



Before

The Stamatiou School photographed in 2015



After

The Stamatiou School after its devastation by fire

The Stamatiou Infants School – a story worth telling

by Nicholas Pappas, Sydney

In the early hours of 1 March 2016, a night-time fire gutted a small public building on a remote island in the eastern Mediterranean. The story itself was hardly worth reporting were it not for the fact that the fire was found to be deliberately lit and bore all the hallmarks of a cowardly and destructive act of defiance against displaced Syrian refugees – and those generously assisting them.

Some years ago, such an act would have been unthinkable on Kastellorizo. An island well-known for its beauty and for the warmth of its inhabitants was somehow distant from acts of wanton destruction. But not this time. An influx of desperate refugees, and a local infrastructure inadequately equipped to cater for them, had produced a tense environment to be matched only by the ferocity of the flames which engulfed a small building with a proud, if largely unknown, history.

Greece has always been slow to preserve its public items of heritage significance and, on Kastellorizo, this situation has been magnified by a long history of municipal indifference and the primacy of private profit over the public good. In recent times alone, we have lost forever the impressive Italian arch that greeted visitors to the Horáfia precinct and the gateway that led to the former residence of the island's governor. As reminders of a colonial occupier, these and other structures were perhaps seen as running counter to a patriotic discourse that comes with a strong military presence and increasingly belligerent Turkish propaganda.

But the small building that burnt down that night bore an altogether different history. It was a school – a Greek school for local infant children. It had been erected at the beginning of the 20th century by one of the island's foremost benefactors at a time when a changing world had imposed stresses and strains on the island's fragile economy. One of a number of such initiatives at that time, it was intended to meet the educational needs of the island's population at a time when the islanders were increasingly looking at opportunities abroad as the Ottoman Empire unravelled around them.

Nikolaos Stamatiou (or 'Stamatoglou') was born on Kastellorizo in 1835 in the immediate aftermath of the Greek revolution. We know little about his early years, but we aware that he and his brothers (Ioannis and Antonios – the latter took the surname 'Kontouzoglou' for reasons that are unclear) inherited from their father Stamatios (hence the surname) some significant landholdings in and around Antifilo and on the island. From these properties, Nikolaos and his sons yielded substantial income and they also exploited the lush forests of Anatolia for timber production which they exported to Egypt from the island's bustling (and tax free) harbour. Like many Greeks trading in Anatolia, Nikolaos and his sons used the names 'Stamatiou' and 'Stamatoglou' interchangeably. As part of a family of merchants with business connections as far as Smyrna and Constantinople, one needed to be readily adaptable in a cosmopolitan setting.

Nikolaos was married twice; his first marriage produced five sons and two daughters, while a second marriage produced a further two sons. When combined with his accumulated wealth, a lifetime of benevolent giving had elevated him and his sons to a privileged position in the island community that only Loukas and Anastasia Santrape were to rival. When Nikolaos died in 1905 aged 70, contemporary accounts attest to the fact that there was the largest outpouring of community grief seen on the island for decades.

Among the public projects he funded were the domed osthýke (the bone repository in the Horáfia – 1893), the transfer of the island's cemetery from the Horáfia to the more isolated Mikro Niftis promontory (1898-1900), the slaughterhouse (sphagía – 1901) and the ambitious clock on the steeple of the church of Ayios Yeorgios tou Pigadhiou (St George of the Well - 1902). But the project dearest to Stamatiou's heart was the erection in 1903 of an infants' school in the avlóyro of the Church of St George of the Well.

This small but elegant building, in a characteristic local style, was built of stone and featured a tiled roof and timber windows with skylights and shutters. Three panelled doors led to two classrooms divided by a central corridor. Above the central doorway an inscription recorded the year of inauguration (1903) and Stamatiou's benevolence.

