

THE CHURCH AND THE URBAN STRUCTURE OF THE AEGEAN ISLAND TOWNS

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Church and Urban Structure of the Aegean Island Towns




ABSTRACT

The present work is an attempt to analyze the traditional Aegean island town with a special emphasis on the role of the church.

The historical background of the area is briefly discussed. Examples of urban structures of island towns as well as their constituting elements (houses, churches, streets, squares), are presented.

A case study on the island of Skyros is also included.



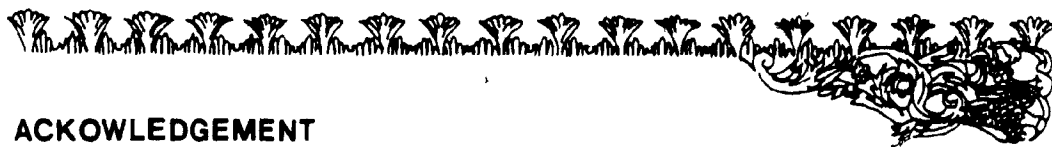


RESUMÉ

Le présent travail tente d'analyser la ville traditionnelle des îles de la Mer Egée, en insistant tout particulièrement sur le rôle de l'église.

On y traite brièvement des fondements historiques de la région. On y présente aussi quelques exemples de structures caractéristiques des villes insulaires, ainsi que leurs éléments constitutifs (maisons, églises, rues, squares).

Enfin ce travail renferme une étude individuelle sur l'île de Skyros.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is a pleasurable task to thank all those whose help have made this thesis possible.

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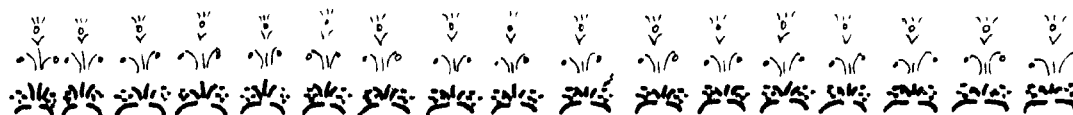


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TRANSLITERATION GUIDE

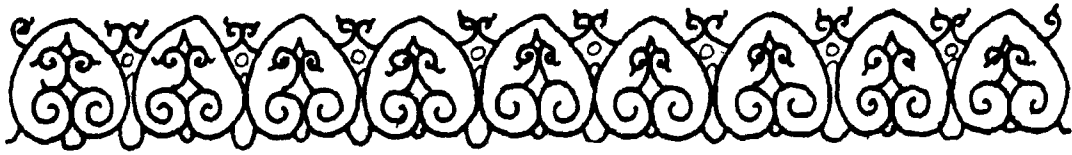
An established system for the transliteration of Greek words into the Latin alphabet, unfortunately does not exist, and this lack creates much confusion because various systems are simultaneously used. In the present work a system similar to the one used in the McLennan Library of McGill University is adopted. According to this system.

1	A	α	become	A	a	15	Nr	vr	become	D	d
2	B	β	—	V	v		(initial only)				
3	Γ	γ		G	g	16	Ξ	ξ	X	x	
4	Δ	δ		D	d	17	O	o	O	o	
5	E	ϵ		E	e'	18	Π	π	P	p	
6	Z	ζ		Z	z	19	P	p	R	r	
7	H	η		<u>E</u>	<u>e</u> '	20	'P	'p	Rh	rh	
8	Θ	θ		Th	th	21	Σ	σ	S	s	
9	I	i		I	i	22	T	t	T	t	
10	K	κ		K	k	23	Y	y	Y	y	
11	Λ	λ		L	l	24	Φ	ϕ	F	f	
12	M	μ		M	m	25	X	χ	Ch	'ch	
13	Msr	$\mu\pi$		B	b	26	Ψ	ψ	Bs	ps	
	(initial only)					27	Ω	ω	\underline{O}	\underline{o}	
14	N	ν		N	n	28	ϵ	ϵ	H	h	

- 29 omit '
- 30 include accents except on proper names
- 31 omit the iota subscript
- 32 omit the dieresis in romanization
- 33 retain intact to avoid confusion those names that have been already established in one form or another of transliteration (for example Aegean instead of Aigaiō)

Furthermore, to help readers unfamiliar with the Greek language, the system proposed by R M Dawkins in *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, vol xlv (1908-1909), p 221 is suggested for the pronunciation of Greek words according to this system.

- 1 A stands for a, as in the word market
- 2 E and Ai stand for e, as in less
- 3 I, Y, E, and Oi stand for i, as in trip
- 4 O stands for o, as in order
- 5 Ou stands for oo, as in foot
- 6 D stands for th, as in the
- 7 G stands for y, as in yellow
- 8 Th stands for th, as in thin
- 9 Ch stands for h but pronounced heavier than in English



INTRODUCTION

Vernacular settlements in general, and the Aegean island towns in particular, have been a fascinating subject for the architect, planner and urbanist. From the beginning of the Modern movement, traditional Greek planning has exerted a considerable influence on architecture. The house forms of island towns, as several writers have pointed out, have served as a source of inspiration for Le Corbusier, while the lay-out of Aegean settlements on slopes of hills influenced the designing of projects such as Habitat in Montreal, the terrace houses in Kattua, the Helen settlement, and numerous other projects, some of which are more successful than others.

The Aegean island towns that are residential in character and have attractive forms and human-scale environments, deserve further investigation and analysis. Inspired by curiosity and the desire to understand their present form, the author decided to study the Aegean island towns, in the hope that a new understanding might result in ideas for the improvement of our own residential environments.

A thorough survey of the literature on this subject was conducted. For the purpose of locating additional information, the author visited

the Schools of Architecture of Athens and Thessaloniki in Greece. A Series of unpublished studies and drawings, produced by students under the direction of Professor Michelis in Athens, and Professor Moutsopoulos in Thessaloniki, were collected. The Greek Ministry of Public Works and the National Tourist Office were the sources of the town plans. Only a few plans were available since the majority of the towns have not been properly surveyed. The town of Chora on the island of Skyros was also visited and areas of interest were surveyed by the author.

The present work is an attempt to analyze the urban structure of the island towns. Believing that "one picture is worth a thousand words" many drawings and sketches are included as demonstrations in this analysis. All drawings and sketches are the product of the author's work, while credit is given whenever a drawing has been copied.

The study is divided into four chapters.

The first chapter gives a general but brief historical background to acquaint the reader with the events which shaped the development and the general character of the towns.

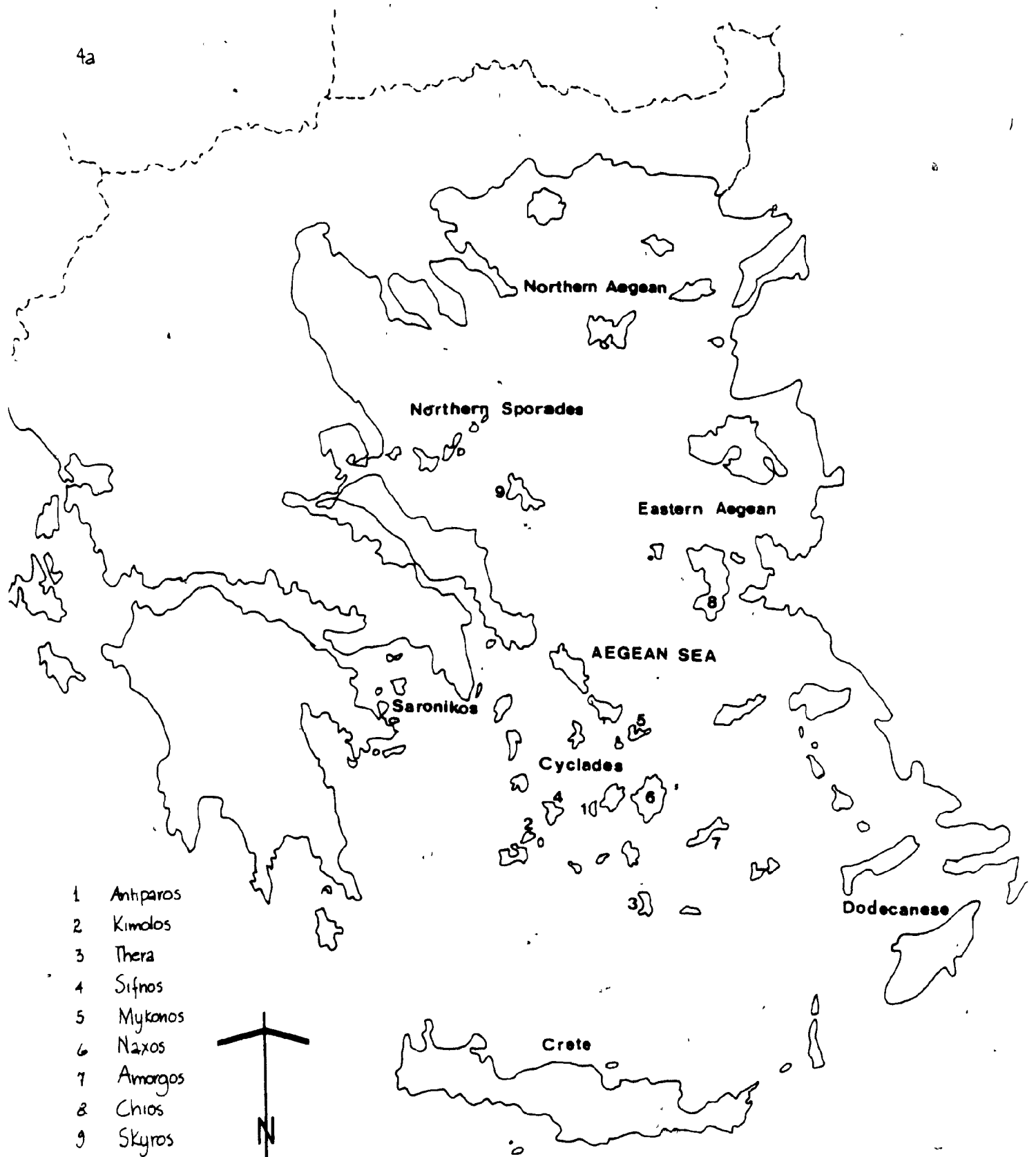
The second chapter presents the urban structures of the following towns: Antiparos, Kimolos, Pyrgos of Thera, Kastro of Sifnos, Mastichochoria, Mykonos, and the capital of Sifnos.

In the third chapter the major elements of the urban environment of the traditional island towns, houses, churches, streets, and *plaiéies* (squares), are examined.

The fourth chapter is a case study. The town of Chora on the island of Skyros is analyzed as an application of the ideas explained in the previous chapters.

Throughout this study special emphasis^{is} is placed on the church and its role in the urban environment.

4a



- 1 Antiparos
- 2 Kimolos
- 3 Thera
- 4 Sifnos
- 5 Mykonos
- 6 Naxos
- 7 Amorgos
- 8 Chios
- 9 Skyros

Fig 4a. Aegean Sea



GENERAL GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Millions of years ago the Greek peninsula and Asia Minor were connected. As a result of a sequence of complex geological phenomena the land bridging Greece with Asia Minor, Aigeis, sunk. The islands of the Aegean are the peaks of mountain ranges that existed on Aigeis.

There exist hundreds of islands in the Aegean, some of which are uninhabited. They are divided into the following groups.

- a) islands of the Northern Aegean,
- b) Northern Sporades,
- c) islands of the Eastern Aegean,
- d) Cyclades,
- e) Dodecanese,
- f) islands of Saronikos;
- g) Crete.

Each of the islands has its own special character, color and particular attraction. They have mild winters (10° - 12°C), and *meltemia*, seasonal summer winds, cool their summers. In many islands the visitor may find ruins of ancient civilizations and interesting traditional settlements which share common features of urban planning and architecture.

CHAPTER I

5a



Fig. 5a. Crete. Minoan settlement (after Ministry of Public Works).



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

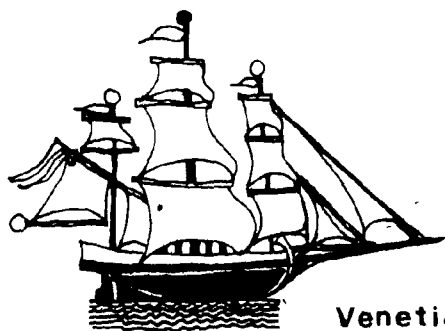
Settlements in the Aegean date back to neolithic age* From the Minoan period (2,000 BC) up to approximately the middle of the seventh century, the settlements were prosperous, fortified, and built on strategic locations**.

Later, devastating earthquakes and piratical raids resulted in a gradual deterioration of these prosperous settlements and the establishment of smaller less important towns in the interior of the islands.

The present forms of the island towns belong to stages of development which date from the beginning of the thirteenth century. The establishment of the Latins in the Aegean, followed by the Turkish conquest and finally the Greek Independence (in the early nineteenth century) formed the historical contexts within which the development occurred.

*Remainings of a settlement that date back to that period have been located on the island of Saliagos.

**Remainings of such settlements are found in many islands of the Cyclades and of the Dodecanese (Paros, Sikinos, Thera, Crete, Rhodes, Delos, etc.).



Venetian Occupation

In 1204, Constantinople fell into the hands of the crusaders Baldwin, Count of Flanders became emperor. The crusaders, who had brought with them to Greece and the Orient the feudal laws of their homelands, divided among themselves the regions they had conquered.

The ruling of the Aegean islands was entrusted to Venetian aristocrats. Thus the Dukedom of the Aegean was established with Naxos as the capital and Marcos Sanoudos as the duke (Miller 1972: 18, 43). In 1268 the Byzantines regained the islands (Kea, Serifos, Sifnos, Astypalea, Therasia, Santorini) and for some years the islands remained under their control, but were also subjected to attack by various Latin pirates (Miller: 1972: 437-438). When the Venetians reconquered the islands after 1288, they found them largely deserted due to the piratical raids. In 1299, with the treaty between Genova and Venice, the raids subsided and the time and energy of the population was channeled in developing and fortifying various towns. However, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the islands were often attacked anew by both Moslem (Ottoman) and Latin pirates. Many islanders emigrated to Crete and around 1470, Sifnos for example, was reduced to

only 1,000 inhabitants (Vakalopoulos 1964:102)

Fights between Moslem (Ottoman) and Latin pirates occurred often in the Aegean but from the fifteenth century on the Turks started to dominate that area. In 1537 the Turkish pirate Barbarosa plundered most of the islands, killing and enslaving their men (Hypourgeion Esoterikon 1975:32). In 1573 Venice signed a treaty with the Turks and stopped helping the Latin rulers of the islands. By 1579 most of the islands belonged to Turkey with some exceptions, for example, Sifnos, where the Gozadinai still ruled under concessions to the Sultan (Tzakou 1976:21), Syros and Tenos, where the Gyzaei stayed until 1715 (Hypourgeion Esoterikon 1975:32).

Social Structure

Under the Venetian Occupation the social structure was feudal. The strongest class, formed by Latin families that immigrated to the islands (Gikon 1874:135), constituted the aristocracy and were the main landowners. There existed also the following classes: a) Greek landlords, b) vasmouli or gasmouli who were offsprings of marriages between Greek women and Latin men, c) free Greeks, and d) Greek serfs or villani (Miller 1972:438, Tzakou 1976:22, Hypourgeion Esoterikon 1975:33).

The economy was controlled by the landlords. They owned the agricultural land, and conducted the commerce (Vakalopoulos 1964:422). Therefore the islanders' contacts with the sea diminished and the ancient art of seafaring became lost to the native population. Vasmouli could own property, but upon their demise the property returned to their lords (Tzakou 1976:22). Serfs lived in agricultural settlements outside the fortified towns and cultivated the farmland; their wives could be sold or inherited like property

8a

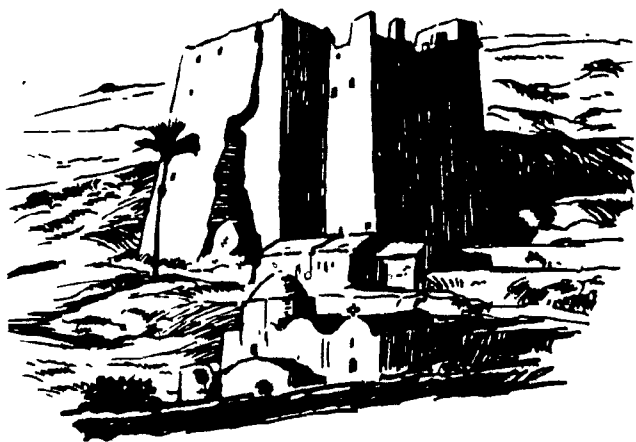


Fig 8a. Thera Castle in Emboreion (after Nomikos)

(Miller 1972 438)

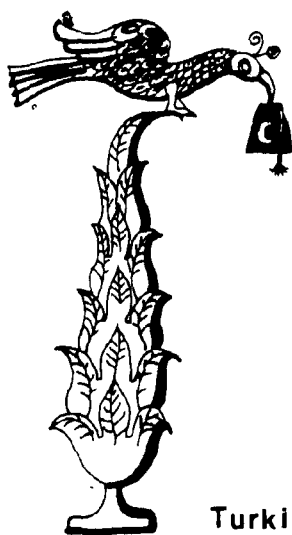
Religion

The catholic lords tried to spread their religion in their newly occupied lands. Although Catholicism was not imposed officially, the Greek Orthodox church was fairly oppressed. Catholic dioceses were established. Two-aisled churches were constructed to serve a mixed community of both orthodox and catholic members. This is further discussed in the section on the two-aisled churches.

Built Environment

The potential threat of raiding parties of pirates during the Venetian occupation resulted in the building of fortified settlements at strategic locations close to the sea, as well as in the interior of the islands so as to be completely invisible from the sea. As early as 1260, the following settlements were mentioned in a Venetian catalogue: Kastrol of Andros, Tenos, Mykonos, Delos, Kea, Kythnos, Syros, Paros, Antiparos, Naxos, Amorgos, Serifos, Sifnos, and Melos (Hypourgeion Esoterikon 1975:34).

In addition to the well organized fortified towns there existed watch towers, *vigiles*, along the shore-line to signal the possible approaching of pirates, individual castles built in the centers of agricultural areas which belonged to rich lords, and shed-like structures forming agricultural settlements outside the fortified towns for the serfs who cultivated the land.



Turkish Occupation

Turkish expansion in the eastern Mediterranean and the final wresting of the Aegean islands from the Latins at the end of the sixteenth century brought in an era of relative security. As early as 1580, the reigning Sultan decreed some advantageous laws for the Greeks:

- a) full protection of the property of the islanders,
- b) liberty in religion and the right to reconstruct the deserted churches,
- c) relief from extra taxes,
- d) right to have Greek judges,
- e) right to appeal to the Sultan,
- f) termination of violent ottomanization of the islands (Drakakes 1948:16).

During the Turkish Occupation all the islands of the Aegean were under the rule of *Kapoudan pasha* who travelled once a year to Paros to collect taxes. Furthermore, each island or group of islands was under the jurisdiction of a lower Turkish official called *beis*. From the seventeenth century on, Turkish *beis* fearing piratical raids avoided living on the islands, with the result that the governing bodies were formed by prominent members of the local societies. These members were called *praestoi*.

and *dēmogérontes*, and they were responsible for the collection of tax money. They also settled disputes at the local level and prevented rather than repressed disorder by exercising a parental control over each member of the community (Philippides 1973:48).

The Turkish-Venetian war of the seventeenth century brought a new period of disorder to the Aegean. During that period, the islanders were paying double taxes and were being attacked by both Moslem and Latin pirates.

A minor incident in 1768 brought Russia and Turkey to war which lasted six years. During that war the Russian fleet of the Baltic Sea sailed around Western Europe and made its appearance for the first time in Mediterranean waters. At the sight of the fleet, most of the small islands of the Aegean revolted against Ottoman rule and were taken over and occupied by the Russians for a number of years (Michaelides 1967:17). Russian successes on both sea and land resulted in the conclusion of the war by the Treaty of Kutschuk-Kainardji, signed in 1774. According to the treaty the islanders gained the following privileges:

- a) amnesty for the population,
- b) freedom of religion,
- c) two year period of tax relief,
- d) rights for emigration (Tzakou 1976:27).

The provisions of the treaty of Kutschuk-Kainardji were supplemented in 1783 by a commercial convention according to which the islanders of the Aegean obtained the important privilege of sailing and trading under the Russian flag and under the protection of the Czar

(Michaelides 1967: 17).

In the beginning of the nineteenth century the Aegean islands joined in the movement for the Greek Revolution of Independence

Social Structure

The islanders, taking advantage of the Sultan's laws decreed in 1580, slowly regained strength from the Catholic oppression. The feudal system weakened. In its place, a distinct self-conscious group of Greek landowners was established. They controlled local, administrative, judiciary, legislative, even religious functions. It was from their ranks that *proestoi*, *dēmogerontes*, and priests were selected (Philippides 1973: 48).

The considerable degree of autonomy under the Turkish rule, allowed a gradual rebirth of seafaring and commerce in the area (Michaelides 1974: 136). An increase in population and nautical power resulted in the formation of a large social class of merchants and seamen.

The serfs of the feudal lords formed a new social class of free farmers and shepherds.

Religion

According to the advantageous laws of 1580, the islanders were able to practice freely their religion and reconstruct their deserted churches.

Religion played a dynamic role during the Turkish period in keeping the Greeks unified and in educating the young members of the community. Public, secular education was unknown to the Turks, but religious education was both practiced by them and permitted to their Christian subjects. Therefore, the education of the young Greeks was exclusively

in the hands of the clergy until the middle of the eighteenth century (Michaelides 1967:26).

Construction of new churches had to be approved by the governing *Kapoudán pashá*. Although approval was easily granted, the church had to be constructed within a time limit (Tzakou 1976:28). For this reason, the buildings were kept small in size. Since it was prestigious to own a chapel, the wealthy families felt almost obliged to construct one. Furthermore, they used to offer their properties to their chapels. In this way they were protecting their wealth from the Turks "who respected religious property. A result of this period is a profusion of small chapels dispersed throughout the island towns.

Built Environment

The relative security and the population increase resulted in the expansion and opening up of the earlier defensive settlements. Outside the fortified walls new neighborhoods were formed with larger houses and courtyards. In this context, island towns "moved" physically within their immediate natural site. For example Hydra shifted its centre of gravity from the hill top defensive enclosure down to the center of the port, literally rolling down the hill (Michaelides 1974:137).



From Independence to Today

The Greek Revolution of 1821 and the long War of Independence which followed, changed the destiny of the islands. At the end of the War, in the late 1820's, most of the islands became part of independent Greece*.

Social Structure

After Independence the islands faced dim economical prospects. Their economy was badly hurt by the War of Independence. The capital accumulated during the prosperous years before the Revolution had been spent for the War. Moreover, the introduction of the steamship that required large initial investment and could not be built in the local shipyards, deprived the islands of the only potential for new growth.

Many of the islanders emigrated to the mainland of Greece or to other countries, and the population of the island towns slowly declined.

* Except for the Dodecanese islands which remained under Turkish Occupation until 1912 when the Italians gained control. It was not until 1948 that the Dodecanese islands officially became part of Greece.

Most of the wealthy landowners left the islands, thus leaving behind mainly lower and middle class people. As a result, social stratification was moderated. The majority of the present population consists of small farmers, merchants and sailors. Recently, tourism has become a new source of income for the islanders.

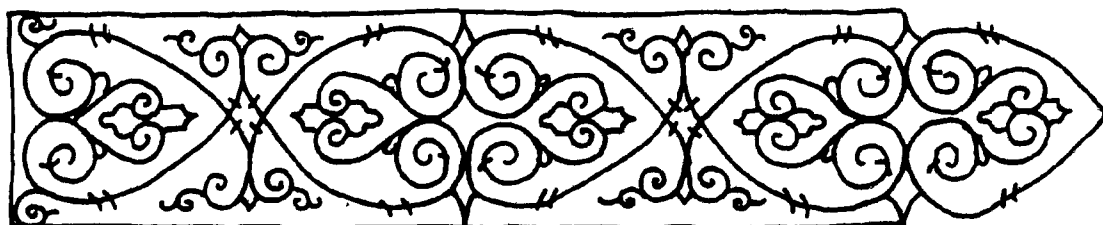
Religion

After Independence the function of the church was slowly restricted to religious duties. The newly formed state took over the responsibility of education which was previously held by the church.

Built Environment

The traditional form of the dwelling unit continued to prevail after Independence. A few neoclassical buildings appeared in the beginning of the twentieth century. The small scale of the island town environment, along with the continuous association of the economy with primary production, helped in preserving the traditional forms.

CHAPTER II



THE TOWNS

Most of the traditional island towns of the Aegean were established at times when pirates were devastating the islands. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, these towns suffered mostly from Moslem pirates sailing in particularly large numbers from the emirate of Mendese (the pirates' nest) on the coast of Asia Minor. At the same time, Moslem pirates from North Africa joined forces with renegade Christians of the Mediterranean area to attack the Aegean towns (Vakalopoulos 1964: 103, 104). At the end of this period, Maniote, Teniote (i.e. from Mani and Tenos) and Catholic pirates made their appearance (Vakalopoulos 1964: 103, 104, 116). From the middle of the seventeenth century on, pirates from Malta, Livorno, and Majorca sailed the Greek seas. After the end of the Turkish-Venetian war, the pirates plundered together with the official naval forces as corsaires (Vakalopoulos 1964: 108). The pirates stole, destroyed harvests and took prisoners who were to be sold as slaves (Vakalopoulos 1964: 108). Many sea-shore villages and even whole islands were deserted, for example Tenedos in 1383, and Astypalea in 1360. Travellers like Clavijo and Caumont mentioned some uninhabited islands of the Dodecanese and of the Cyclades,

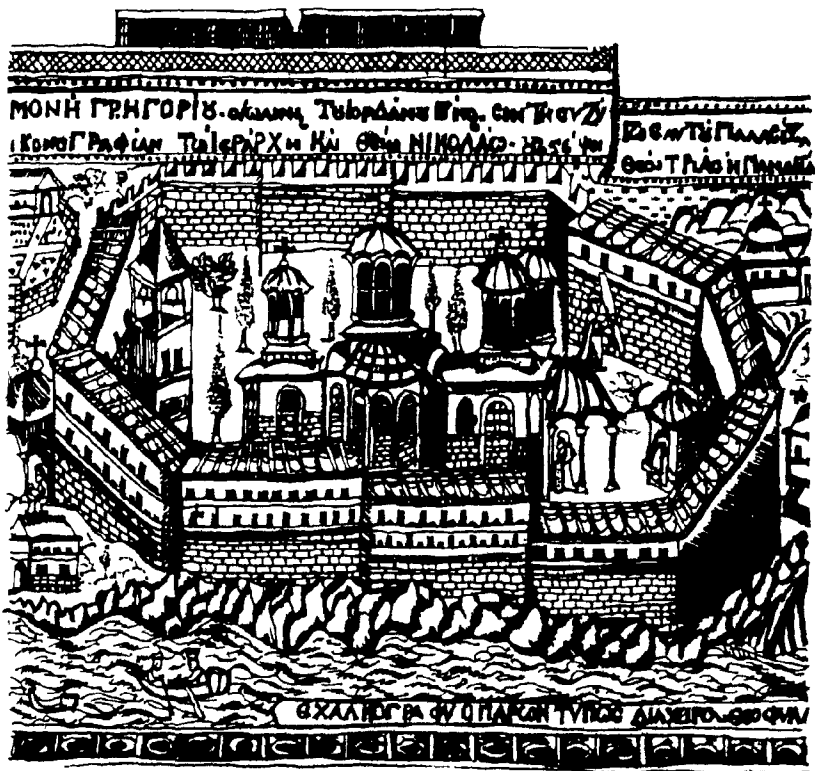


Fig 162. Mount Athos. Monasteries

while Buondelmonti described the fear and poor living conditions of the people. They inhabited castle-like structures in protected areas. During the day, they cautiously opened their door and went out to their farms, only to return to their homes by the fall of night.

