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EVANGELIA N. GEORGITSOYANNI

GREEK MASONS IN AFRICA: THE CASE OF THE KARPATHIAN MASONS IN MOROCCO*

Introduction

Many Greek masons (builders, marble-workers, carpenters, etc.) have worked in Africa. Most of these masons originated from regions with a long tradition in these skills, such as the island of Karpathos in the Dodecanese¹. Karpathos is a large mountainous island with few plains for agricultural production and a coastline not suitable for the development of maritime shipping. For these reasons, its inhabitants were mainly masons, specializing in construction work and carpentry². The several villages scattered around Karpathos are to be found in two areas that divide the island: the northern part [Olympos (or Elympos), Spoa, Messohori] and the southern part [Volada, Aperi (ex-capital), Othos, Pyles, Menetes, Arkasa, Pighadia (its modern capital)]. The northern part was poorer and more isolated than the southern part and the majority of masons originated from there³.

In general, the Karpathians were more numerous and active among the so-called "traditional" masons, who lived on the Aegean islands during the period of Turkish occupation. They worked mainly on the nearby islands - in particular on Crete - and in Asia Minor. They usually worked in groups, who left every year in April, after Easter, and returned in October, when the period of sawing started. Following the creation of the Modern Greek state their activity also spread to the regions included within its borders, as a result of the work opportunities arising from the building activity which had begun there. At the turn of the 20th century onwards they started to seek work in Africa and Asia, and in Amer-

* The author expresses her acknowledgments for their assistance to Mr. George Sp. Politis, Mr. Manos Anastasiadis, Mrs Photini Mela and Mrs Athena and Maria Bahnini.

1. A. Petronotis & P. Kamilakis, *Masons of Vernacular Architecture in the Aegean*, reprinted from *Epistimoniki Epetirida tis Polytechnikis Scholis tou Aristoteleiou Panepistimiou Thessalonikis - Tmima Architektonon* [Scientific Journal of the Polytechnical School of the Aristoteleian University of Thessaloniki] X, Thessaloniki, 1986, pp. 63, 67.

2. D. Philippidis, *Elliniki Paradosiaki Architektoniki: Karpathos* [Greek Traditional Architecture: Karpathos], Athens: Melissa, 1983, pp.9, 37. About the renown traditional art and culture of the island, see: M. G. Michaelidis - Nouaros, *Laographica Symmeikta Karpathou* [Folkloric Miscellaneous of Karpathos], Athens 1934. M.A Alexiadis, *Karpathiaki Laografia. Opseis tou Laikou Politismou* [Karpathian Folklore. Aspects of Popular Culture], Athens 2001.

3. D. Philippidis, op.cit., p.11.

ica as well⁴. Several factors contributed to this migration. Among the most important were: after 1869 the gradual abolition by the Ottoman government of many of the "privileges" enjoyed by the Dodecanese, the population growth of the island at the end of the 19th century, the Italian Occupation of the Dodecanese (1912), the Greek defeat in Asia Minor (1922) -after which the Karpathanian masons were cut off definitively from Asia Minor- and of course, the growing demand for skilled craftsmen in the countries of acceptance⁵.

Under these circumstances, many Karpathanian masons left for Morocco during the interwar period, having learned of the work opportunities there. The present article deals with the activity of these masons, the last of the "traditional" craftsmen, and their descendants in the host country. The sources that were utilized are Greek newspapers, oral narratives, archives, old guides and published works.

Karpathanian Masons in Morocco

Since 1912 Morocco had become a French Protectorate, with the exception of its northern part that was under Spanish control. A great number of Europeans had settled since then in French Morocco⁶. Among them were many Greeks⁷. They lived mainly in the cities of Casablanca, Fez, Meknes, Taza and Ouzda and were engaged mainly in commerce. During the interwar period they had become organized into a community and had founded two churches in Casablanca and a church at Fez, but they never managed to create an organized Greek school⁸. Among the Greeks living in Morocco there were many masons, in their great

4. M. G. Michaelidis- Nouaros, op.cit., vol. II, pp. 246-7, 253. D.Philippidis, "Greek vernacular architecture: The interior woodwork decoration of Elymbos house", *Art and Architecture Research Papers* 12 (1977), pp. 1-10. N. Moutsopoulos, *Karpathos. Simioseis istorikis topographias kai archaiologias* [Karpathos. Notes on historical topography and archaeology], Thessaloniki, 1978, pp.104-105. A. Petronotis & P. Kamilakis, op.cit., pp. 63, 67, 71, 73. M. Logothesis "Oi Dodekanesioi tis diasporas sta hronia tis Tourkokratias (1821-1912) [The Dodekanesians of the Diaspora during the period of the Turkish Occupation (1821-1912)]" *Dodekanissiaka Hronika* [Dodecanesian Chronicles] X (1984), pp. 238-267.

