant and fits it into the frame tying it firmly to the ribs and the back piece. Two more pieces of leather have to be sewn over the part of the

mattress that is close to the hind, a bit of felt is added around the neck opening and two small cushions filled with straw, bulging on either side of the mattress, prevent the packsaddle from sitting heavily on the animal's back.

Quite often when the packsaddle is finished the craftsman will decorate

Vanghelis Katardzis' packsaddle (Photograph taken 1987)



the front piece with geometrical designs carved on the surface of the wood or with white rope and multicolored beads and amulets. The packsaddle is secured on the animal with four straps; the gird goes under the belly, two straps around the hind and one around the chest.

"I'm always worried when I sell a new packsaddle because I know what heavy loads animals have to carry. That's why I try so hard to make packsaddles that won't hurt."

the farrier and his workshop



Yiannis Ghekas, the farrier in Milies, has his smithy on the main cobbled path that led to the upper part of the village, but he was forced to leave because animals waiting to be shod blocked the passage and soiled the area. He moved a bit further away, and now has a forge next to a courtyard where all farmers can tie their mules, horses or donkeys while they wait for him to fashion the horseshoes.

He has customers from all around the area because he has a reputation for being the best farrier on Mount Pelion. "I learned the job when I was just fourteen and two years later when my master was sent to the front to fight, I ran the place all by myself. When my turn came to join the army, they needed me as a farrier and that's

where I got the proper training with books and real lessons. During those months of study, I developed real confidence."

Horseshoes protect the hooves of an animal and prevent it from slipping, but as the hoof is continuously growing, it needs trimming. Animals walk on the nails of the horseshoes, so when the nails are worn, they must be replaced. The old shoes are removed with large pincers, which pull out the old nails and the hooves must be cleaned with a paring knife, and then filed with a rasp. The new shoes are tried on and then altered if necessary to fit perfectly before being nailed on. "That's where I have to be very careful," Yiannis Ghekas says, "because the nails must only penetrate the insensitive part of the hoof or

*Farrier's paring
knife to cut off
the protruding
nail and clear the
hoof
(Photograph
taken 1983)*



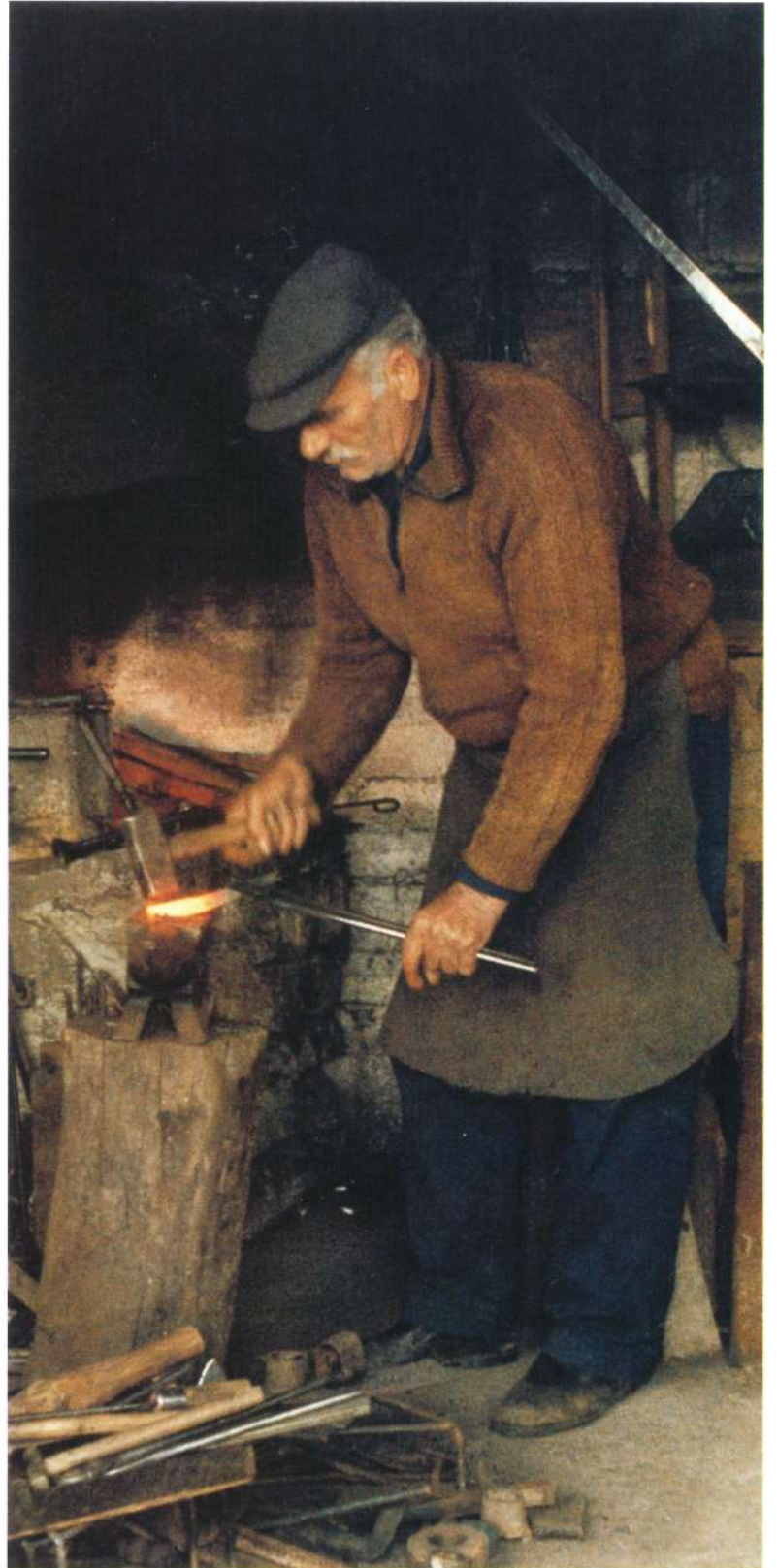
*The local farrier,
Yiannis Ghekas
making a flat
plate in his
workshop
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

*Forming a
horseshoe; the
farrier heats the
metal in his
furnace then
shapes the hot
iron on the anvil
(Photographs
taken 1986)*

*Nail holes are
punched on each
of the
horseshoes
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

*Forged on an
anvil, the
glowing metal
takes the shape
of a horseshoe
(Photograph
taken 1986)*







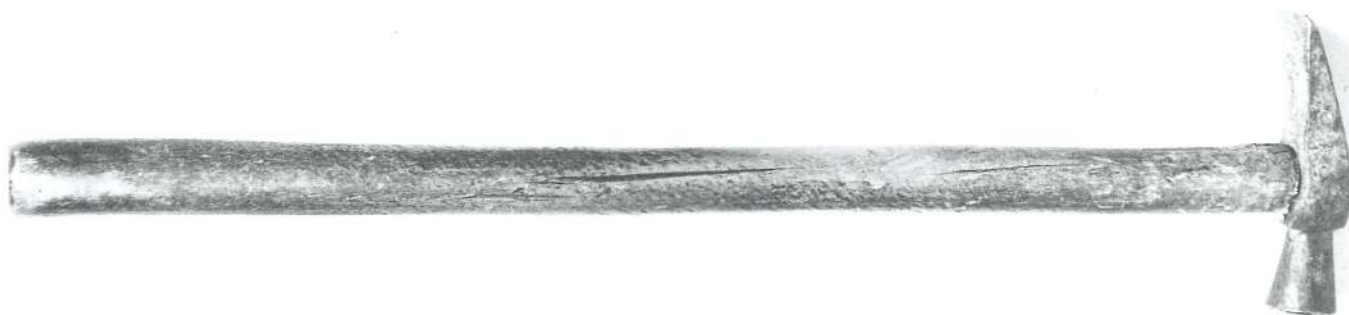
*Every flat plate
must have a clip
on the front to
grasp the hoof
firmly
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

I might injure the leg; a wound would fill with pus and the animal will limp."

The protruding point of each nail is twisted off and the end is clinched over to hold the shoe firmly to the hoof. In Milies, the farrier fashions two types of horseshoes. One is made of flat plates of thick sheet metal to

bent down and folded back to form the calkins that will stop the shoe from slipping on muddy soil or smooth and wet paths. A toe clip on the upper surface of the shoe clasps it firmly on the hoof.

These shoes are fitted hot. While holding the hot shoe against the hoof,



cover the entire hoof and the other is the well-known German horseshoe which covers only the edge.

"Here in the village, our animals wear mostly flat plates to protect them from treading on a sharp stone, or from stepping on a thorn or a piece of broken glass or a nail. Flat plates are always made to measure with a clip on the front to grasp the hoof firmly, a heel on the rear to grip on to any uneven or slippery ground and six holes for the nails."

The traditional horseshoe with the two curved branches is made of iron bars that are worked on the anvil, once the metal has been heated in the furnace, to take the form of the hoof. Three holes are hot punched on each of the branches while both ends are

the farrier checks to see if any alterations are needed, in order to make the shoe a perfect fit. He then cools it off in water and nails it on just like an ordinary flat plate. "I also make special horseshoes for animals that have been injured; or for those that do not walk straight; also for oxen that need two separate plates on each foot. I have studied the anatomy of mules and horses so I can even offer first aid if a vet is not around. That is why my workshop is equipped with all kinds of medicine."

"Our job is not an easy one and it can be quite dangerous at times. I've been kicked once in the chest by a fierce horse and had to spend three months in bed. The scar is there but so is my love for the animals."



Farrier's hammer and nail used in affixing horseshoes (Photograph taken 1986)

*Yiannis Ghekas
removing a worn
out horseshoe
(Photograph
taken 1986)*



*Once the
horseshoe is
removed, the
farrier cuts off
the nail from the
hoof
(Photograph
taken 1986)*



*Filing the hoof
(Photograph
taken 1986)*





*Nailing on a new
horseshoe
(Photograph
taken 1986)*



*Filing down the
protruding nails
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

the icon painter



*A portable icon,
a work of art by
the local icon
painter Lefteris
Karayiannis
(Photograph
taken 1981)*

Lefteris Karayiannis paints his icons faithfully following the old traditional Byzantine technique, but with a preference for the works of art of the Cretan School of the 16th century. He often copies the subjects drawn by Theophanis Strelidjas and icons adorning the iconostasis of the Stavronikita monastery on Mount Athos.

As a schoolboy he always carried a pencil in his pocket and spent hours

sketching people's faces in the village. As a young man he wanted to enter the School of Fine Arts in Athens, but he had to stay in Milies and manage the family land. He became seriously interested in icon painting much later, while helping his sister Eleni, an accomplished painter, finish a mosaic frieze covering the walls of a church not far from the village. Their collaboration opened up new horizons for him and prompted him to get deeply involved with icon painting. Since then he has worked in many churches and has taken part in various exhibitions both in Greece and abroad.

Portable icons are painted on wood about two centimetres thick. The front side is covered with a special kind of fabric and the whole surface is given a first coat of glue dissolved in water, and then a second coat of glue mixed with putty or stucco. A palette knife is used to rub out any bubbles and sandpaper is used to make the surface smooth.

The artist then draws his subject on paper, covers the back with burnt sienna, places the paper on the wooden surface and retraces every line. This is how he transfers his drawing onto the wood.

To retain all the details of the design, when the colors are added, every line is engraved with a sharp instrument. "I still use an old 78rpm



*The local icon
painter in his
workshop
(Photograph
taken 1986)*

After the artist has transferred his drawing to the surface of the wood, he engraves each line with a sharp tool and gilds the background with wafer-thin leaves of gold (Photograph taken 1981)



Onto the gilded surface, the icon painter adds religious inscriptions and outlines the halo, once the first layer of color has been applied (Photograph taken 1981)



Finished icon (Photograph taken 1981)

record player needle," the local icon painter says, "it works just as well.

If an icon calls for a gilt background, the surface to be gilded is coated with shellac, which is thinned with methylated spirits and then with a special emulsion on which the wafer-thin 22 carat gold leaves will adhere. These leaves of gold are so thin, I scarcely dare breathe when I'm gilding the icon."

Icon painters in the past used gold dust instead of gold leaf, and with a polishing tool they rubbed the gilded surface until it shone. However, on many paintings the gold has worn away, while the colors have kept their glow.

On the gilded surface the outline of the halo is drawn with a compass and the religious inscriptions are painted following the fine engravings that show through. The painter must now use an extremely thin brush and work with a steady hand. Once this work is done, he starts to work on the colors.

Byzantine icon painters use fifteen basic powder colors among which white, ochre and dark red are used to render the outlines. Raw sienna is used for dark yellow, and burnt sienna for red; raw umber as a light brown and burnt umber for a darker one. Some of the other colors which the painter uses are red lacquer, and black, citron yellow which is very seldom used alone, and green which is very difficult to apply. All of these powder paints are blended. Black can be mixed with a bit of brown or dark blue to provide a softer shade or used to 'cut down' as they say, the glow of other colors. All paints are mixed by the painter with egg yolk which has

been dissolved in an equal amount of water and a few drops of vinegar, which gives the painting a remarkable lustre. "Egg yolk is easily applied," says Lefteris Karayiannis, "and ten to fifteen years later it forms a shiny glaze coating which lasts forever while all acrylic colors lose their glow. I only work with powder colors."