Due to the lack of safety that dominated the Aegean islands, towns were planned and built as fortified settlements. In the thirteenth century there existed already fortified towns in the Dodecanese. Their walls followed the pattern of conventional fortification systems of the west.

- * A more economic system of fortification was, however, invented and used for the protection of settlements built during the fourteenth century. The outer walls were formed by the backs of houses which were joined together so as to present a continuous solid wall to the outside. In this system the houses themselves were used as fortification walls. The total plan formed an enclosure which was rectangular or circular depending on the site*. On the outer line, the houses were built one room deep, and usually consisted of a single room. The church lay in the middle of the town.

*The basic idea of the defensive enclosure is an old one, and can be found in all periods of architectural history. It contains elements of both fortress structures and of interior courtyards of houses (atriums). This system of fortification was used in ancient Greece. Thucydides and Plato mentioned it while describing ancient cities. It can be seen in the archaic Ionian cities, and in the seventh century settlement of Vroulia in Rhodes (Bouras and Lambakes 1960: 8). It is especially pronounced in the plan of the Byzantine monasteries. The buildings of the monasteries were constructed in an uninterrupted sequence along the periphery leaving free a large interior court which sheltered the church and was the center of the monastic life. The Byzantine monasteries which were frequently attacked by pirates for their treasures, introduced the central tower as the ultimate defense point.

17a

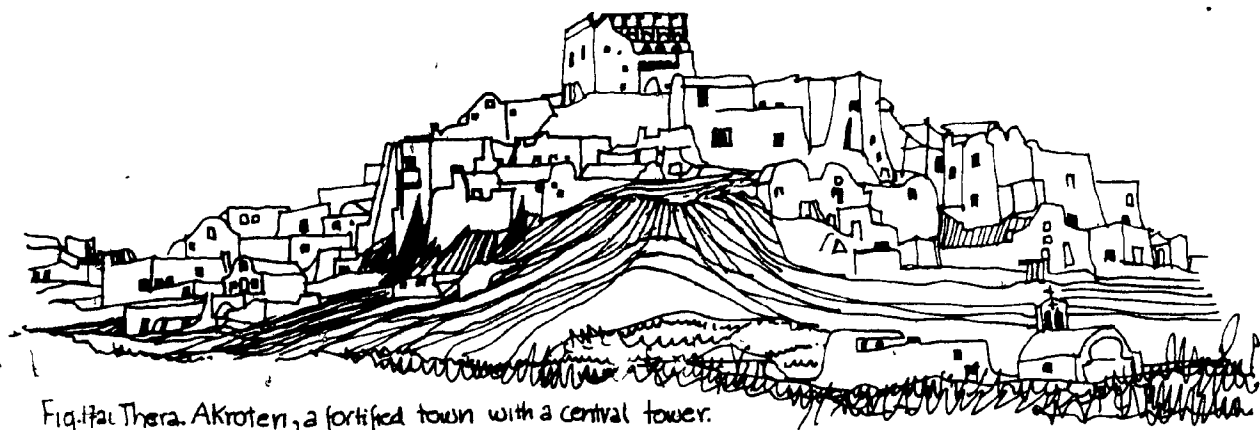


Fig. 17a. Thera. Akrotiri, a fortified town with a central tower.

and it was surrounded by successive rings of houses. In addition to the fortified wall, a tall tower, *pyrgos*, was sometimes built at the center of the settlement next to the church (Mastichochoria). The tower served as the last defensive structure once the enemy had entered the town. A twisted street pattern, with many alleys and culs-de-sac led from the gates to the center. In case of invasion, the residents fought from roof tops of houses, and could finally retreat to the tower (Kriesis 1965:133,134). By their very nature such settlements could not expand easily because the shape and size of the outer wall defined their limits. Examples of such settlements are: Antiparos, Kimolos, Pyrgos* of Thera, Akroteri of Thera, Kastro* of Sifnos, Kastro of Andros, Kastro of Melos, Kastro of Sikinos, Kastro of Astypalea, Folegandros, Mastichochoria of Chios, Naxos (the capital of the Dukedom of the Archipelago of the Aegean), etc. In some cases, the towns seem to have been built in one phase as for example the Mastichochoria of Chios (Eden 1950:16). In other cases, such as in Kimolos and Antiparos, there is indication of construction of successive outer walls to accommodate a growing population.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, danger from the outside diminished, and houses started being constructed outside the fortified walls. However, since the piratical raids did not entirely stop until 1830, the residents of the towns still resorted to the *Kastro* for protection (Philippides 1973:131). Slowly the towns expanded beyond their walls without following

*The towns are commonly called Pyrgos and Kastro. These Greek words mean tower and castle respectively. Such names denote the fortified character of the towns.

18a



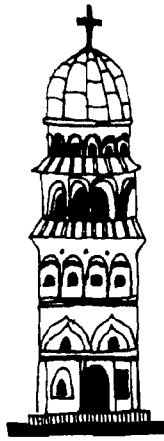
Fig. 18a Hydra. A harbor town.

a specific plan and acquired their final form

The defensive towns were usually built on a hill (Kastro of Sifnos, Pyrgos of Thera). In the case where there were no natural hill formations, small peninsulas, or any similar positions of strategic significance, the fortified town was far more regular (Antiparos, Kimolos).

From the seventeenth century on, other settlements that based their economy on open trade, developed as harbor towns. These harbor towns were built in well protected coves (Mykonos, Hydra).

Towns can be classified into two major groups, the defensive towns and the harbor towns. Antiparos, Kimolos, Pyrgos of Thera, Kastro of Sifnos, and Mastichochoria are further discussed in the relative sections as examples of the various types of fortified settlements. Mykonos is examined as a good example of a harbor town. The capital of Sifnos, a linear group of settlements, is also analyzed for its interesting configuration.

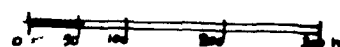
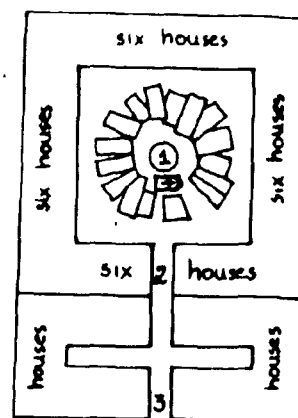


Antiparos

Kastro of Antiparos was built sometime in the beginning of the fifteenth century by a Venetian nobleman called Leonardo Lorentano. It probably served as a fortified residence for the noble family (Moutsopoulos 1977:40). In 1485 Bartolomeo Zamberti, known as Dalli Sonetti, visited the Aegean islands and sketched a map of Paros and Antiparos. This map depicts a circular fortification with a tall tower in its center. Therefore, it is concluded that the present surrounding square settlement was constructed later on.

The overall plan was square; each side of the square contained six two-storey cells that housed two units each of approximately 30 square meters of area. Consequently, 48 families could be housed there. During the day, they cultivated the ruler's land, returning to Kastro for the night (Moutsopoulos 1977:40). The buildings which stand inside the courtyard were constructed later on when the population grew and could not be accommodated in the peripheral houses. They formed a ring with their backs turned inwards a low rocky hill*. The only entrance to the settlement was in the center of the

*On this hill are the ruins of the central tower which was the ultimate defense structure (Dawkins and Wace 1914:100).



1. tower, 2. old gate, 3. later gate

Fig. 20i. Antiparos Schematic plan

(after Dawkins and Wake 1914: 99).

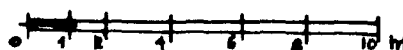
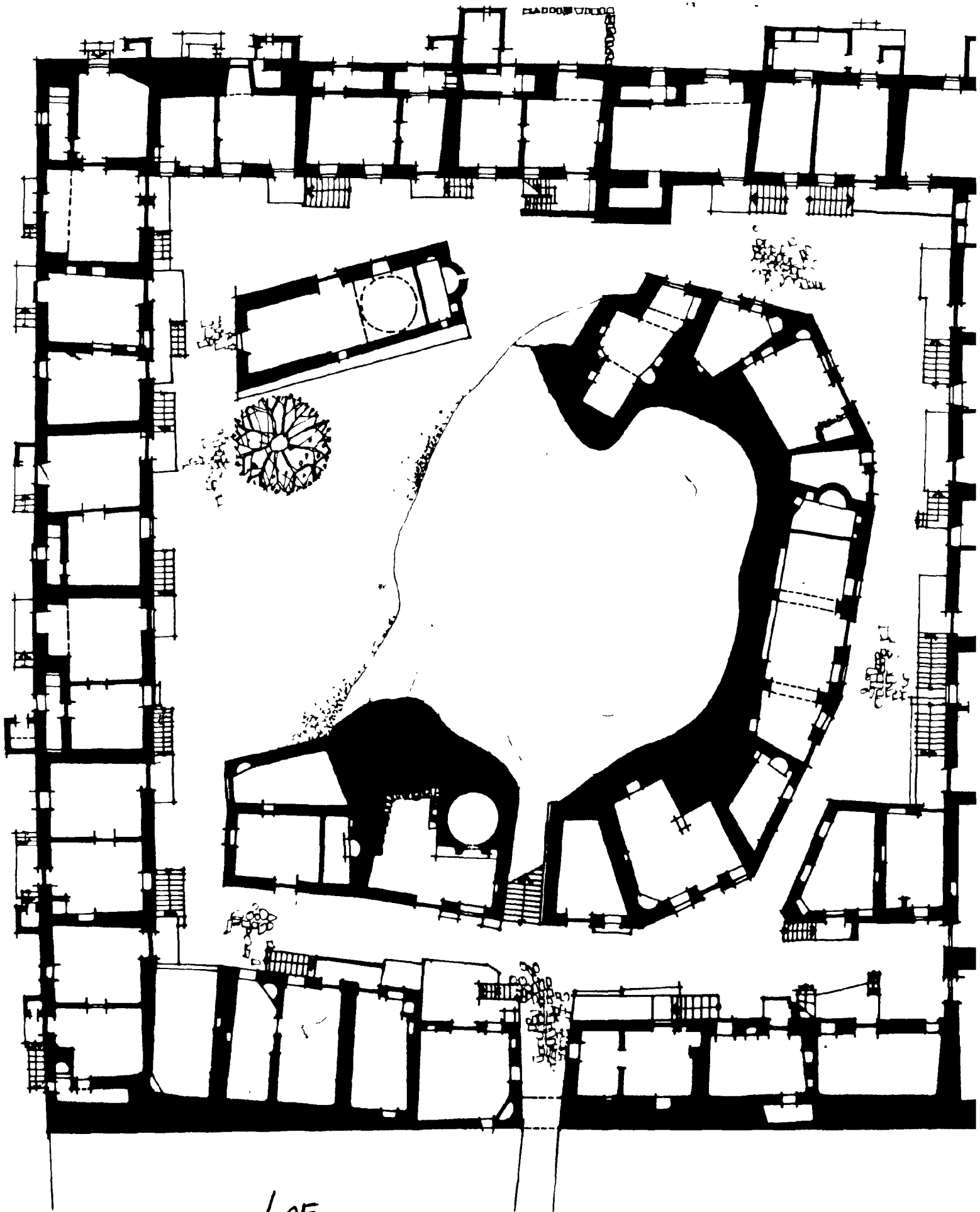
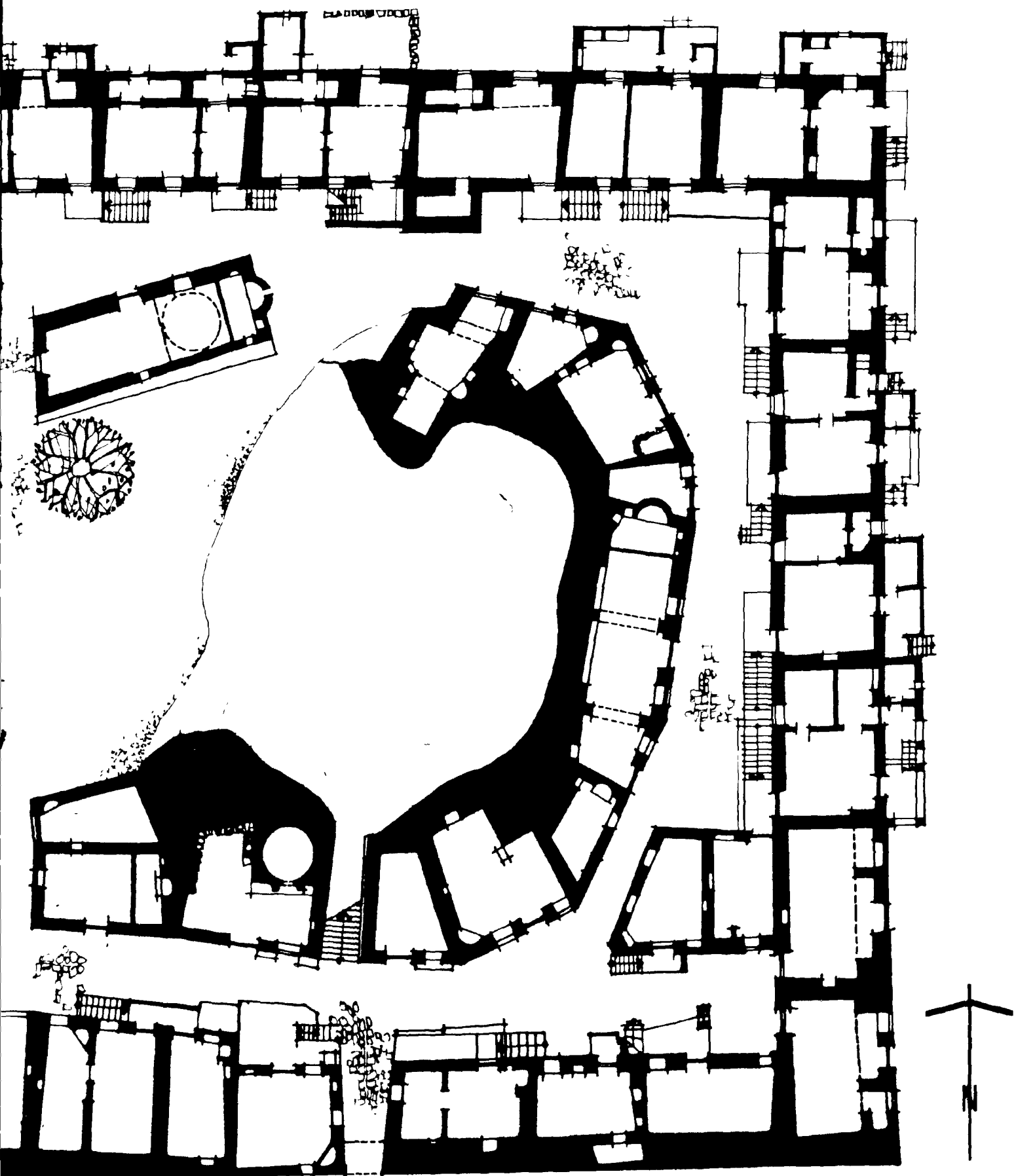
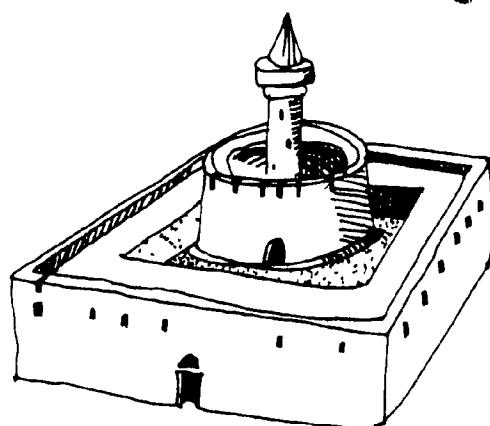
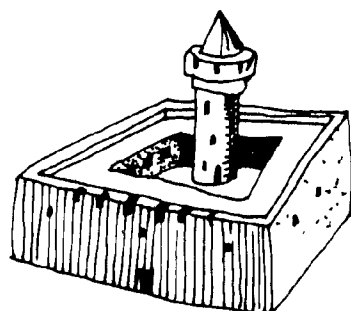
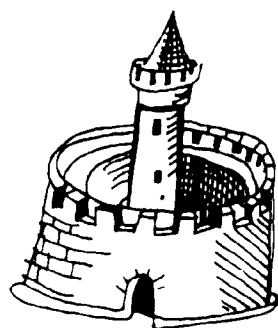
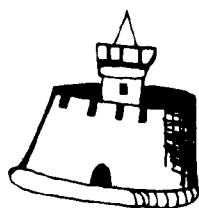


Fig. 20ii. Antiparos. Plan of Kastro

(after student survey of the School of Architecture in Thessaloniki).







southern wall I was a narrow gate with a heavy door. The houses had their doors and windows facing the interior courtyard (40x41m) of the settlement and the only openings to the outside were loopholes. The windows and balconies that we see today facing the sea were constructed later when the piratical raids stopped.

As the settlement expanded further, houses had to be constructed outside the fortification walls. Today, these houses are called *xópyrga* (outside the castles). They form a rectangle next to the southern wall of Kastro. They also form an interior elongated courtyard which is entered from the South.

All houses are simple and compact. Each unit has two rooms. The large room next to the entrance serves as a living room during the day, and is converted into a sleeping area during the night. The second room is used as a kitchen and as storage area.

Two churches are located inside Kastro, one adjacent to the houses inside the courtyard, and the other free standing and dominating the open space.

Fig 21. Antiparos. Evolution of the fortified urban nucleus (after Moutsopoulos 1977: 41)



Kimolos

Kastro of Kimolos was built in five phases*. The first phase, called Mesa Kastro (interior Kastro), was probably constructed in the early thirteenth century, when Marko Sanudo seized the Cyclades and organized his dukedom. The last phase called Exo Kastro (exterior Kastro) was constructed in the middle of the seventeenth century, between 1640 and 1650 and was fortified with round bastions on its corners (Meliarakes 1970:10). It encircled Mesa Kastro which was destroyed by pirates in the middle of the seventeenth century only to be rebuilt later.

Exo Kastro has two gates, one on the east side with two small towers protecting it on the left of the entrance, and one on the south side. The date 1656 appears over the east gate, and the date 1675 appears over the south gate, while a house in the outer wall bears the date 1616. Consequently, the town in its present form was probably completed towards the

* Information on the history of Kastro of Kimolos is provided by Antonios Meliarakes, "Hypomnēmata Perigrafikā tōn Kykladon Nēson, kata Méros Kimolos," *Kimoliaka*, 1970, pp 3-160, and by Ch.G. Moustakas, *Synoptiké Historia tes Nēsou Kimou*, (Peireas, 1957), pp 7-13.

23a

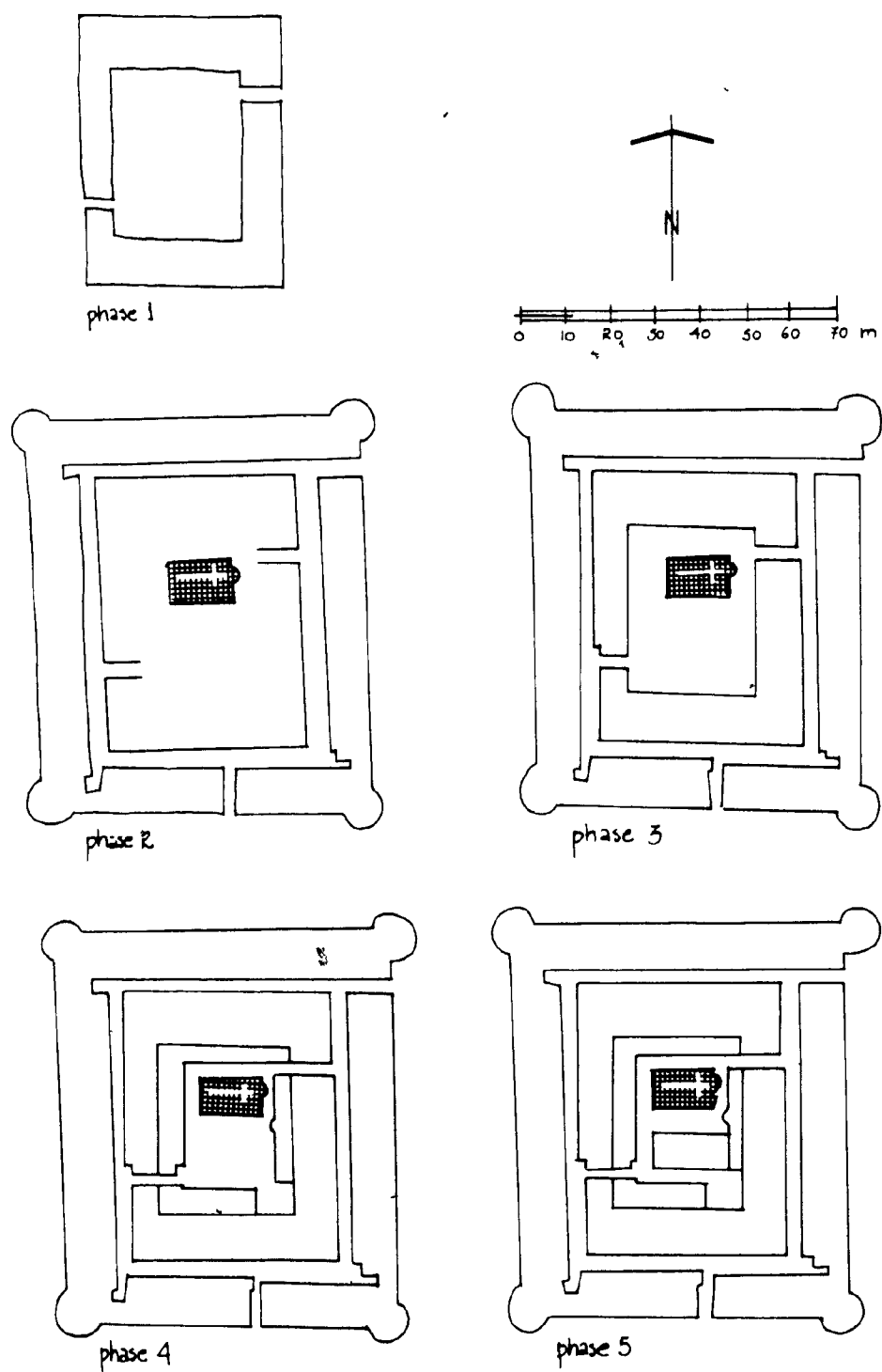


Fig 23ai Kimolos Subsequent phases of evolution (after Moutsopoulos 1977: 104).

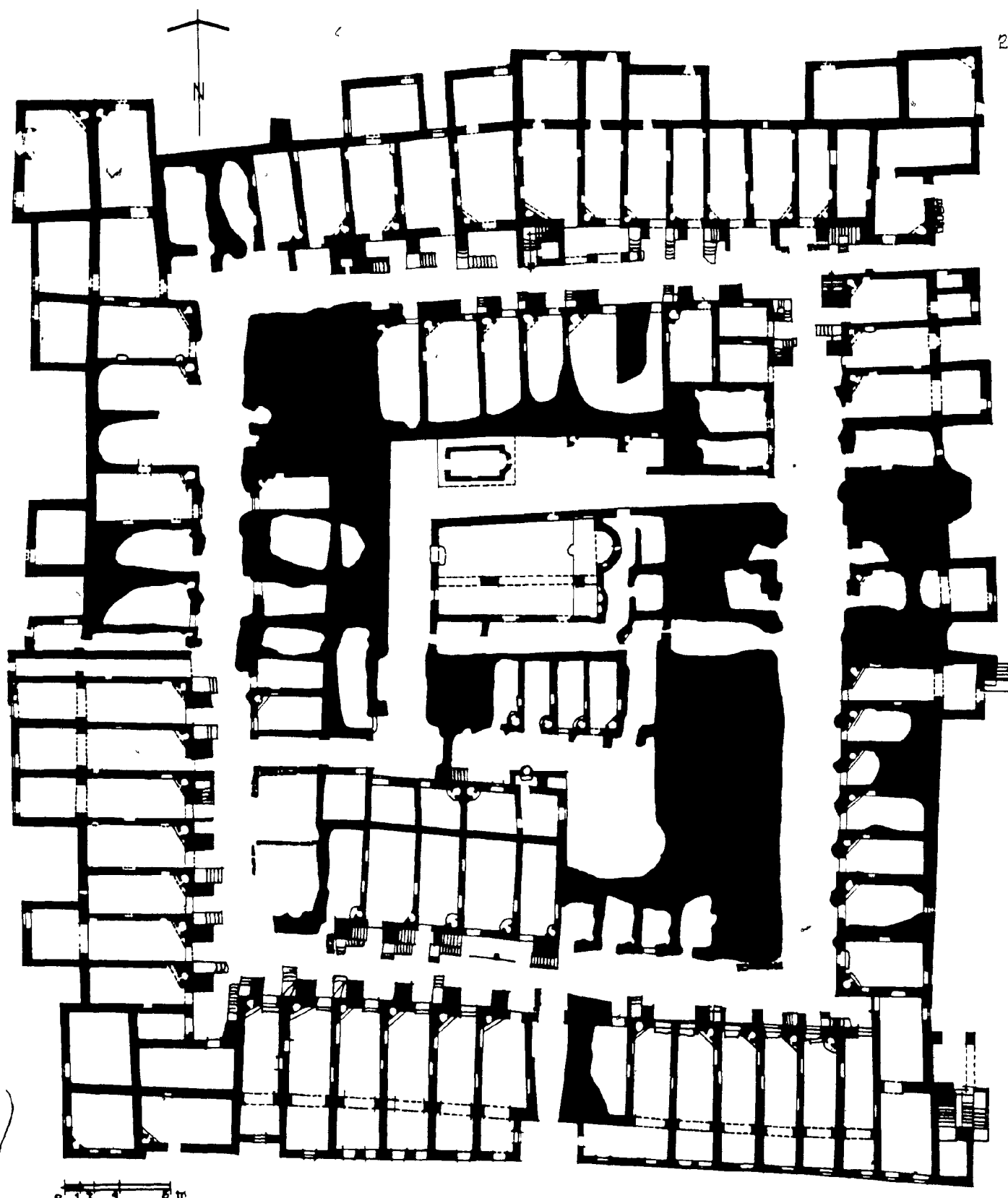


Fig. 23c. Kimolos, Mesa, and Exo Kastro (after student survey of the School of Architecture in Thessaloniki).