5. Sp. Loukatos, "Dodekanissa [Dodecanese]" *Istoria tou Ellinikou Ethnous*, vol. XIV, Athens: Ekdotiki Athinon, 1977, pp. 380-382; vol. XV, 1978, p. 465. M. Logothesis, op.cit, 465.

6. See about: Fr. Quinn, *The French Overseas Empire*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000. J. Chipman, *French Power in Africa*, London: Blackwell, 1989. D. Bouche, *Histoire de la colonisation française*, Paris: Fayard, 1991.

7. According to the *Panhellenic Commercial Guide* (1933) which lists Greek professionals in Africa, the first Greek immigrants had come in 1907 from the island of Lesbos in the Aegean. Approximately 1200 Greeks lived in Morocco in the early thirties [*Panellinos Emporikos Odigos* [Panhellenic Commercial Guide], vol. II (Africa), Cairo: Hermis (A. Pachtikos & Co.), 1933, p. 850].

8. *Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit. p. 850. M. Agathaggelidou, "Ellinikes paroikies-koinotites tis V. Afrikis (Livyis, Tynissias, Algerias, Marokou) apo tin idrissi tous eos simera) [Greek colonies- communities in N. Africa (Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco) from their foundation till nowadays]", *Congress Proceedings: "Istoria tis Neoellinikis Diaspora. Erevna kai didaskalia* [History of the Greek Diaspora. Research and Instruction]" vol. I, Rethymno: E. DIA.MME 2004, pp. 154-157. Information by Athena Bahnini.

majority Karpathians (fig. 1-2)⁹. They had arrived to meet the need for skilled workers in the construction of many buildings and railway lines undertaken by the French. The Karpathians masons constituted the majority of the Greek population in Taza (approximately 200 Greeks), in Taza (approximately 50 Karpathian masons) and in Ouzda (approximately 40 Greeks, mostly masons, temporary labourers who moved to nearby towns, when they heard work was available). Few Karpathians lived in Itzer, in Kasba Tadla, in Marrakhes, in Meknes, in Qued-Zem, in Sefrou and in Midelt¹¹. Very few of them had other occupations¹².

In general they were practical skilled artisans who came mostly from the villages of northern Karpathos¹³. Only one case of an educated Karpathian is recorded, that of the architect or civil engineer *Iordanis El.Petritis* from Aperi, who had studied in Lausanne. He was engaged in public works in Morocco for a certain period, but just before 1925 he left for Sudan, where he worked with his relatives. Later he went to Indochina, where he died.¹⁴

However, some of the Karpathian masons who arrived in Morocco were very experienced since they had already worked in public works in the Middle East and Africa. Such were the cases of: *Michael I. Ioannidis* (1875- 1944), who had worked in early 20th century in public works in Syria, Madagascar, Egypt and Ethiopia (in the construction of the Djibouti- Addis Ababa railway line); he came in 1926 to Morocco, where he worked as subcontractor and foreman¹⁵; *Spyridon N. Politis* (1869-1957), carpenter from Messohori, who had worked in 1900-1906 in Sudan and then in Asia Minor and - from 1924- in continental Greece; in 1928 he left for Morocco, where he worked as a builder and carpenter in public works¹⁶; *Nicholas Mavromatis* from Messohori and *Michael Diakomi-*

9. It has been mentioned that in the early twenties approximately 40 masons from the village of Messohori alone left for Morocco (Information by George Sp. Politis)

10. *Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., pp. 845, 848-850, 857, 872. K.Halkias, "Syntomos istoriki anaskopissis ton paroikion Spoitou Karpathou Amerikis met' anaforas kai eis tas ana tin yphilion ypolipous tiaftas [Concise historical review of the communities of people originated from Spoa of Karpathos in America with reference to the rest of them over the world" *Karpathiakai Meletai* [Karpathian Studies], IV (1987), p. 474. It is also recorded that French companies who had undertaken the construction of public works in Morocco organized the migration of the Karpathians there; they even sent a ship to Karpathos, in order to make their transportation easier (Information by M. Anastasiadis).