Artists blend their colors on a pane of glass placed over a piece of white paper to help them distinguish every tone and they use brushes of the very best quality with fine, stiff bristles. In icon painting, colors are applied in layers. The artist will start by adding all the main colors and light effects are produced over the basic coat by simply mixing a small bit of white with the original tone.

Details of the drawing can only be traced by following the lines of the engravings. Only the last touches are rendered somewhat more freely and the work is completed when all the fine golden lines are drawn with a very thin brush dipped in gold powder, diluted in water.

As the icon painter works he rests his arm on a staff fixed with a clamp to the edge of his easel. This supports his wrist and he can paint perfectly steady brush-strokes this way. "This staff is a very precious help indeed, since the slightest trembling of my hand may ruin my painting. I often work six to eight hours a day, even longer if I have to finish an icon and by then my strokes would not have been as accurate and fine had I not used the staff."

When the paint has dried, the whole surface of the icon is varnished to protect it from the devotion of worshippers and candle smoke.



The icon of the Nativity: one of the best examples of Lefteris Karayiannis' work (Photograph taken 1981)



Two more works of art by the same artist (Photograph taken 1985)

WOMEN'S EVERYDAY LIFE



For most women in Milies, life is still centered around the family and caring for their households. This task is of major importance. Until just recently, a farmer's family had to be self-sufficient, producing most of what was necessary for their daily life, spending as little as possible from their hard-earned and rather low income.

Most women of the older generation are reluctant to change their ways despite the number of facilities offered today. It is as if memories of their hard life during the war and the long years after the great fire and the earthquakes are still deeply rooted. These feelings obviously make them feel bound to the old ways of living. The household depended on them to supply many of the family needs. They were required to help their husbands, whenever necessary, in the fields. A woman's position was very demanding.

Many women still light the oven and bake homemade bread, others make cheese with milk from their own goats, and fresh tomato preserve. They grind wheat for *trachana*, with an old handmill and salt olives from their groves. They wash with soap made from pure olive oil, and drink *tsipouro* from their own vineyards. They cook the traditional Pelion *spentzofai* with green peppers and sausage, and roll out dough for pies and *baklava*. Others offer home-made sweets and cookies with a glass of walnut liqueur. In their spare time, these women are very rarely idle. Most of them fetch their crochet or their needlework and busy themselves with their daughters' trousseau. Two or three keep their loom going sometimes using yarn dyed with natural dyes.

Yet, as older women in the village still carry on a way of life that has already disappeared in many parts of the country, younger girls tend to go on with their high-school studies, hoping to find a job away from the village, unwilling to follow the life of their mothers.

a woman of Milies remembers her life

Twilight had just fallen, her husband had gone up to the village square, and she was alone in the house. She was just getting ready to take up her needlework when I knocked at the door. She welcomed me and went to make some coffee. A few minutes later she was back with two cups on a tray which was covered with a hand-embroidered doily, along with *firiki* (apples in syrup, stuffed with almonds) and a glass of home-made liqueur.

I told her I was eager to share her memories of the old days. I wanted to learn about her life when she was young, and about her mother's life. I wanted to hear it first-hand, because their way of life, so close to mine, seemed to be almost forgotten today.

Having placed the tray before me, she brought out her knitting, sat down close to me and stared at me for a while. "So what do you want to know about the old days for? So much has changed these past few years. It startles me whenever I come to think of it, or whenever I try to make my children understand. I don't suppose you'd believe me if I start to tell you

what we've been through. But, if you're really curious, then listen. Our life has been hard. That's what it was for women like me. We lived through the war. We saw our village go up in flames. We faced the earthquakes. I had two babies then to take care of, and I was all alone. I tell you, it was enough to make us all despair."

"You really want to hear about it then? Well, there's one or two things I'd like to learn myself; about all you young women of today. I want to know why you keep complaining all the time about how difficult a life you have, about how hard you work, how tired you are. Tired? How can you be tired when you have it so easy? Can you have any idea, I sometimes wonder, of how exhausted my mother often felt at the end of a long day's work? Most women in her day had five, six, maybe seven children to look after and their parents often lived with them as well. Do you realise that my mother had to carry water from the nearby fountain, and do the washing, all the ironing with no modern facilities? She also helped our father in the fields and gathered loads of leafy

branches to feed the animals. A wedding, any family gathering, whether for joy or sorrow, meant days of extra work for her. You've done away with most of that today. Your life has changed, so how can I make you understand? Don't you see?"

"Mother was up at dawn. She quickly washed her face, ran a comb through her hair, pinned it up in a tight bun with a large bone hairpin. Then she would hurry to make coffee for my father. She knew that he didn't like to go to the *kafeneion* up in the square and drink his morning coffee with the rest of the men. He wanted her company and I remember watching them sitting together at our kitchen table talking softly so as not to wake the little ones. There were five of us, you see. Then he would saddle the mule and ride off into the fields and he would be gone all day."

"As soon as he was out of the house, mother would milk the goats and strain the milk. Then she would bring fresh branches for them to feed on, and put out bran, clover or barley for the other animals. She'd let the chicks out and shoo them to the coop before coming in to boil the milk for our breakfast. She always saved some of the milk to make fresh cheese. Then she'd be off to the fountain for water, carrying two jugs at a time. This going back and forth every single day of the year seemed endless to me. She'd go up and down our stone path, her rubber scuffs slipping off now and then as she struggled under the weight. She must have felt exhausted as she hauled water for washing the dishes, for mopping the house, for the animals, and for the flowers. In

the hot summer months all those red painted flower pots that made our yard so pretty needed a lot of water. Yet mother never complained. She loved to see everything spotless and her flowers fresh and blooming. When my brother grew up strong enough, father made him go to help her at the fountain each morning before he left for school. Later on, I went to help also."

"A nuisance in our days were all those fleas and bedbugs that sneaked in from everywhere. We had no sprays then to keep them away, so we were forever whitewashing the walls, rubbing petrol over the wooden floors, scrubbing our beds and shaking out all of our clothes. Days of hard work, these were, for every housewife, I can tell you. However, that wasn't all. Every year we had to stuff all our pillows and mattresses with fresh corn husks, which we brought all the way from the valley of Boufa, some eight miles down the hill. It was a tiring job, but the joy to stretch out on a freshly stuffed mattress was worth it."

"Everything meant work for us. Just think of the washing we had to do! Now all you do is push a button on a machine, that's all. Back then, my mother washed piles of clothes by hand, countless sheets, towels, pillowcases, shirts, and underwear. When friends or relatives paid us a visit mother would always lay out one of the beautiful hand-embroidered tablecloths from her dowry, which had been freshly washed and starched. My daughter-in-law uses a synthetic one, even though I've made some fine crochet ones for her. I suppose it is very convenient, but it surely

doesn't look as lovely."

"It was hard work to wash and iron all those clothes, but worth the effort. Many of us did our washing in the yard and had to carry water from the fountain to fill the tub and the barrels. We needed warm water so we also had to bring home plenty of wood to keep the fire going, but sometimes we took our laundry to the fountain. We'd set off early with the troughs on our shoulder, bringing the children along to keep them out of mischief. We'd roll up our sleeves and continue scrubbing until all of our clothes were as white as snow, using bars of soap made from pure olive oil, and leaving them to soak in ash water if necessary. Although washing was surely a painful and tiring job, I can still remember our mother gossiping back and forth, laughing from time to time and even stopping for a little song when Lemo-nia, who was quite a big girl a bit on the plump side, gay and cheerful, would set the tune. I also will never forget the scolding we got the day we were caught playing hide and seek behind the washing which was hanging on the line!"

"All those clothes had to be ironed with the old irons which were heated with coals. Then mother stood over the ironing board for hours, never resting until all of our petticoats and every one of father's shirts, all of our sheets and pillowcases, and each one of the curtains and tablecloths were starched and folded neatly back in the chest."

"The washing was usually done once a month, but we would light the oven once or even twice a week. Mother would get up earlier than

usual to have the oven going before the day got too hot. She always wore a scarf around her head to keep her hair tidy and an apron tied around her waist. I used to watch her bent over the old wooden trough kneading the dough with her two fists until her knuckles were white and blue. She'd make seven large loaves for the family, one or two pies with zucchini or wild greens, and those rusks father liked to dip in his coffee. I loved the taste of my mother's homemade bread. Today, bread goes mouldy in a few days. I remember when mother lit the oven it filled the entire area with a delicious smell. The fire required a lot of kindling and branches and someone had to carry the wood home. Most often it was she who took care of that because Father was rarely home until late from the fields, and he was very tired. He was never home for lunch, but mother liked to cook in the evening so he would have food to take with him the next day, but also so in case she had to go with him, he wouldn't be without a proper meal."

"How many times did I wake up to find her working when all of us had been in bed for hours! I remember seeing her, with an oil lamp beside her, bent over some task, trying to get everything done. She would only rest for a short time after the midday meal, but not always. Because that's when our neighbors would gather in the front yard to card wool, spin, or to do a bit of knitting. They'd make some coffee and chat away, darning and patching all our old clothes because no one could afford to buy new things the moment that they wore out."

"In those days we learned a lot by

watching our mothers work. What about you girls who live in the large cities? You buy everything ready-made. Almost nothing is homemade today."

"Do you cook *trachana* soup made with wheat and goats' milk, or use fresh tomato preserve? Is homemade cheese served at your table, along with olives from your trees? Can you boast of drinking wine and *tsipouro* from your own barrel, and do you taste baklava with pastry rolled wafer thin, with lots of nuts and honey? Do

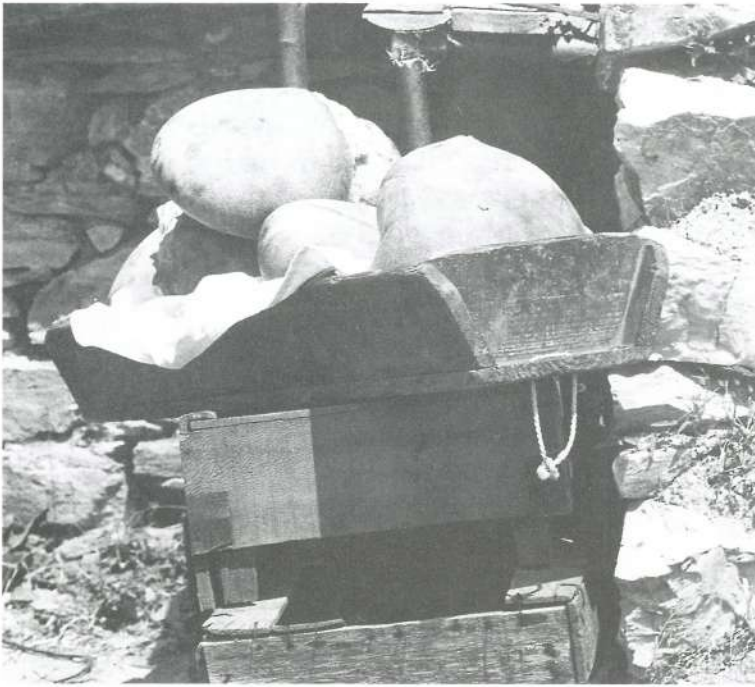
you use soap made from pure olive oil and scented with laurel leaves?"

"Isn't it true that all of these simple things are quite unknown to most young housewives today? Taking care of your home is no longer your only joy and satisfaction, whereas my mother took real pride in her house-keeping and beamed when people praised her for it. I felt that way myself and, though life has changed in many aspects, even here in Milies, some of us still like doing things the traditional way."



"Ghioumi" – a copper jar for transporting water

homemade bread



"Pinacoti" – a hollowed out wooden beam where dough is placed to rise, filled with freshly baked loaves (Photograph taken 1985)

It used to be that almost every household in Milies had an oven in the courtyard, and there was always a wooden trough around as well as a *pinacoti* – a wooden beam hollowed out in sections where dough was placed to rise before being baked.

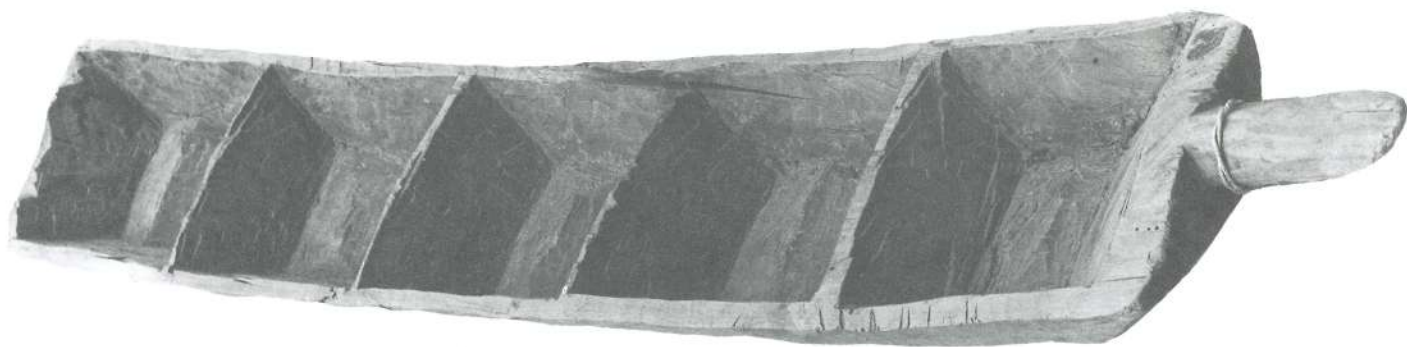
Kneading the dough is not an easy task and most housewives today prefer to buy bread from the bakery. However, some of them still insist on baking their own bread because it is tastier and lasts longer without getting mouldy.