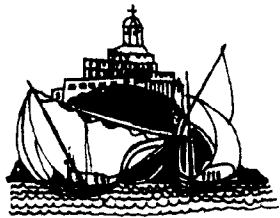
beginning of the seventeenth century

The plan is square and the town is built on ground that is fairly level. Exo Kastro is formed by the backs of a continuous row of houses which differ in number on each side of the square. Within this, there is another double row of houses (Mesa Kastro). One row faces the narrow street left between Mesa and Exo Kastro. The other row faces inwards into the central square of the town. All houses look towards the center of the settlement. In the central square stands a two-aisled basilica, which was built in 1592 (Moutsopoulos 1977: 47), adjacent to a row of five houses.

Each side of Exo or Mesa Kastro consists of two levels of housing units, an upper and a lower. The door of the lower level is on the street level. Access to the houses of the upper level is achieved by a narrow flight of stone steps with a small wooden landing at the top. Often, there is a continuous wooden balcony from landing to landing so that a second-level sidewalk is formed. A typical housing unit consists of one long narrow room (*monospito*), and has a fireplace in the corner next to its entrance.

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Sign over the gate of Kimolos (after Zafeiropoulos)



Kastro and Pyrgos

In order to achieve greater security, towns were often built on hills, thus providing another element of defense against attack. Their shapes were quite irregular because of the land contours. Examples of this kind of defensive planning can be seen in Kastro of Sifnos, and in Pyrgos of Thera.

Kastro was the capital of Sifnos until recent years. The town, (as we know it today), was constructed during the second half of the sixteenth century (Miller 1972: 430).

Kastro originally contained two rings of houses opening inwards, and a network of bridges, ramparts, and alleyways to defend the town against invaders who might have penetrated the peripheral wall. Instead of a square centrally located in the town, there were many widenings in the streets. The churches were built next to these widenings which provided the space necessary for the community to congregate after the mass. The commercial center of Kastro was nearby, in the port of Serailia (Theriot 1665: 207). The larger houses, which belonged to the wealthy landowners, were situated within the interior ring for more security. Laymen lived in houses of the exterior ring (Tzakou 1976: 85).

26a

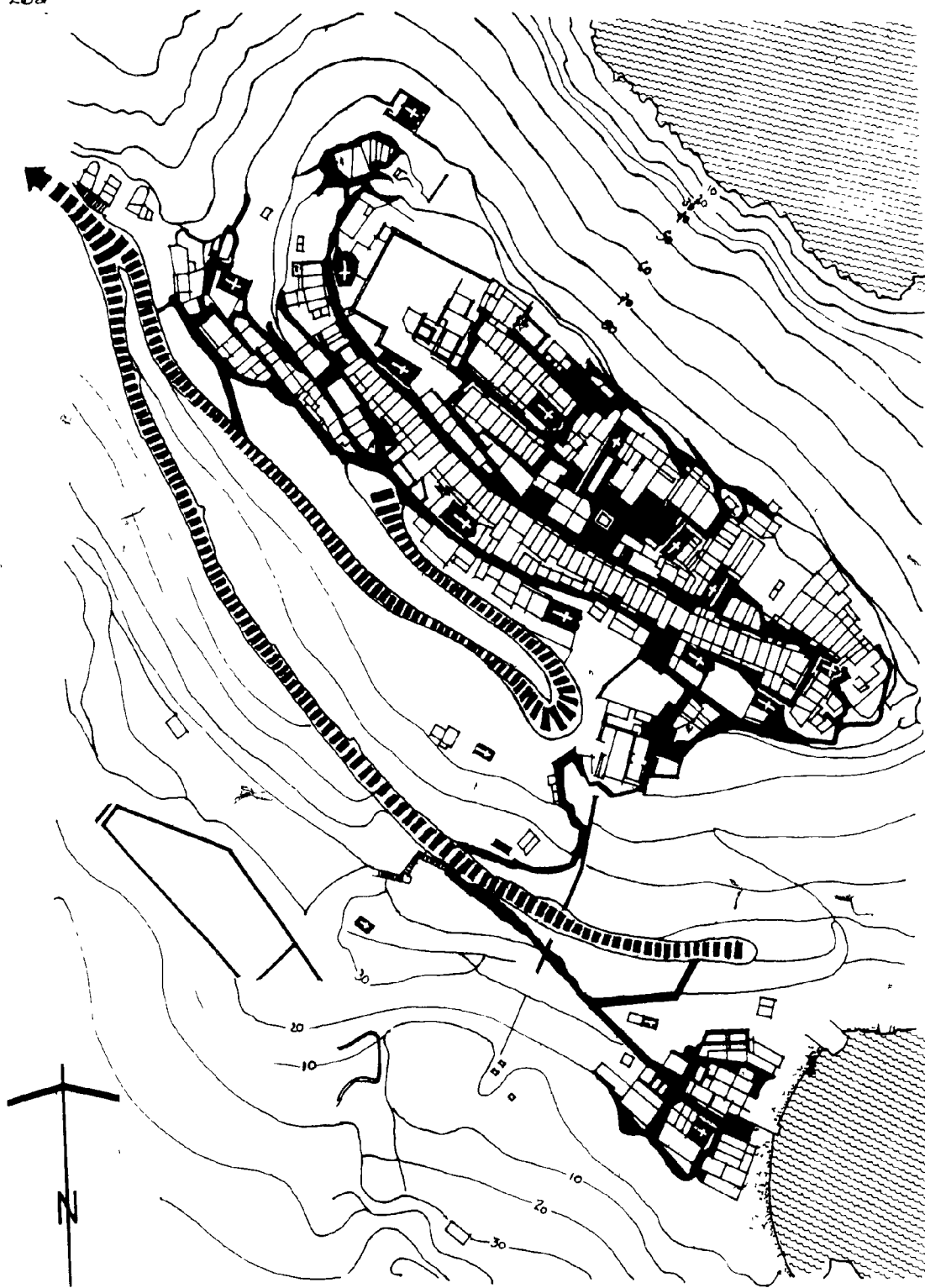
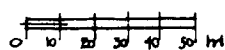


Fig 26a Sifnos Plan of Kastro (after Birkett-Smith)



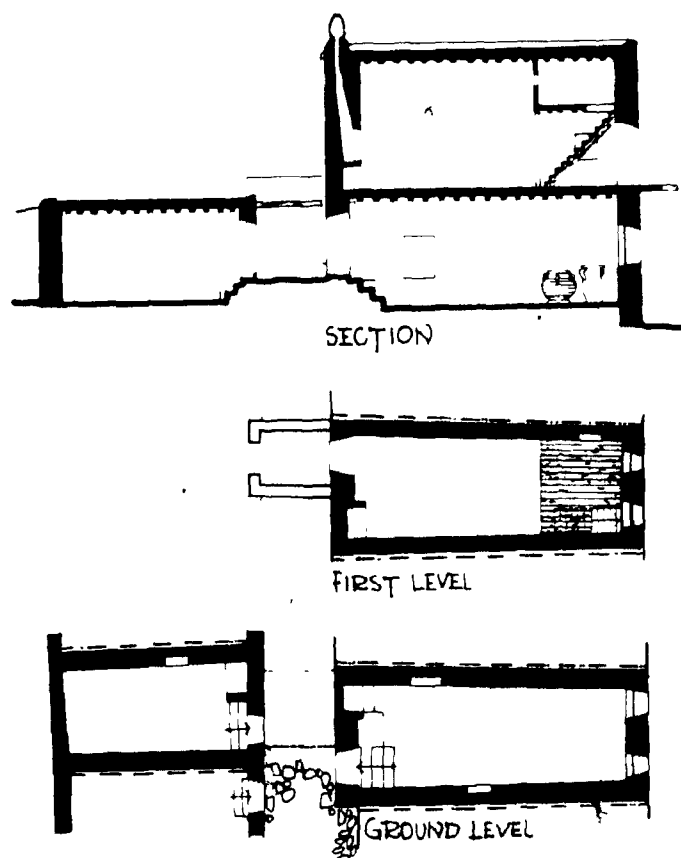


Fig 261 Sifnos Monáspito in Kástro
(after Tzakou 1976: 36)

The town preserves to this day its two entrance gateways, the main features of that period, and even traces of earlier periods. Two types of houses are common. The narrow-front *monáspito* of the outside ring, which consists of two or three stories, each level being a different dwelling unit; and the larger houses of the inside ring, which consist basically of three to four interconnected *monáspita**. It is interesting to note that the bridges and ramparts of the past have been modified in recent times to provide access to the higher levels of the *monáspita*.

**Monáspita* is the plural form of *monáspito*



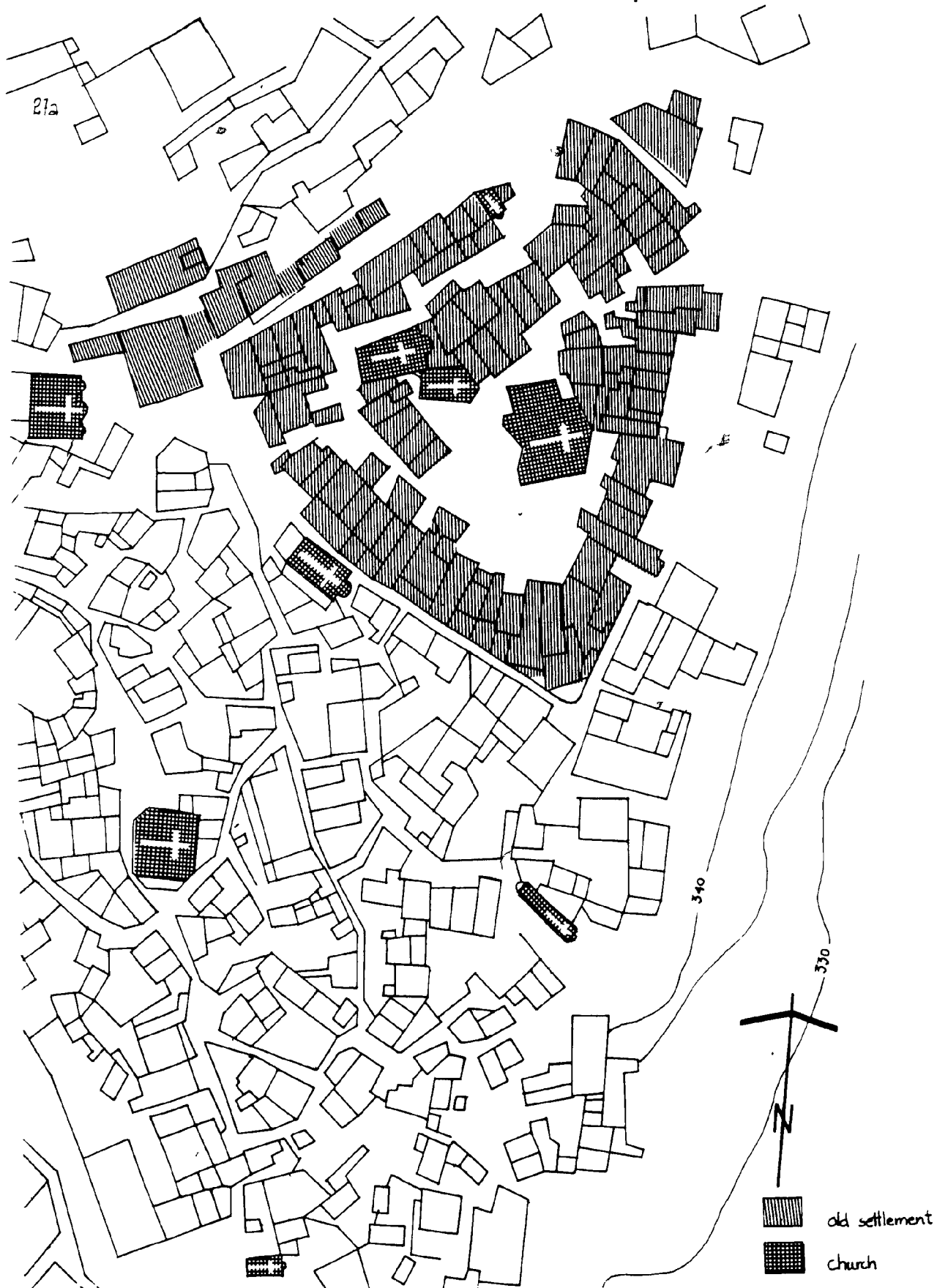


Fig. 27a. Thera Plan of Pyrgos. (after Ministry of Public Works).



Fig. 27. Thera Pyrgos (after Nomikos)

Similarly, Pyrgos of Thera, also consisted of two rings of houses. The outside ring, a circle, had a single entrance from the northwest which was protected by a double gate (Branch 1966:24). Because the houses forming this ring were built on sloped land, their front walls were slanted slightly towards the inside for greater stability. The inside ring was occupied by irregular blocks of houses which enclosed a large open space. The main churches of the town were located in the vicinity of that open space.

After the piratical raids stopped, the town started expanding beyond the exterior ring and acquired the less ordered form observed today.



Plan of Pyrgos in 14th century.



Mastichochoria

During the Genoese occupation of 1346-1566 Chios was developed and became one of the richest and most beautiful islands of the Eastern Mediterranean. The principal crop and source of wealth of Southern Chios was mastic (an edible gum which oozes from the trunk of the lentiscus shrub). The noble Genoese Justiniani monopolized the mastic trade, becoming extremely wealthy and building magnificent buildings and fortifications throughout Chios (Politis 1975:136). To safeguard their interests in the mastic trade they organized the building of several fortified towns in the Southern part of the island, called Mastichochoria which means mastic villages. These new fortified Mastichochoria assembled the villagers of the surrounding countryside in order to protect them from the attacks of pirates sailing the narrow waters between Chios and Asia Minor. Among them, the best conserved, and still retaining their original character, are Mesta, Pyrgi, Olymboi, and Kalamote.

A common feature of these towns was that they were surrounded with a stone wall formed by the back walls of outlying houses (which at the time the town was established had their doors and windows facing only towards the center of the town). This wall was further fortified with small round towers

29a

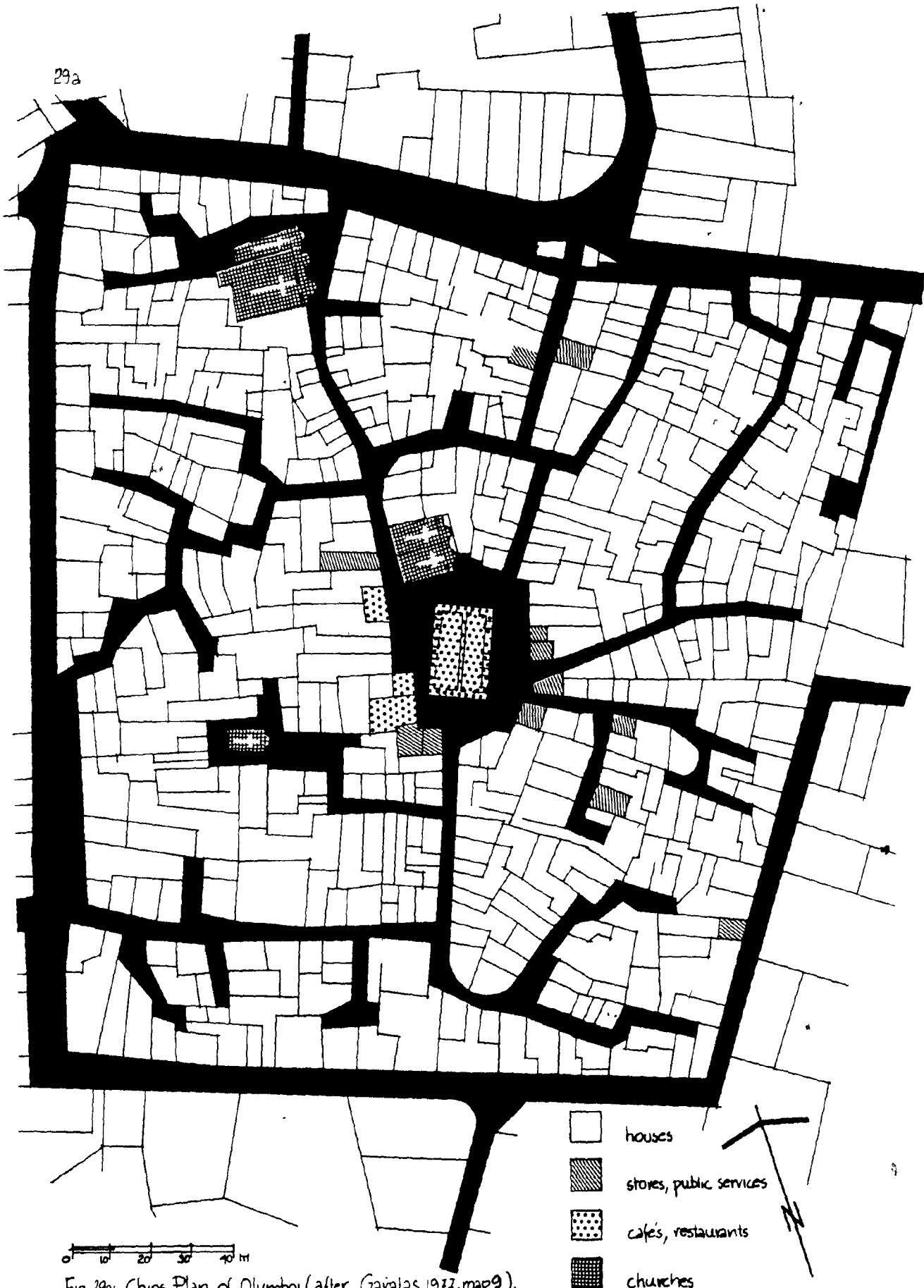


Fig. 29a. Chios Plan of Olymboi (after Gavrilas 1977, map 9).

on its corners, and close to the central and unique square of the town, a big tower served as the ultimate defense structure

The entrance to the town was through a limited number of gates. The governing rule was to save space. Therefore, apart from the central square and the narrow streets, the whole area within the walls was densely filled with houses and churches. The demand for space was at one time so great that many of the houses bridged over the streets. Churches and houses were arranged in such a way that the people could fight effectively and could easily escape, using the roofs, in case the town was captured.

The system of forming the village wall by building the houses in an unbroken line had been used in older settlements on other islands*, in the design of archaic Ionian cities before these adopted the *Ipodamion* system**, and in the building of Byzantine monasteries which added the central tower as the ultimate defense structure***. Therefore, although *Mastichochoria* were built by the Genoese, an authentic Greek system of fortification was adopted.

At present, a visitor once inside the town is confronted by a labyrinth of twisting narrow streets. At first glance, these streets appear disordered, but in fact they are organized. In *Mesta*, for example, four main arteries

* In *Senfos*, *Naxos*, *Pirgos of Thera*, etc., as described by D. Vasileiades, *Eisagoge stin Anagoragiki Laiki Architektonike*, (Athens: Nea Hestia Press, 1955), pp. 8-9.

** K. Kinch, *Vroulia*, (Berlin, 1914), p. 112, and J. Demargue, *Les Ruines de Goulas ou l'Ancienne Ville de Lato en Crete* (BCH, 1901), p. 282.

*** In *Dafni*, *Hosios Meletios*, *Mount Athos* as described by A. Orlandos, *Monasteriaki Architektonike*, (Athens: Hestia Press, 1958), p. 12.

30a

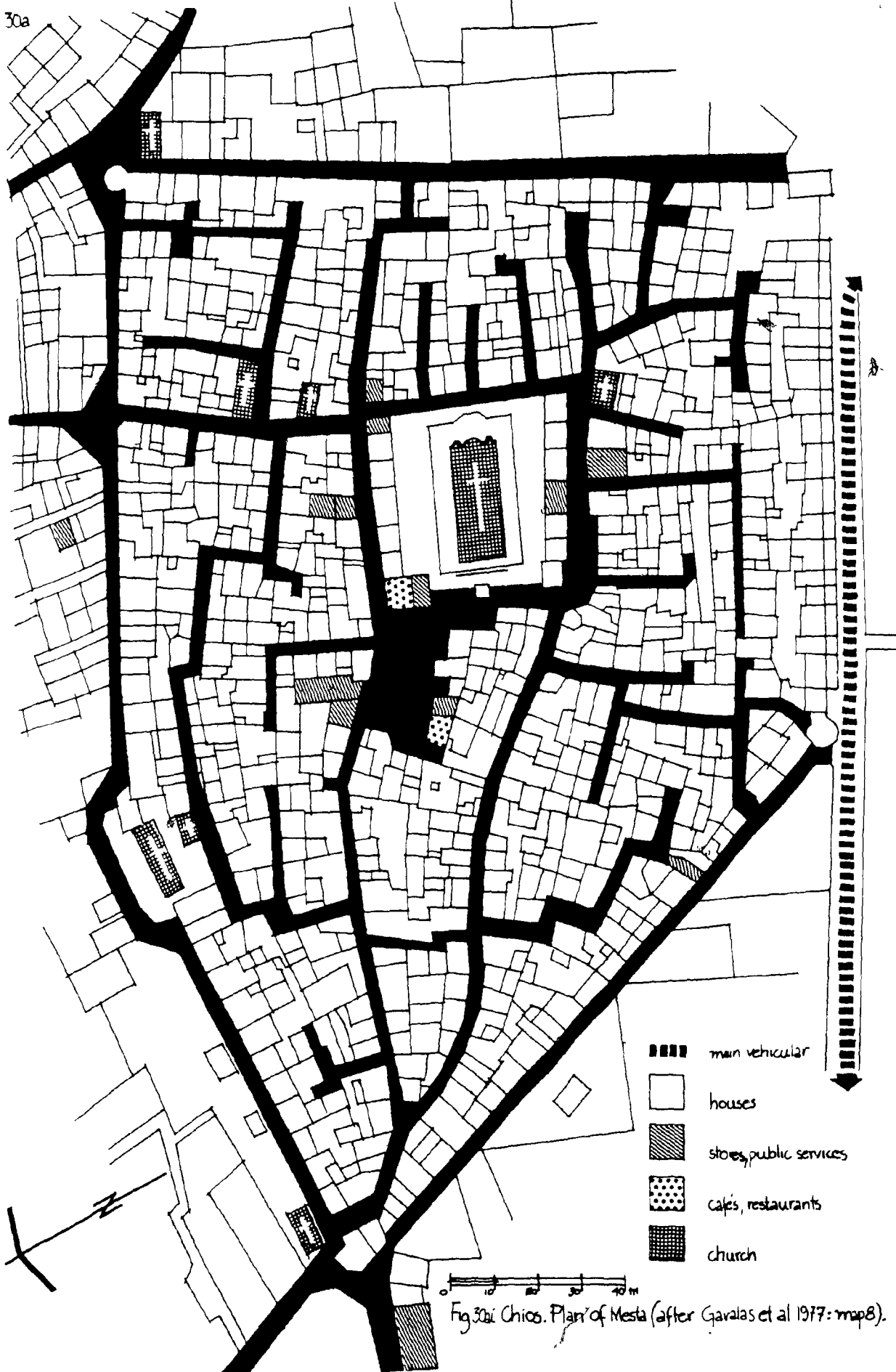
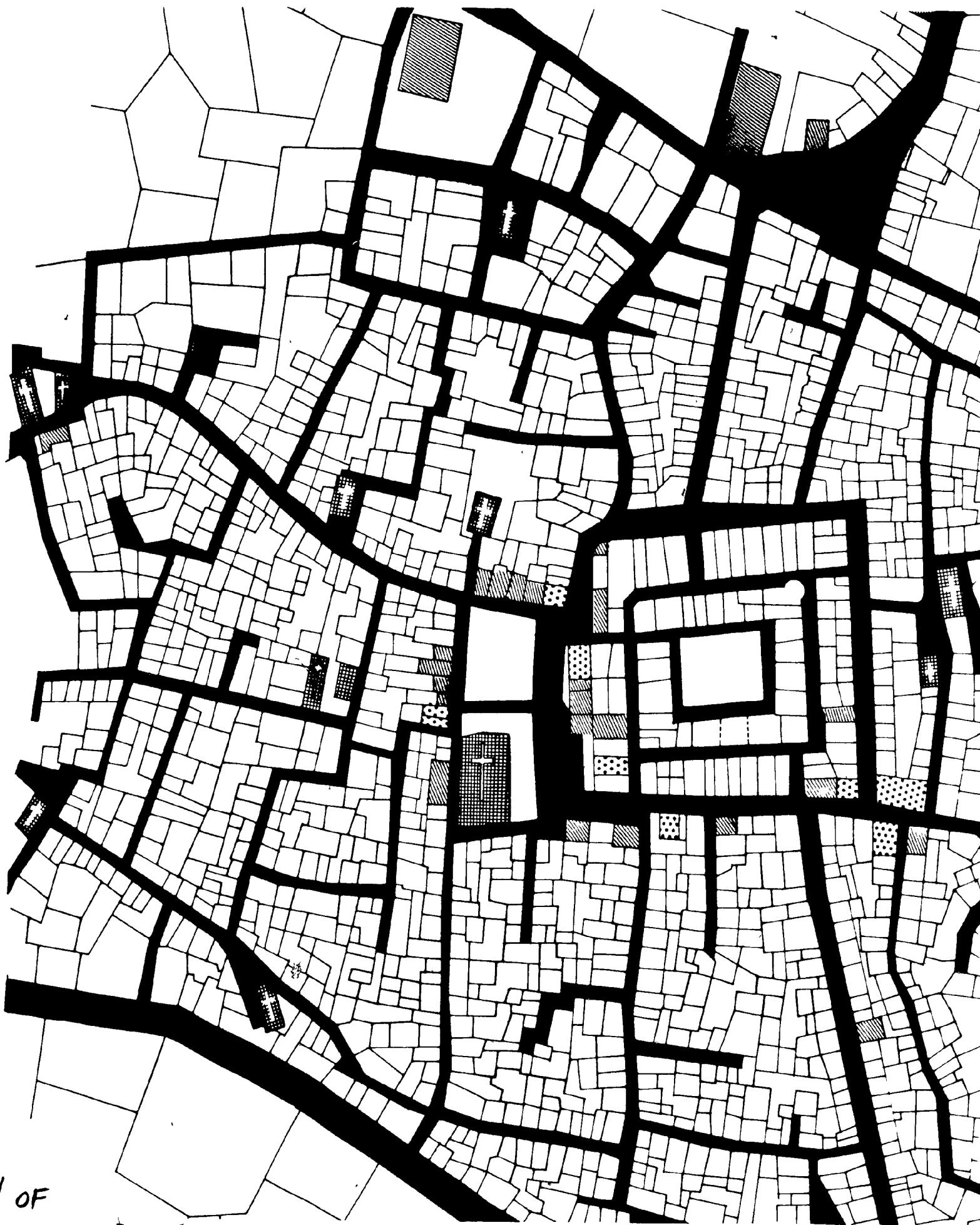
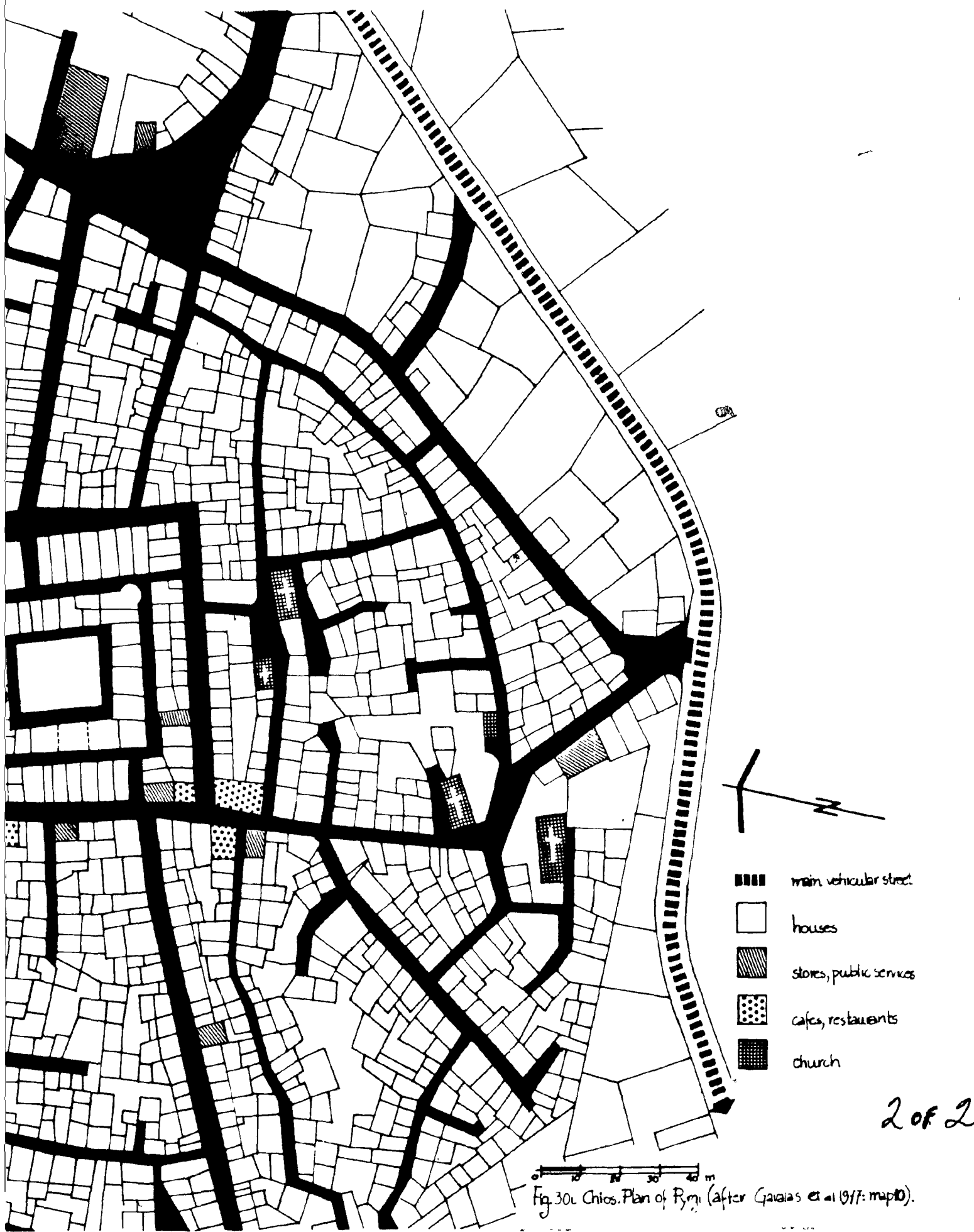