11. *Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit.,pp. 857, 859, 860, 863, 867, 869, 870, 871,872. Information by Athena Bahnini.

12. *Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit.,pp. 857, 859, 860, 863, 867, 869, 870, 871,872.

13. K. Halkias, op.cit., p.474.

14. M. P. Hiotis, *I Karpathiaki Paroikia tou Soudan* [The Karpathian Community in Sudan]. Reprinted from "*Karpathiakai Meletai* [Karpathian Studies]" III, Athens, 1984, pp. 332, 342, 359.

15. K.Melas, "Karpathiaki Prossopographia [Karpathian Prosopography]", *Karpathiakai Meletai* [Karpathian Studies] 4(1987),pp. 235-239. "*Avghi tis Karpathou*" [Dawn of Karpathos], no. 47 (6th July 1913): p.2; no. 48 (6th August 1913): p.1. Information by his son-in-law George Sp. Politis.

16. Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3901/E/191. Information by his son George Sp. Politis.

halis from Spoa (the latter died in 2004 in Athens, over 100 years old), both of whom had already worked as builders in the early 20th century at Port-Sudan and in Massawa¹⁷; *Peter M. Grigoriadis*, (1880- 1956; he came to Morocco in 1929 and lived in Meknes)¹⁸, the brothers *George and Ioannis M. Harokopos* (they lived in Fez)¹⁹, *Michael M. Maltas* (1909-?; he lived in Sefrou)²⁰, *George N. Matsagakis* (?- 1950; he came to Morocco in 1925)²¹, *Konstantinos V. Orphanos* (1890- 1953; he came to Morocco in 1929 and he lived in Taza)²² and *Vassilios M. Panaretos* (he came to Morocco in 1929)²³, the builders from Messohori, *Vassileios Levakis* (he lived in Taza)²⁴ and *Konstantinos G. Phonaclas* (he lived in Taza)²⁵, builders from Olympos, such as *Andreas Mandopoulos* (he lived in Taza)²⁶ and *George Karageorgis* (he lived in Fez)²⁷, a builder from Pyles, all of whom worked in 1913 in Ethiopia (in the construction of the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railway line)²⁸; *Ioannis A. Mastroyannis* from Messohori, who had also worked in Massawa and Djibouti²⁹.

The largest presence of Karpathians in Morocco was during the twenties and thirties³⁰. In the early thirties improvements in the status of the Karpathian community was observed. Some of the early builders had become contractors or subcontractors. Those known to have been contractors at this time were the following: *Emmanuel Vassiliadis*, *Emmanuel G. Maltas* ('building contractor') and *Pachos M. Harokopos*, all from the village of Messohori, in Fez; *Michael Nisyrios*, in Kasba Tadla, *George Makris* and *Nicolas Sarris* ('transportation contractors') at Marrakhes, *Ioannis Makris* in Oudja and *Kyriakos Makris* ('transportation contractor') in Qued-Zem, all from the village of Aperi; *Petros Phil-*

17. "Karpathos", no. 63 (20th Nov. 1908): p. 2. Information by George Sp. Politis.

18. Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3754 /E/41. *Panellinios Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 867. Information by George Sp. Politis.

19. *Panellinios Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 859. Information by George Sp. Politis.

20. Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3822/E/109. *Panellinios Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 871. Information by George Sp. Politis.

21. Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3836/E/123. Information by George Sp. Politis.

22. Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3856 /E/143. *Panellinios Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 872. Information by George Sp. Politis.

23. K. Melas, op.cit., p. 238. Information by George Sp. Politis.

24. *Panellinios Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 872. Information by M. Anastasiadis.

25. *Panellinios Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 872. Information by M. Anastasiadis.

26. *Panellinios Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 872. Information by K. Melas.

27. *Panellinios Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 859. He must be identified either with *George N. Karageorgis* (1883-1942) [Municipal Register of Pyles: a/a 4653/H/28: 'builder, Piraeus'] or with *George M. Karageorgis* (188?-1966) [Municipal Register of Pyles: a/a 4655/H/30: 'foreman, Athens']. We believe the second one to be more likely, since the presence of his brother Ioannis is also recorded, contractor in Morocco [Municipal Register of Pyles: a/a 4654/H/29]

28. "Avghi tis Karpathot" [*Dawn of Karpathos*], no. 47 (6th July 1913): p. 2; no. 48 (6th August 1913): p. 1. K. Melas, op.cit., p. 238.