When Yeoryia Kosma lights her oven she also bakes cookies, rusks, a pie, and if a small amount of dough is left over, she makes a *pitasti*, a flat bread which is ready to eat in a jiffy. "When I'm going to make bread," she explains, "I get up earlier than usual and put on some water to boil. Instead of yeast I use *prozimi*. This is a bit of dough I always keep in reserve from the previous kneading. The night before, I add to it a bit of water and a little flour, mixing it well, and leave it overnight to rise."

"The following morning, once I've sifted the flour in the trough – and I use about ten kilos for every batch – I add the *prozimi*, a pinch of salt and as much warm water as is needed, little by little. Then for more than half an hour I keep kneading the dough with both of my fists."

"When the dough is ready I make the Sign of the Cross over it, cut off a little to keep for my *prozimi* and shape the rest into six or seven large loaves. Each loaf will be placed in one of the slots of the *pinacoti* and covered with the *messali*, a long white towel. The *pinacoti* is left in a dark room with one or two blankets heaped on top to help the dough rise."

"In the meantime I busy myself with the other household chores for about an hour. Then I begin to heat my oven. I stuff it first with thin dry twigs that will burn quickly, and then I add one or two large pieces of wood. The



oven must heat up evenly. So using a long stick, I spread the firewood over the entire floor of the oven. Once the fire is well lit, I pile the embers near the opening. With wet cloths, stuck onto a wooden pole, I wipe the interior of the oven clean."

"When the oven is hot and the dough has risen, I carry the *pinacoti* outdoors and place one loaf after another on the flat long-handled paddle strewn with fresh vine or chestnut leaves. In one quick, smooth movement, I shove the loaves into the oven and shut the opening. Afterwards I make the Sign of the Cross and return to the house. A short time later I pass a wet cloth over the loaves so that the crust will become crisp and glossy. Then I place a section of newspaper over them to keep them from burning. One has to keep an eye on the loaves and remove them as soon as they are ready."

"If I have no bread left, I take a handful of dough and shape it quickly. I punch a few holes in with my fingers and put it straight into the oven without letting it rise. This type of bread is flat but it bakes rapidly and so my husband can take some along to have a bite during the day."

"On New Year's Day, I always knead the large traditional loaf with the very best quality of white flour, a bit of sugar, cinnamon, and vanilla. To this I add all kinds of decorations on the bread to make it look real special, and I also smear egg yolk on it and then it's ready for the oven."

"Kneading and baking take up a lot of my time and I sometimes think that if I buy bread from the local bakery I would not have to worry with carrying home heavy sacks of flour or bundles of firewood for the oven, but I feel that it's worth the extra work because homemade bread tastes better."

An old "*pinacoti*"
(Photograph
taken 1987)



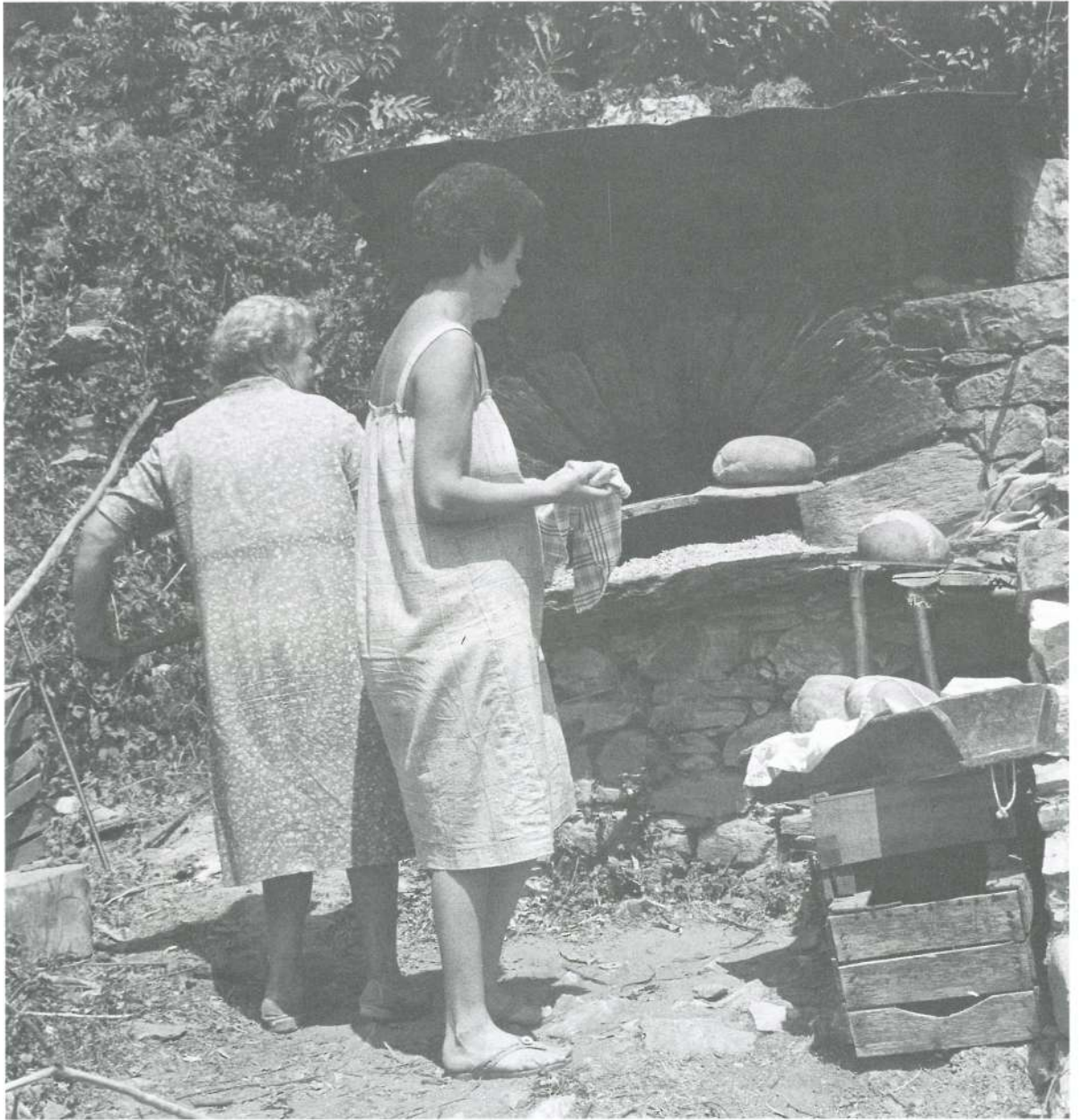
*After having
sifted the flour,
Georgia Kosma
kneads dough in
a wooden trough
(Photograph
taken 1986)*



*Eleni Yiovana
places a loaf on a
long-handed
paddle covered
with fresh leaves
(Photograph
taken 1981)*



*Georgia Kosma
cleaning her
oven with a
dampened cloth
attached to a
wooden pole
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



Katina Katardzi and her daughter Fotini Demeli pull out freshly baked bread (Photograph taken 1985)



Fotini Demeli carries home the freshly baked loaves (Photograph taken 1985)

homemade *trachana*



Quite a few women in Milies still make *trachana*, a kind of semolina with wheat and goat's milk which is very healthy and easy to prepare.

"In winter a bowl of steaming *trachana* is really nourishing and the entire family enjoys it. I also cook *trachana* with bits of meat, chicken or sausage," Irini Malamaki says. "To make *trachana*, I milk my goats and keep the milk for four or five days. Then I boil it and leave it in a glass jar until it turns a little sour. When I've got all the milk that I need, I rinse the wheat clean and dry it in the sun, making sure to pick out any twigs, or small stones, or any rotten grain. When the wheat is dry I go over to my neighbor and grind it with her old hand mill because she alone still has one."

"This hand mill has two round stones one on top of the other with a hole in the middle, through which you keep pouring the wheat. At the edge of the upper stone, there is another hole about the size of a coin. This is where the wooden handle goes. By turning the handle round and round, the upper stone moves

over the lower one, grinding the grains of wheat that have fallen between the stones."

"I always prepare my *trachana* in the summer," Irini adds, "because it has to dry in the sun. I usually knead five kilos of wheat with seven kilos of milk, adding a pinch of salt in the dough. These days, I mix it in a plastic bowl because my earthenware basin has cracked. When I've mixed the dough well with both of my hands, I leave it aside for two or three hours to let it rise. Then I spread a clean white cloth on a table out in my yard, and with a soup spoon pour out the dough one spoonful at a time, leaving it in the sun to dry. Flies are a nuisance so I've got to cover the *trachana* with a piece of fine cloth to keep them away. Now and again, I'll go and turn each little bit over to let it dry on all sides and when they are all nice and crisp on the outside, I'll break them in small pieces and leave them a little longer to dry completely. After this, I rub these bits of rusk through a sieve to get fine rice-like grains of *trachana*. I use one of those metal sieves now, because the old leather one I had burnt along with all our household belongings during the war and no one makes them any more."

"My *trachana* is now ready, but before storing it away in a cloth sack, I will leave it for a week or so in a shady place because the slightest humidity can turn it mouldy, though I really shouldn't bother with it because our *trachana* never lasts that long."

Wheat-filled
earthen bowl
(Photograph
taken 1988)



*Lemonia Akrivou
grinding wheat
for "trachana" in
a handmill
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



Spooning out "trachana", Loula Sfetsa will leave it to dry in the sun (Photograph taken 1985)



Breaking up the crisp bits of "trachana", Irini Malamaki and Lemonia Akrivou will sift the rusk through a sieve (Photograph taken 1984)

olive oil soap



*Pure olive oil
being prepared
in copper
cauldron by
Loula Sfetsa to
make soap
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

Soap from pure olive oil is easy to make. It keeps hair and skin healthy and doesn't wear out clothes as quickly as some detergents do. It also makes less suds and is easier to rinse out. Olive oil soap also makes babies diapers soft and fluffy.

"It's a shame that women today

can't be bothered to make their own soap," says Loula Sfetsa. "But I can understand them because it is a strenuous task. However, I never bought a single bar of soap and when we were young, we would use it to wash our teeth." Up to a few years ago, practically all women in Milies used home-

made soap. Some made larger quantities to sell, others were hired by the day to make soap for the family.

"To make soap one generally uses olive oil of poor quality. I make mine in September, when we have to clean our olive oil jars before gathering the new crop of olives. Whatever is left at the bottom of each jar is scooped out

and used to make soap. For every five portions of olive oil, you need five portions of water, one portion of caustic soda, which you can buy at the local grocery, and thirty grams of salt for every kilo of liquid. The recipe is from my old nanny and if I weigh all the ingredients, my soap turns out very well."

"When I decide to make soap, I light a small fire the night before in order to warm up the water and caustic soda. I use our old copper cauldron because the acid will attack any other metal. When the mixture is hot, I pour in the olive oil and keep stirring it for a while. Then I let it stand all night. Early the next morning I build a roaring fire in order to bring the mixture to a boil, stirring constantly for about an hour and a half, or until it sets. Every now and then, I sprinkle some fresh water onto the mixture to slow the boiling and halfway through I add the salt and a small bunch of bay leaves to give my soap a special perfume. When the mixture has thickened, two of us lift the cauldron from the fire and pour the mixture in a wooden case laid with a sheet of wax paper. Then I smooth it with the palm of my hand, or with a soap spoon, sprinkling it with a bit of water. As the excess of the liquid seeps out through the cracks of the case, the soap becomes harder. I leave it to dry out in the shade for another two or three hours before marking out the cakes with the edge of a knife. The following day I cut the cakes and rinse them well. My soap is now ready, but I won't use it this year. Last year's soap which has dried out all through the year is always the best!"

*The housewife tests to see if her soap is ready
(Photograph taken 1985)*



fresh tomato preserve



Preparing fresh tomato preserve, Popi Plaka boils it over a fire in her yard (Photograph taken 1984)

Grocery stores in the village sell tomato preserve in cans but women in Milies prefer to cook with homemade preserves which give their food a better taste and a delicious smell. Most of them make quite a large quantity to last them all year round.

"I make my tomato preserve during the summer when the tomatoes are less expensive and plentiful. I grow

some in my garden, but can also buy more if I need to. I choose the very ripe ones, which are red and juicy. I wash them well, cut them into slices and put them in a basin with a handful of salt. Then I mash them and pass the pulp through a strainer, throwing peels to the chicks in the yard.

I use a plastic strainer now, not the type that needed plating every now and then. I use a large pan which is made of copper, and if I can't have it lined, I use an aluminum one to be safe."

Even today, Popi Plaka prepares her preserve out in the open. She lights a fire in her garden and sets the pan on a low tripod.

"When the pulp begins to boil, I have to keep on stirring it so it won't stick to the pan, and as it thickens, I add a bit of juice until there's no more left. Of course, I have to put some salt and one or two spoonfuls of olive oil in at the end, but when it is ready, I pour it out into large dishes to dry in the sun for a few days."

The best way to store tomato preserve is in a glass jar filled to the brim with some olive oil and a vine leaf on top, to keep out the air and to prevent mould.

"I seal each jar tight and put it on my kitchen shelf so that it's handy when I'm cooking. My tomato preserve tastes real good so whenever I prepare it, I bring a big jar to a friend of mine living in Volos, who has no time for such household chores."

table olives

Ripe olives are bitter by nature and therefore unsuitable for immediate eating. Women in Milies prepare two kinds of olives; pickled and dry.