Upon its opening in late 1903, the school catered for 242 infants who were taught the basics of language and faith in a strict regime of classes. During recesses, they played on the sunken courtyard decorated with vótsala while shaded by cypress and date palm

N. STAMATIOU FRÈRES

NÉGOCIANTS

CASTELLORIZO - ANTIFELLOS

استاماتیہ برادرلری

خلف

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ILE DE CASTELLORIZO

N°

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Monsieur

RECOMMANDÉ

Agamemnon Comminos

Criterion Bar

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St.



Stamatiou and his sons were wealthy traders, as evidenced by their personal stationery. Straddling Castellorizo and the mainland, their business interests reflected the Ottoman Empire's multi-lingual flavour.

trees. Until the 1930s, concerts were staged here, with the building serving as a backdrop and its raised platform as a make-shift stage.

The island's great chronicler, Achilleas Diamandaras, records for us the ode that was sung at the school's inauguration, and at each annual speech day ceremony, in Stamatiou's honour:

Τον μέγαν ευεργέτην
Νικόλαον κλεινόν,
Υιόν του Σταματίου
Πολίτην φαινόν.

To our great benefactor,
Nikolaos by name,
Son of Stamatios,
A citizen of fame.

Υμνήσωμεν, ω παῖδες,
Αινούντες τον Θεόν,
Ινα υγείαν δίδῃ
Και πλούτον αγαθών.

Let us praise him, children,
While praying to God,
To give him good health,
And wealth in all things good.

Ας ευχηθώμεν πάντες
Εκ βάθους της ψυχῆς,
Ετη πολλά να ζήσῃ
Ευδαίμων κ' ευτυχής.

Let us all wish,
From the bottom of our hearts,
That he lives for many years,
In prosperity and happiness.

When Stamatiou died on 27 May 1905, his funerary procession, in which even the island's Ottoman governor, Hussein Sambri, and his entourage took part, paused in this beautiful square while the assembled priests performed a short supplication. One of the island's young teachers, Mihail Yeorgiou Petrides, then addressed the packed gathering:

These small infants, whom you have embraced with such fondness through your patriotic acts, you, respected 'father' of these innocent children who, even if owing to their young age they cannot

comprehend the void you leave behind, will nonetheless in years to come shed many tears of gratitude over your grave.

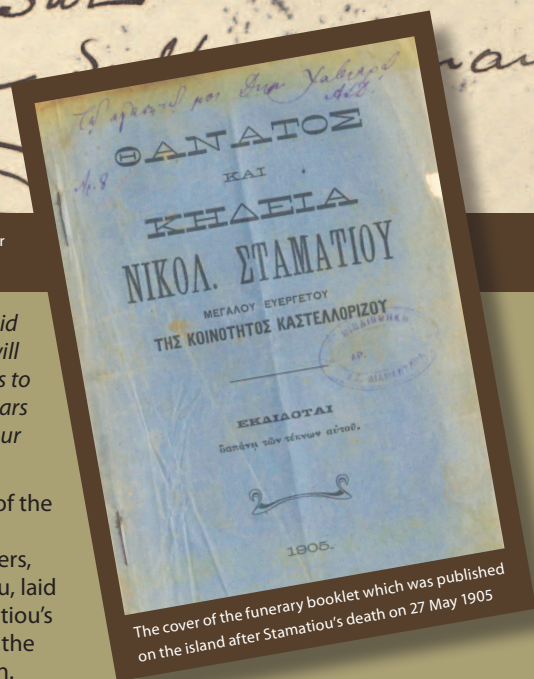
At the conclusion of the oration, one of the school's two teachers, Anastasia Grigoriou, laid a wreath on Stamatiou's coffin on behalf of the assembled children.

Such was Stamatiou's standing, the lavish booklet issued to commemorate his funeral concluded with a short dramatisation of two infant girls reacting with grief to the news of Stamatiou's death.

With economic decline and rapid emigration from the island from 1910, the school fell into disuse after WWI and infants were transferred to the Horáfia. However, under the Italians, the building continued to perform a civic function with concerts and municipal events staged here on an irregular basis.