Fig 30b Chios. Plan of Mesta (after Gavallas et al 1977: map 8).





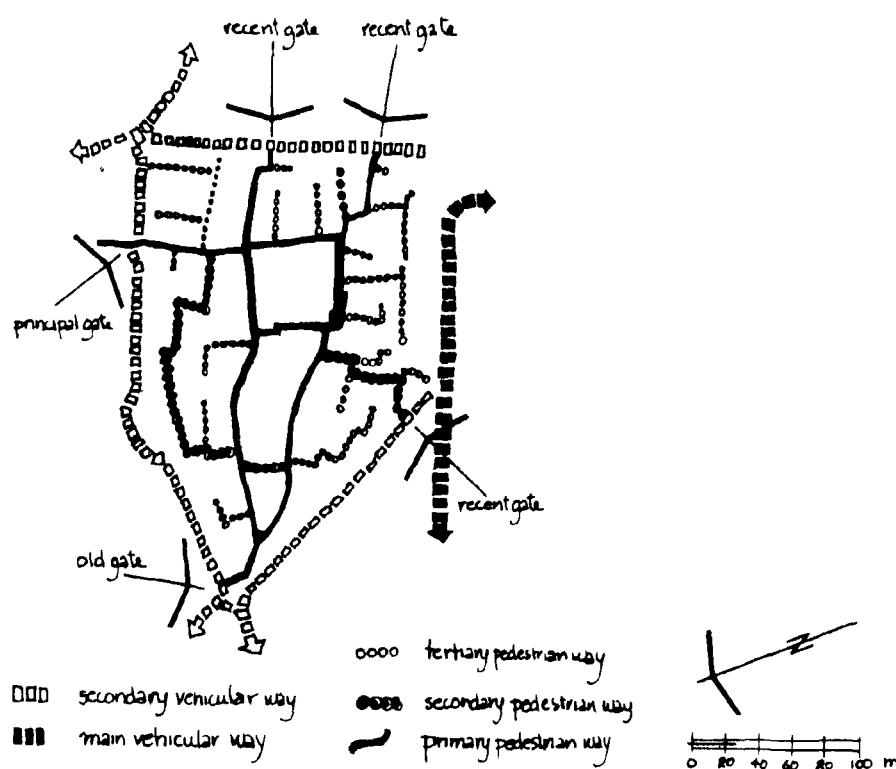


Fig 31. Chios Street analysis of Mesta

(primary streets) lead from the gates to the center of the town, while smaller ones branch out of them forming loops (secondary streets), or cul-de-sac (tertiary streets) which end at a distance of one building depth from the outer walls. The primary streets are approximately 2 m wide, (this width suffices for the passage of a laden pack mule with its driver), but there are alleys that are only .80 m wide.

The streets are paved with stones and have a central drainage channel which carries the water outside the town walls. Often, over the streets, semicircular vaults link opposite facing houses while supporting additional rooms. In addition to the semicircular vaults arched stone bridges connect houses at roof level, thus forming a network of passages,

32a

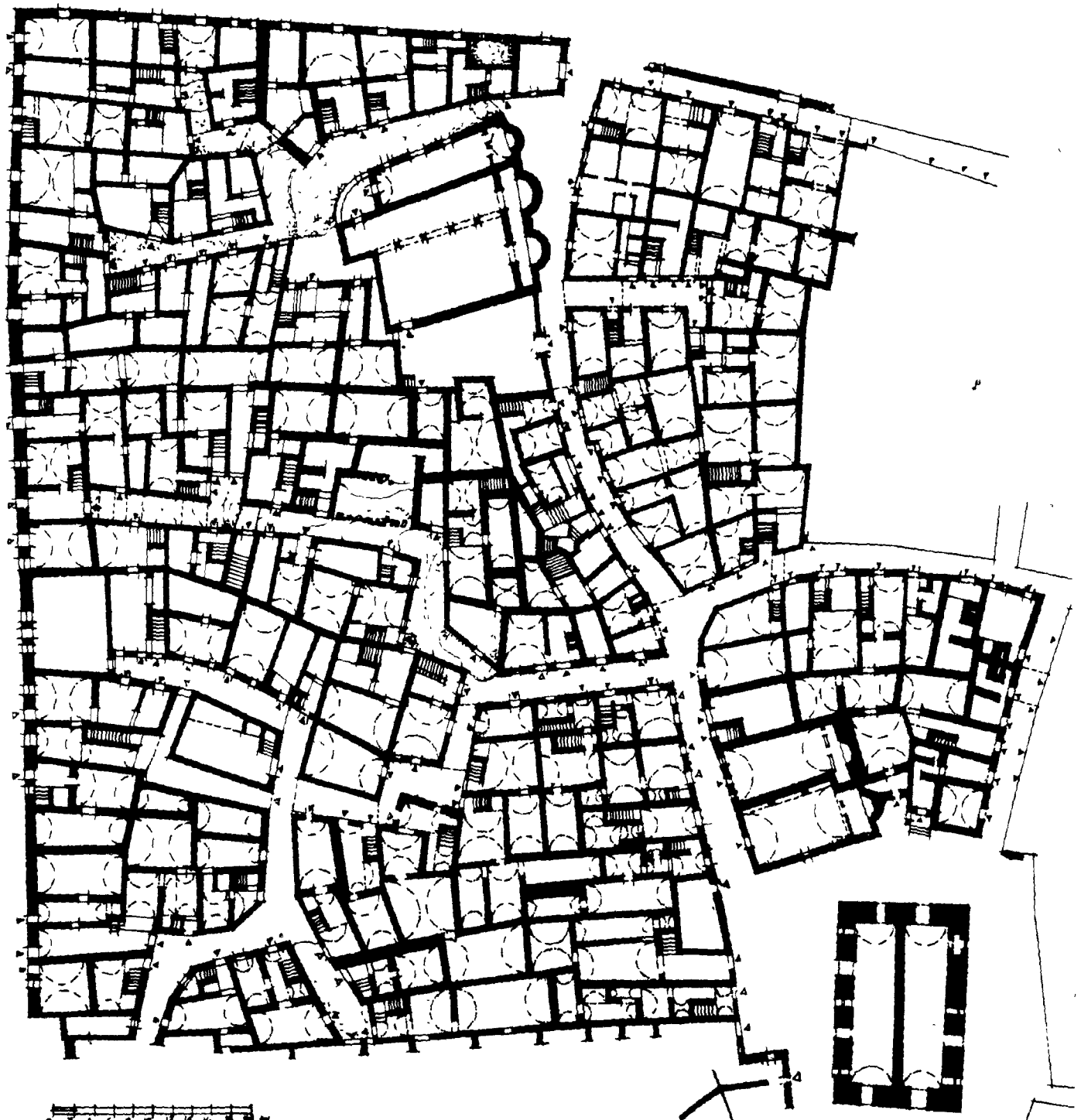


Fig. 32a. Chios Olymbi (after student survey of the School of Architecture in Thessalonika).

that lead to the tower. This tower is separated from the general structure of the town and is surrounded by a relatively wide space forming the *plaza* square of the town.

In Olymboi the tower still stands in the middle of the *plaza* and dominates it. It is renovated and used as a coffeehouse and restaurant. In Pyrgi, the tower is separated from the *plaza* by two lines of houses, it has not been well preserved and today only the shell remains. In Mesta, the tower is now occupied by a large nineteenth century church, flanked to the north and south by blocks of houses. The *plaza* is the only large open space of each town. It is the heart of activity in each of the Mastichochoria communities, the place where the market is held and where men gather in coffeehouses. The sunny open space of the *plaza* offers a sharp contrast to the shadowed and narrow streets.

In Mastichochoria, the settlement is organized in terms of neighborhoods around the churches. A small church is located at a widening of a street, and serves all the surrounding houses. The main town churches are always associated with the central *plaza*. In Pyrgi, for example, the main church, together with the principal shops and three of the coffeehouses surround the *plaza*. In Olymboi, although there is open space all around the tower, only the part of the space that faces the church serves as the *plaza*. In Mesta, as mentioned, the church now occupies the very place of the central tower.

The typical house is a two-storey structure, the ground floor being reserved for storage or for the animals. A staircase leads to an open patio invariably containing potted plants and a stone.

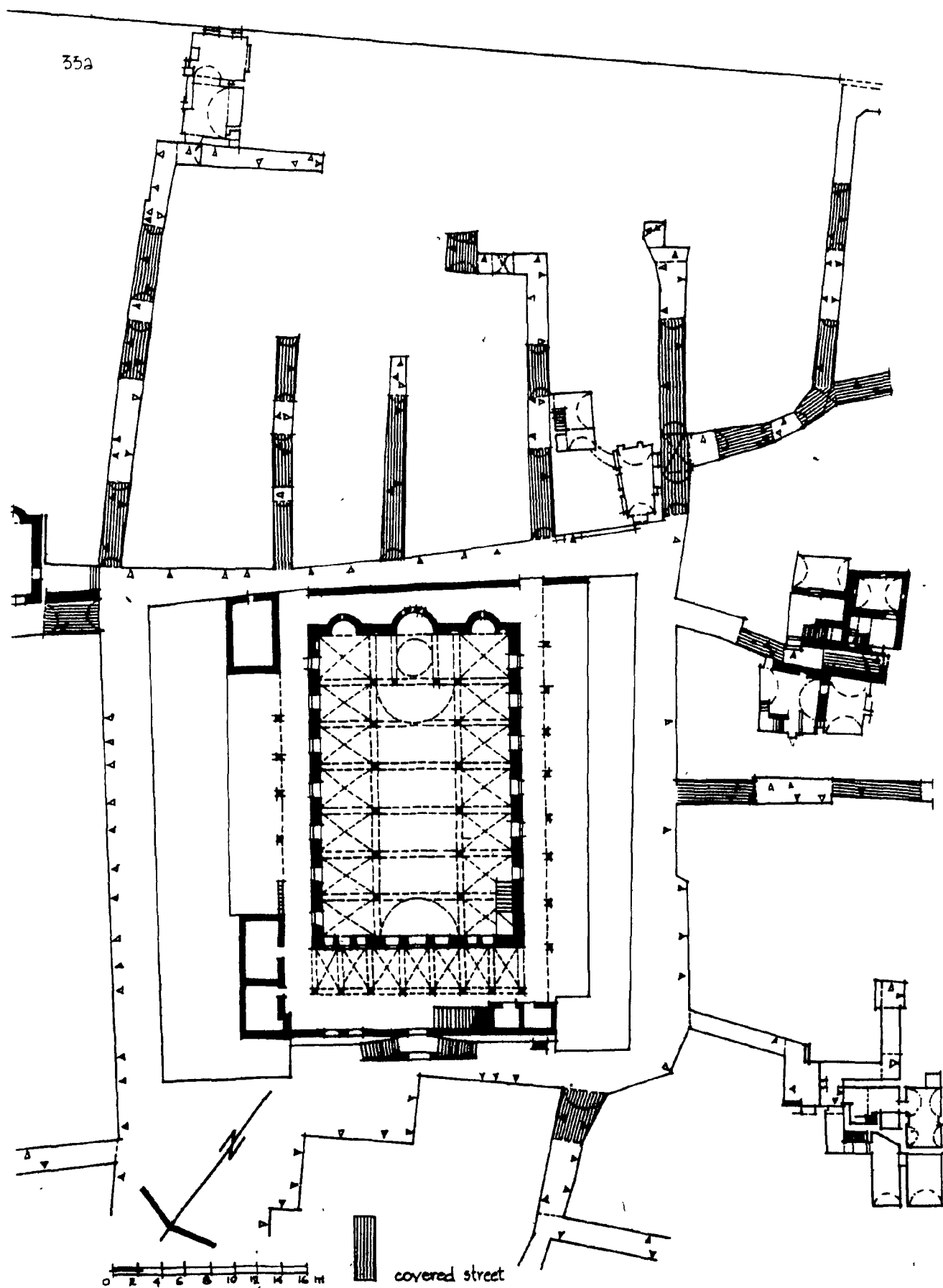
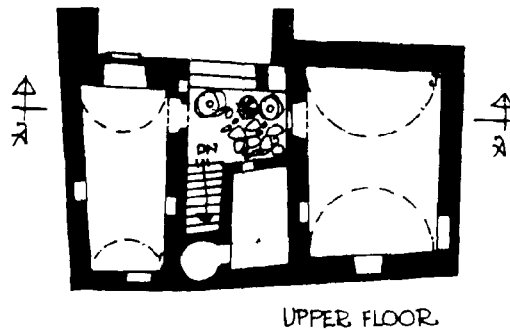
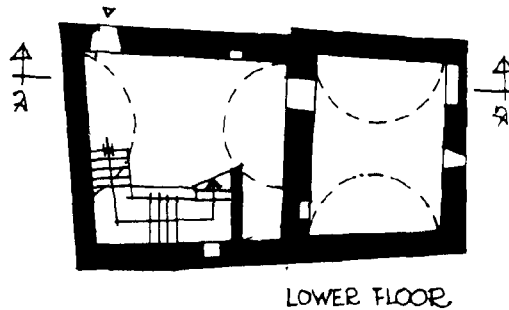


Fig.35a: Chios Center of Mesta (after student survey of the University of Thessalonika).



UPPER FLOOR



LOWER FLOOR

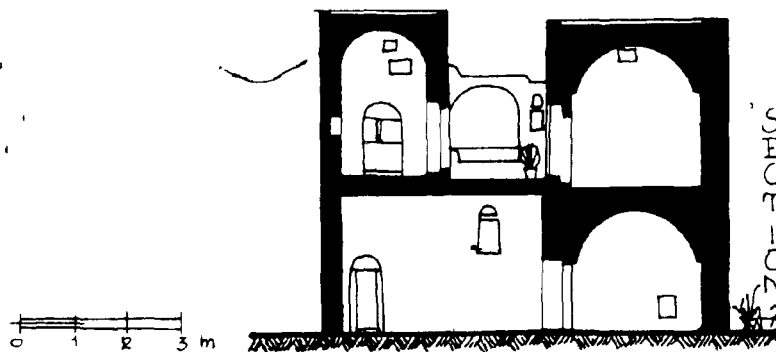


Fig 33c Chios House in Miesia
after Bouras and Lambakes
(1960: 37)

sink built into the wall. Around the open patio, the various rooms are freely organized, usually quite independently of the ground floor plan, and often bridging over the streets. From the patio a narrow flight of stairs leads up to the terrace at which level there is free communication between neighboring houses. These terraces provide an extensive space for children to play and women to dry their laundry.

Everything is built out of stone, and the structural system is based on the barrel vault. Since the span of the masonry barrel vault is

34a

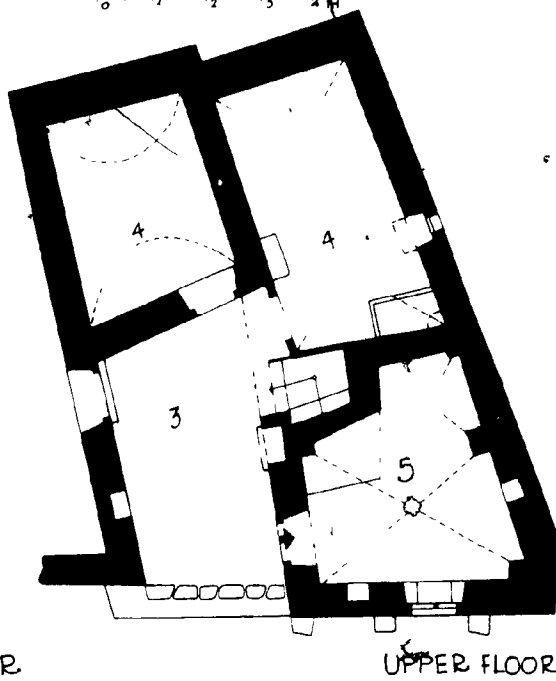
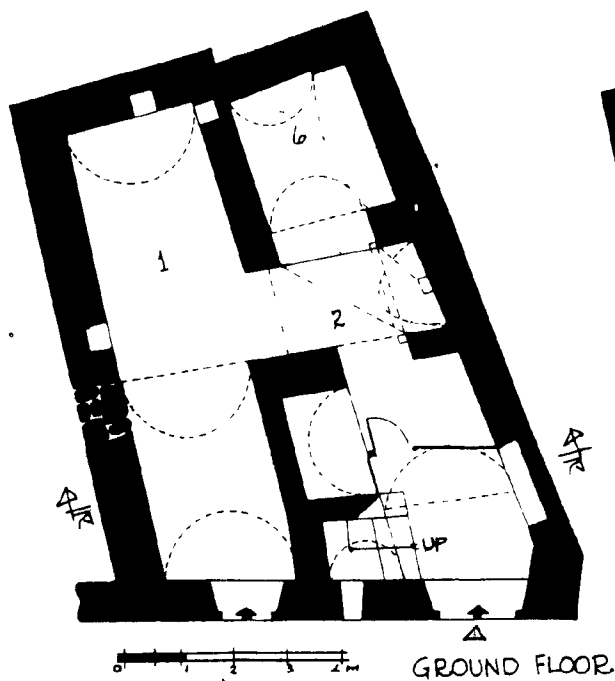
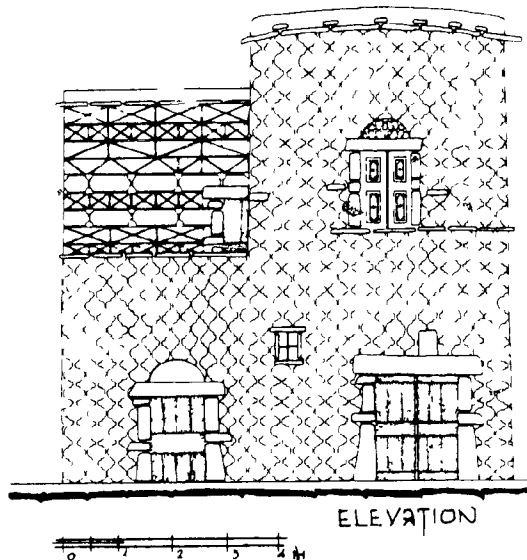


Fig 34a Chios House in Pyrgi (after Vasileiades 1973:161) 1 stable, 2 kitchen, 3 patio, 4 bedroom
5 living room, 6 cellar

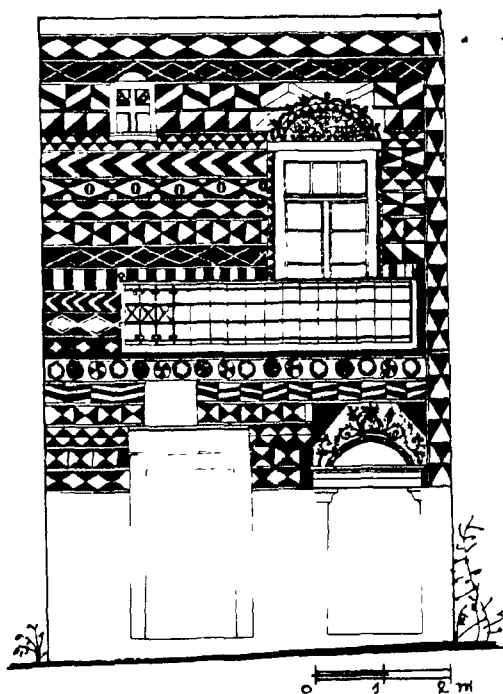


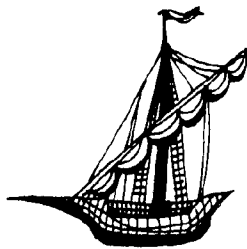
Fig 34. Chios Xysto elevation in Pyrgi
(after Bouras and Lampakes 1960:37)

seldom greater than five meters, the width of all spaces, whether used for passageways, stabling, storage, living rooms or open patios is limited to five meters or less. However, there is no structural limitation to the depth of these rooms, nor to the depth of the building blocks, which vary from twelve to thirty meters. Lighting is often dim but the thick stone walls and arches keep the interiors cool and dry.

An unusual and striking feature of the houses of Pyrgi is the decorative plaster work called *xysto* (scratched surface). The larger part of

the facade is covered by a wide variety of simple geometric forms arranged in horizontal bands of 15 to 30 m wide. This is accomplished by a technique called sgraffito. A mortar mixture is prepared and lime is added little by little. The resulting mixture is applied on the surface of the wall, and then it is smoothed with a trowel until the lime rises to the surface as a white cream. After the cream stiffens color, usually white, is applied. The design is drawn with a nail, and the surface is scratched revealing the dark mortar underneath.





Mykonos

Mykonos is a comparatively flat island. During the thirteenth to sixteenth century period of piracy, when many other island cities were being developed as fortress cities, the site of Mykonos was not developed because of the flat and, therefore, difficult to protect terrain. At this time, Kastro of Mykonos did exist, but until the end of the seventeenth century it consisted of only a small number of houses and churches built on the tip of an unprotected peninsula. Most probably the back walls of the peripheral houses served as part of the defensive wall of the town. Furthermore, houses and churches were connected either in series or by buttressing and bridging over the streets, so that the houses themselves served as continuous ramparts. This characteristic was partially carried over in the later, less restricted development along the northern gulf (Ernest and Mitarachi 1960:79).