29. Information by George Sp. Politis.

30. K. Halkias, op.cit., pp. 474-477. *Panellinios Emporikos Odigos*, pp. 857, 860, 872. To be specific, there are 73 Karpathians mentioned in the Panhellenic Commercial Guide of 1933, while K. Halkias gives the names of 45 Karpathians (men and women) only from the village Spoa.

lipidis ('transportation contractor') from Volada, in Qued-Zem; the brothers Minas and Michael ('contractor and designer') Maltas, from the village of Messohori, in Sefrou; the brothers G. Maltas, Vassilios, Emmanuel ('building contractor') and Nicholas, also from Messohori, in Taza; Konstantinos G. Phonaclasis and George Hirakis, both from Olympos, in Taza; Minas Hiotakis from Aperi in Volada, at Taza³¹; as also the brothers Konstantinos (1893-;)³² and Michael(-; -) in Avdelis from Olympos. Also known are the subcontractors: George Hatzifragheskos (or Hatzifraghestis) from Messohori, in Oudja, originally a carpenter³⁴; Michael I. Ioannidis (1875- 1944) from the same village, who also worked as foreman³⁵ and was assisted by his son Ioannis (1910-1982)³⁶; Emmanuel Marghetis (1897-1967), also from Messohori³⁷; George Karageorgis from the village of Pyles worked as a foreman in public works in Fez³⁸, while Emmanuel Karaminas from Volada, also in Fez, was a subcontractor in public works³⁹. There are also records of the engineer Pahos Petr. Peridis (1916-;) from Messohori⁴⁰.

Some others acquired the necessary capital and established their own businesses or became landowners⁴¹. Improvements in the life of Karpathians in Morocco is also verified by the philanthropic activity they engaged in during 1934 for the benefit of their home island⁴². The majority though remained simple craftsmen, mostly builders⁴³.

31. *Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., pp. 858, 859, 860, 864, 865, 870, 871, 872. "Olympos", no. 60 (January- April 1995), p. 2; Information by George Sp. Politis.

32. Municipal Register of Olympos: no number.

33. Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 3/5.

34. Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3952/E/239. *Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 870.

35. Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3762 /E/49. K. Melas, op.cit., pp. 235-239. Information by his son-in-law George Sp. Politis.

36. Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3763 /E/50. "Karpathiaki Echo" [Karthian Echo], no. 169 (August 1980), p. 3, no. 190 (May 1982), p. 4. Information by his brother-in-law George Sp. Politis.

37. Information by his daughter Athena Bahnini

38. *Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 857. Information by George Sp. Politis.

39. *Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., p. 857. Information by George Sp. Politis.

40. Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3888/E/175.

41. On record are the cases of: the brothers Elias and Ioannis Zavolas, from Volada, merchants and hotel owners at Itzer; George Harokopos from Messohori, ex-builder, who had become coffee-shop owner in Fez; the contractors Minas and Michael Maltas, who were also land owners in Sefrou (*Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit, pp. 857, 859, 871).

42. K. Halkias, op.cit., pp. 477-479.

43. Such as: Michael Diakomihalis from Spoa (he died in 2004 in Athens, over 100 years old; information by George Sp. Politis), Ioannis Lyrstis from Pyles, Ioannis Michailidis from Othos, Emmanuel Parayios, G. Pahos, Theocharis V. Pahos and Ioannis M. Harokopos and Peter Matsos from Messohori, who all lived in Fez; Peter Grigoriadis from Messohori and Nicholas Georgiadis from Volada, who lived in Meknes; Nicholas Agapiou and Philippos Kastellorizios from Olympos, who both lived in Oudja; Andreas Agapiou, Nicholas I. Diakantonis (1904 -?) ["Elympos", no. 55, (May - June 1993), p.2), Minas Diamantis, Michael Konstantaros, Vassilios Levakis, George Balanos, Emmanuel V. Sophilas, Michael G. Hatzipapas (1910-;) (Municipal Register of Olym-

A smaller number were stone carvers⁴⁴ and carpenters⁴⁵.