In more recent years, the school became a municipal store and, after some privately-funded restoration, was re-opened as a small movie theatre. But its history was forever changed when it was suitably chosen as a relief centre and supply repository for desperate Syrian refugees.

At a time when projects like the faithful restoration of the 18th century Ottoman hamám, the 19th century windmill and the Monastery of St George of the Mountain (tou Vounioú) are breathing new life into the preservation of the island's history, one hopes that we will also see a swift and similarly faithful restoration of this small, but elegant, part of Castellorizo's material heritage. At the very least, Nikolaos Stamatiou and our forebears deserve it.



The cover of the funerary booklet which was published on the island after Stamatiou's death on 27 May 1905

Interview of the Scientific Team for the Restoration of the Ottoman Bath in Kastellorizo



Fotini Chalvantzi
Architect Engineer NTUA
MSc "Protection of Monuments
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Konstantinos I. Toumpakaris
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The Ottoman Hamam in Kastellorizo is a bath installation in the Muslim quarter that was developed in the area next to the Castle during the Ottoman rule (1522-1912). Until now it was abandoned, and it is situated next to one of the most powerful landmarks on the island, the Red Castle, at the highest point of the Kavos promontory, between the two ports. Today, with the initiative of Greek-Australian expatriates who have the vision to enhance the monuments around the Castle, the hamam will be fully restored and made functional. The project attracted the interest of *Friends of Kastellorizo* who support this initiative, because it is an important part of protecting the island's cultural heritage.

After decades of non-use, in September 2015, the hamam was the site for the first official presence of an Arts program for the local community and tourists. The hamam was selected by the world wide famous Brazilian Artist, Lucia Koch, for a temporary light installation at the small skylights of its dome as part of the public program of the Art Biennale of Constantinople that was organised by the Fiorucci Art Trust on Kastellorizo. The result was particularly atmospheric and emotional for those who had the chance to be inside during this event. (For more information you can visit the page of the event at <http://fiorucciarttrust.com/works/the-violent-no/>)

Το χαμάμ στο Καστελλόριζο αποτελεί λουτρική εγκατάσταση της Μουσουλμανικής συνοικίας που αναπτύχθηκε στην περιοχή του Κάστρου κατά τη διάρκεια της οθωμανικής κυριαρχίας (1522-1912). Μέχρι πρότινος βρισκόταν εγκαταλειμμένο και απαξιωμένο δίπλα στο ισχυρότερο τοπίο του νησιού, το «Κόκκινο Κάστρο», στο ψηλότερο σημείο του ακρωτήριου του Κάβου ανάμεσα στα δύο λιμάνια. Σήμερα, με πρωτοβουλία ελληνοαυστραλών ομογενών που οραματίστηκαν την αποκατάσταση μνημείων της ερειπωμένης περιοχής του Κάστρου, συμπορεύτηκαν και φίλοι του Καστελλορίζου άλλων εθνικοτήτων που αγαπούν το Καστελλόριζο, αντιλαμβανόμενοι ότι το λουτρό είναι κοινή πολιτιστική κληρονομιά που χρήζει προστασίας.

Μετά από δεκαετίες αχρησίας, το Σεπτέμβριο του 2015, το χαμαμ έκανε την πρώτη του επίσημη δήλωση της παρουσίας του στην τοπική- και όχι μόνο-κοινωνία. Στα πλαίσια του δημόσιου προγράμματος της Μπιενάλε Τέχνης της Κωνσταντινούπολης που οργανώθηκε από το Fiorucci Art Trust, το χαμάμ επιλέχθηκε από την παγκοσμίου φήμης Βραζιλιάνη καλλιτέχνη Lucia Koch για να κάνει ένα light installation προσωρινού χαρακτήρα στους φεγγίτες του θόλου του. Το αποτέλεσμα ήταν ιδιαιτέρως ατμοσφαιρικό και συγκινητικό για όσους μπόρεσαν να παραβρεθούν στο εσωτερικό του. <http://fiorucciarttrust.com/works/the-violent-no/>

What is the project trying to achieve?