After the seventeenth century, Mykonos expanded and developed as a harbour town. Unlike the tight town forms limited by geographical or protective considerations, the former trading center opens up to the sea and gently extends into the rocky grazing pastures beyond. While the oldest part of the town consists of irregular blocks separated by narrow streets, in the recent part of the town there are long blocks of houses in a row

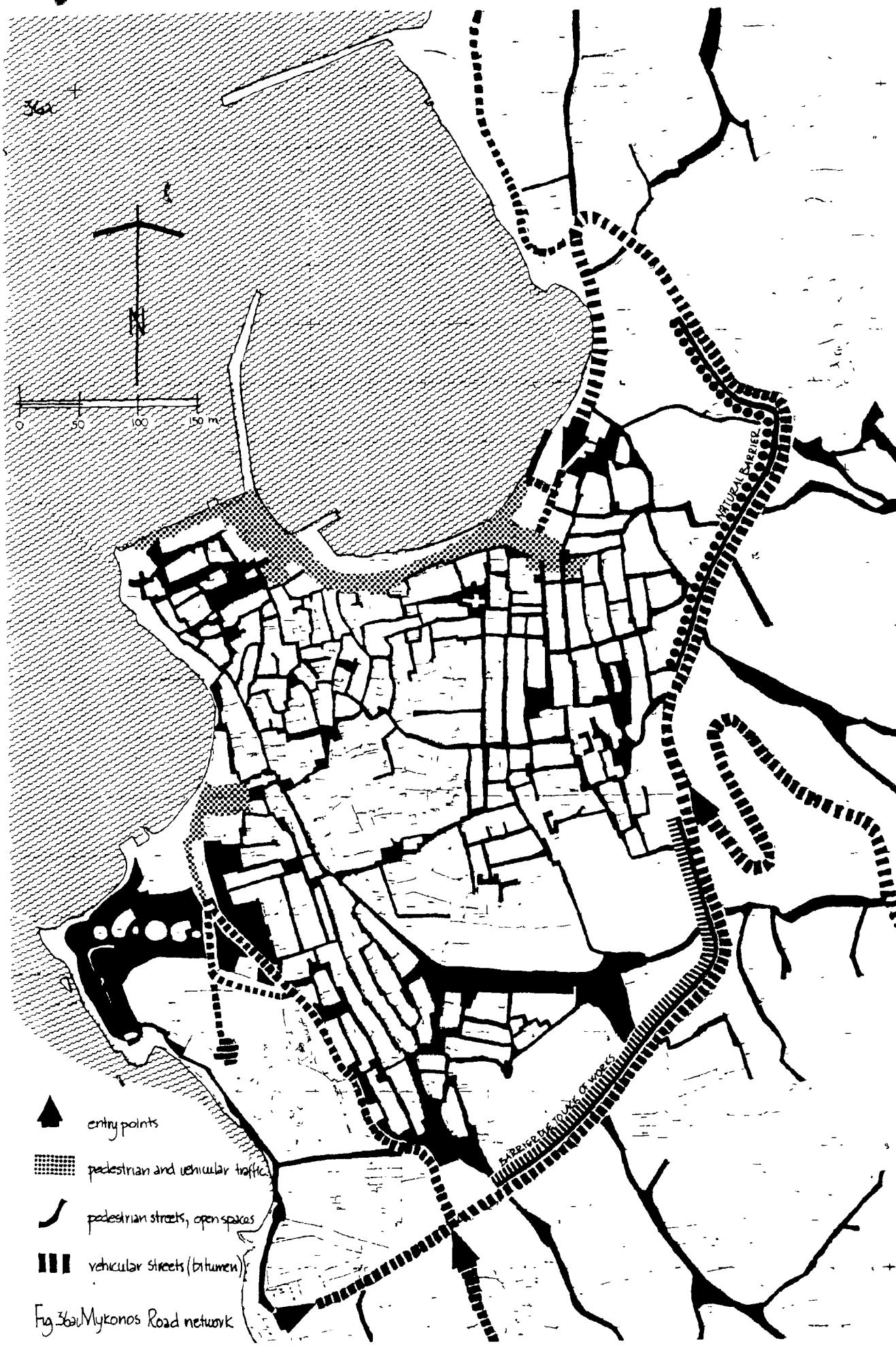


Fig. 362. Mykonos Road network

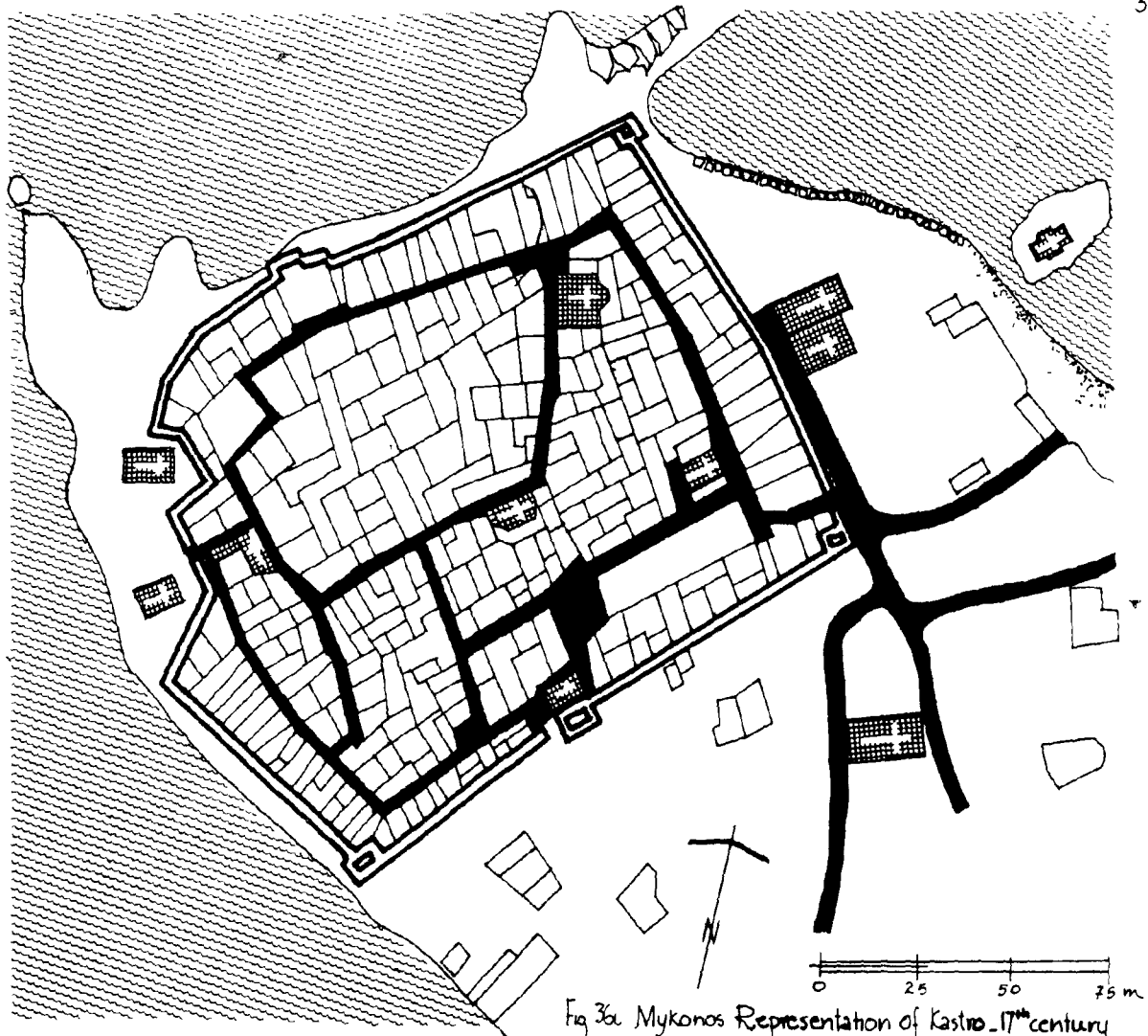


Fig 36. Mykonos Representation of Kastri - 17th century
(after Prof Kyriazopoulos).

At first impression, the human-scale streets lead on and on, turning slowly upon themselves to form labyrinths, dulling all sense of direction. But soon one realizes that in the present plan of Mykonos there is a hierarchy in pedestrian movement. The broadest street is the one along the quay, it is the active commercial, and social nucleus that serves as harbor, street, market, and square. From the quay three long straight streets lead to the extremities of the city. These branch out to smaller domestic streets, passages, and squares. The light admitted into the streets, also varies from the bright sunlight of the quay to the cave-like atmosphere quality of the domestic

37a

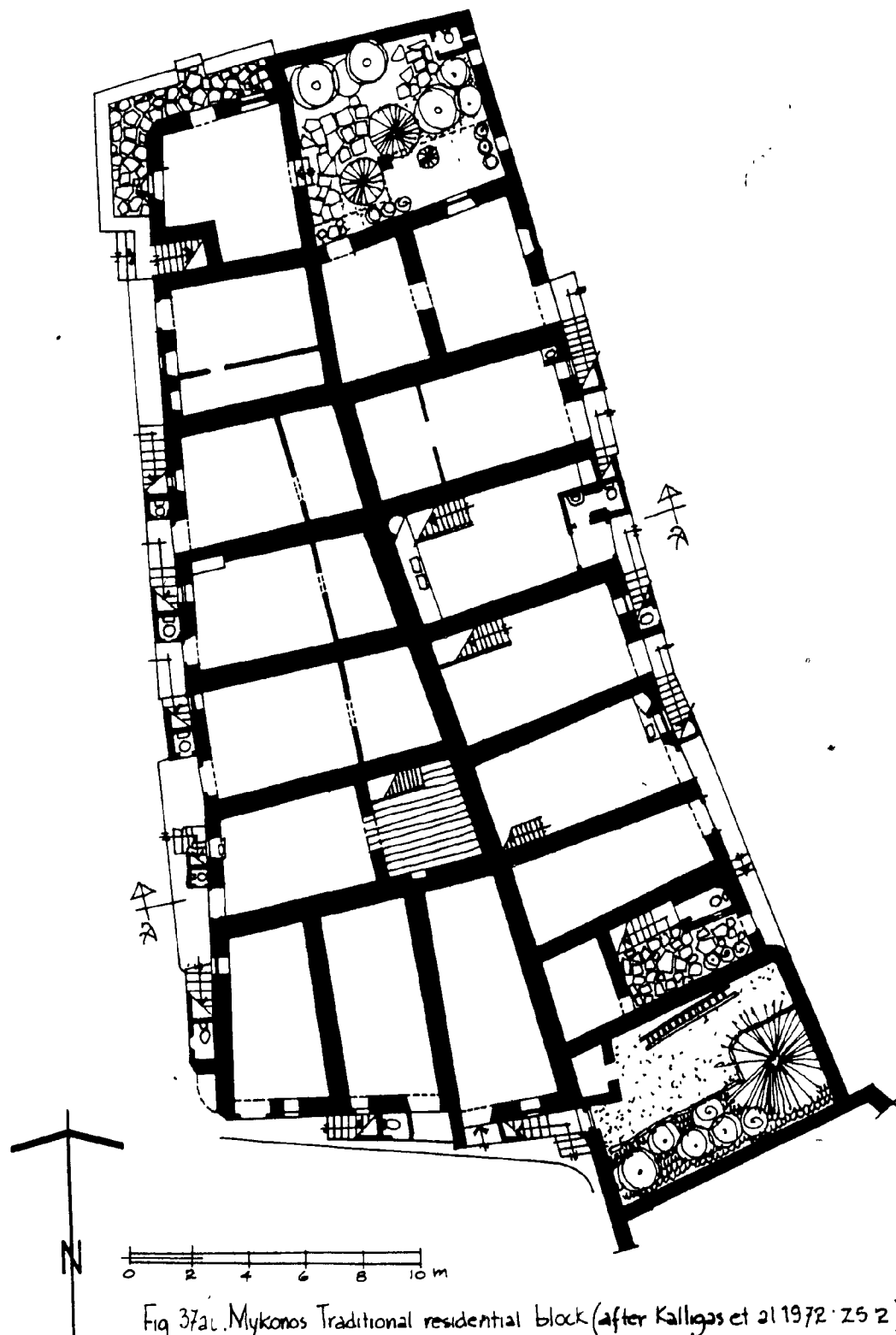


Fig 37a. Mykonos Traditional residential block (after Kalligas et al 1972: 252).

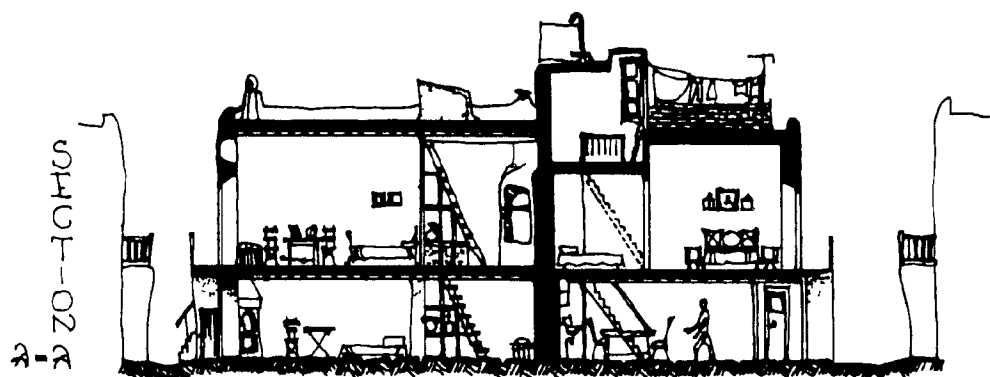


Fig 37: Mykonos Section of traditional block (after Kalligas et al 1972: Z5.3)

passages All the streets are enriched by the modulation of projecting exterior stairs, chapels, occasional bridges and tunnels, and small areas of intense color on wooden doors, windows, balconies, and railings

There are several types of houses varying from one-storey dwelling units one room deep, to three-storey dwelling units three rooms deep A typical Mykonite house has load-bearing stone walls and flat roofs which span the short room-dimensions with cypress logs Sometimes intermediate arches are introduced The cypress logs support twigs tied together and covered with seaweed and a thick layer of mud Then the entire surface of the structure is whitewashed many times Most houses have two storeys with the living room opening directly off the street having the kitchen located behind it, and the sleeping areas above In this case, each dwelling unit contains an exterior stone staircase (the space under this is used as chicken hatch or storage area), and an interior ladder-like staircase leading from the kitchen to the sleeping areas Other houses contain two separate dwelling units, one on the ground floor, *katoí*, and another on the first floor, *andó* Few of the houses have courtyards at the rear since they are usually backed up by other houses For this reason, the interior spaces depend upon the narrow streets for light and air, and the inhabitants use the streets as exterior extensions of their homes

38a



Fig 38a. Mykonos. Street elevation (after Kalligas et al 1972: 25.3)

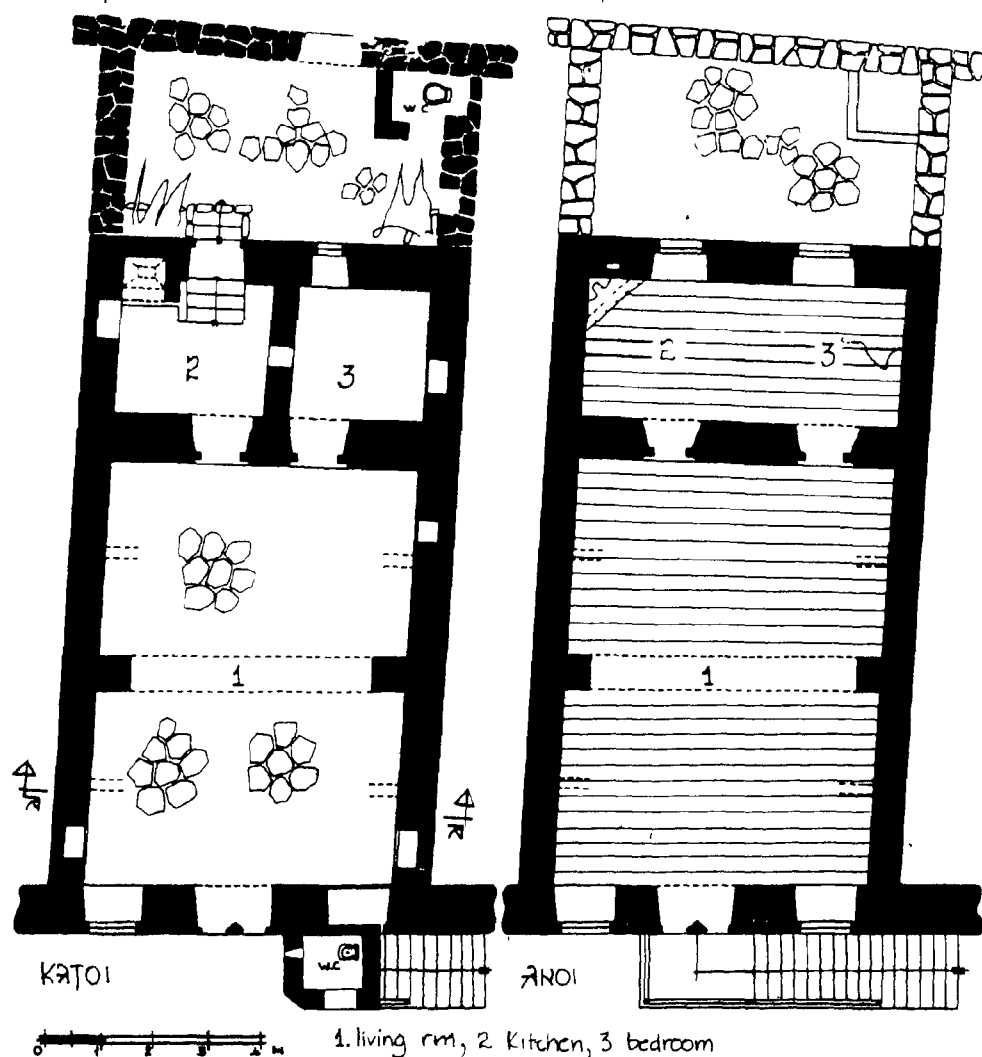


Fig 38. Mykonos *Katoi* and *Anoi* (after Vasileiades 1973:49)

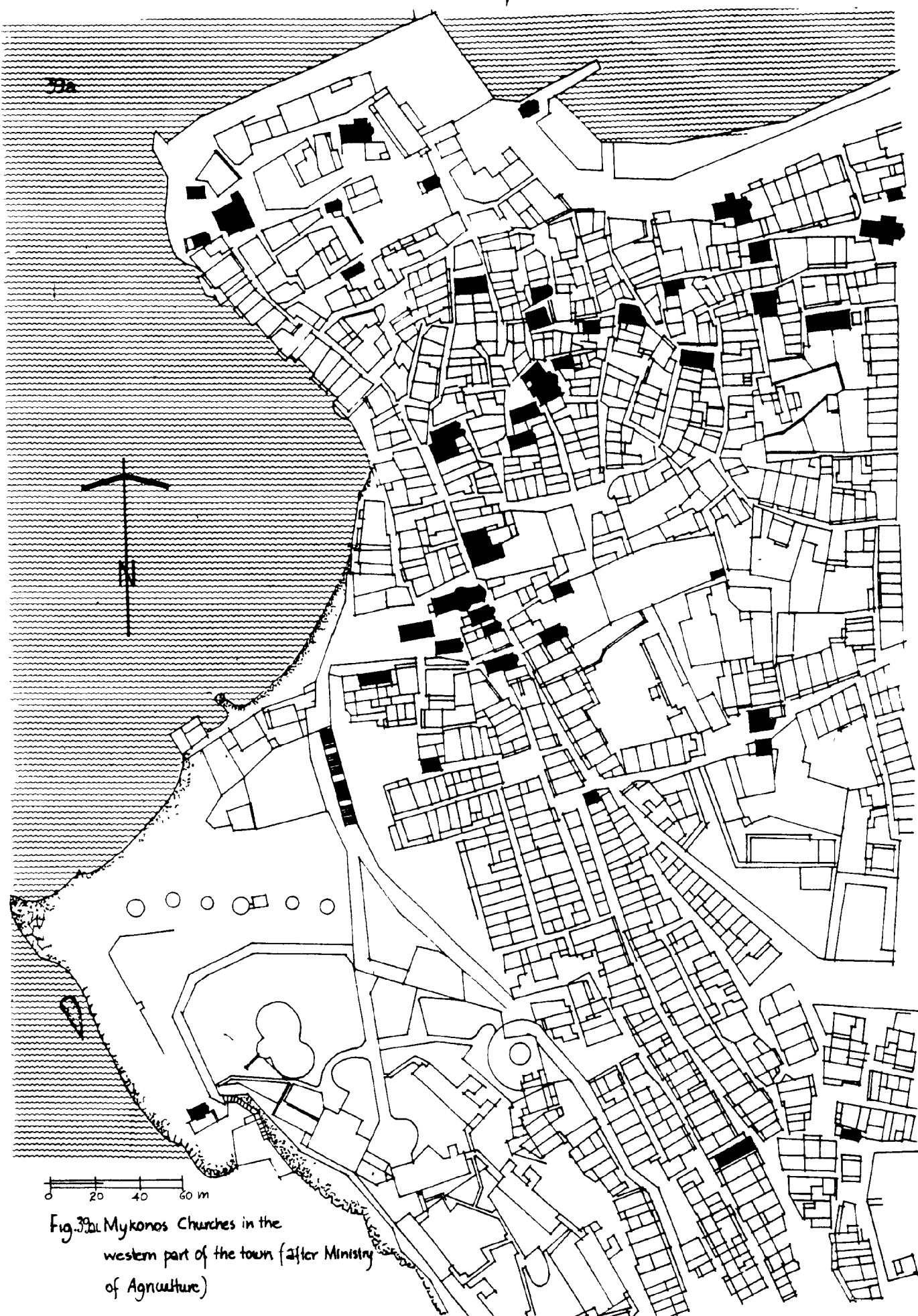


Fig. 39a Mykonos Churches in the western part of the town (after Ministry of Agriculture)

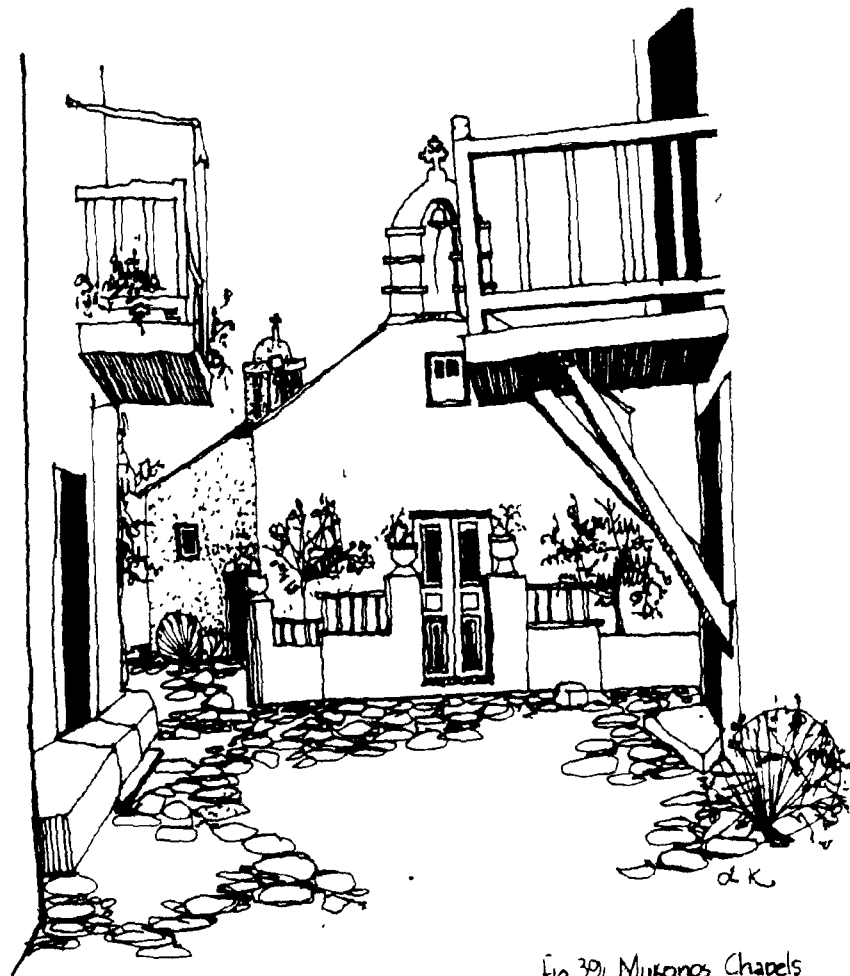
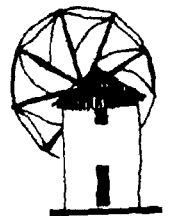


Fig 39c Mykonos Chapels

As for the 360 little orthodox chapels (most of which are private), one could say that they express themselves but do not dominate. They have bright red and blue roofs, rounded walls to express their altar niches, and are often free standing close to the widening of streets and small irregular squares. Mykonite churches are further discussed in the section on Post Byzantine churches.



**Sifnos**

The town of Sifnos consists of a linear group of settlements which have a galaxy-like configuration. This group contains seven villages, and it is possible to distinguish at certain places within them earlier cores of settlements and traces of the defensive urban lay-out that prevailed in the Cyclades during the Frankish and Turkish periods. The central settlements of Sifnos, as we see them today, were established in the nineteenth century when this area attracted the majority of the population of the island.

On Sifnos, farming was, and still is, the main feature of the economy of the island; the site of the central settlements is directly related to farming since most of the fertile land of the island is on the central plateau. This site also combines a favourable orientation, a suitable ground formation, and relative protection from the strong winds. Thus farming and the difficult conditions created by the lack of space on the island, are the two basic reasons that drove the people of Sifnos to the center of the plateau. The gradual increase of the population resulted in the expansion of the settlements until these combined and formed a uniform elongated network which follows a North-South direction. This network

41a

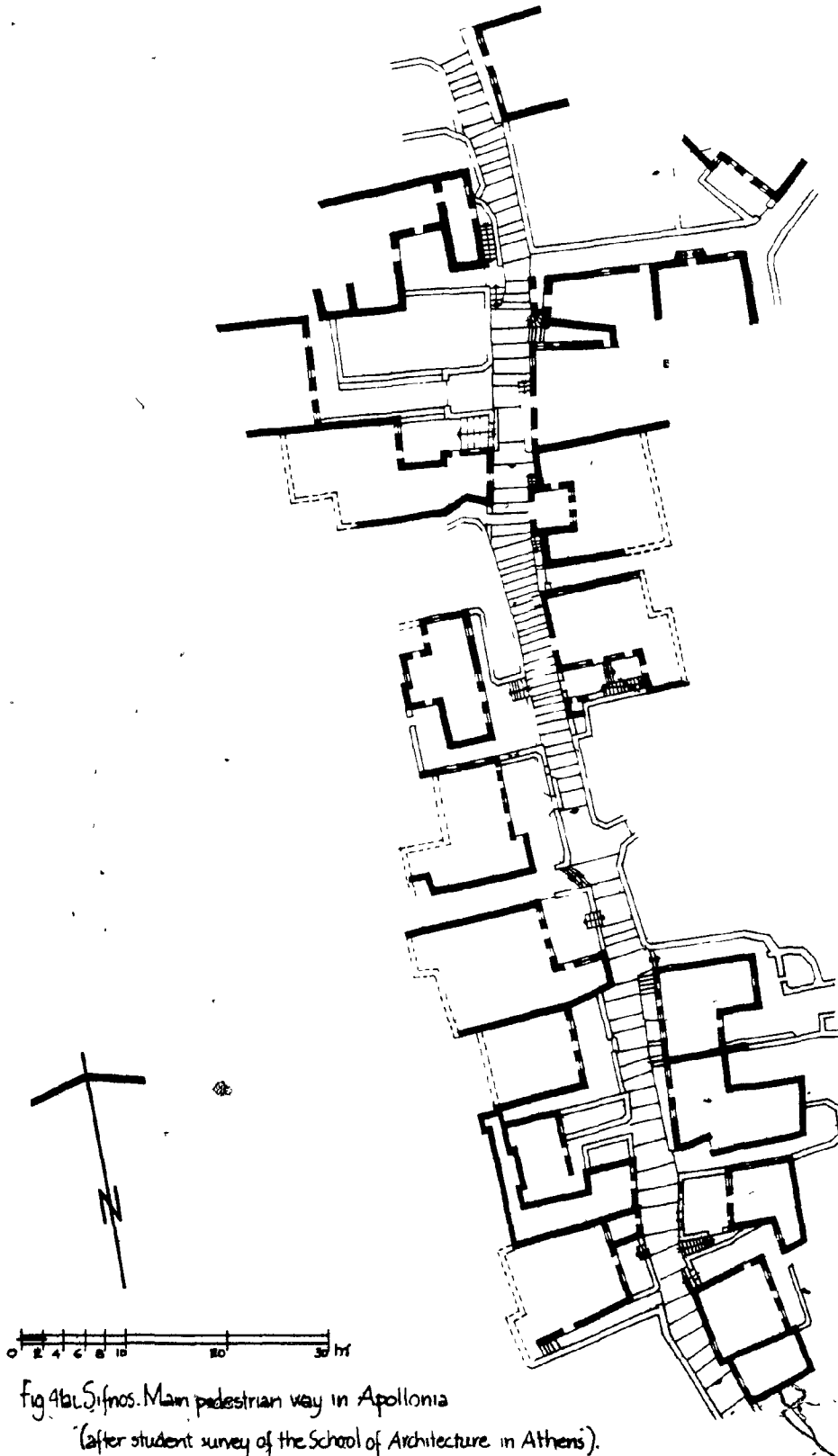


Fig 41a Sifnos. Main pedestrian way in Apollonia
(after student survey of the School of Architecture in Athens).