Many Karpathians remained several years in Morocco, but, later, because of a slump in public works throughout the country, they returned home⁴⁶ or they left for Iran, since masons were required there⁴⁷. A characteristic testimony recorded in the local newspaper "*Elympos*" is that of Nicholas I. Diakantonis, born in 1904 in Olympos. After finishing elementary school, he left his village as did many of his compatriots because of the difficulties experienced living there. Initially he worked in Piraeus as a simple builder and after 1922 as a skilled craftsman in the construction of houses for the refugees from Asia Minor. In 1926 he left with other masons for the island of Kastellorizo in the Dodecanese, as workers were needed for the reconstruction of buildings damaged by a catastrophic earthquake. He worked there for about two and a half years and then returned home where he got married in 1928. The income earned from his agricultural activities in Olympos was not enough though and soon after his marriage he left for Morocco, where his father-in-law had already taken up residence. He worked there with other fellow countrymen in the construction of buildings and

pos:a/a 552/7), the brothers *Ioannis, Vassilios and Michael Hirakis* ["*Olympos*", no. 60 (January-April 1995), p. 2] from Olympos, *Minas Lagonikos* and *George V. Nouaros* from Othos, *Pahos N. Lykos* (1885-;) [(Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3793/E/80), *Nicholas Orphanos* from Messohori, *Andreas M. Mandopoulos, Nicholas Dargonis* and *Nicholas Xirakis* from Pyles, *Stavros N. Othitis* and *George I. Portocalis* from Menetes, who all lived in Taza [*Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op.cit., pp. 857, 867, 869, 872. Information by George Sp. Politis]; also, *Andreas Varikas* from Pyles (1900-?) (Municipal Register of Pyles:a/a 4638/H/13, 'worker'), *Nicholas Pavlidis* from Olympos ["*Olympos*" no.66 (April- June 1996), p. 2;], *Michael Matsos* (he left for Morocco in 1922) and his sons *Emmanuel and Ioannis* from Messohori (they left for Morocco in 1929) (Information by George Sp. Politis), the brothers *Ioannis, Emmanuel and Nicholas G. Vassilakis, Minas N. Politis, Konstantinos Koutelas*, the brothers *Konstantinos, Polychronis, Michael and Antonios St. Stamatiadis*, their cousin *Pahos K. Stamatiadis, Petros Petropoulos* and his son *Konstantinos, Michael, Emmanuel and Konstantinos Lykos, Theocharis Scevophylakas, Nicholaos A. Mastroyannis, George, Pavlos, Nicholas and Vassilios M. Harokopos, Konstantinos N. Harokopos, Nicholas Emm. Harokopos, Nicholas and Vassilios Emm. Diakos, Emmanuel N. Diakos, Ioannis and George V. Kouzelis, Konstantinos G. Lytos* all from Messohori (Information by George Sp. Politis).

44. Such as: *Emmanuel Varikas* from Pyles, *Konstantinos El. Vassilaras* from Spoa, *Ilias K. Dimarhos* from Spoa, *Konstantinos V. Orphanos* from Messohori, *Ilias V. Phountis* from Spoa, who all lived in Taza (*Panellinos Emporikos Odigos* 1933: pp. 858, 859, 860, 867, 869, 870, 872. Information by George Sp. Politis)]

45. Such as: *Frangios Antimisiaris* from Volada who lived in Meknes (*Panellinos Emporikos Odigos*, op. cit., p. 867)

46. Such as: *Spyridon N. Politis* from Messohori (he returned home in 1932) (Information by his son George Sp. Politis.); *Peter M. Grigoriadis* from Messohori (he returned home in 1932) (Information by George Sp. Politis); *Michael Matsos* from Messohori (he returned home about 1926-27) (Information by George Sp. Politis); *Michael Papamihalas* from Messohori (he returned home about 1932) (Information by George Sp. Politis); *Ioannis El. Diakolios* from Spoa (he went to Morocco in the thirties and then returned home. In 1957 he immigrated to the U.S.A.) (Information by Konstantinos Diakolios); *Emmanuel M. Palaos* (1902-1968) and his brother *Minas M. Palaos* from Olympos (they returned home around 1938) (Information by Emmanuel G. Dimarhos); *Evanghelos Roussakis* (1908-1937) and *Emmanuel Sakellaridis* from Menetes (they remained in Morocco from 1931-33) (Information by Photini Mela).