The attempt to fully restore the monument, including the functional network, and of the reintegration into the everyday life of this living monument is extremely rare. In 2011, it was referred to Eleni Kanetaki, PhD architect who specialises in Ottoman Baths in Greece. Only fourteen out of seventy eight Ottoman Baths have been restored and, among them, only two are still functioning as baths. Nowadays, unfortunately, one of these two functioning baths that existed in Rhodes has been closed.

The monuments of special use, such as hamams, windmills or traditional olive presses, are treated often as common monuments and they have only their shell and architectural elements restored, while their functional elements are maintained in a museological style as memories of a traditional way of living. At these "dead" restorations, the function is rarely restored, which is often played out and has been substituted by new technology, according to the needs of a contemporary way of living.

In this case, the scientific team that was organised to support the hamam's restoration is trying to achieve not only the structural restoration, but also the total recovery of the monument in its functional form as a bath.

Το εγχείρημα της πλήρους αποκατάστασης του μνημείου, συμπεριλαμβανομένου του μηχανισμού λειτουργίας του και της επανένταξής του στη σύγχρονη κοινωνία ως ένα ζωντανό είναι εξαιρετικά σπάνιο για τα ελληνικά δεδομένα. Το 2011, αναφέρεται από την Ελένη Κανετάκη, Αρχιτέκτονα με διδακτορικό στην μελέτη των Οθωμανικών Λουτρών στην Ελλάδα, ότι από τα 78 οθωμανικά χαμάμ της Ελλάδας μόλις 14 έχουν αποκατασταθεί ως μνημεία και μόνο δύο εξακολουθούν να λειτουργούν ως λουτρά. Σήμερα, εν έτει 2016, το ένα από τα δυο λειτουργούντα χαμαμ, και μάλιστα ένα από τα μεγαλύτερα, το χαμάμ της Ρόδου, έχει δυστυχώς διακόψει τη λειτουργία του.

Τα μνημεία με ειδική χρήση όπως είναι τα λουτρά, οι ανεμόμυλοι, τα παραδοσιακά ελαιοτριβεία, αντιμετωπίζονται συχνά μονοδιάστατα ως αρχιτεκτονήματα των οποίων αποκαθίσταται μόνο το κέλυφος, ενώ ο μηχανισμός λειτουργίας τους διατηρείται ως μουσειακό ενθύμιο ενός παραδοσιακού τρόπου ζωής, αποτελώντας έτσι «μνημεία του εαυτού τους». Σε αυτές τις «νεκρές αποκαταστάσεις», σπάνια αποκαθίσταται η λειτουργία τους, που συνήθως έχει ξεπεραστεί και έχει αντικατασταθεί με την σύγχρονη τεχνολογία, σύμφωνα με τις επιταγές της σύγχρονης εποχής.

Στην προκειμένη περίπτωση, η διεπιστημονική ομάδα που οργανώθηκε για την αποκατάσταση του χαμάμ στο Καστελλόριζο, επιχειρεί όχι μόνο τη δομητική αποκατάστασή του, αλλά την πλήρη επαναφορά του μνημείου στην αρχέτυπη του μορφή ως λουτρό.



How does it achieve its objectives?

The achievement of the goal requires the absolute understanding of the historical and geophysical context of the monument.

Theoretically, when reading all the related research and studying a monument through the procedure of drawing the actual physical dimensions, the specialised restoration scientist is able to take the next step in its restoration. However, there are no details for its incorporated networks regarding the complicated function. Therefore, there must be research and consultation with Eastern countries about the methods used in order to lead us to the guaranteed and successful re-use of the hamam in realistic ways.

Therefore, a geophysics study has been selected as a non-destructive method for the introspection of the hamam's walls and thus, for the detection of the networks.