Dry olives have to be washed with abundant water and put in baskets with large amounts of salt over each layer. When the basket is filled to the brim, it is covered with a heavy stone that squeezes the olives, thus making the bitter juice drip out little by little. After about three or four weeks, when there is no longer any liquid leaking out, the olives can be served as such or with a bit of fennel and oregano. However, they can also be preserved in jars.

"When I make pickled olives I choose the best ones," Doxa Nikole says, "and to remove the bitterness I prick them all with a fork and leave them to soak for a week in water, changing the water each day."

"To make the olives tasty, I put them in a jar with some oil and vinegar, adding two or three spoonfuls of salt, a slice of lemon, and a few bay leaves just to give them a special taste. In about ten days, my olives are ready for eating, and if I want to preserve them so they won't get mouldy, all I have to do is shake the jar, from time to time and add a bit of olive oil if necessary."



*Olive branch –
loaded with ripe,
juicy fruit*

white goat's cheese



*Popi Plaka
milking her goats
(Photograph
taken 1981)*

In Milies quite a few families have two or three goats. Keeping goats gives a housewife a lot of extra work because she has to milk them twice a day, carry home loads of leafy branches, take them out to graze and clean their pen. But goats give fresh milk for the family and milk to make white cheese.

"I won't hear of giving away my goats," says Eleni Koutsinouri. "I've never drank milk from a can. It can't be as good."

But Nikos Christou who is the only shepherd in the area finds it hard to keep track of his herd of five hundred goats. "I am the only one with such a large herd and most of the milk I get, I

make into cheese which is easy to preserve and also to transport because the milkman who comes from Volos can't reach my pastures with his van. Not all my goats give milk and none give milk all year round. Only goats that have had a little one that same year can be milked, but not when they are waiting to give birth or when they are suckling their young. I start milking sometime in May and then only until October. When the grass is fresh and plentiful, my goats are milked twice each day, however, in the hot summer months, just in the morning, and if they find little to feed on, I milk them every other day. Every morning I've got to bring the goats to their pen and milk them by hand. Then I let them graze freely until the next milking. Each animal gives about four glasses of milk each time, rarely more, often less."

"That's how much milk I get from my Fifi," says Popy Papazachariou. "We like drinking a hot cup of milk in the morning and I make cheese with what's left over. All I have to do is strain the milk through a very closely woven cloth, add a bit of rennet mixed with some water and start stirring. In less than an hour my milk should curdle, then I cut the soft cheese into two or three parts which allows most of the whey to pour out. Finally I place my cheese in a cheese-cloth. I fold it, make a knot and hang it up until all the water has dripped out."

"When the cheese is firm enough it can be served, but it is rather tasteless. So I prefer to leave it in a jar with lots of salt for a few days. The salt also keeps the cheese from becoming mouldy. Each time we want to have



To drain all excess water, fresh cheese is wrapped in cheese-cloth and hung (Photograph taken 1985)

some, I take one or two chunks out of the jar and rinse the salt away. Then I cut the cheese into thin slices and let them soak in fresh goat's milk to give it a milder taste. That's how I make our goat's cheese, the only cheese we had back in my day."

baklava



Made with hand-rolled fine pastry, lots of chopped walnuts, almonds and spices, and soaked in thick syrup and honey, baklava is the traditional Pelion sweet offered to all the guests on every feast, weddings, New Year's Day and Easter.

Some housewives prefer to buy ready-made pastry, while others roll it out by hand as thin as paper. "The dough for the pastry," Syrago Tsitsani says, "is best made with fine ground flour, in order to have real soft dough. I knead little bits of dough into small

balls and roll them out on a floured surface, as thin as can be. Normally, I make about thirty such sheets of dough. For the filling I use blanched almonds, and walnuts which have been finely chopped, together with some grated rusk, sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg."

"I start by buttering my pan and placing three or four sheets of dough, each brushed with olive oil or soft butter. Then I keep spreading some of the filling between each of the next twenty to twenty-five sheets, finishing with four plain sheets simply brushed with olive oil."

"Then I trim the edges and fold in the dough carefully all the way around and with a sharp knife I mark the top layer with a beautiful star-like pattern, sticking a clove in the center of each piece. Before putting it in a moderately heated oven, I pour some sizzling hot olive oil or butter over it and let it bake until the top is a golden brown. While the baklava is cooking, I make my syrup with sugar, water lemon juice, and honey. As soon as I remove the baklava from the oven I pour the hot syrup over it and leave it to soak for a day."

"Now that's how I prepare my baklava," joins Eleni Kostaki, "but when I make baklava for a wedding I use the largest pan I have and add up to sixty layers of dough, decorating each piece with pure white sugared almonds."

*Mela Maitianou
proudly
displaying her
bridal baklava
decorated with
white almonds
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



*Preparing her
baklava,
Angheliki
Mitsopoulou
rolls out paper-
thin sheets of
dough
(Photograph by
Margot Granitsa
taken 1988)*

village pie and spentzofai

beard. She would rinse them well and cut them very fine, squeezing them until all the bitter juice dripped out. Mother never boiled her greens, but mixed them well with half a cup of rice and lots of white cheese, salt and pepper, fennel, dill and fresh onions."

"Then she rolled her dough paper thin, and placed three sheets on a greased baking pan taking care to brush each sheet with olive oil. She would then spread the filling and cover it with three more sheets of dough carefully folding the edges all around. Before putting the pie in the oven she would sprinkle it with some grated cheese and then with the edge of her knife, she would mark out large equal portions."

Spentzofai is a traditional Pelion dish served both in winter and summer as a spicy appetizer or main course.

"It is quick and easy to prepare," Stathis Nikou explains. "You just need a few long green peppers, juicy red tomatoes and some of our best local sausage. First you've got to cut the peppers lengthwise and then peel your tomatoes. After that, you pass them through a sieve and fry them in olive oil with a pinch of pepper, salt, and a little water, leaving it to simmer for a few minutes. In the meantime you cut the sausage into slices and fry them separately. You then draw off all the extra grease and as soon as the peppers are cooked you mix them with the fried sausage. That's all. It is easy to make and delicious to eat."

Housewives in Milies make all kinds of pies but the typical village pie is made with hand-rolled dough and a variety of wild greens.

"To make the dough, my mother would sift the flour and the yeast in a bowl and then stir in a bit of olive oil, and two drops of vinegar," Loula Sfetsa says, "adding gradually a little tepid water. The day before she would have gathered all kinds of greens: dandelions, nettle shoots, sorrel, and goat's

*Spentzofai
simmering over
the coals: a tasty
Pelion dish made
of local sausage,
long green
peppers and
juicy red
tomatoes
(Photograph
taken 1988)*

medicinal plants and herbs



*Small bunch of
oregano*

Since very ancient days, Mount Pelion has been famous for its forests and rich vegetation. The variety of wild flowers, plants and herbs that grow on its slopes is widespread. This is one reason why Greek myths mention that Chiron, the wise Centaur who lived here so close to nature, could cure the sick and ailing.

Eversince, medicinal plants have been in great demand and the women of Milies still use them quite often instead of pills and syrups to relieve pain. They make camomile tea to ease any pain in the stomach, to sooth tired and burning eyes, to rinse clean all wounds, and inflammation. So they

are never without this herb. When camomile blooms, they'll go out in the fields and pick these tiny daisies, letting them dry in the sun.

An infusion with mint leaves or marjoram also relieves those stomach problems while salvia can lower blood pressure. Colds and flu are treated with a hot infusion of leaves from elder, lime or wild tea. Wild violet blossoms helps diarrhea and basil constipation. Basil is also used in cooking. So is dill, fennel, rosemary, mint, anise, thyme and oregano. Most of these herbs can be planted in flower pots and women in Milies grow them in their gardens.

apple sweet and homemade liqueur



*Homemade
liqueur and
spoon sweets are
often served to
guests by local
housewives
(Photograph
taken 1988)*

Of all the spoon sweets made in Milies, the *firiki*, small very tasty, locally grown apple which is stuffed with an almond, is certainly the most popular.

"You've got to choose the best quality," Marina Sykioti explains, "small, red, hard apples from the trees that grow up in Milies, if possible, are the best by far. You use thirty apples to a kilo of sugar, but I always make a

double batch because I give away one or two jars to friends and acquaintances."

"I peel and core the apples leaving them in a basin with water and the juice of two lemons to prevent them from losing their white color, lemon also helps keep the apples nice and crisp. Meanwhile, I make my syrup, by bringing a kilo of sugar which has been dissolved in two glasses of wa-

ter, to a boil. As soon as it starts to bubble, I drop in the apples and let them simmer for about two hours, taking care to sprinkle them with a little water now and then, until they become a golden honey color, and then at the end I add a bit of sweetener to make the syrup thick and glossy."

"Apples stuffed with almond are even more delicious. Almonds peel off easily if you let them soak for a while in boiling water, but then you have to roast them to make them real crisp. That's my recipe for making apple-sweet, one of our local traditional treats."

Whenever you pay a visit to a local family in Milies, or even if you just happen to drop by, you will certainly be treated to one of the local specialties. On a tray laid with a white embroidered napkin, the housewife will offer you a large piece of honey-sweet baklava or one of her spoon sweets along with a large glass of water and probably some of her very best liqueur.

"Liqueur is very easy to make," Maro Vanghela tells us. "I make all sorts of kinds from whatever fruit is in season; sweet or sour cherries, oranges, tangerines, apricots, or walnuts."

One of these days, I'm going to make some walnut liqueur because the nuts are now just the right size, green and tender. I'll pick twenty-five or thirty small nuts and rinse them well. Then I'll stick a clove at each end of the fruit and then put them in a jar with four cups of sugar. I'll close the jar tightly and leave it in the sun for about a month, turning it over now



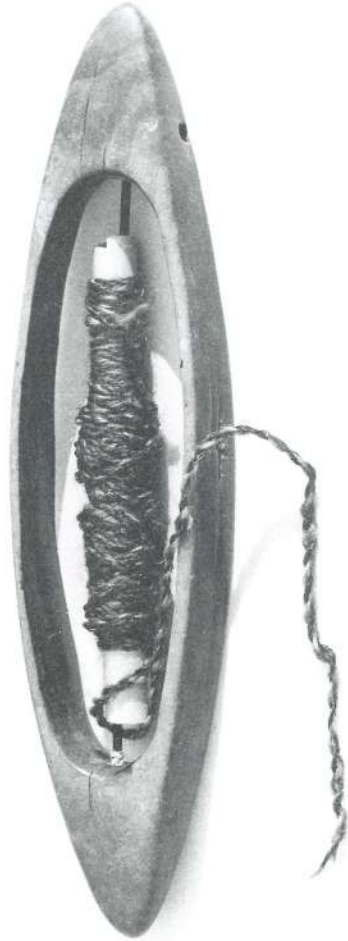
Maro Bezou prepares walnut liqueur (Photograph 1987)

and again so the sugar will mix well with the nuts. Each day, the juice of those green walnut shells dissolves and the sugar turns into a rather thick syrup with a delicious walnut aroma and a deep golden green color."

"When I'm expecting guests all I have to do is to buy a bottle of brandy and strain some of my liqueur, adding equal amounts of each. Now if I want to make it a bit stronger, I add more brandy or instead of brandy, I can use ouzo or even *tsipouro*."

Home-made liqueur has no preserves, it keeps the aroma of the fruit you use and glitters in the glass.

yarn – natural dyes and the loom



*Shuttle with wool
(Photograph
taken 1988)*

Weaving used to be one of the main occupations of women in Milies and, as in other parts of Greece, many homes had a loom. However, when the village was burnt down during the war, only a few looms were spared, and not many women thought of setting up a new one. Many dowries were lost in the fire. Beautiful hand-woven carpets, rugs, sheets, blankets and towels were reduced to ashes yet

enough examples of local weavings were saved to show the skill, patience and love women had for their craft.