47. K. Melas, op.cit., pp. 235-239. K. Halkias, op.cit., p. 480.

in publi- . After two and a half years he returned home where he built a
 stable. I ring he left again for Morocco. There he heard that they needed
 masons He left then with three other of his countrymen for Iran, where
 they w d to remain because of World War II. He finally returned to his
 village after 16 years as an emigrant, and then he went to Piraeus where
 he wor builder till his retirement. Afterwards he lived with his family on
 Rhodes

Nevertheless a considerable number of Karpathians remained permanently in the Morocco⁴⁹. They lived with their families, married mostly to women from

48. "Elympos", no.55, (May- June 1993), p. 2.

49. Such as: *George Fr. Hatzifragheskos* (or Hatzifraghestis) from Messohori, (*Panellinios Emporikos Odigos* 1933: p. 870; Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3952/E/239); *George N. Matsagakis*, builder from Messohori, who died in Morocco in 1950 (Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3836/E/123); *Theophilos G. Matsagakis* (1914 -?), builder from Messohori, who died in Morocco (Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3836/E/123); *Michael G. Matsagakis* builder from Messohori, who lived in Morocco and then in France (Information by George Sp. Politis); *Nicholas Mavromatis*, builder from Messohori, who died in Morocco (Information by George Sp. Politis); *Konstantinos V. Orphanos* (1890-1953), builder-stone carver from Messohori, who died in Morocco (Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3856 /E/143); *Antonios Emm. Orphanos* from Messohori (he left in 1927), who died in Morocco in 1930 (Information by George Sp. Politis); *Vassilios M. Panaretos* from Messohori, who died in Morocco (Information by George Sp. Politis); *Emmanuel K. Scoullis* (1906-1938): builder from Pyles, who died in Morocco [(Municipal Register of Pyles: a/a 4764/II/139. Information by Ir. Michaelidou.)]; *Theocharis M. Dimellas* (1909-;), builder from Menetes, who lived in Casablanca with his family [Municipal Register of Menetes: a/a 2981/A/114]; *Petros Pah. Peridis* (1890-1960), builder from Messohori, who died in Morocco [Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3888/E/175]; *Pahos Petr. Peridis* (1916-;) engineer from Messohori, who died in Morocco [Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3888/E/175]; *Antonios N. Stamatiadis* (1892-1932), builder from Messohori, who died in Morocco (Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3943/E/230); *Vassilios Emm. Spanos*, builder from Messohori, who died in Morocco [(Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3945/E/232); *Antonios Io. Harokopos* (1898-?), builder from Messohori, who stayed in Morocco [(Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3971/E/258); *George Emm. Protopsaltis* from Messohori, who died in Morocco (Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3906/E/193 'farmer'. Information by George Sp. Politis). *Nicholas G. Protopsaltis*, from Messohori, who died in Morocco (Municipal Register of Messohori: a/a 3912/E/199 'farmer'. Information by George Sp. Politis); *Emmanuel Marghetis* (1897-1967), from Messohori, who died in Morocco (Information by his daughter Athena Bahnini); *Konstantinos Maltas*, builder from Messohori, who died in Morocco (Information by George Sp. Politis); *Konstantinos Min. Avdelis* (1893-?), contractor from Olympos, who lived in Morocco (Municipal Register of Olympos: no number); *Nicholaos Min. Avdelis* (1905-?), builder from Olympos, who lived in Morocco (Municipal Register of Olympos: no number); *Michael Min. Avdelis* (?-?), contractor from Olympos, who lived in Morocco (Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 3/5); *Emmanuel Min. Avdelis* (1888-;), from Olympos, who lived in Morocco. (Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 3/3 (no profession); *Minas G. Giorghakis* (1900-;): from Olympos, who lived in Morocco (Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 63/1 (no profession); *Mikes Nicet. Koulouriotis* (1908-?), from Olympos, who lived in Morocco [Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 188/2 (no profession)]; *Nicholaos Io. Nicetas* (1899-;), from Olympos, who lived in Morocco [Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 314/1 (no profession); *Nicholaos Io. Orphanos* (1880-?), from Olympos, who lived in Morocco [Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 353/1 (no profession)]; *Emmanuel K. Orphanos* (1906-?) from Olympos, who lived in Morocco [Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 345/1 (no profession)]; *Nicholaos Pavl. Pahou* (1910-?), builder from Olympos, who lived in Morocco (Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 407/3);

their island⁵⁰ and observed the customs of their homeland⁵¹. It is characteristic that the Karpathians from Messohori had built a Greek Orthodox church in Fez, where every year on 8th September they celebrated traditionally the festival of their village church dedicated to the Virgin Mary surnamed Vryssianni⁵². The Karpathians of Morocco also adapted to local financial and social realities. In general, as the majority of the Greeks of N. W. Africa did, they had a good standard of living⁵³.