Για την επίτευξη του στόχου απαιτείται η απόλυτη κατανόηση του μνημείου.

Θεωρητικά, διαβάζοντας την σχετική βιβλιογραφία και αναγινώσκοντας το μνημείο μέσα από την αποτύπωση, ο εξειδικευμένος επιστήμονας στα θέματα αποκατάστασης δύναται να προβεί στην αποκατάσταση του μνημείου. Στην ελληνική βιβλιογραφία, όμως, το χαμάμ έχει αναλυθεί ως αρχιτεκτονήμα περισσότερο τυπολογικά και λιγότερο λειτουργικά, χωρίς να παρέχονται αναλυτικά στοιχεία για τον ενσωματωμένο μηχανισμό που λειτουργεί. Έτσι, θα πρέπει να γίνει συμβουλευτική αναζήτηση στη διεθνή βιβλιογραφία, ανατολικών κυρίως χωρών, των χρησιμοποιούμενων πρακτικών για την εγγυημένη και επιτυχημένη επαναλειτουργία του χαμάμ με σημερινούς αληθινούς όρους.

Προς την κατεύθυνση της βαθύτερης κατανόησης του μνημείου, επιλέχθηκε η γεωφυσική έρευνα ως μη καταστροφική μέθοδος για την ενδοσκόπηση των τοίχων του χαμάμ και, επομένως, την ανίχνευση των δικτύων.

What are the challenges you face in its implementation?

The first successive step towards the achievement of our goals which is arguably the most difficult, has been achieved. For the Greek reality, the restoration and management of public property, and especially of cultural heritage, is a procedure that is extremely difficult, and sometimes unachievable.

Regarding the ownership, it belongs to the state, to the public real estate agencies specifically, and up to now, its use wasn't given to any public entity such as the Ministry of Culture, or the Municipality. Thus, the state, without any previous commitment for the specific monument, gave permission for the study and restoration of the hamam to the non-profit organization Drasi Kastellorizo, which is an uncommon model of management.

The specific hamam on Kastellorizo is supported by a low population and is one of the smallest, which puts it into the category of designing the simplest layout. This is in comparison with others that have a more complicated layout.

The implementation study, regarding the structural restoration is dealing with issues relating to problems with the walls due to the presence of three different networks (steam, fume, water), but also due to the graffiti that is on the interior walls since the Italian domination (1921-1947). Intervention by the team of specialists is needed to rectify the problem.

As for the sub-structures, the implementation study requires a highly specialised layout. We need to consider which of the new technologies that are ecologically friendly, can be adopted in order to improve the traditional function of the hamam. This needs to be examined carefully. For instance, the new technologies can provide filters for retaining unwanted particles from the fume pipes, whereas lighting from the skylight of the dome, has already been tested in countries that have traditional hamams.

The implementation study must specify and adhere to high standards for durability and functionality, such as the materials that will be used for the reconstruction of the furnace and the hypocaust heating system, where the developing temperatures make them vulnerable structures with big contractions.

To become a member, to advertise or for general information contact Marilyn Tsolakis,
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The challenges related to the restoration of the project are many. However, with careful research and attention to the structural form we look forward to the restored haman being in full public use.

If you are visiting Kastellorizo, this summer be sure to climb the Kavos promontory to inspect the progress of restoration works under way.

Το πρώτο επιτυχές βήμα προς την επίτευξη του εγχειρήματος, ίσως και το πιο δύσκολο, έχει επιτευχθεί. Για τα ελληνικά δεδομένα η αποκατάσταση και διαχείριση δημόσιας περιουσίας και δη μνημείου, είναι εξαιρετικά δύσκολη έως και ακατόρθωτη πολλές φορές.