KATAVATE

APOLLONIA

XAMPELA

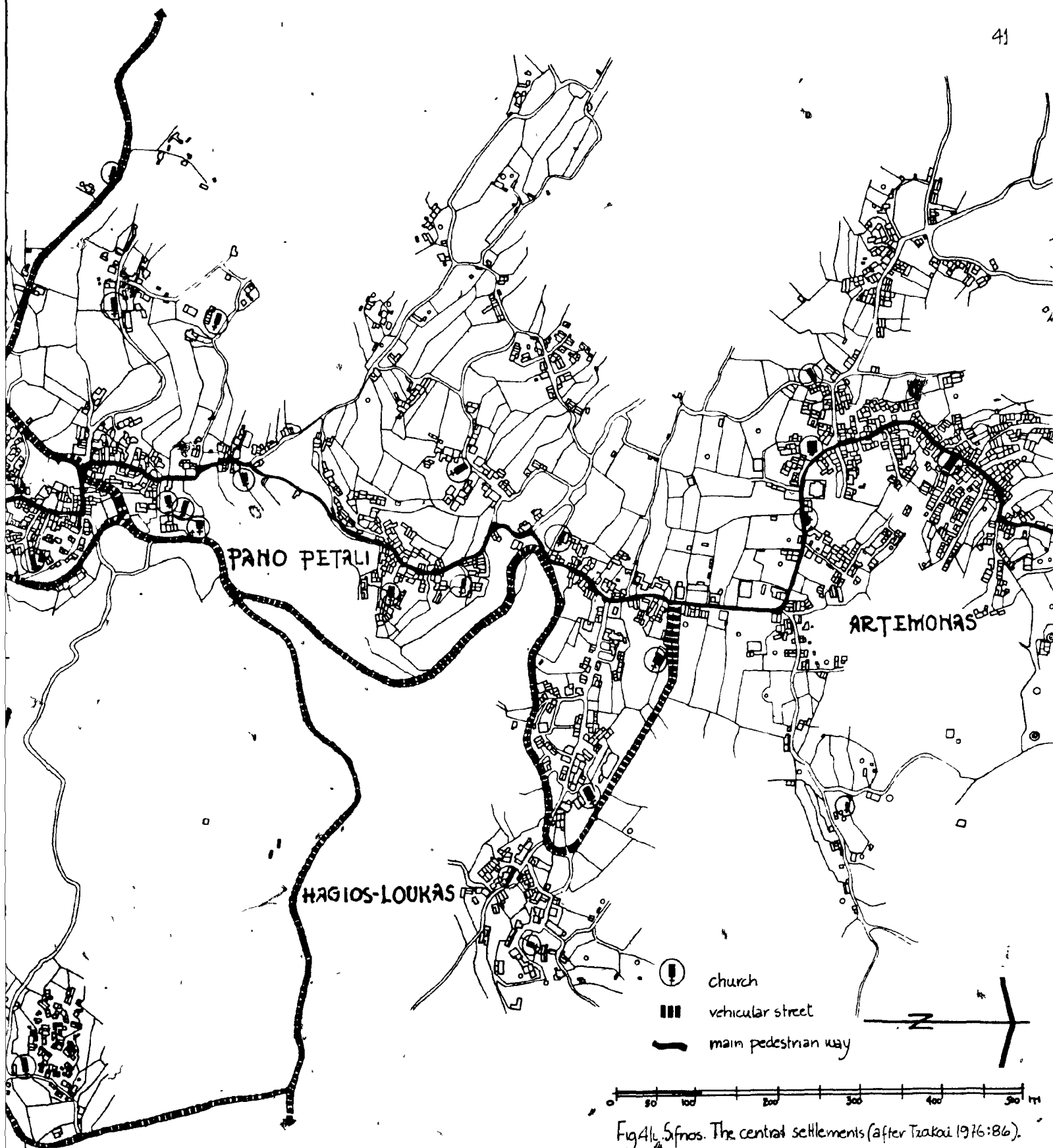


Fig 41. Sifnos. The central settlements (after Tzakou 1976:86).

functions as a single settlement, while retaining the unique nature of its formation and the individual characteristics of the villages.

The general lay-out of the group of settlements has a linear shape. The linear formation, which is very common in the recent towns of the Cyclades (Clark and Radford 1974:76), was both the creator of and created by the process of extension. All settlements (except Kato Petali) are linked together by a central pedestrian street which concentrates the social, spiritual, commercial, administrative, and recreational activities. It is the spinal cord of the complex, that follows approximately a North-South direction. On the left and right, other secondary streets branch out and lead to dead ends, or outside the settlements to the fields. The houses are densely concentrated around this pedestrian street network. The reasons for the resulting dense structure are: a) the influence of the tradition of the dense ancient defensive systems; b) the penurious economy; and c) perhaps, as Amos Rapoport suggested the socio-cultural framework of the Greek society which demands sociability and life among crowds (Rapoport 1969:47).

The vehicular traffic is as a rule separated from the pedestrian traffic. Recently, in the twentieth century, a few central squares have been established. These new squares are always associated with the main vehicular street and they serve as the starting point for vehicular movement. There also exist a number of smaller open spaces, widenings of streets e.t.c., located next to churchyards, (these in older times were main poles of attraction of social activity).

Each of the settlements is in a way a large neighborhood which encompasses a number of smaller neighborhoods. Both in the settlements and in the neighborhoods, within them, there exists a distinction that corresponds to the social position of the inhabitants. For example, Arlemonas is the aristocratic settlement which

43a

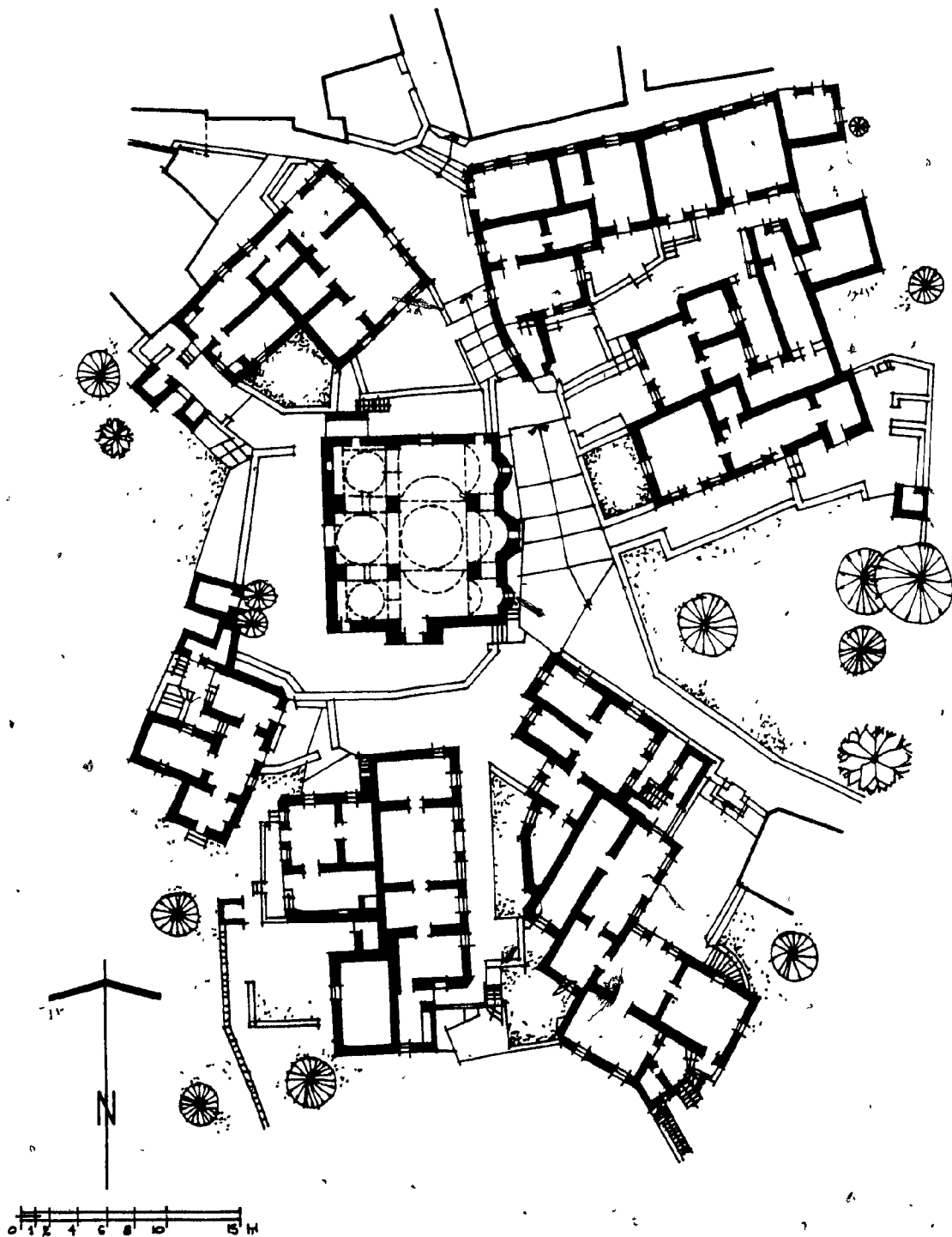


Fig. 43a Sifnos Neighborhood in Artemonas
(after student survey of the School of Architecture in Athens).

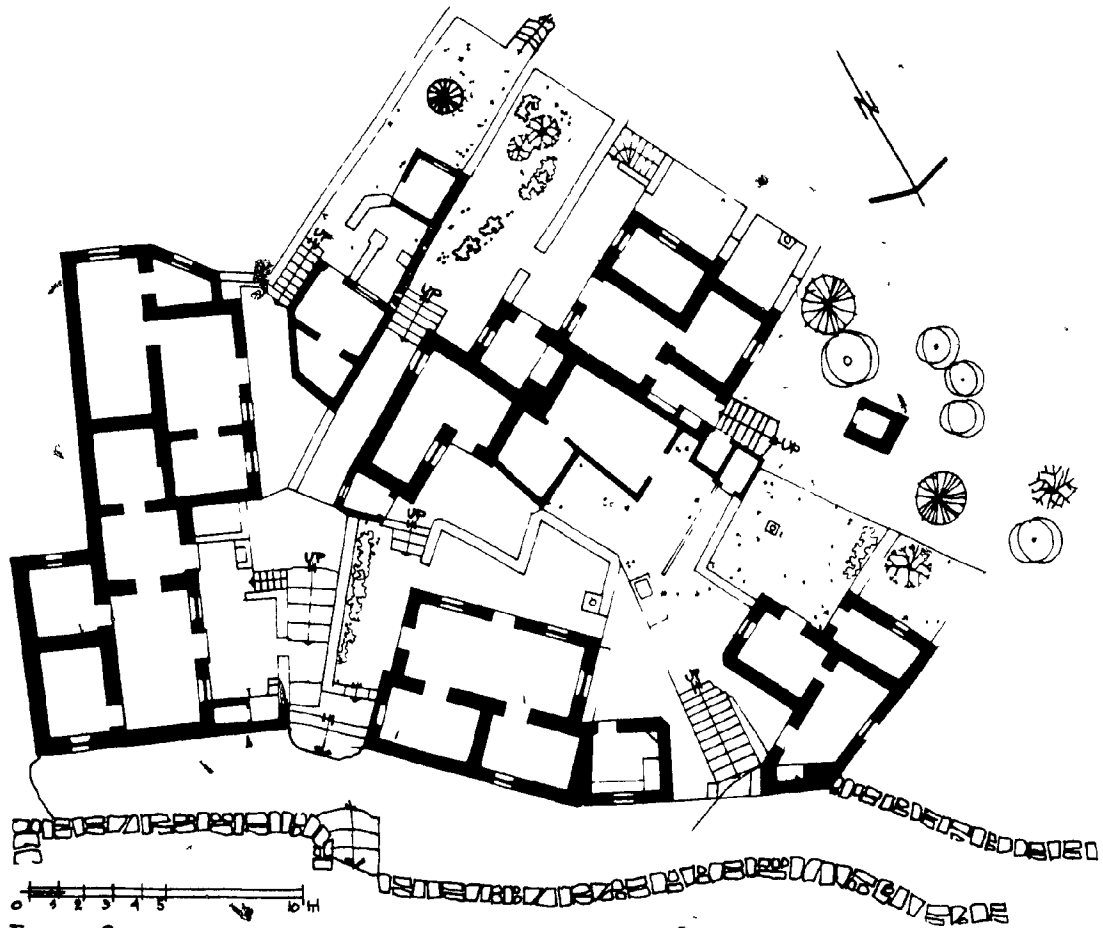


Fig. 43i Sifnos Houses in Apollonia (after student survey of the School of Architecture in Athens)

is further divided into neighborhoods with wealthy houses clustered around churches Katarate and Kato Petali on the other hand are settlements of farmers that own small houses; and Apollonia consists of both aristocratic and of less prosperous neighborhoods. The social distinctions, nevertheless, have not assumed such dimensions as to create closed areas or destroy the unity of the whole system. From the nineteenth century on, the society of Sifnos has been dominated by a middle class of small-holders and still shows a considerable homogeneity.

In general, there is no specific rule that governs the way the houses are arranged. The various properties do not have regular forms and the houses interlock with each other and adjust to the limitations of the site having to cross

44a



Fig. 44a. Sifnos. Views of Settlements.

α.κ.

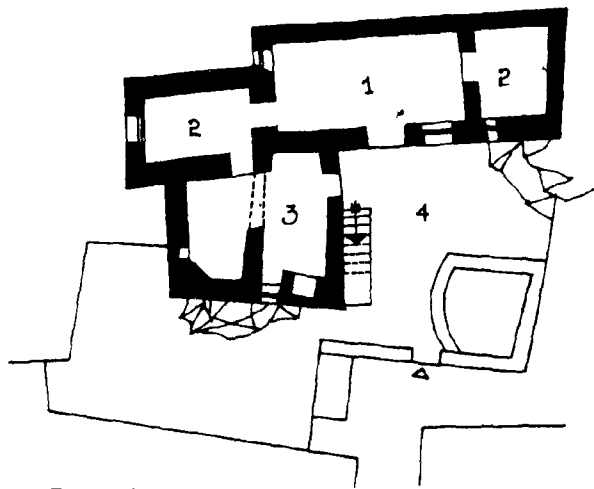


Fig. 44c. Sifnos. Plan of traditional house

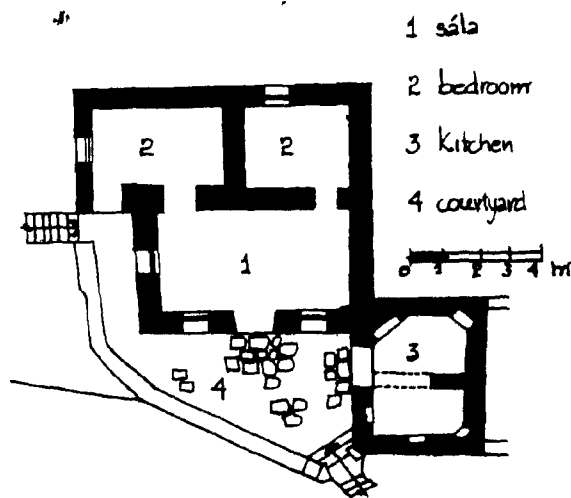


Fig. 44c. Sifnos. Plan of traditional house
(after Tzakou 1976: 116; 117).

the courtyard of one house in order to enter into another is not unusual, in this case it is suggested that such houses used to belong to members of the same family and were built on a single family lot (Tzakou 1976: 83)

The majority of the houses in the central settlements are medium size, although there exist a few large aristocratic ones (neoclassical style), as well as small houses of a purely rural type

A significant element of the traditional medium size house is its courtyard. This is invariably encircled by a low wall (in contrast to the high walls constructed for privacy in other islands such as Hydra, Santorini, Rhodes). Through the courtyard one enters into the *sála*

(living room), and thence into the bedrooms. Access to the kitchen, bathroom, and the occasional storage room is also through the courtyard. In this way corridors and hallways are eliminated and the courtyard functions as the link between the service rooms and the rest of the house, rendering the traditional Sifnian house efficient and functional.

45a



Fig. 45a. Sifnos Parish church and neighborhood in Pano Petali
(after student survey of the School of Architecture in Athens).

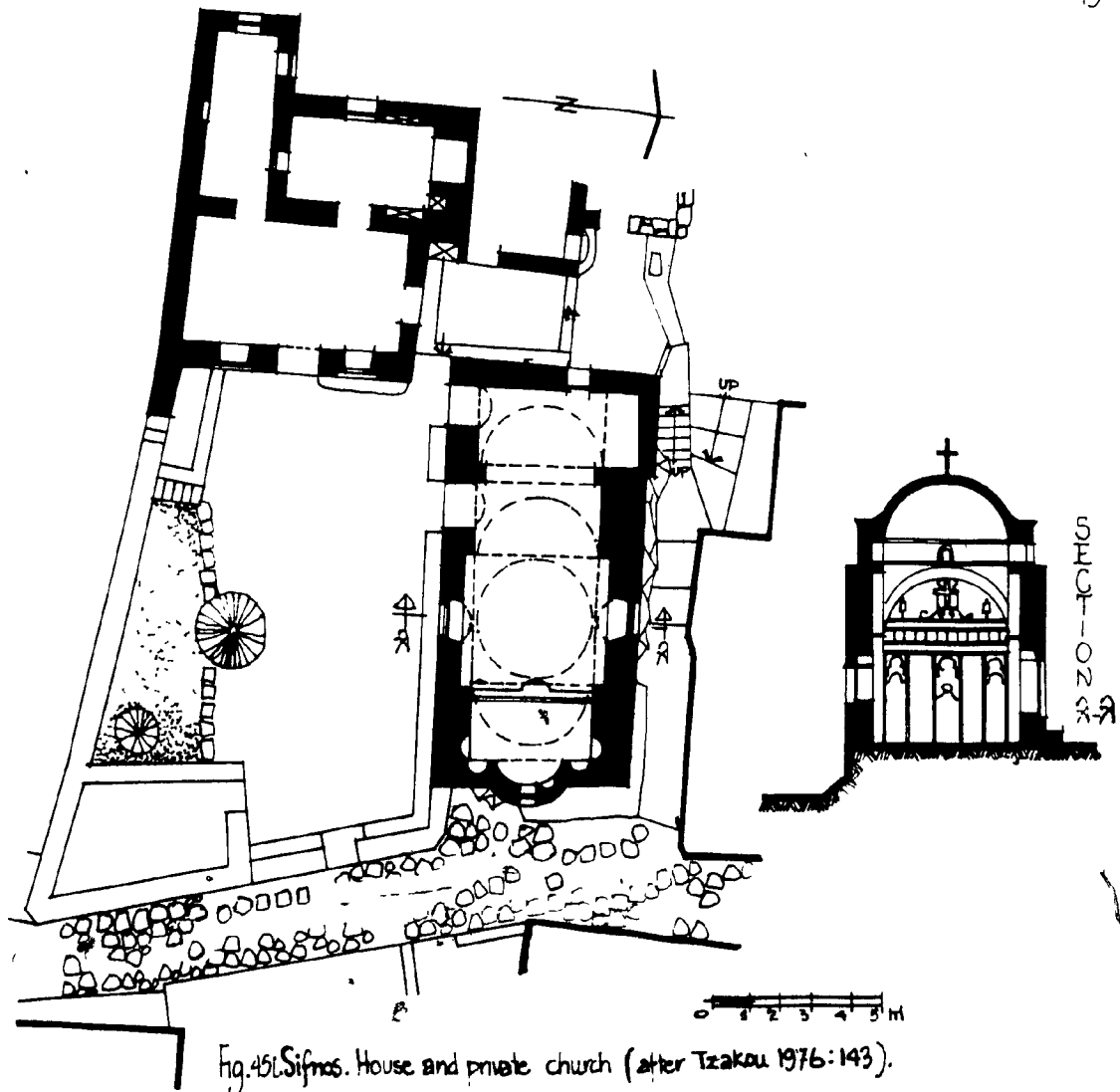
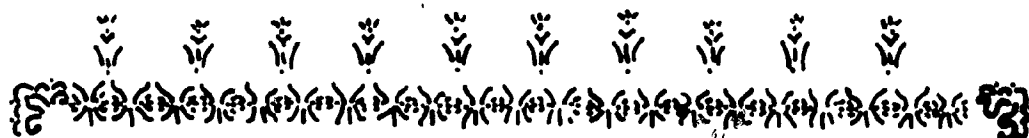


Fig. 45. Sifnos. House and private church (after Tzakou 1976: 143).

Throughout the settlements there are a large number of churches with the neighborhoods clustered around them. Most of them are private and access to them is often through the owner's courtyard. Their construction is similar to the construction of houses, and their form is that of a flat roof single-aisled basilica, two-aisled basilica, or single-aisled basilica with a dome.

CHAPTER III



ELEMENTS OF THE TOWNS

An attempt is made to analyze the complementary elements of the towns separately.

First houses and churches are examined. Houses form the majority of the buildings since the towns are of residential character. The profusion of churches often appears as "exceptional" and tends to dominate the surrounding built environment.

The special qualities of the islands' climate and topography and the constant relationship of the people with the sea, have played an important role in shaping their behavioral patterns (Thakurdesai 1972:334). For the islanders, life nine months of the year is spent outdoors. It is frustrating to stay indoors even in the winter. As a result interior spaces of the houses of the islands have remained, compared to interior spaces of houses of northern climates, relatively undeveloped. On the contrary a special emphasis is placed on the outdoor spaces such as courtyards, streets, or main squares called *plateas*.

An analysis of *plateas* and of streets follows the analysis of houses and churches since open spaces are also considered important elements of the urban structure. Courtyards are described together with the houses as their outdoor extensions.



Houses

There is a great variety of house types in the Aegean islands. With the exception of some vaulted-roof houses (Kimbolos, Antiparos, Thera) and the sloped-roof houses of certain islands in the northern Aegean (Skopelos, Samothrace), a common feature of the Aegean insular houses is their flat roof which is called *dōma*. These flat roof houses can be further subdivided into other general types using the following criteria: a) the arrangement of houses within the town (organization and character of the town structure); b) the main function of the houses; and c) the plan of the individual houses.

ARRANGEMENT	FUNCTION	HOUSE PLAN	
		organization	form
Arranged so as to form a megastructure	Protection and Defense	Inward looking	narrow-front <i>monóspita</i> <i>anokíto</i> structures two & three storey houses
Arranged in rows	Communal Living	Outward looking	narrow-front <i>monóspita</i> wide-front <i>monóspita</i> variety of forms
Detached	Private family living	Inward looking Outward looking	variety of forms

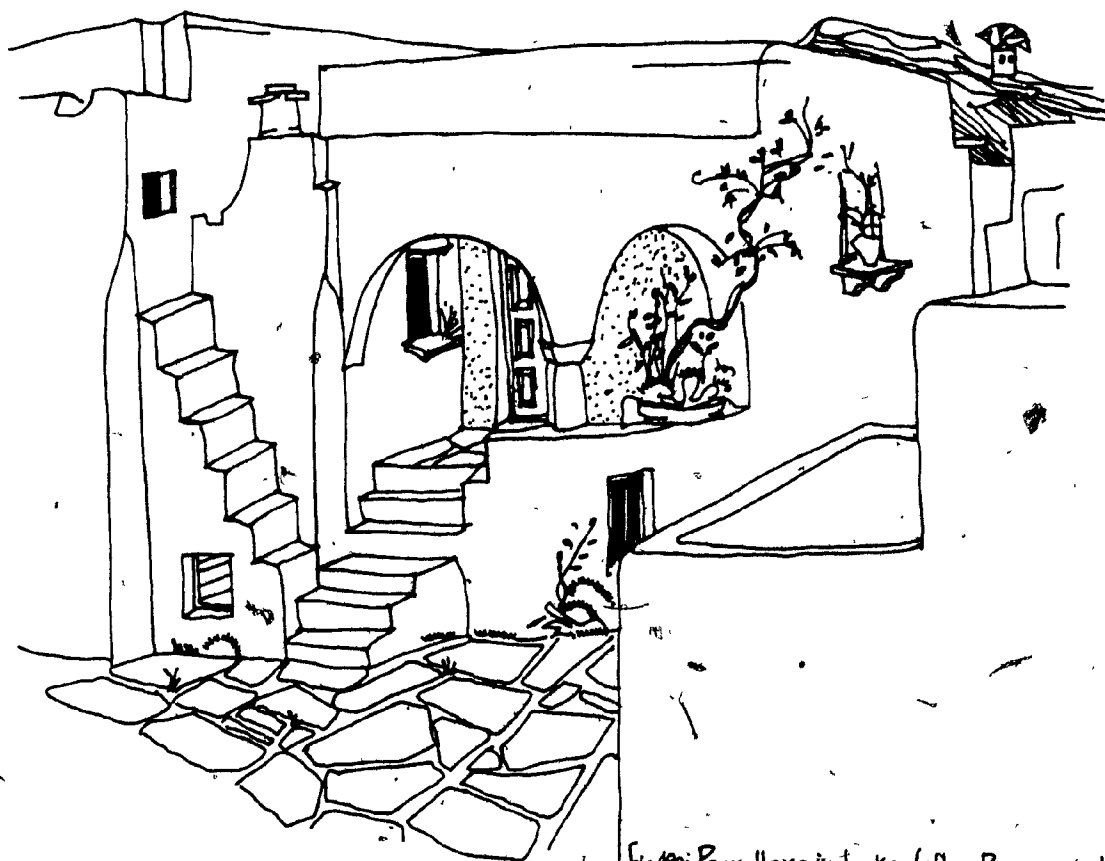


Fig. 482i. Paros. House in Leukes (after Bouias et al 1960: 102).