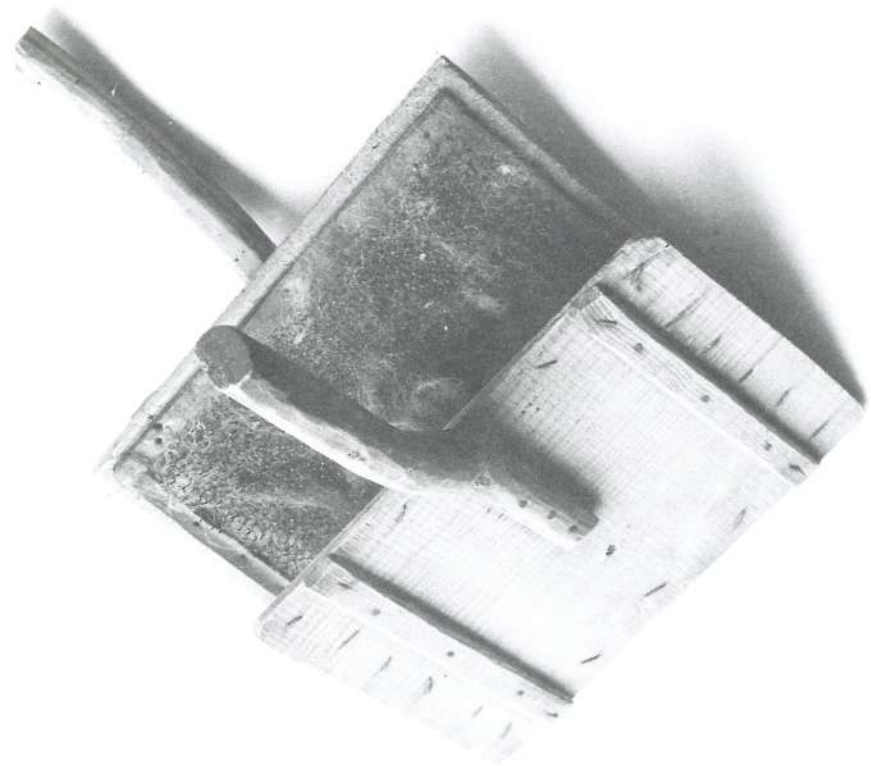
Colors have not faded away because women used natural dyes and patterns are beautiful because they copied the traditional Pelion weavings, some done in simple vertical stripes, others with complicated geometrical shapes or schematic designs of birds and plants. Not many women weave in Milies these days. Most of them consider it hard, strenuous work. A local folk song says it best:

*Embroidery is a thing of joy
The distaff just a promenade
But the loom is always full of ploys
that make you feel like a slave*

Electra Gourgouliani is one of the few women left in the village who knows how to prepare the loom for weaving. "It's an art in itself," she says. "It takes time and patience, practice and experience. I set my loom up every summer out in the yard under a tree, because I haven't room in my house," she admits. "To dress a loom you have to begin by winding the yarn. Then you measure the length of the warp according to the length of the cloth you want to weave and wind it on the warp beam. You need some-



"Kilimi" – An exquisite example of the rug making craft, belonging to the Katardzis family (Photograph taken 1981)



*Combs with
densely placed
short fine teeth
to card wool
(Photograph
1986)*

one to help you there because you can't manage alone and pass the warp threads through the heddles of the loom. All in all, it takes at least two days work."

"It is such a pity this craft is being lost here in Milies," Eleni Malliora says. "It gave me such great satisfaction to sit and weave. God knows how many yards I've woven! How many things I've given away to my children."

"My loom has its place right in the house and I very often sit and weave," Amalia Katsanaki says. "Women come and bring me cloth pieces to make into rag rugs, but I also weave with yarn."

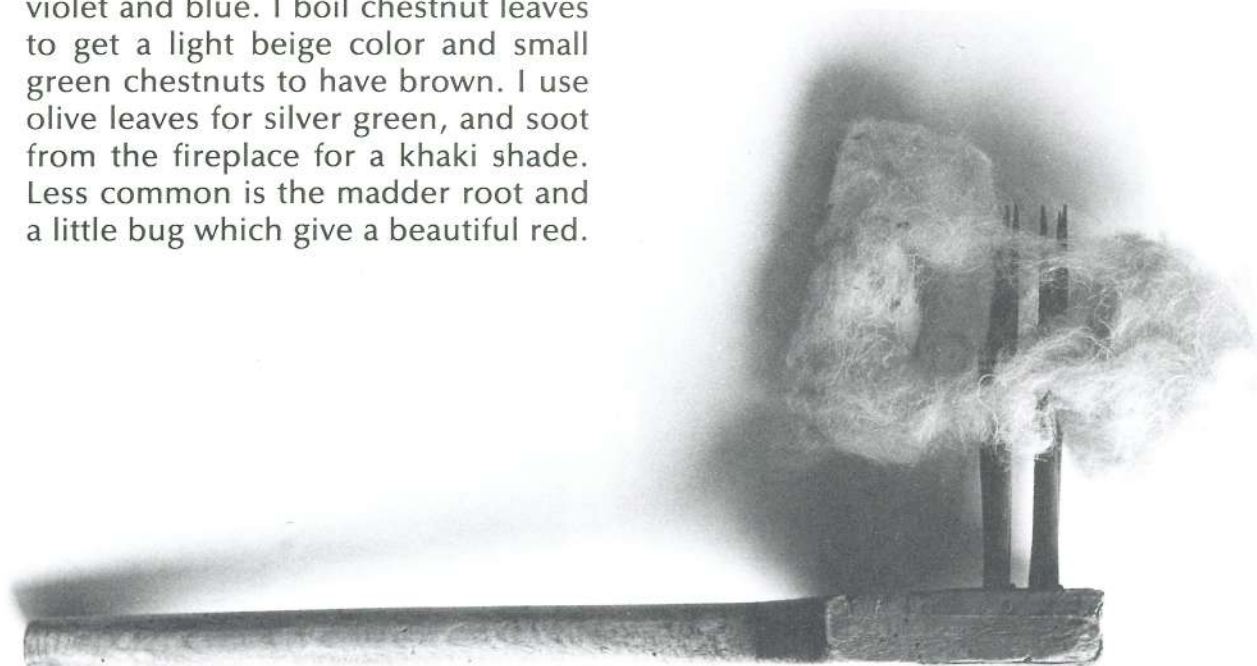
Weavers in Milies used to spin their own yarn. When the sheep were sheared in June they went to choose the sheepskins on the spot; they needed long-haired wool to make blankets, carpets and rugs, and short-haired wool for the rest. The merchant would sell the whole skin but the wool from the back of the animal was clean and soft, the wool from the belly was only the second best, and the wool from the legs was only used to fill pillows and mattresses.

"Sheepskins were left in water to soak all night," says Eleni Malliora. "Then the next day we'd wash them in hot water and spread them to dry in the sun. After the midday meal, we could put the children to bed and gather in the courtyard to card and spin. Wearing an apron around our waist we had to cut the wool off the sheepskin according to what we were planning to weave and the color we wanted; milky white or beige, light or dark grey. To card the wool we worked with two pairs of combs, first with the combs that had long widely spaced iron teeth, then with the closely placed short, fine teeth."

As the yarn is carded the combs untangle the fibers of the wool and make them fluffy. A handful of this carded wool is put on the distaff and women begin to spin it, drawing the yarn out, twisting it into thread and then letting it wind around a spindle.

"Years ago women were hired to card because we used large quantities of wool to weave carpets, rugs, sheets, and towels for our dowry," Lela Korba remembers. "Many of us would dye the yarn, using natural dyes. Here on Mount Pelion we have a

lot of plants that give beautiful colors, including bright shades of yellow, violet and blue. I boil chestnut leaves to get a light beige color and small green chestnuts to have brown. I use olive leaves for silver green, and soot from the fireplace for a khaki shade. Less common is the madder root and a little bug which give a beautiful red.



When I'm about to dye my yarn, I wet it first, then the night before, I'll put the leaves, flowers, roots, or barks of wood in water to soak. Early the next morning, I'll light a fire in my yard and pour everything in a copper cauldron to boil. The longer the water boils, the darker the color gets. If I want an even darker shade, I can add a bucket of ash water and stir it well."

"When I've got just the right color I had in mind, I strain the water and dip in my yarn leaving it to boil for about a quarter of an hour. Then I'll remove the cauldron from the fire, but leave the yarn in for a little longer to let it absorb the tint. Then I'll rinse it well and hang it up to dry."

"My yarn is now the color I've chosen, and it will never fade. However, it is practically impossible to get that very same shade again because every plant is different, the soil is different, even the water is different. I like to experiment with new plants to see what other colors I can get. Just recently I found out that quince leaves make a lovely pale beige and one of the cactus flowers will provide a bright violet color. I also know that if I add a bit of alum in the water before I put the olive leaves in, I will get a softer green, and if I pour vinegar in when I am boiling madder, I have a very glossy red. So the variety of colors that nature gives us is infinite."

For untangling wool fibres, cards with long, widely spaced teeth are used (Photograph taken 1986)

*Lela Korba cards
wool
(Photograph
taken 1984)*



*The same
housewife
spinning without
a distaff
(Photograph
taken 1986)*



*Eleni Malliora
winding her yarn
into a ball
(Photograph
taken 1981)*



*Lela Korba uses
natural dyes to
color her yarn
(Photograph
taken 1987)*





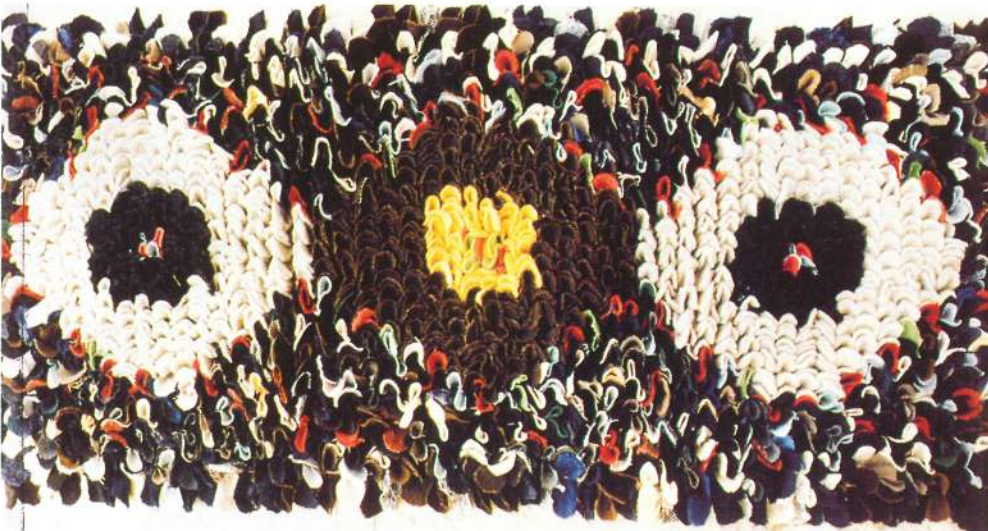
Amalia Katsanaki winds yarn for weaving on her loom (Photograph taken 1986)



Electra Gourgoulani weaving a rag rug on the loom set up in her front yard (Photograph taken 1981)



Passing small bits of cloth through widely woven sackcloth, Dina Katsanaki is finishing a rag rug



A colorful rag rug, handwork of Ilias Boukouvalas (Photograph taken 1981)

A TRADITIONAL WEDDING



In the last few years people in Milies have undeniably been influenced by the general changes which have taken place throughout the country. Everyone enjoys a higher standard of living and has more money to spend. Most households now have the basic facilities, which make everyday life easier, offering more time for leisure.

Village people of all ages, but particularly the younger generation, like to travel and to visit other villages and cities. Foreigners coming to Milies bring along new attitudes and show a new mentality.

With this in mind, inevitably, certain customs which had been deeply rooted in the life of every family for generations are now gradually being abandoned, while others have been altogether forgotten. Yet older people remember them and when they talk about those days, there is nearly always a feeling of regret along with the fear that this part of their life can no longer touch or affect the young people of today, exposed as they are to so many new and violent experiences, and offered the choice of so many activities.

This is why it is comforting to find that in Milies some of the old customs have not been completely abandoned. Local people follow many of those traditions which are connected with religious festivities. Among them all, certainly the most impressive are those that take place during the traditional Pelion Wedding Ceremony which is still celebrated in Milies by some young couples.

In the life of every family in Milies, a wedding is an event of major importance. The main religious ceremony celebrated in the Orthodox Church is the same all over the country, however local customs give each wedding an individuality and charm of its own.

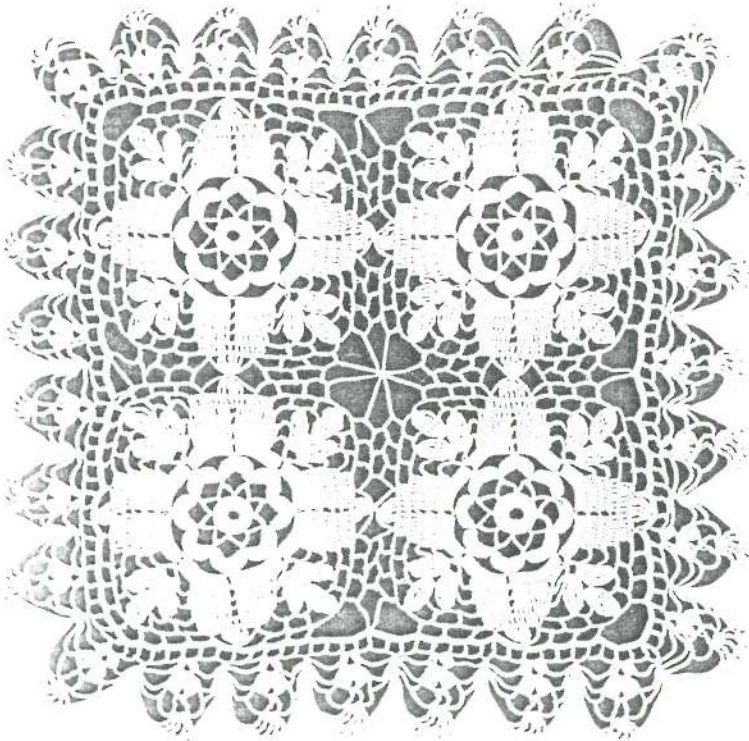
Preparations for the wedding start well before the actual ceremony since

sent day local folk art, unknown to the wider public. The variety of designs, the color combinations and the impeccable handwork show a great artistic flare which has its roots in the rich traditional Greek background.

"Preparing a dowry is a beautiful custom which we have to preserve," says Maria Koute, embroidering for her daughter's trousseau a table runner with the finest of gold threads.