Ιδιοκτησιακά το μνημείο, ανήκει στο ελληνικό Δημόσιο, στην Κτηματική εταιρεία Δημοσίου, η οποία μέχρι στιγμής δεν είχε παραχωρήσει τη χρήση του σε κάποιο φορέα όπως το Δήμο, το Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού κλπ. Έτσι, το δημόσιο, χωρίς να έχει προηγούμενη δέσμευση για το εν λόγω μνημείο, ενώ γενικά χαρακτηρίζεται από δυσκαμψία και έλλειψη ευελιξίας σε θέματα που αφορούν τη σύμπραξη ιδιωτικού και δημόσιου τομέα, έδωσε εντέλει την άδεια για την μελέτη και αποκατάσταση του μνημείου στη ΜΚΟ «Δράση Καστελλόριζο», κάνοντας πραγματικότητα ένα ασυνήθιστο μοντέλο διαχείρισης για τα ελληνικά δεδομένα.

Οι προκλήσεις που αφορούν το κατεχοχίν έργο της αποκατάστασης είναι πολλές και σχετίζονται άμεσα με την ιδιαιτερότητα της φύσης του μνημείου.

Το χαμάμ γενικά, όπως αναλύθηκε παραπάνω, δεν είναι ένα απλό μνημείο, είναι ένα «κτήριο-μηχανή». Το συγκεκριμένο χαμάμ, όμως επειδή εξυπηρετούσε λίγο πληθυσμό είναι από τα πιο μικρά και ανήκει στην κατηγορία με την απλούστερη διάρθρωση. Φαινομενικά, αυτό θα το καθιστούσε και πιο απλό από τα υπόλοιπα που έχουν πολυπλοκότερη διάρθρωση σε χώρο, χωρίς όμως να είναι στην πραγματικότητα, καθώς εδώ όλες οι λειτουργίες παρουσιάζονται περισσότερο συμπυκνωμένες και ενσωματωμένες στην τοιχοποιία και στα δάπεδα.

Η μελέτη εφαρμογής, όσον αφορά τη δομητική αποκατάσταση, καλείται να αντιμετωπίσει το μνημείο όχι με τους συνήθεις όρους επέμβασης, διότι η επέμβαση στους τοίχους εκ των έσω δεν ενδείκνυται λόγω της ύπαρξης τριών διαφορετικών δικτύων (ατμού, καπνού και νερού), αλλά και των graffiti που διατηρούνται στο εσωτερικό επίχρισμα από την εποχή της Ιταλοκρατίας.

"Credere, obbedire, combattere", δηλ. «Πίστεψε, υπάκουσε, πάλεψε», και το

"Nessuno pensi di piegarsi senza prima avere duramente combattuto" Mussolini, δηλ. «Κανείς δεν νομίζει να λυγίσει χωρίς πρώτα να έχει πολεμήσει σκληρά» Μουσολίνι- το οποίο δεν είναι σε όλη του την έκταση ευδιάκριτο.

"Non si fuma", δηλ. «Μην καπνίζετε»

Όσον αφορά στις υποδομές, η μελέτη εφαρμογής απαιτεί υψηλά εξειδικευμένο σχεδιασμό. Αρχικά, θα πρέπει να εξερευνηθεί και να υιοθετηθεί όποιες από τις νέες τεχνολογίες που είναι φιλικές προς το περιβάλλον, μπορούν να βελτιώσουν την παραδοσιακή λειτουργία του χαμάμ. Για παράδειγμα, οι νέες τεχνολογίες μπορούν να δώσουν φίλτρα για την συγκράτηση των ανεπιθύμητων σωματιδίων της αιθάλης από τους καπναγωγούς, αλλά και διακριτικό ενσωματωμένο φωτισμό στα φυσητά γυαλιά του θόλου, προϊόντα πλέον δοκιμασμένα σε χώρες με παράδοση στο χαμάμ.