Fig. 48b. Paros Houses in Paros (after Djelpey 1952: 32).

In this study houses are examined according to their plan. Furthermore, only traditional Aegean houses are examined, while the examination of neoclassical style and "Peireas"* style houses are beyond the scope of the present work.

*These houses are characterized by stark, plain forms, almost devoid of any decoration, with cantilevered balconies and deep-set verandas (Cambell and Sherrard 1968: 259). In addition, their *spiti* unit has the characteristics of the large living room (commonly called *sabiri* in Greece) used in contemporary urban houses on the mainland of Greece.

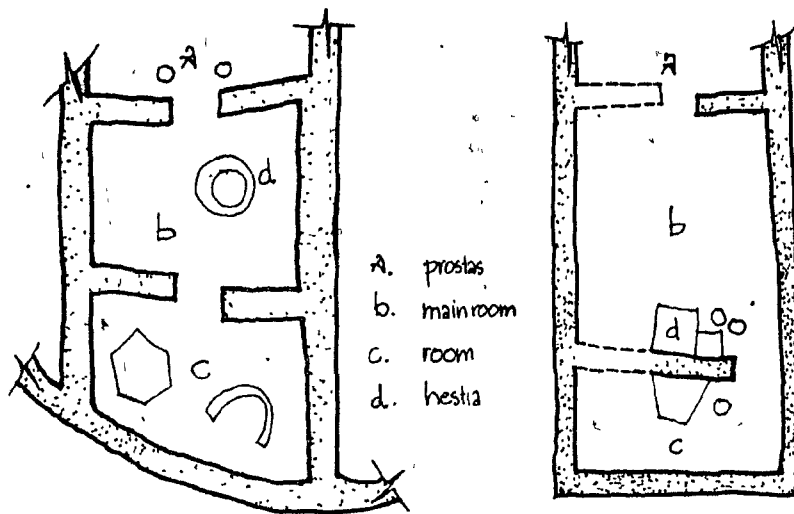


Fig. 49a. Thessalia. Prehistoric houses (after Tsountas 1928: 4, 5).

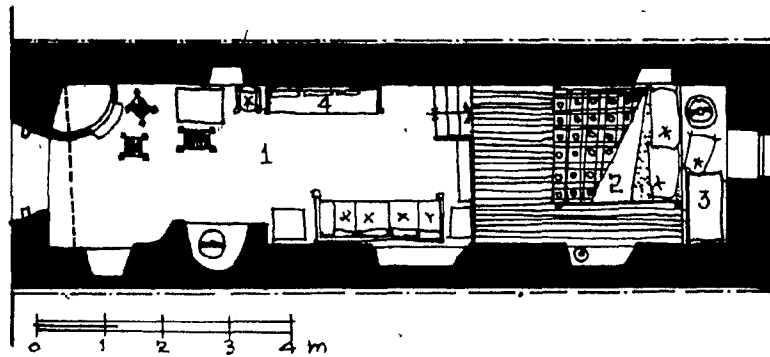


Fig. 49i. Typical narrow-front *monospita*. 1. *spít*, 2. *sofás*, 3. *panosúfi*, 4. *pángos*

Narrow-front Monospita

Monospita (a greek word meaning a house with one room) which in older times were built around a central open space and served as fortification walls, prevail in the islands of Skyros, Amorgos, and Kythnos. Many examples are also found in Crete, Cyprus, and generally in the villages and towns of the Cyclades and the Dodecanese. The origins of the *monospita** plan date back to prehistoric years (Tsountas 1928:4). This plan is generally a big rectangle, *spíti*, with an entrance on one of the small sides. The house interior consists of a raised wooden platform, *sofás*, set against the wall which usually faces the entrance. Sometimes this platform does not occupy the entire width of the house (Megas 1949:17, 49). The *sofás* is raised about 1.0m from the floor level and is reached by a few steps. Part of the *sofás* is even higher by one step and is called *panosúfi* (upper *sofás*); this is used for storing clothing and bed spreads. A fixed wooden bench, *pángos*, occupies the length of the walls at right angles to the *sofás*. The *pángos* serves also as a grain storage while food is stored under the *sofás* in large containers. The fireplace is generally built near a corner by the entrance. It is used

**Monospita* is the singular form of *monospita*

to heat the house and cook food. The table and stools are arranged around the fireplace.

The *monospito* usually has a private courtyard in the front. The private courtyard, *arli*, was introduced later when there was no more danger from pirates and it can be seen as a response to the availability of open space.

It reflects the movement away from the closely-packed, intensely communal environment inside the fortified walls. At this point it is suggested that the need for cooperation declined once the piratical threat was removed from the islands. Thus the community members felt less compelled to participate in a shared life and opted for more privately orientated modes of life. (Philippides 1973: 140).

As mentioned, the structural system used, *dóma*, is typical of most insular and some coastal areas of the Aegean. The roofs are supported by one cross beam, *mesá*, that spans the entire length of the house. If the length exceeds 4.0 to 4.5 m. *mesá* is supported by a post. Transverse wooden beams rest on the *mesá* and on the two opposite walls of the length of the house. On top of these beams are placed thin branches or canes tied together. A layer of seaweed or brushwood is then stacked over the layer of branches. On top of it a thin layer of clay is first spread for water insulation, followed by a layer of packed earth with enough inclination so as to lead water out of the roof. Because of the weight of the earth roof, the masonry walls of the structure have very few openings. Thus the door must serve as both ventilation and daylight source along with the one small window most often located at the rear of the building.

Anokáto Structures

When the town is situated on a hill, the houses are built according to the contours of the ground. Often, whenever the slope of the land permits a two storey house, *anokáto* (upper-lower), is constructed. Each level of the *anokáto* structure is a separate dwelling unit with a private entrance. Because the house is built on a slope, the upper level, *anói*, is frequently entered from a street which follows a higher level contour.

Anói and **Katoí** have similar plans. They consist of a single room, *monóspito*, which is divided into three parts. The front part of the room is the living area. The back part of the room is further divided by a wooden platform into two. This platform is built across the house from wall to wall. Access to it is by wooden steps which rest against the wall, while its edge is protected by a railing. The space underneath the platform is used as kitchen and storage, and the space above as bedroom.

Examples of these three part dwelling units arranged as *anokáto* structures are found in Kimolos, Kastro of Sifnos, Amorgos, and as is discussed in the last chapter, in Skyros.

* *Anói* is the upper dwelling unit, and *Katoí* is the lower dwelling unit.

52a

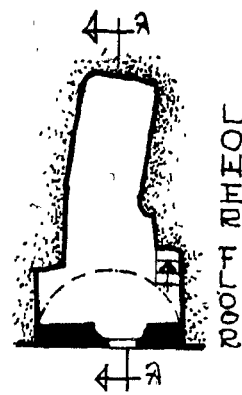
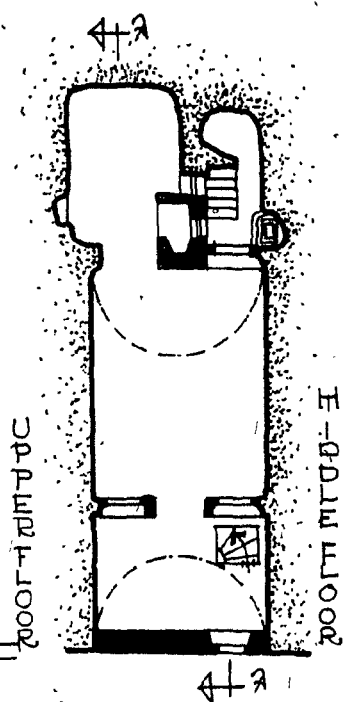
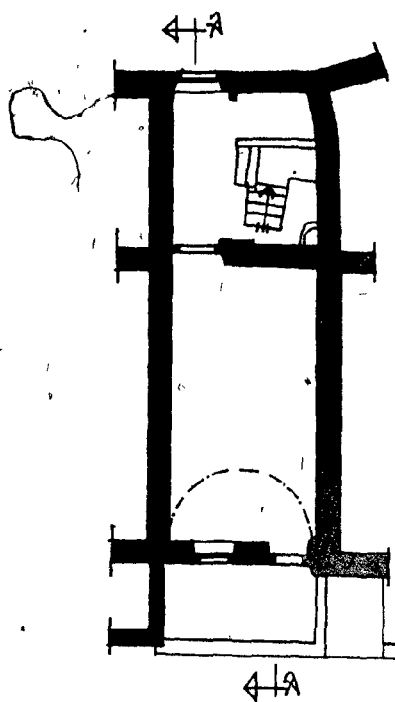
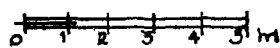
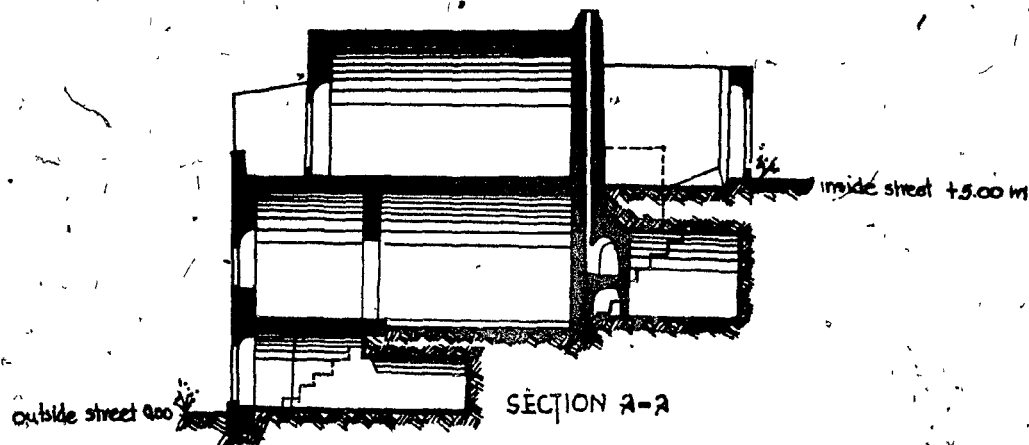
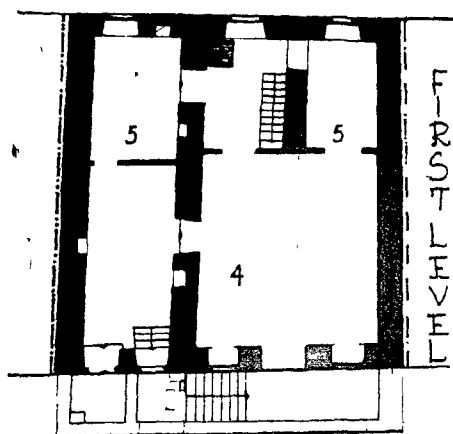
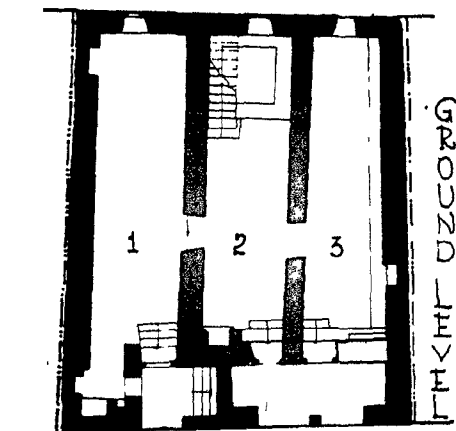


Fig. 52a. Thea. Three story house in Pyrgos (after Branch 1966: 47).



- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| 1. Kitchen | 4 living room |
| 2. cellar | 5 bedroom |
| 3. storage | |

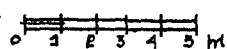


Fig. 52. Sifnos House on the outer ring of Kastro (after Izakou 1976: 38).

Three-Storey Houses

As the *monóspito* evolved the house grew horizontally by additional rooms as shown in the house of Kastro of Sifnos.

The houses also grew vertically by additional floors. An example of this are the houses of Pyrgos in the island of Thera. They date back to the sixteenth century. The house illustrated on the opposite page belongs to the outside ring of structures that formed the fortified wall. Entrance to the house is from the higher level street (inside street). Behind this entrance there is a small courtyard. The house has three stories. The upper storey serves as living room, dining room, kitchen, and bedroom. The lower storey was never used as a living place because of its proximity to the outside street (Branch 1966: 47). As it is typical of Theraian construction, the ceilings of the house are supported by arches with flat higher surfaces which form the floor of the next level.

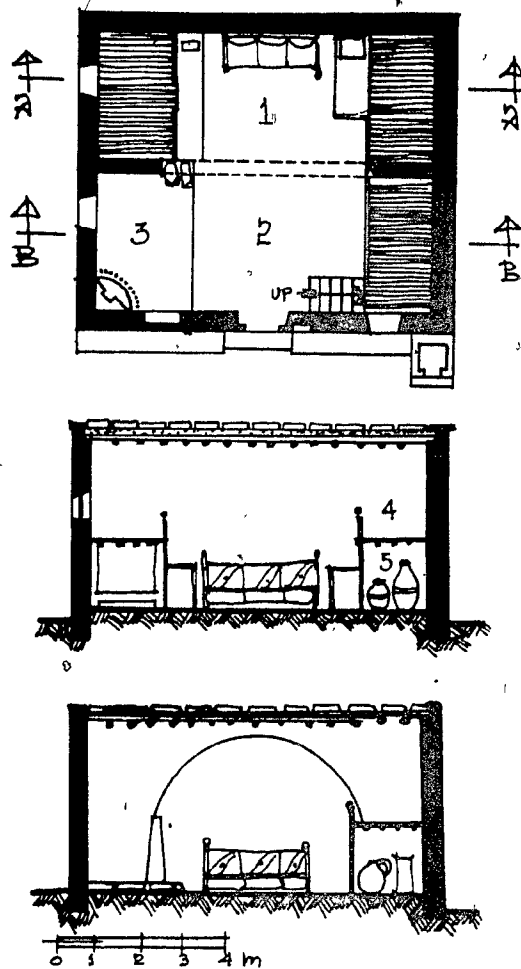


Fig 53c. Typical wide-front monospito
1. *mésa chóra*, 2. *éxo chóra*
3. Kitchen, 4. *krévatos*, 5. *apokrévatos*.

Wide-front Monospita

The wide-front monospito prevails in the Southern Cyclades and in the Dodecanese Islands. Most of these islands were under the rule of the Knights of Sir John who made Rhodes their headquarters from 1309 until 1523, when they were driven out by the Turks. The Knights lived in castles and defended the islands while the Greeks lived in towns around the castles. These towns were not heavily fortified since the Knights protected them, and consequently the houses were not restricted in space.

Many of the houses of these towns have only one room with a wide facade. The entrance door is in the middle of the long front wall. The area on one side of the entrance serves as kitchen, while the area on the other side serves as bedroom. The

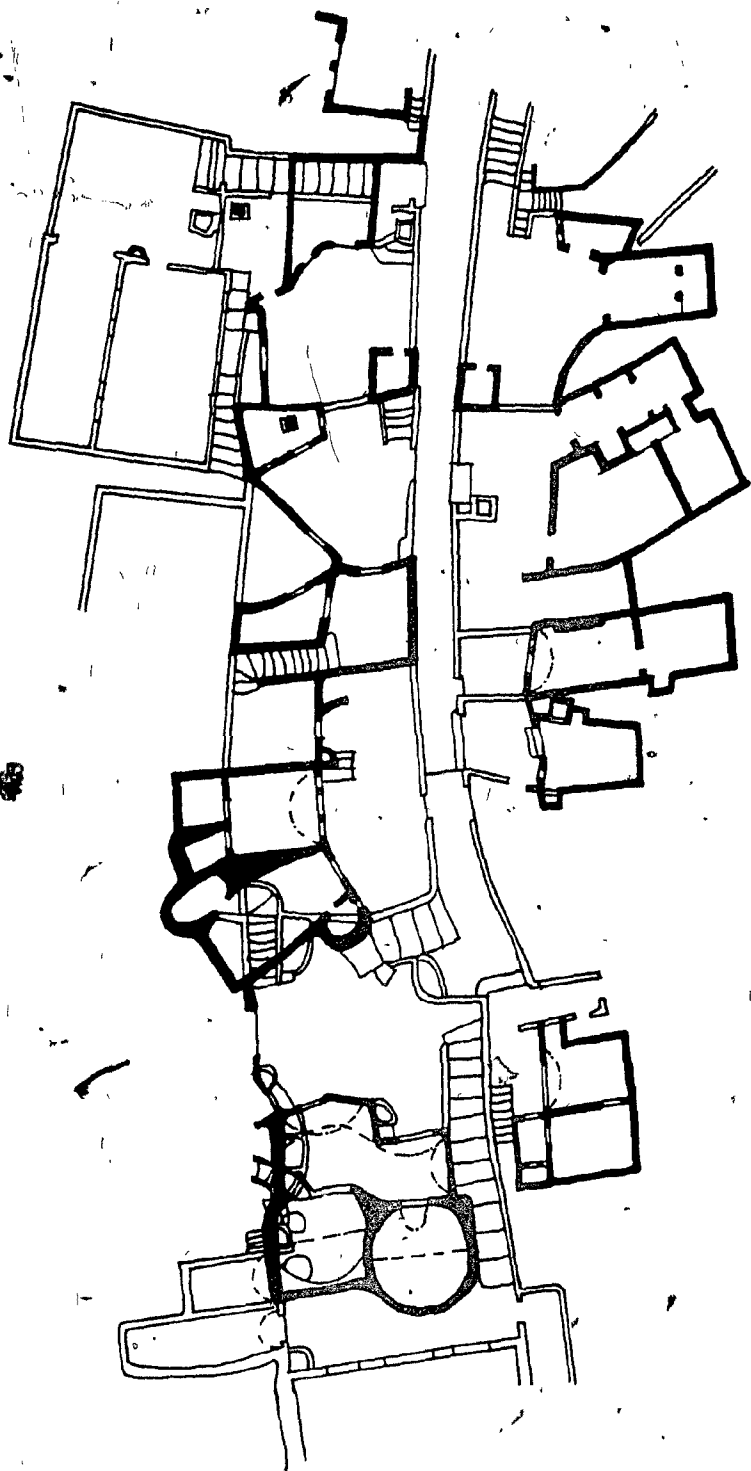
bed lies on a wooden platform, *krévatos*, raised approximately 1.5 m. above the floor. The space underneath *krévatos*, *apokrévatos*, serves as storage.

Certain houses are larger. In this case the large room is divided longitudinally by an arch or by posts and beams which support the roof. The front part of the room, called *éxo chóra* (outside room), contains the *krévatos*, *apokrévatos*, and Kitchen as described above. The part of the house behind the arch, called *mésa chóra* (inside room), contains two

raised platforms These are used either for storage or as beds for the children Shelves are constructed on the wall opposite to the entrance. Plates and cooking utensils are kept there

Generally the wider-front monospito is better lit than the narrow-front one because it has space for windows on either side of the entrance door.

55a



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 m

Fig. 55a. Thera. Houses in Messaria (after Warlamis 1976: 57).

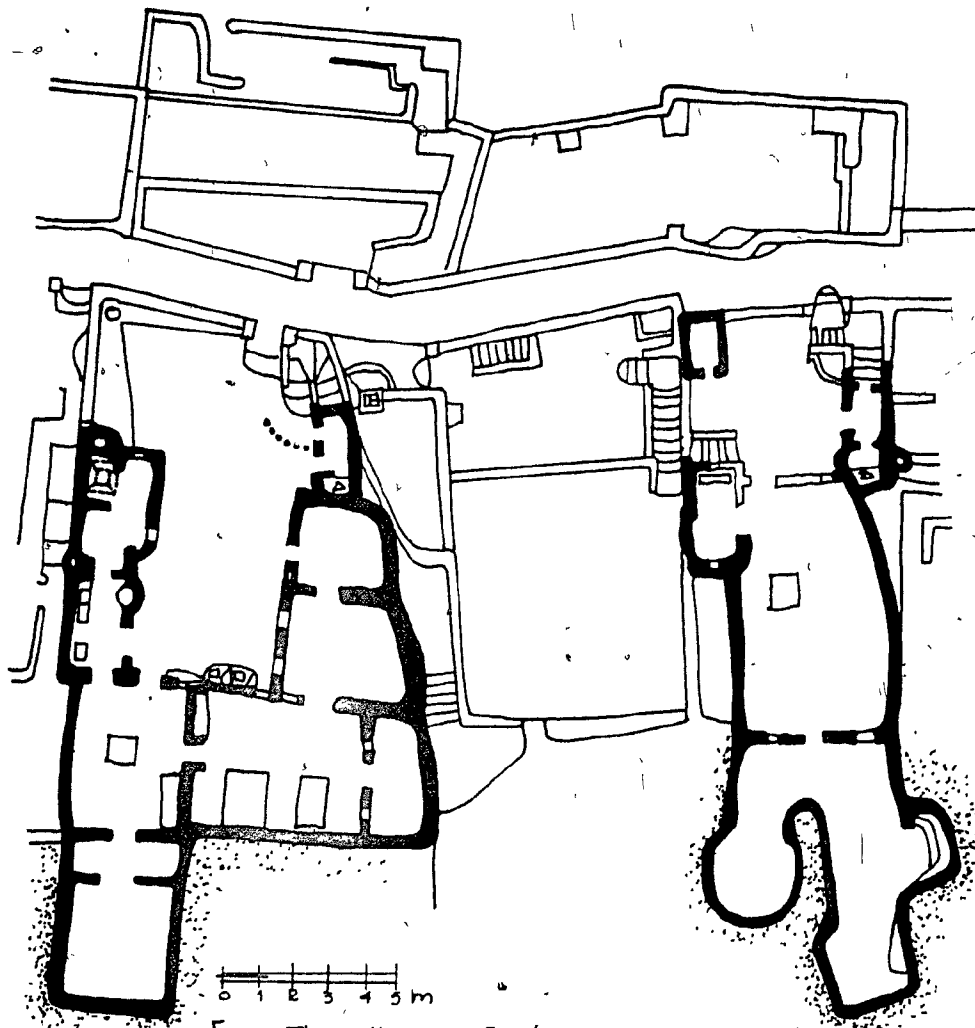


Fig. 55L Thera Houses in Fera (after Warlamis 1976: 65).

Detached Houses

Detached houses can be seen in Thera (Santorini). While the typical Aegean house has a flat roof, *dóma*, the houses of Thera invariably have vaulted roofs. Since Thera is a volcanic island, the vaulted roof is constructed out of volcanic earth. When built on a slope, the houses are carved into the ground. Some houses have two levels; others have three, and the ingenuity of access between the levels is remarkable. The rooms of the upper floor are arranged without regard for the downstairs. The use of the vault allows this "independence" of planning.

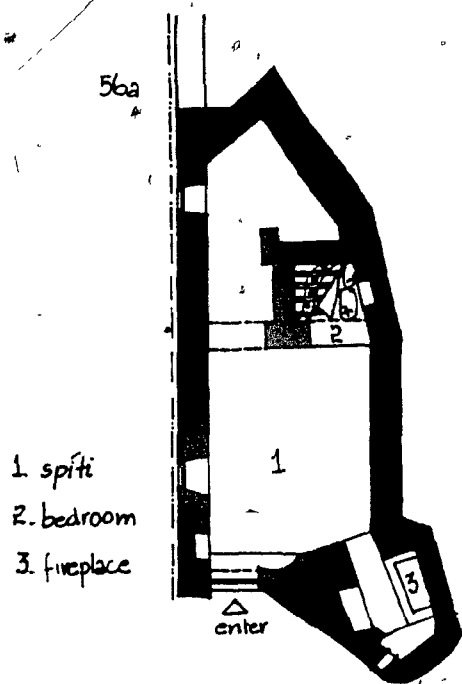


Fig. 56a. Amorgos. Monospito 111 Tholara

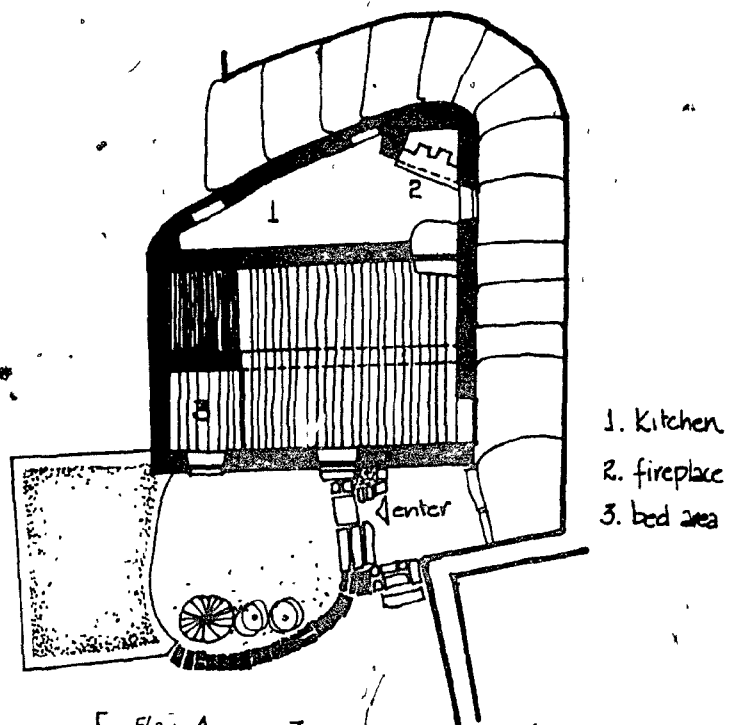


Fig. 56a. Amorgos. Two-room ground floor house in Tholara.

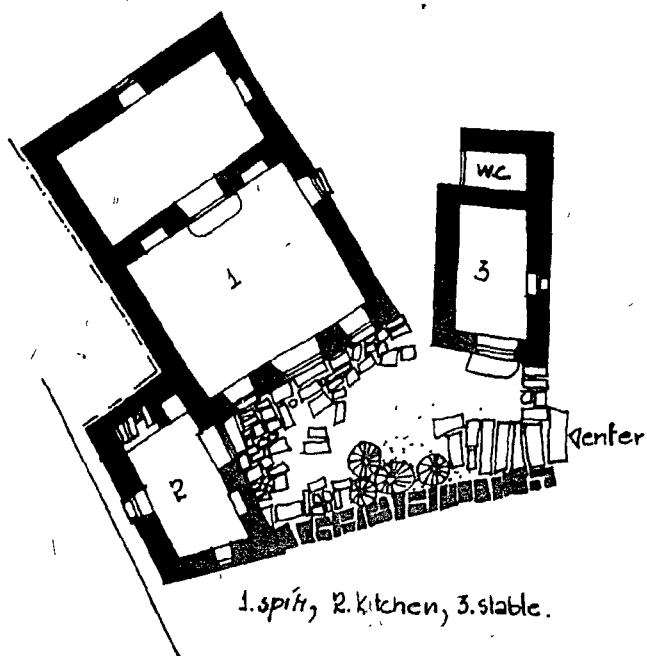


Fig. 56a. Amorgos. Three-room ground floor house in Arkesini.