The engagement

"Too many customs have already been lost, even here in Milies, because times have changed," Doxa Nikole points out. "In my days marrying for love was practically unknown. Most marriages were prearranged by a matchmaker. Girls were not allowed to go out alone. They went to church, of course, and sometimes to the local *paniyiria* or for a stroll as far as Lakkes at the far end of the village, but never without an escort and if a boy and a girl wanted to marry without the family's consent there was no other way but to elope. Younger sisters had to wait till the eldest in the family had found a husband. All girls were given a dowry and this was the first and most important subject discussed with the matchmaker. No engagement was settled unless both families agreed on it. The engagement was nearly always celebrated in the house of the future bride, " Doxa goes on, "in the presence of both families and it was the custom for the couple to exchange gifts. My fiancé gave me a compact,



A lace doily,
crocheted by
Doxa Nikole
(Photograph
taken 1983)

Irini Malamaki
embroidering a
small tablecloth
(Photograph
taken 1987)

women in the village spend years weaving, knitting and embroidering for their dowry, patiently adding one beautiful hand-made piece after another in trunks and chests. A few days before the wedding, it is customary to display the trousseau for the whole village to come and admire. Blankets, bedspreads, rugs, sheets and pillow cases, tablecloths and napkins are all neatly presented in the main room of the bride's house. These dowries are the secret wealth of pre-

two fine golden bracelets, a necklace and a dainty wristwatch. I had sewn for him a pair of hand-embroidered slippers and a shirt and I had also prepared a huge pan of homemade 'baklava' for my future mother-in-law. It was his parents who paid for the engagement rings, bringing them wrapped in a white handkerchief."

A week later the couple was supposed to be seen in church together making their engagement known to the whole village.

Preparing for the wedding

"When I was a girl," says Maria Maitianou, "most weddings were held in the autumn when the season's farm work had been done, the fruit harvested and the family had money to spend. Then came a period of fasting for Christmas and no weddings took place. Again young people married between Christmas and Carnival time in early February."

Maria married off her daughter just a few years ago in a beautiful traditional wedding celebrated in the main church of the village. "Once the date of the marriage is fixed," she goes on, "the dowry must be ready and the bride will have to think of her new wardrobe. A seamstress comes to the house, materials are bought, and coats, suits, dresses, even underclothes and nightgowns are made to measure. The bridal gown, always white and as elaborate as can be, is paid for by the groom."

As the great day approaches, all the dowry has to be freshly washed and



*A little boy
perched on the
dowry of Mela
Maitianou – in
hopes that her
first child will be
a boy
(Photographs
taken 1985)*



*Maria Koute
sprinkles a
handful of rice
over the bride's
dowry
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



*The bride's
mother, Maria
Maitianou pins a
banknote on her
daughter's
wedding dress
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



ironed. Carpets and rugs are taken out of the trunks and beaten; pillows and quilts are filled. All this means a lot of extra work, but it is done with love and joy even though there is always a touch of sadness since the young girl will soon be separated from her family, her neighbors and her friends. Those feelings can easily be traced in some of the local wedding songs:

*Mother, do keep my flowers fresh
please never let them wither
and when at times you think of me
just smile, shed not one tear.
Farewell, I bid you Mother dear,
farewell, sisters and brothers,
farewell, friends of my neighborhood,
farewell, to all young men.
One last farewell to my sweet home
to friends I won't forget.*

All the washing and ironing is done by married women who come to help the family." Marina Sykioti tells us: "Aunts, cousins, friends and neighbors are there but never a widow or an orphan because it is considered a bad omen. In my days we would light a fire in our yard and mother would put on a big copper cauldron to heat the water and she made us all throw a few coins in the wooden tub together with the washing for good luck."

"Washing and ironing means days of work," her sister adds, "because each dowry has so many sheets, pillowcases and towels, so many tablecloths and napkins for all sizes. And everything has to be spotless and starch stiff before it is put on display along with all the copper objects brightly polished and all the wedding presents. When visitors come to look at the dowry we offer them rice and

rose petals and ask them to sprinkle a handful all around for luck. Others pin one of two banknotes here and there mostly, of course, on the wedding dress. We also make a little boy sit on a cushion to bring the bride luck and let her first baby be a son."

"During the whole week before the wedding there is so much to be done that we need all the help we can get," Ioanna Nikou will say. "The couple's best friends, both boys and girls, are chosen to be the *bratimia*, responsible for all extra work. With a white handkerchief pinned on their shoulders they will go from door to door handing out the wedding invitations and a flower for each guest to wear during the ceremony, offering a sip of *tsipouro* to the man of the house."

The bridal loaves

On Wednesday afternoon the groom goes to the bride's house together with his friend and relatives to watch her prepare the dough for the bridal loaves. While she is sifting flour every one drops a coin in the trough and takes a handful of flour to sprinkle over the couple wishing them both long life and a happy marriage. Still covered with flour, they all have a glass of wine and that is the last the groom will see of his bride before the wedding.

Next morning, the women of the house will knead the loaves, decorating them with white sugared almonds. These loaves will be taken to church on Sunday by one of the *bratimia* along with a bottle of wine.

*The bride's
friends and
relatives
accompanied by
musicians
approach the
house of the
bridegroom,
Thanassis
Yeroyiannis to
fetch the horses
and mules that
will transport the
dowry. One of
the "bratimia"
leads the way
carrying the
bridal baklava.
(Photograph
taken 1985)*



Bringing the dowry home

Friday is one more busy day, for the groom has hired mules and horses to fetch the dowry. Once his mother has tied a white handkerchief behind their ears and spread brightly colored covers on their packsaddles, muleteers, relatives, *bratimia* and friends will head for the bride's house. When everything has been carefully loaded, everyone but the bride will start off for the new household. Leading the joyful group is one of the *bratimia* carrying a huge dish of baklava, a gift from the bride to her mother-in-law, then comes a young man carrying a flask of *tsipouro*. Musicians bring up the rear playing wedding tunes, followed by the muleteers, keeping an eye on the heavily loaded animals. As housewives hear them, they come out to wish the couple luck, throwing handfuls of rice and flower petals, as the dowry passes by.

That same evening the bride's girlfriends linger on to tidy the house and make up the bridal bed, choosing the finest white embroidered sheets and pillowcases, the most beautiful coverlet. Before leaving, they sprinkle it with rice, drop a few coins and roll a little boy across the bed in hopes that the young bride will conceive a son.

Saturday is a peaceful day, since everything is by now ready for tomorrow's ceremony. Both the bride and groom stay at home and in the evening they enjoy a last meal with their parents, bidding farewell to the family homestead.

The wedding day

Early the next day, the bride's girlfriends will come to keep her company and there's a lot of chatting and giggling, as they help her dress, while



The bride's family celebrates in their front yard – her mother dances with her son who is holding the bridal bouquet; while a "bratimi" is holding a white hen (Photograph taken 1985)

everyone around sings the traditional, local bridal song:

*Today the sun is shining,
today the day is bright,
today we have a wedding,
an eagle weds a dove
Today we have a wedding,
in this here fragrant yard,
a mother and a daughter,
today are drawn apart
Beautiful is our bride to be,
beautiful is all her dowry,
beautiful are also her good friends,
that wish her a great happiness.*



*Friends and
relatives carrying
the dowry to the
couple's new
home
(Photographs
taken 1985)*



All dressed up, but still wearing her slippers, the bride will kiss her parent's hands and will ask for their blessing before going out into the courtyard to dance with each of her relatives and friends. Shortly after, her mother joins her to dance with the *bratimia* holding the bouquet of flowers which she will send to the groom.

As the hour of the actual wedding ceremony approaches, the musicians leave to fetch the groom, his family and friends. On his wedding day, the groom is shaved by the local barber in the presence of friends and relatives. It is the custom for everyone to drop a few coins in his lap as a little extra for the barber while singing:

*Barber make sure your razor's edge
is sharpened with great care,
and don't you dare to cut away,
not even a black hair*

When the musicians are heard coming, they are urged to come in and play for a while, so that everyone can have a chance to dance with the groom. Custom has it, that one of the *bratimia* will dance while holding up, for everyone to see, the bridal shoes, a gift from the groom to his future wife who is now waiting for him still wearing her slippers.

*Before leaving
the family home,
the bride kisses
her mother's
hand and asks for
her blessing
(Photograph
taken 1985)*

Going to the church

Time is running short and the party still has to fetch the best man before reaching the bride's house. As soon as they arrive, one of the *bratimia* will be invited in to meet the bride with the new pair of shoes. Half laughing and

half teasing, he won't let her put them on before making her promise that he will get something in exchange!

The bride, wearing her new white shoes, comes to the front door escorted by her father, who will give her away to the best man. As they all leave for the church, a few shots are fired, musicians begin to play, and the mother of the bride tosses rice and flower petals at the guests while singing:

*Oh son-in-law, my little girl,
I ask you to protect,
like a flower in a basil pot,
please cherish and protect.*

The wedding party proceeds along the cobbled paths, one of the *bratimia* with the bouquet of flowers, the others carrying the wedding candles, the bridal loaves, and wine. A little



boy, holding the wedding crowns on a tray, is followed by the best man with the bride, the groom next to a maid of honor. As they approach the church, the priest greets them and leads the couple to the altar.

After the wedding

When the wedding ceremony is over, there is music playing in the main square and the congregation dances hand in hand with the bride and groom leading the way. As night falls, those invited follow the couple to their home. The mother-in-law awaits the bride at the threshold with a spoonful of honey to wish her a sweet married life. The young woman will also be made to step on the key of

the house. As soon as she enters she will have to sit on a chair, holding a little boy in her arms, wishing for her first child to be a boy.

Then everyone is offered a piece of the bridal baklava which is made with thin crisp pastry, lots of nuts and syrup, decorated with cloves and white almonds. Only relatives and close friends stay on for the evening meal where a dish of rice – a symbol of long, united, loving life – is always served. The feast may well go on till late at night or even early morning and the *bratimia* will see to it that nothing is missing, and that everyone is having a good time.

"Here in Milies, the wedding feast may well last for two or even three days. Our house is open to every guest, food and wine is served to all and music fills the air. This is a time of happiness, a time of real joy!"





Dancing in the main square immediately following the wedding (Photograph taken 1985)



PAINTINGS of Milies



Farandatou, Anna. 'Snowy morning in Milies', oil, (25x35 cm) private collection



Prekas, Paris. 'The square in Milies with the church and the Library', watercolor, (50x72 cm) private collection

Prekas, Paris. 'Milies: view of the village', watercolor, (50x72 cm), artist's collection

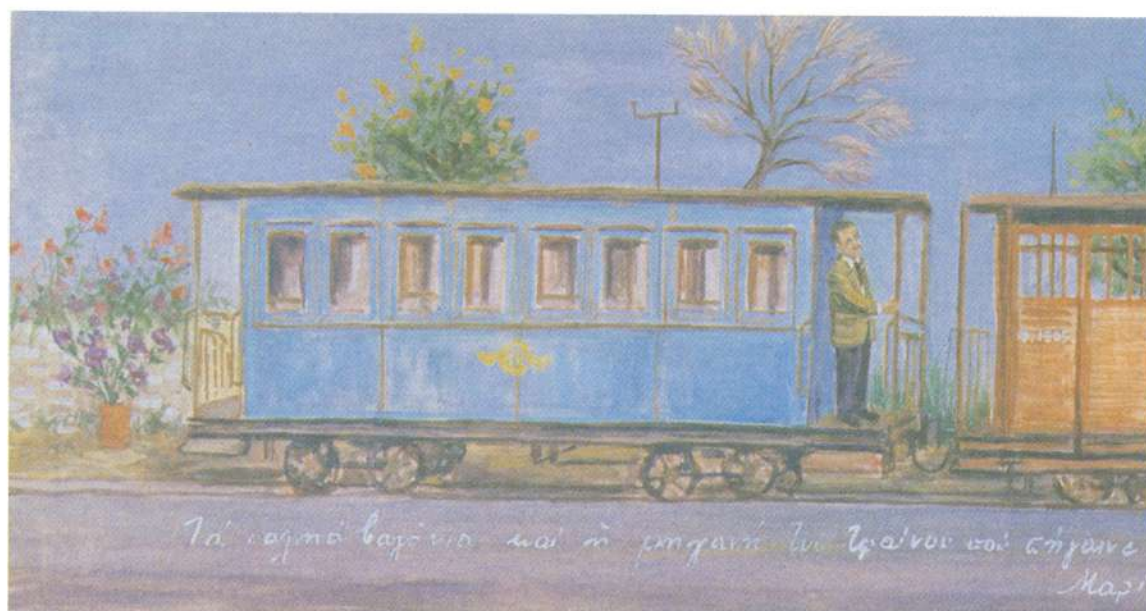




Voyadzoglou-Sklirou, Ismini. 'Milies: view from Paliambela', oil, (60x76 cm), collection of Mrs. V. Georgakaki

Voyadzoglou-Sklirou, Ismini. 'Milies: view towards St. Constantine', oil, (60x76 cm), collection of Mr. A. Damtsa