Ακόμη, η μελέτη εφαρμογής θα πρέπει να ανταποκρίνεται σε απαιτήσεις υλικών υψηλών προδιαγραφών και αντοχών, όπως είναι αυτά που θα χρησιμοποιηθούν στην ανακατασκευή του φούρνου και του υπόκαυστου ενδοδαπέδιου συστήματος θέρμανσης, όπου οι αναπτυσσόμενες θερμοκρασίες τα καθιστούν κατασκευές ευπαθείς με μεγάλες συστολοδιαστολές.

Poetry Corner

Megisti's Magic

Your grand organ like cliff, etched with pain sings songs of long ago.
Defiant of foe and nature, you proudly stand over your beautiful bay
protecting your people as you have always done.
You just stand there... yet the magic you weave keeps us longing for you.

Barren rock so isolated so remote, your songs haunt my heart.
You have known my father as a child, heard the joyous songs sung on
my grandmother's wedding day...
You have witnessed arrivals and departures.
Share with me these stories.
You don't talk, you just stand there, and you have seen everything.

I will keep returning.

My last night on Kastellorizo

The moon came out in all her glory to bid me farewell.
She was golden, full and ripe, shedding her magical glow over my
beloved Island.
The breeze played with me endlessly as I looked across to Turkey.
We enjoyed a traditional meal at "An old Story" washing down our food
with cheap white wine served in vivid aluminium jugs without spouts.
Passers by bid us farewell in an endless stream of hugs and kisses as we
turned to God for a safe return next summer.
I'm feeling sad tonight. Summer is over for another year here. It's time to
lock down our house for 10 or so months and fly off to another spring.

The moon was outside my window at 5.30 this morning, shining brightly
just in case I missed her glory the night before.
"I will be here waiting for you," she said... "remember me when you are
far away... I will be here waiting."

Elizabeth Philippou
9th September 2014, Adelaide

Οι Βράχοι

Οι βράχοι στέκουν ακούοντας,
Σαν φάροι εξετάζουν προσεχτικά τον ορίζοντα,
Ξέρουν τα Μελτέμια,
Ξέρουν την ιστορία του ανθρώπου,
Έχουν καλωσορίσει χιλιάδες επιζώντες στις βραχώδεις ακτές τους,
Έχουν φυλάξει τον Οδυσσέα.

Ελάτε τους λένε, κάτι θα βρείτε,
Εξερευνήσετε αυτά τα ακριτικά
Μέσα τις σπηλιές και τις σχισμές
θα ανακαλύψετε τα μυστήρια μας,
Σας προσφέρουμε προστασία,
Ελάτε για να μείνετε αξιοπρεπείς άνθρωποι.

Λευκή
7 Μαρτίου 2016, Perth

Ghost of Levissi

by Joerg Schodl

Joerg Schodl was born in Vienna and initially studied painting. In his youth, he spent a few years working in Turkey, before moving to Chicago where he studied for his degree in Film. He went to Los Angeles where he received an MFA from the AFI in Cinematography, and he then worked in the High Speed film industry (slow motion cinematography). Joerg began teaching at Cal State Northridge 9 years ago, and then moved to Savannah where he is teach filmmaking at the Savannah College of Art and Design.

In October of 2015 I stumbled across an online article of the Hürriyet Daily News, announcing the imminent public auction of Kayaköy, the former Greek village of Levissi. The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism was planning to lease one third of Levissi to the highest bidder for the purpose of turning it into a large hotel complex with modern tourist facilities. I had visited Levissi 25 years ago and again in 2002 when it was already apparent that the Kaya Valley was encroached upon by the Tourism developments of Ölüdeniz, Fethiye, (the former Greek town of Makri), and the artificial tourist settlement of Hisarönü.

Ölüdeniz is a lagoon that can be found depicted in almost any Turkish tourism advert. It attracts hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. Unfortunately these tourists do not come to see the Byzantine remains adjacent to this lagoon. They come for the beach, the cheap bars, clubs and restaurants. As a result the Byzantine remains of Ölüdeniz were systematically destroyed to make room for hotels. What remains is illegally encroached upon until the last remains will disappear into rubble supporting some hotels concrete foundation. This is possible, because the building of structures on forbidden property is penalized in Turkey by such laughingly low fines that the landlords already budget for this expense during the planning stages of construction.