An interesting case as regards the Karpathians of Morocco is that of the Marghetis family from Messohori. Emmanuel El. Marghetis (1897-1967), mason, came with his family to Morocco in 1930, where his father-in-law Vassilios Panaretos had already immigrated. He had settled in Midelt, in the south of Morocco, in a region recently pacified by the French, where no infrastructure at all existed and therefore major public works had to be carried out. Other Karpathians lived there, too. Emmanuel El. Marghetis used to work with his father-in-law and his fellow countrymen. They usually undertook work as subcontractors, paid for the job done, with the aid of Moroccan workers to whom they often taught their craft. They constructed bridges, roads and tunnels. After the early death of his wife Maria in 1937, Emmanuel El. Marghetis moved to Fez. He was interested in providing his children with a good education. His son John finished a technical school and later entered the Civil Protection service, where he reached the grade of colonel. His daughter Athena was sent as resident in a private school run by nuns and she later got married to Mohammed Ahmed Bahnini, prime minister of Morocco during 1963-1965⁵⁴.

The beginning of the end of the Karpathian and generally the Greek community in Morocco took place once the country acquired its independence in 1956. Living conditions created then were unfavorable for all foreigners, including Greeks, and obliged most of them, with very few exceptions, to leave⁵⁵.

Conclusions

What emerges from the above research is that there were numerous Karpathian masons working in Morocco from the interwar period up to the 1960s and

Nicholaos G. Houvardas (1913-?) from Olympos, who lived in Morocco [Municipal Register of Olympos: a/a 579/2 (no profession)]; *Ioannis G. Aslanidis* (1922- ?), from Pyles, merchant, who lived in Morocco (Municipal Register of Pyles: a/a 4812/H/187); *Vassilios Ath. Zavolas* (1922- ?), from Volada- he lived in Morocco (Municipal Register of Volada: a/a 2441/I/62). Also on record is the case of *Theocharis Marghetis* from Messohori, who was killed in Morocco by rebels around 1926 at the age of 26 (approximately). (Information by George Sp. Politis).

50. K. Halkias, op.cit., p. 480.

51. "Olympos", no.60 (January- April 1995), p. 2. Information by Athena Bahnini.

52. Information by Athena Bahnini.

53. M. Agathagelidou, op.cit., p. 156.

54. Information by Athena Bahnini.

55. J. K. Hassiotis, *Episkopissi tis Istorias tis Neoellinikis Diasporas* [Survey of the History of the Modern Greek Diaspora]. Thessaloniki: Vaniias, 1993, pp. 128, 169.

they formed a large section of the Greek community in the country. They were mostly practical skilled artisans, who participated in the construction of public works and buildings in the country. They used to work with relatives and fellow countrymen in accordance with the custom of traditional Greek craftsmen. The majority of them had only temporary residence in the country, that is as long as they could find work, but a certain number remained permanently. Many continued to work for the rest of their lives with the skill that they had learnt, while others, having managed to accumulate the required capital, established their own businesses. It is evident that possessing the knowledge of a craft helped them both to earn a living and progress in their adopted country.

SUMMARY

In Africa many Greek masons have worked, most of them originating from regions with a long tradition in these skills, such as the island of Karpathos in the Dodecanese. The present article deals more specifically with the activity of Karpathian masons in Morocco, which since 1912 was a French Protectorate. It emerges from the above research that there were numerous Karpathian masons working in Morocco from the interwar period up to the 1960s and they formed a large section of the Greek community in the country. They were mostly practical skilled artisans, who took part in the construction of public works and buildings in the country. They used to work with relatives and fellow countrymen. The majority of them resided only temporarily in the country, that is for as long as they could find work, but a certain number remained permanently. Many continued for the rest of their lives to make a living from the skill that they had learnt, while others, having managed to accumulate the required capital, established their own businesses. It is evident that the knowledge of a craft helped them earn a living and progress in their adopted country.



Fig. 1. Karpathians in Morocco (Eugenia Ioannidis- Mochonas Archive, Karpathos).



Fig. 2. Karpathians in Morocco (Eugenia Ioannidis- Mochonas Archive, Karpathos).