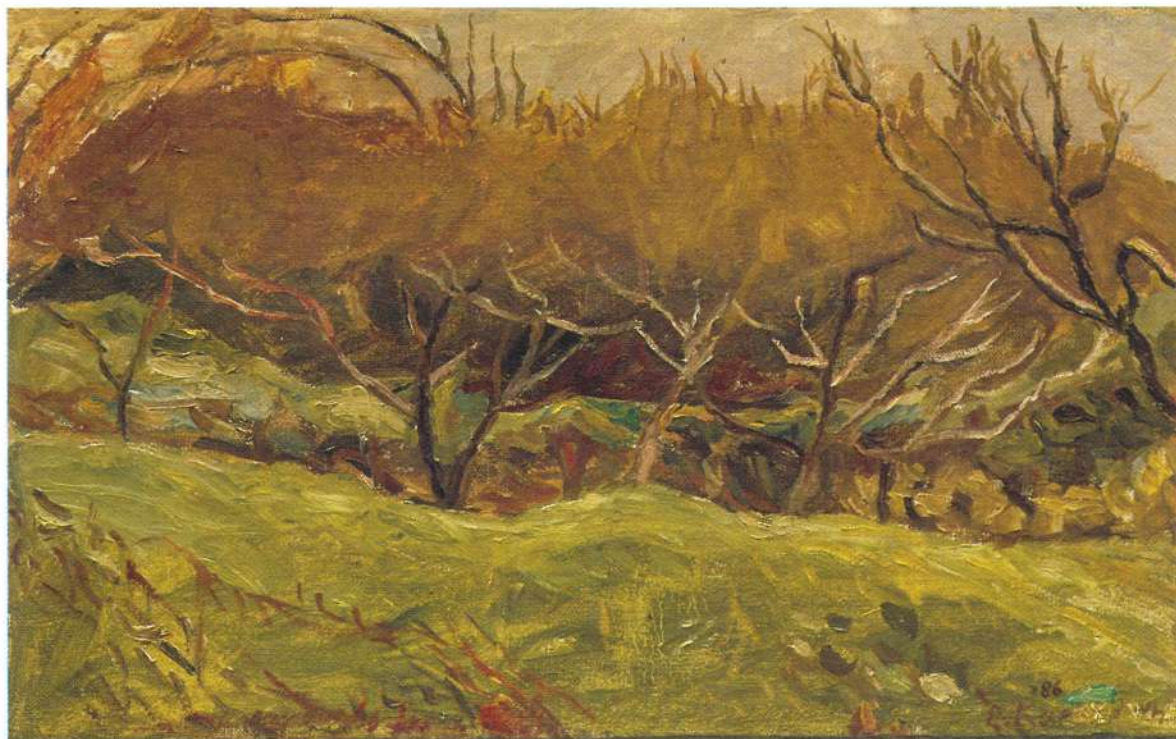


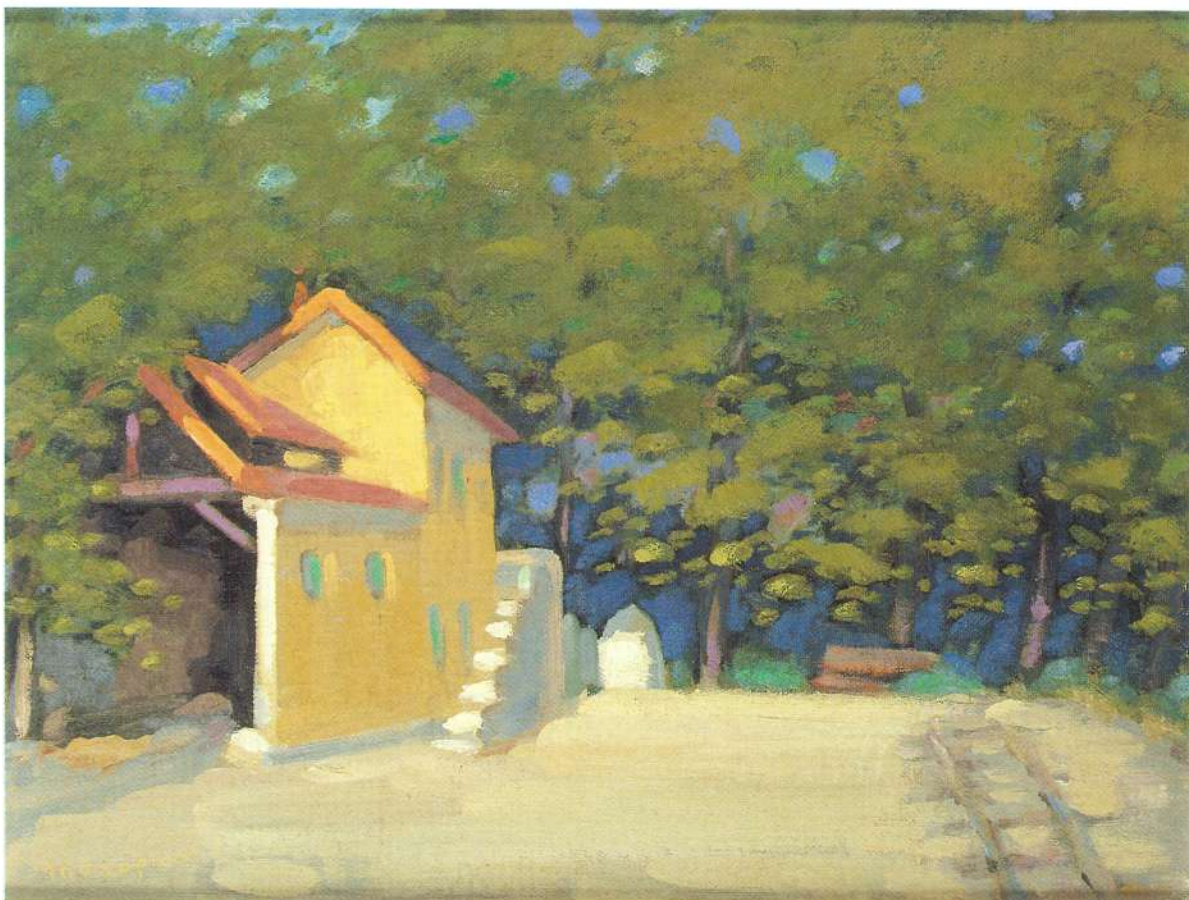
Pop, Maria. 'The little train of Pelion starts its journey to Milies', oil, (58x16 cm), collection of Mrs. K. Varvitsioti



Karayianni, Eleni. 'Milies', oil, (34x71 cm), private collection

Karayianni, Eleni. 'Milies', oil, (39x46 cm), private collection





Baharian, Assandour. 'The Station in Milies', oil, (30x40 cm), artist's collection

BIBLIOGRAPHY

RECORDED INTERVIEWS • VIDEO TAPES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ἀρβανιτόπουλος, Ἀ.Σ.

- «Ἀνασκαφαί ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ», *Πρακτικά Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας*, 1906 καὶ 1907, σελ. 147-148.

Ἀργυροπούλου, Ρ.

- «Les Conceptions Pédagogiques de Daniel Philippidès», *Ἑλληνικὲς ἀνακοινώσεις στό Ε΄ Διεθνές Συνέδριο Σπουδῶν Νοτιοανατολικῆς Εὐρώπης*, 1984, Ἀθήναι 1985, σελ. 93-98.
- «Τά φιλοσοφικά ἐνδιαφέροντα τοῦ Δανιήλ Φιλιππίδη», *Θεσσαλικά Χρονικά*, τόμ. 15 (1984), σελ. 319-328.

Βασαρδάνης, Στ.

- *Τό Πήλιο στή Μυθολογία*, Ἀθήνα 1959.

Βουρβέρης, Κ.Ι.

- *Γρηγόριος Κωνσταντᾶς, ὁ διδάσκαλος τοῦ Γένους*, Ἀθήναι 1974.
- *Τό Πήλιον· παράδοσις, καί νέα ζωή, πνευματικόν καί τουριστικόν Μέλλον*, Ἀθήναι 1974.

Γεωργιάδη-Λαμπίρη, Ἡ.

- *Στό Πήλιο, περίπατος σέ φυσικά καί ψυχικά τοπεῖα*, Ἀθήνα 1982.

Γεωργιάδης, Ν.

- *Ἡ Θεσσαλία*, Ἐν Βόλῳ 1984.

Δημαρᾶς, Κ.Θ.

- «Ὁ Ἑλληνικός διαφωτισμός», *Μεγάλη Ἑλληνική Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια*, τόμ. Ι΄, Ἀθήναι 1964.
- «Ὁ πρῶτος μαθητής μου, ἡ γλωσσική θεωρία τῶν Δημητρίων», *Ἀφιέρωμα στή μνήμη τοῦ Μανόλη Τριανταφυλλίδη*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1960, σελ. 95-105.
- «Γρηγ. Κωνσταντᾶς», *Φροντίσματα*, Ἀθήνα 1962, σελ. 89-102.

Δούσμανης, Β.

- «Στρατιωτική Γεωγραφία τῆς Θεσσαλίας», *Θεσσαλικά Χρονικά*, τόμ. Ε΄ (1936), σελ. 24-29.

Ἐλύτης, Ὁ.

- *Ὁ ζωγράφος Θεόφιλος*, Ἀθήνα 1973.
- *Ἑρμῆς ὁ Λόγιος ἢ Φιλολογικαί Ἀγγελίαι*, ἔκδ. Ἀνθιμου Γαζῆ, Βιέννη 1811-1815 καί 1816-1821 (καί ἐπανεκδ. μέ φωτομηχανική ἀνατύπωση ἀπό τό Ἑλληνικό Λογοτεχνικό καί Ἱστορικό Ἀρχεῖο στή σειρά Προεπαναστατικά περιοδικά, τόμ. Α΄, 1988, μέ πρόλογο Κ.Θ. Δημαρᾶ καί εἰσαγωγή Ε.Ν. Φραγκίσκου).

Ζερλέντης, Π.

- «Προσθῆκαι καί παρατηρήσεις εἰς τοῦ τὰ περί Δανιήλ Φιλιππίδη γράφοντος», *Ἑβδομάς*, τόμ. Β΄ (1985), σελ. 164.

Ζιοῦτος, Γ.Δ.

- *Θεόφιλος*, ἐπιμ. Ἰ. Τσαρούχης, Γ. Μανουσάκης, ἔκδ. Ἐμπορικῆς Τράπεζας τῆς Ἑλλάδος, β' ἔκδ. Ἀθήναι 1967.

Κακογιάννης, Κ. — Σταμάτης, Ἀ.

- Μορφολογική ἀνάλυση οἰκισμοῦ — Μηλιές — Πήλιο, σπουδαστική ἐργασία, τομέας Ἀρχιτεκτονικῆς Μορφολογίας καί Ρυθμολογίας, ΕΜΠ 1983.

Καμηλάρη, Μ.

- «Ἱεραὶ Ἀναγραφαί. Ἐξέτασις τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν, παρεκκλησιῶν, ἐξωκκλησιῶν, μονῶν ἀπὸ ἀπόψεως Ἀρχαιοχριστιανικῆς τῶν ἐν τοῖς τέως δήμοις τοῦ Πηλίου», *Θεσσαλικά Χρονικά*, τόμ. Ε' (1936), σελ. 38-86.

Καμιλάρης, Ρ.

- *Γρηγορίου Κωνσταντᾶ: Βιογραφίαι — Λόγοι — Ἐπιστολαὶ μετὰ περιγραφῆς τῶν Μηλεῶν καὶ τῆς Σχολῆς αὐτῶν*, Ἀθήναις 1897.

Κανδήλης, Ἰ.

- *Μηλιές, ἓνα σημαντικό Πνευματικὸ Κέντρο τοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ κατὰ τοὺς τελευταίους πρὸ τοῦ 1821 χρόνους*, Ἀθήνα 1985 (β' ἔκδ. 1988).

Καραμπάτσας, Δ.

- *Ἡ συμβολὴ τῶν Θεσσαλῶν λογίων στὸ νεοελληνικὸ διαφωτισμὸ· σύντομη ἀναφορά*, Ἀθήνα 1981.

Κατσιμπαλῆς, Γ.

- *Βιβλιογραφία Θεόφιλου Γ. Χατζημιχαήλ*, Ἀθήνα 1957.

Κίρης, Ἰ.

- *Πηλιορείτικη Οἰκοδομία*, διδακτ. διατρ., ΕΜΠ 1984.

Κορδότος, Γ.

- *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἐπαρχίας Βόλου καὶ Ἀγιάς*, Ἀθήνα 1960.
- *Ἡ Ἐπανάσταση τῆς Θεσσαλομαγνησίας τὸ 1821*, Ἀθήνα 1974.

Κουμαριανοῦ, Αἰκ.

- «Ἑρμῆς ὁ Λόγιος ἢ Φιλολογικαὶ Ἀγγελίαι 1811-1815 καὶ 1816-1821», *Ἐλεύθερα Γράμματα*, ἀρ. 63 (1967), σελ. 83-84· ἀρ. 64 (1967), σελ. 108.
- «Ἡ “Νεωτερικὴ Γεωγραφία” τῶν Δημητριάων», *Ἐποχές*, τευχ. 32 (1965), σελ. 22-29.
- «Ἀνθίμου Γαζῆ “Λεξικὸν Ἑλληνικόν”. Ἡ ἱστορία μιᾶς λεξικογραφικῆς προσπάθειας», *Ὁ Ἐρανιστής*, ἔτος Β' (1964), τόμ. 2, τευχ. 9-10, σελ. 163-186.

Κουτρομπᾶς, Δ.

- *Ἡ Ἐπανάστασις τοῦ 1854 καὶ αἱ ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ ἰδίᾳ ἐπιχειρήσεις*, Ἀθήνα 1976.

Κωνσταντᾶς, Γρ.