Having witnessed the destruction of historic remains in Turkey I have no doubt that a partial lease of Levissi will result in the eventual disappearance of the entire village. Alarmed, I set out in June 2016 to film what is left of Levissi and to interview the local Turkish population. Through the interviews it became apparent that the majority of locals are supporting the hotel development. Tourism is inflating local property values. Illegal construction in the Kaya Valley is extremely profitable to anyone involved. I was told, that even a Lycian tomb was turned to gravel, to make room for the summer home of a wealthy politician.

As I continued the interviews in Kaya something else became apparent: The narrative of the events taking place in Makri and Levissi, leading up to the population exchange of 1923 seemed to hardly exist. Most people told that the Rulmar (the Turkish word for Greeks whose home was Asia Minor, meaning Romans), and the Turks, under Ottoman rule, lived happily together. There was a war, but that was the politician's doing. It hardly affected the community of Levissi and in 1923 the Christians had to leave. Their Turkish friends waved them good by, holding on to their property, awaiting their return.

Being born in Vienna, a city that will forever carry the guilt and mourn for the loss of its vibrant Jewish community, I am no stranger to the

sanitation of historic tragedies. The more interviews I conducted in Turkey the more it became apparent that the tragedy that was inevitable, in a war resulting in the deportation of an entire people, was hardly acknowledged. I realized that today Levissi is a ghost town without a history. I believe Levissi and the people who had to leave their homes deserve this history to be remembered, and I believe that this history can save Levissi from destruction.

Having found a source online that made brief mention of Levissi refugees escaping to the Greek island of Kastellorizo, I boarded a ferry and arrived on this incredibly picturesque island in early July of 2015. This was a long shot. I did not know anyone on the island and was just hoping to find someone whose ancestors may have come from Levissi. Kastellorizo had seen its own tragedy in WW2 and I ended up visiting exactly as the Greek banks locked the doors on the people. I spent a week on the island, filming views that are probably reminiscent of Levissi, but though I found descendants from Kalkan, I was not able to find anyone with roots in Levissi or Makri. I was, however, told that Australia would be where I would find the history I was seeking.

With the help of members of the Greek community in Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney, Perth and Brisbane I was able to find thirteen descendants of Levissi families living in Australia. I have furthermore found descendants in Toronto, Rhodes, London, Athens and Istanbul. On June 6th I will embark to record the history that has been lost for so long. I expect to film in Australia for three weeks. Anyone wishing to participate can reach me through the films website: <http://levissimovie.net>

I would furthermore like to, humbly, ask for support of this project. *Ghosts of Levissi*, is entirely privately financed. There is no studio, television station, or organization funding this documentary. Equipment and travel expenses amount to considerable sums and any contribution would be of tremendous help! I have set up a Patreon account for donations at:

<https://www.patreon.com/GhostsofLevissi?ty=h>

Patreon works through monthly contributions, which are cancelable at any time. A Patreon link can also be found on the website. With some support I am hoping to be able to travel to Greece, Britain, Turkey and Canada in November to record the history of descendants living there.

Once post-production is complete, I expect to release the film to festivals around the world. I expect the film will restore some of Levissi's lost history, and hope it will help protect its remains through the respect this history deserves! I dream of a screening in Levissi in the presence of all descendants I can find. This dream is well beyond my means, but maybe someone who reads this can make it happen!

Excerpt from an interview of a Turkish lady who grew up in Makri:

"When I was little I used to play in the ruins of Levissi. One warm spring day I saw some beautiful flowers in an overgrown garden. I went inside to pick a flower, but as I touched it a cold feeling overcame me that made me let go. I left the garden knowing these flowers were not mine to take."

