

Their relationship with landscape, religion and the community.

Author: Dr Maria Vidali, Affiliation: DIKEMES, Athens, Greece, email:info@mariavidali.com

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The island and the excessive numbers of chapels

Tinos is a Greek island in the northwest of the Cyclades, an archipelago of the Aegean Sea, and it is known for the devoutness of its local inhabitants and the festivals in honour of the Virgin Mary. The outlying chapels dot the island landscape and reveal the relation of its inhabitants to their village community, the landscape and the divine. Today the outlying chapels reflect both religious traditions, Orthodox Christian and Catholic Christian, which coexist on the island.

Methodology

This research was initially based on an understanding of the turbulent history of the island, and how these chapels serve as symbols of rebirth and salvation in the broader historical context of continuous changes on the island. Some of the outlying chapels have existed since Venetian times, some date back to the Byzantine era before 1207 A.D., while others were built later on, when the island was under the Turkish rule as part of the Ottoman Empire (1715-1821) and the inhabitants claimed the right to express their piety and tradition by building churches (Foskolos, 1996). With the help of phenomenology and hermeneutics it is revealed how outlying chapels reflect a continuity of tradition in the modern world, while festivals and rituals revitalise this tradition.

The village structure and the role of the parish church

The village is an organic structure, which is given life through the movement and activities of its people. Alleys and pathways radiate from the village core and connect the houses with the gardens, the outer fields, and the chapels on the hilltops. The church is a three-aisled basilica in most of the villages. The festival of the patron saint takes place once a year and is reflected in every house of the village, since its aim is to exchange hospitality and to share meals in local houses of neighbouring communities. The church creates an identity for the village community; it represents the political body of the village society and also the Christian 'body', while the celebration of the feasts of the local calendar lifts people out of chronological time. The church and the festivals of the village become a manifestation of the communal life and collective memory.

The private outlying chapel and its connection to the family

The outlying chapels belong either to the parish church, in which case they are communal property, or, more frequently, to a family, in which case they are private property. One of the primary functions of the outlying chapel was that of a tomb. The owner and his family had the right to be buried in the chapel. At the beginning of the 19th century, when the Catholic Church forbade burying the deceased in churches (Harries, 2000), this use of the chapel was discontinued. However, nowadays, every outlying chapel becomes a reminder of the resurrection of Christ every Saturday evening, when its owner performs his weekly religious task, leaving his village in the afternoon to light the vigil lamps of his outlying chapel.

The outlying chapel and the collective journey of the faithful in the landscape

A liturgy is enacted at least twice a year in the outlying chapel. On the day of the feast for the chapel saint and just after Easter, during the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension of Christ, we have the collective journey of the peasants in the landscape. The liturgy and the communal meals celebrate the Resurrection of Christ and the saint to whom the chapel is dedicated. During these festivals, the village community to which the chapel belongs and the neighbouring communities participate in a procession towards the chapel and in a collective celebration in the countryside. Also the saint establishes his place on the landscape, connecting his legend with the characteristics of the place. Saint John the Baptist 'dwells' in springs and St. Michael, in caves. The prophet Elijah dwells on mountain-tops and St Peter on the coast (Demetrokalles, 2004).

St. Peter, an outlying chapel by the coast of St. Peter

In Kardiani village, three days after Easter, the villagers, joined by the neighbouring communities, celebrate Resurrection at the outlying chapel of St. Peter. The chapel was built in 1621 and was the property of a peasant of Kardiani, who later donated the chapel to the parish church. During the liturgy at the outlying chapel of St. Peter, the priest reads the gospel which is related to the location of the chapel. The priest blesses the meal which will follow: eggs, bread and wine. Next to the church we find an open sheltered space where the community can participate in the meal of *agape* (love) after the liturgy.

Concluding thoughts

Today people on the island preserve their tradition by preserving the outlying chapels. Symbols and meanings may not be interpreted the same way anymore. However, the connection with the past, through mimesis and repetition, is valuable to the locals. The outlying chapels also continue to embody our primary sense of continuity that was formed by the passage through life and death and the hope for rejuvenation. Eliade says that there is a profound need for nostalgia through religion, "to inhabit a divine world" (Mircea Eliade, 1987). The problem with nostalgia is that it refers not to continuity but rather to a break with the past. Eliade may call this nostalgia, but actually it is something deeper and more basic, which has to do with continuity and tradition. The village topographies with their chapels act as concrete, enduring repositories of this continuity.

Selected Bibliography

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Fig. St Sofia of Griza, outlying chapel at Agapi village territory.



Fig. The Agapi village.



Fig. St. Antonios parish church of Smardakito village.



Fig. The interior of St. Sofia of Griza.



Fig. St. George chapel at Loutra village.



Fig. St. Peter outlying chapel by the coast.



Fig. St. Anastasia chapel at Rentia.