- «Νεκρολογία Δανιὴλ Φιλιππίδη», *Ἀθηνᾶ*, ἔτος Β', ἀρ. 121, 14 Ἰουν. 1833, σελ. 486-487.
- «Ἀλληλογραφία Γρ. Κωνσταντᾶ καὶ Καπετάν Μήτρου Μπασδέκη», *Θεσσαλικά Χρονικά*, τόμ. Α' (1930), σελ. 85.

Κωνσταντάκης, Ἐ.

- *Τὸ χωριὸ Μηλιῆς τοῦ Πηλίου*, Μηλιές 1953.

Κωνσταντινίδης, Ἀ.Γ.

- *Τὰ ἐν Πηλίῳ παλαιὰ καὶ σύγχρονα χριστιανικά μνημεῖα*, Ἀλεξάνδρεια 1943.
- *Λεύκωμα Ἑλληνικῶν Ἐνδυμασιῶν*, ἔκδ. Μουσείου Μπενάκη, τόμ. Α΄, Ἀθήνα 1984, πίν. 28.

Λιάπης, Κ.

- *Καπετάν Κώστας Γαρέφης, ὁ σταυραετός τοῦ Πηλίου*, Ἀθήνα 1979.
- *Ὁρὲς Πηλίου*, Ἀθήνα 1981.
- «Ἡ Μηλιώτικη Σχολή καὶ ἡ Βιβλιοθήκη της», *Θεσσαλικό Ἡμερολόγιο*, τόμ. ΣΤ΄, Λάρισα 1984, σελ. 65-96.

Μάγνης, Ν.

- *Περιήγησις ἢ Τοπογραφία τῆς Θεσσαλίας καὶ Θετταλικῆς Μαγνησίας*, Ἐν Ἀθήναις 1860.

Μακρῆς, Κ.Α.

- *Ὁ ζωγράφος Θεόφιλος στό Πήλιο*, Βόλος 1939.
- *Πηλιορείτικα ψευτοπαράθυρα*, Βόλος 1942.
- *Ἡ Πηλιορείτικη λαϊκὴ τέχνη — πηγές καὶ ἐπιδράσεις*, Ἀθήνα 1948.
- *Πηλιορείτικες φορεσιές*, Βόλος 1949.
- «Συμβολή στὴ μελέτη τῆς πολεοδομίας τῶν χωριῶν τοῦ Πηλίου», *Ἐπιθεώρηση Τέχνης*, τόμ. Ζ΄ (1958), σελ. 374-381.
- *Ἡ Ξυλογλυπτικὴ τοῦ Πηλίου*, Βόλος 1958.
- *Μικρά Μελετήματα*, Βόλος 1960.
- *Υφαντά Θεσσαλίας*, ἔκδ. ΕΟΕΧ, Ἀθήνα 1961.
- *Βόλος-Πήλιο (Ἀνατολικὴ Θεσσαλία)*, Ἀθήνα 1965.
- *Ἡ χειροτεχνία ἐν Θεσσαλίᾳ*, Λάρισα 1966.
- *Ἡ λαϊκὴ τέχνη τοῦ Πηλίου*, ἔκδ. Μέλισσα, Ἀθήνα 1976.

Μηλιαράκης, Ἀντ.

- «Δανιὴλ Φιλιππίδης καὶ ἡ Γεωγραφία αὐτοῦ (1791)», *Ἑστία*, τόμ. ΙΘ΄ (1885), σελ. 115-119, 131-136, 147-151, 163-167.
- *Μορφαὶ τῆς Μαγνησίας*, ἔκδ. Νομαρχίας Μαγνησίας, Βόλος 1973.

Μουγογιάννης, Γ.

- «Ἡ Παιδεία στὴν Τουρκοκρατούμενη Θεσσαλία», *Θεσσαλικό Ἡμερολόγιο*, τόμ. Ε΄ Λάρισα 1983, σελ. 49-64.

Οἰκονομίδης, Δ.

- «Δανιὴλ Φιλιππίδης, βίος καὶ ἔργον», *Μνημοσύνη*, τόμ. 7 (1978), σελ. 200-290.

Παπαγιάννη, Μ. — Σολοῦκος, Δ.

- *Ἡ συμβολὴ τῆς Θεσσαλίας στὴν ἀπελευθέρωσή της*, Ἀθήνα 1983.

Παπαδόπουλος-Κεραμεύς, Ἀ.

- «Κατάλογος τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν Κωδίκων τῆς ἐν Μηλέαις Βιβλιοθήκης», *Ἐπετηρίς Παρνασσοῦ*, ἔτος Ε΄ (1901), σελ. 20-74.

Παπαχατζῆς, Ν.Δ.

- *Τα λείψανα καὶ ἡ ἱστορία τῶν ἀρχαίων πόλεων τῆς περιοχῆς Βόλου*, Βόλος 1937.
- «Ἡ Κορόπη καὶ τὸ ἱερό τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνα», *Θεσσαλικά*, ἔτος Γ΄ (1960), σελ. 1-24.

Πετρῆς, Τάσος Ν.

- *Βόλος-Πήλιο ἱστορία, τέχνες, λαογραφία, σύγχρονη ζωή*, Ἀθήνα 1978.

Σκουβαράς, Β.

- *Τό Παλιότερο Ἀρματολίκι τοῦ Πηλίου καί οἱ Ἀρβανίτες στή Θεσσαλομαγνησία, 1750-1790*, Βόλος 1960.
- «Σελίδες ἀπό τήν Ἱστορία τῆς Μηλιώτικης Σχολῆς», *Ἡώς*, ἀρ. 92-97 (1966), σελ. 241-278.

Σκουβαράς, Β. — Μακρῆς, Κ.

- *Ἀρχαιολογικός καί Τουριστικός Ὁδηγός Θεσσαλίας*, Βόλος 1958.

Σπεράντζας, Θ.

- «Ὁ Γρηγόριος Κωνσταντᾶς ὡς Ἐφορος τῆς Παιδείας ἀνά τάς Κυκλάδας», *Ἐπετηρίς Ἑταιρείας Κυκλαδικῶν Μελετῶν*, τόμ. Α' (1961), σελ. 32-140.
- *Δανιήλ Φιλιππίδης*, Ἀθήνα 1978.
- *Τα περισωθέντα ἔργα τοῦ Ἀργύρου Φιλιππίδη*, Ἀθήνα 1978.

Τσοποτός, Δ.

- *Γῆ καί Γεωργοί τῆς Θεσσαλίας κατά τήν Τουρκοκρατίαν*, Βόλος 1912.
- «Ἡ Θεσσαλομαγνησία (Πήλιον) καί τό φρούριον τοῦ Βόλου κατά τήν Ἐπανάστασιν τοῦ 1821», *Θεσσαλικά Χρονικά*, τόμ. Α' (1930), σελ. 23-54.

Φιλιππίδης, Ἀργ.

- *Μερική Γεωγραφία — Βιβλίον Ἠθικόν*, ἐπιμ. Θ. Σπεράντζα, Ἀθήναι 1978.

Φιλιππίδης, Δανιήλ — Barbié du Bocage J.D. — Γαζῆς, Ἀνθιμος

- *Ἀλληλογραφία (1794-1819)*, ἔκδ.-σχόλια Αἰκ. Κουμαριανοῦ, πρόλογος Κ.Θ. Δημαρᾶ, Ἀθήνα 1966.

Φιλιππίδης, Δανιήλ — Κωνσταντᾶς, Γρηγόριος

- *Γεωγραφία Νεωτερική, Ἐρανισθεῖσα ἀπό διαφόρους συγγραφεῖς παρά Δανιήλ ἱερομονάχου καί Γρηγορίου ἱεροδιακόνου τῶν Δημητρίων*, Ἐν Βιέννῃ 1971.
- *Γεωγραφία Νεωτερική περί τῆς Ἑλλάδος*, ἐπιμ. Αἰκ. Κουμαριανοῦ, ἔκδ. Ἑρμῆς, Ἀθήνα 1970 (καί ἐπανεκδ. 1988).

Φιλιππίδης, Δημ.

- *Ὁ διδάσκαλος τοῦ Γένους Δανιήλ Φιλιππίδης*, Ἀθήνα.

Χατζηφώτης, Ἰ.

- *Ἀνθιμος Γαζῆς (1758-1828): ἡ ζωή καί τό ἔργο του*, Ἀλεξάνδρεια 1965.
- *Ἀνθιμος Γαζῆς. Νέα θεώρηση τῆς ζωῆς καί τοῦ ἔργου του*, Ἀθήνα 1969.

Χουρμουζιάδης, Γ. — Ἀτζακᾶ, Π. — Μακρῆς Κ.

- *Μαγνησία — Τό χρονικό ἑνός πολιτισμοῦ*, ἔκδ. Μ. καί Ρ. Καπόν, Ἀθήνα 1982.

Lolling, H.C.

- «Mittheilungen aus Thessalien», *Athenische Mittheilungen*, τόμ. 7 (1882), σελ. 61-76, 223-240, 335-348.

Stählin, F.

- «Zur Chronologie und Erklärung der Inschriften von Magnesia und Demetrias», *Athenische Mittheilungen*, τόμ. 54 (1929), σελ. 201-226.

Wace, A.J.B.

- «Topography of Pelion and Magnesia», *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, τόμ. 26 (1906), σελ. 143-168· τόμ. 28 (1908), σελ. 337.

RECORDED INTERVIEWS • VIDEO TAPES

From the Archives of the Local Museum of Milies

name	subject	date	
Adamandiades, S.	A farmer's life	1981	1985
	The olive press	1986	
	The Pelion train	1985	1987
Akrivou, E.	Preparing <i>trachana</i>	1984	
Bezou, M.	Preparing walnut liqueur	1986	
Christou, N.	With the goat and sheep herd at the pen	1984	
Demeli, F.	Homemade bread	1985	
Demou, P.	The stone carver's craft	1986	• 1987
	The woodcarver's craft	1987	
Efstathiou, K.	Preparing wine and <i>tsipouro</i>	1988	
Ghekas, Y.	The farrier's craft	1982	• 1986
Gouliotis, S.	Life of an expatriate	1980	
Gourgoulani, E.	Working the loom	1982	
Gouryiotis, K.	The woodcarver's craft	1986	
Hadziyiannis, D.	The carpenter's craft	1983	
Karayiannis, L.	Painting an icon	1981	• 1986

Katardji, K.	Preparing bread	• 1985	
Katardjis, V.	The packsaddler's craft	1982	• 1986
Katsanaki, A.	The loom	1985	
	Carding and spinning wool	1985	
Kolovos, N.	The blacksmith's craft	1982	• 1985
Kolovos, S.	Building a cobbled path	1986	
Kolovos, C.	The blacksmith's craft	1987	
Korba, L.	Natural dyes	1985	1988
Kornoutos, S.	Building a Pelion house	1985	
Kosma, G.	Preparing bread	• 1985	
Kosma, Y.	Preparing bread	• 1985	
Kosmas, Y.	A farmer's life	1987	
Koute, M.	A woman's life in the village	1984	1987
	A Pelion wedding	1988	
Koutes, R.	The history of Milies	1978	1981
Kostaki, M.	Preparing <i>trachana</i>	• 1988	
	Preparing <i>spantzofai</i>	• 1988	
Liandzouras, T.	A farmer's life	1987	
Maitianos, G.	Preparing <i>tsipouro</i>	1985	
Maitianou, M.	A Pelion wedding	1985	
Malamaki, I.	A woman's life in the village	1981	1987
	Topography of Milies	1985	1987
	Preparing <i>trachana</i>	1984	• 1986
Malliora, E.	Spinning and working the loom	1985	1987
	Dyeing with natural dyes	1985	1987
Nikole, D.	A woman's life in the village	1981	1987
	Preparing olives	1982	1985
Nikoles, G.	The history of Milies	1980	1985
	Topography of Milies	1980	1985
Nikou, I.	A Pelion wedding	1983	
Nikou, S.	The Pelion train	1987	
Oikonomaki, K.	The history of Milies	1978	
Oikonomakis, P.	The history of Milies	1980	1981
Papademetriou, F.	A woman's life in the village	1983	
	A Pelion wedding	1983	
Papazachariou, P.	Preparing cheese	1985	
Papazachariou, Z.	Building a Pelion house	1984	1988
Papoulaki, E.	Soap made with olive oil	1983	
Passia, A.	Cultivating a vineyard	1985	1988
Passias, S.	Preparing wine and <i>tsipouro</i>	• 1985	
Philippides, Y.	The history of Milies	1981	1983
Plaka, P.	Preparing tomato preserve	1983	
Roubou, T.	A woman's life in the village	1982	1985
Sakellariou, Y.	The history of Milies	1978	
Sfetsa, L.	Soap made with olive oil	• 1985	
Sykioti, M.	A woman's life in the village	1987	
Tsangarakis, N.	The tinker's craft	1984	• 1986
Vassilikos, Y.	Topography of Milies	1981	1987
Yiannoutsikos, V.	The history of Milies	1978	

ERRATA

Page 108. Pantocrator: read – Pantokrator

Page 181. mattess: read – mattress

Page 237. white sugared almonds: read – with sugared almonds

THE PRESENT EDITION OF "MILIES, a village on Mount Pelion"
BY HELEN FAY STAMATI
WAS PUBLISHED IN ATHENS
IN SEPTEMBER 1989 WITH AN IMPRINT OF 1000 COPIES.
A GREEK EDITION OF 3000 COPIES WAS RELEASED IN MAY 1989.