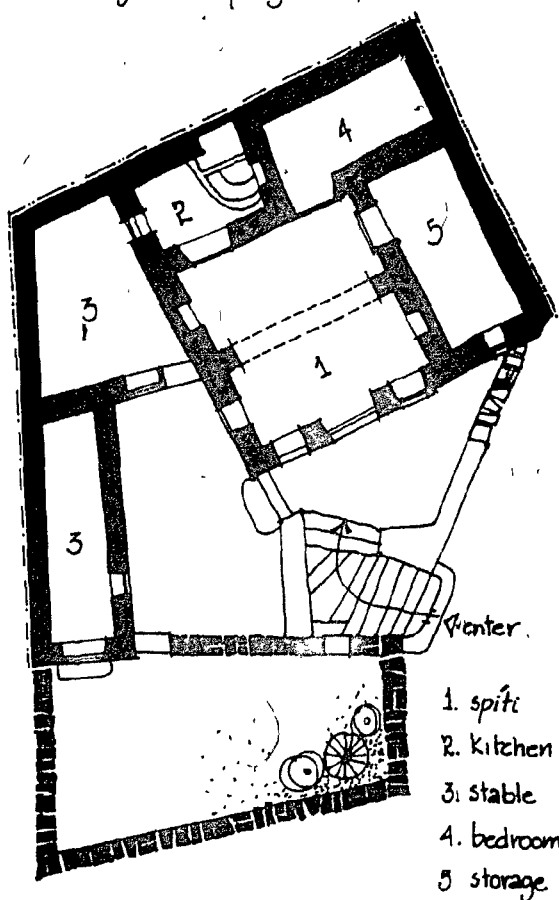
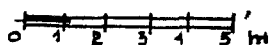


Fig. 56a. Amorgos. Four-room ground floor house in Arkesini.

House-form Evolution

Originally, service spaces in the various types of *monóspita* were found in the *apokriatos*, under the external staircase, or in the basement of the house, depending on the inclination of the site. Eventually, the cooking and storage areas were separated from the *monóspito*. They were added in a separate wing of service spaces either at right angles, or parallel to the main house. The main house is now called *spiti* and the new wings *paráspito*. Thus, the all purpose *monóspito* started to break down into elements of specialized function. In some island towns where there are families of greater wealth, a second storey is added to the house. These houses consist of a main room on the second storey, with one or more rooms leading off it, while the lower storey contains all service areas such as kitchen, storage, stables*, etc.

The evolution of the house-form from ground floor *monóspito* to two storey multiple-room house is illustrated with plans of houses from the island of Amorgos. These houses were surveyed in the summer of 1977.

*In the old fortified towns where space was precious, stables were communal and were built on the outskirts of the town. Later on, many houses acquired private stables which were built around the courtyard. The stables occasionally provided storage space for agricultural implements.

57a

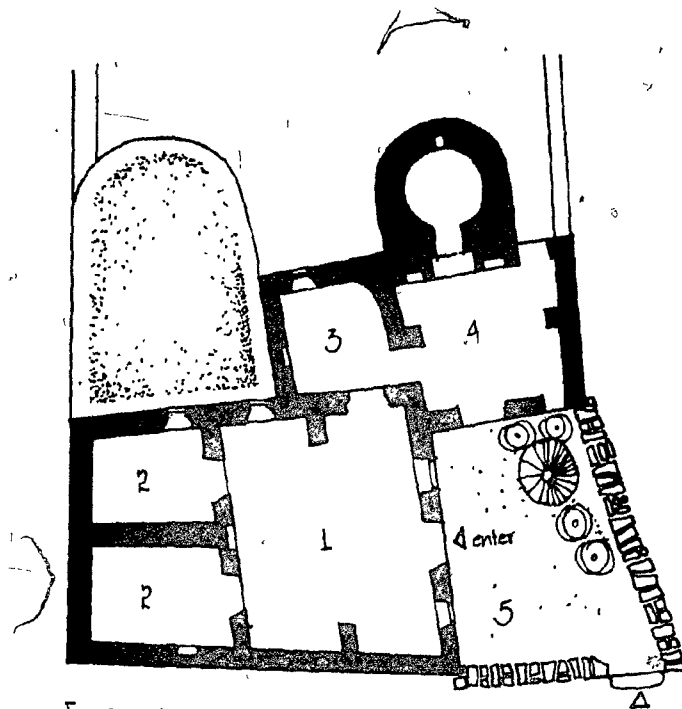
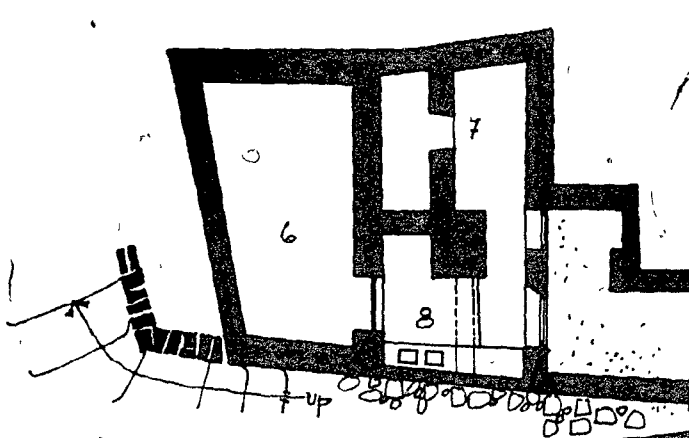


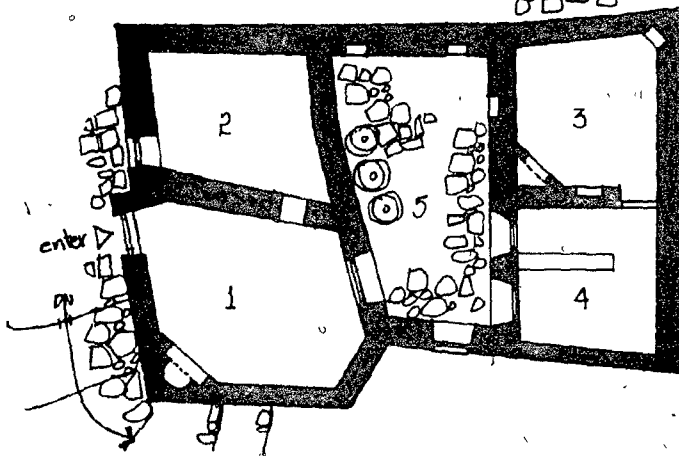
Fig. 57a. Amorgos Five-room ground floor house in Arkessini

1. spiti
2. bedroom
3. Kitchen
4. oven room
5. courtyard



GROUND FLOOR

1. spiti
2. bedroom
3. Kitchen
4. covered courtyard
5. open-air courtyard
6. stable
7. storage
8. laundry room



FIRST FLOOR

Fig. 57a. Amorgos Towards a two storey building transitional form of house in Chora.

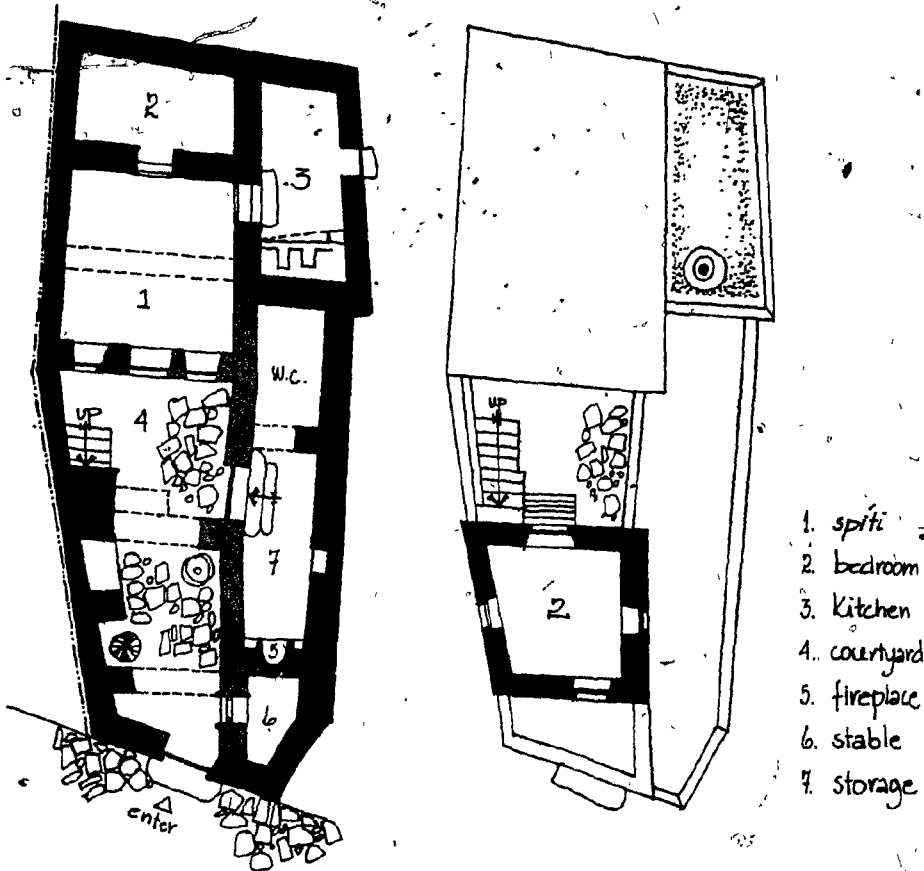


Fig. 57i. Amorgos. Towards a two storey building transitional form of house in Tholara.

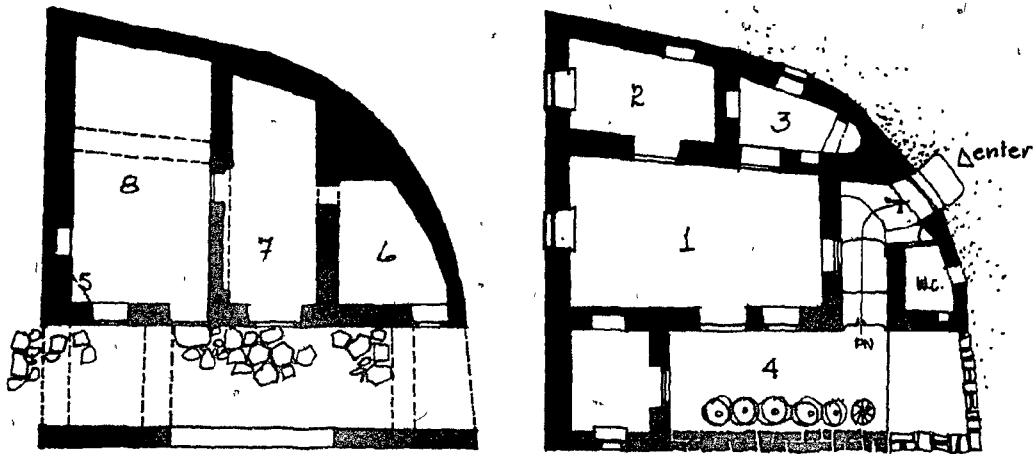


Fig. 57ii. Amorgos. Two storey house built on a slope in Tholara.

0 1 2 3 4 5 m

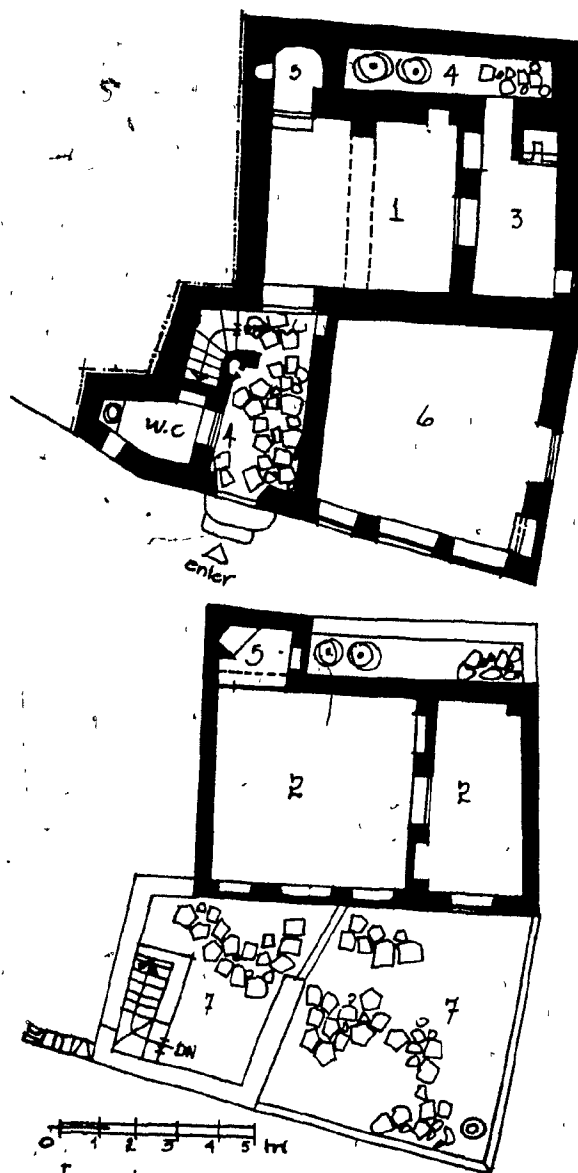


Fig. 58. Amorgos Two storey house in Chora.

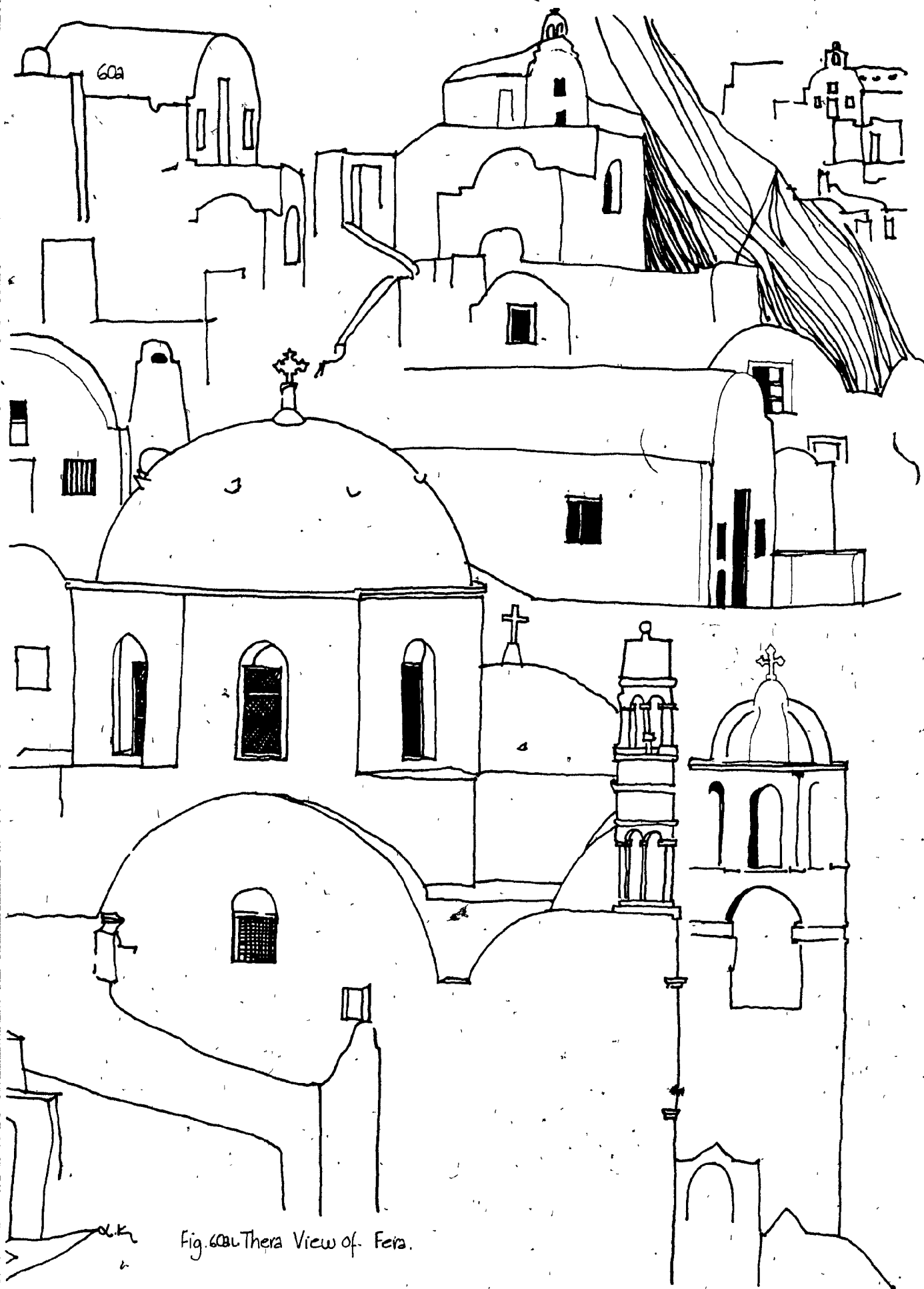
1. spit, 2. bedroom, 3. kitchen, 4. courtyard
5. storage, 6. store, 7. veranda.



Churches

The churches discussed belong to the period generally referred to as Post-Byzantine, which may be taken to mean in this case, from about the fifteenth century to the present day. Most of the churches were constructed in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries.

The existence of hundreds of chapels in the Aegean towns for a fairly small population indicated the significance of religion in the Greek life. During the long years of foreign occupation, religion became a social support as well as the connecting link of Hellenism. The large number of chapels also proved an emphasis on private rather than institutionalized religious tradition. Many of the chapels were built by wealthy families who, at one time or another, had estates on the islands. It was a matter of prestige for them to have their own private chapel. Even more important, since Turks did not touch church property (Paparegopoulos 1955:47) during the Turkish Occupation, by offering their valuable belongings to their own churches, the Greek families were able to control them and later reclaim them (Orlandos 1953:151). The remaining of the private chapels were constructed in fulfillment of vows made in



prayers for the saving of life at sea.

Today, the many chapels built in the dense towns where space is valuable, are functionally situated between the houses. The chapels adhere to the order of the street, they express themselves but do not dominate. In many islands, like Mykonos and Thera, they are the only buildings on which color is directly applied; their red and blue roofs present the only large painted areas. Their characteristic vaults, domes, and belfrys are easily recognizable among the flat-roofed houses. Their entrances are well defined and elevated by several steps from the street. Their walls are curved to describe niches of altars. Sometimes chapels are free standing, in contrast to the long rows of houses, appearing as constant surprises, and serving as focal points. Occasionally, the biggest of the churches are dominant elements within the whole of the neighborhood and even the whole of the town.

Except for their vaults and domes, the church construction is similar to that of houses. Their thick (.60-1.00 m) stone walls are overlaid with coats of stucco and whitewash. The slate floor pavings have their joints whitewash several times a year; in the center of the nave there is very often a more elaborate square design, either in the same materials, or in grey and white and even black marble. Their roofs are simple, flat, or vaulted. One practice common in the Cyclades is that of leaving the outside of the vault round (parallel to the inside) thus keeping an even thickness. In some islands, these rounded roofs covered with plaster and washed in a shade of blue or pink, are very attractive. The dome, which had rarely been used since Byzantine days, reappears in churches of

61a

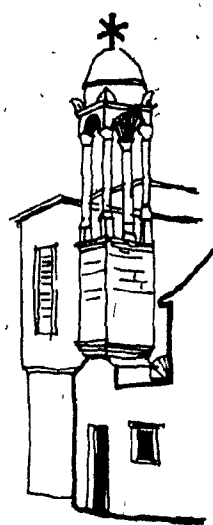


Fig. 61a Chios Bell-tower.

the second half of the nineteenth century (Smith 1962:86), but a cruciform plan instead of a rectangular one is usually adopted in these churches.

In the smaller churches, if there are any windows in the side walls, they are in one row and their bases come just above the tops of the stalls which are arranged along the inside walls. These windows are round-headed. In the larger churches windows of a very similar size and of diverse shapes are used, arranged in two or sometimes three rows, one above the other. The windows at the top are often round or oval. Above the altar there is generally a tiny window in the niche, and in the smallest churches this is occasionally the only source of light other than the door (Smith 1962:86).

The smaller churches usually have one door only, situated at the west end, or at the north or south wall towards the west end. The architrave of the door is invariably in cut stone and is frequently decorated with elaborate carving; its woodwork is generally simple. The churches very often have small covered porches with stone seats around them. If there is no covered porch attached to a church, a small enclosure is made, surrounded by these seats, and there sit those who are unable to enter the church.

Bell-towers are generally free-standing on the side of the roads next to the churches, or over the entrance gates to the churchyards. They usually have a solid square lower storey above which are one, two or three storeys with open arches on a square plan, supporting a small dome. The smaller churches confine themselves to belfrys which are usually finished in white plaster, are very decorative, and have

62a

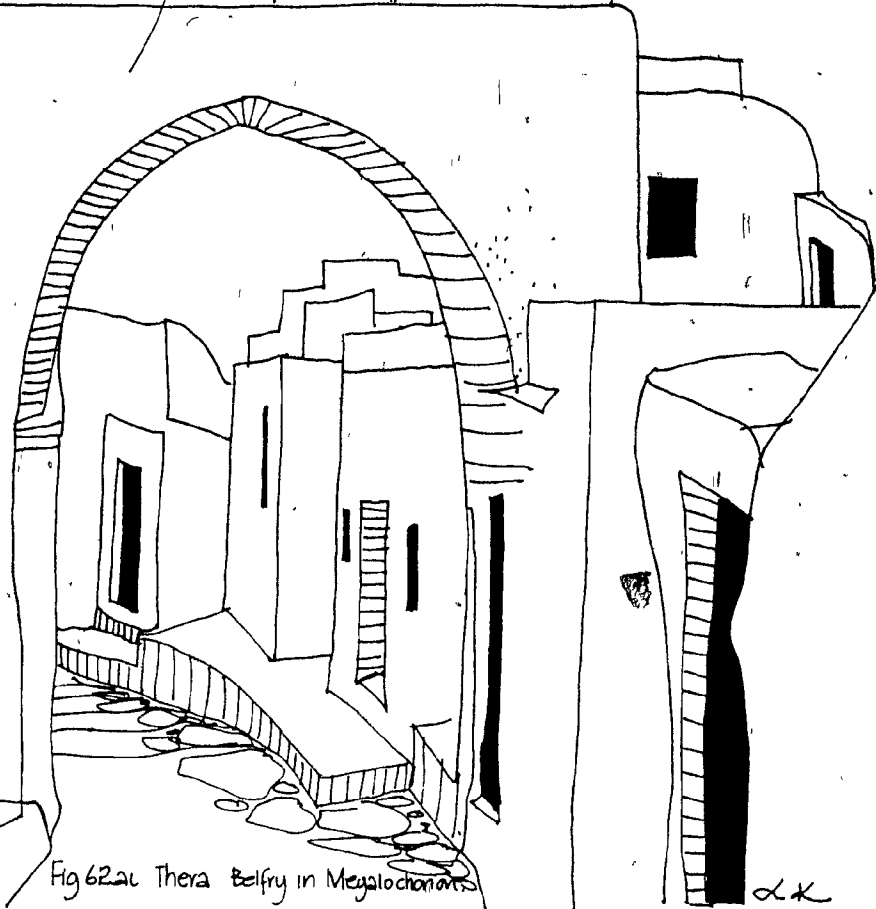
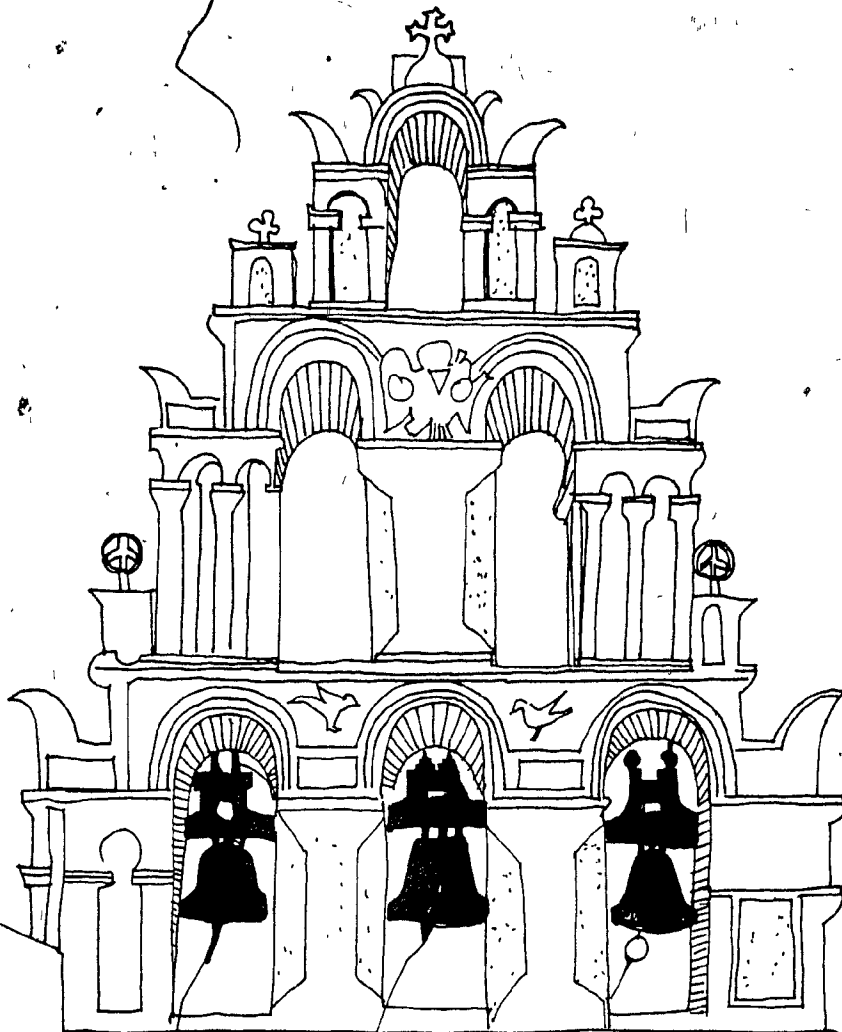


Fig 62a Thera Belfry in Megalochori

dk

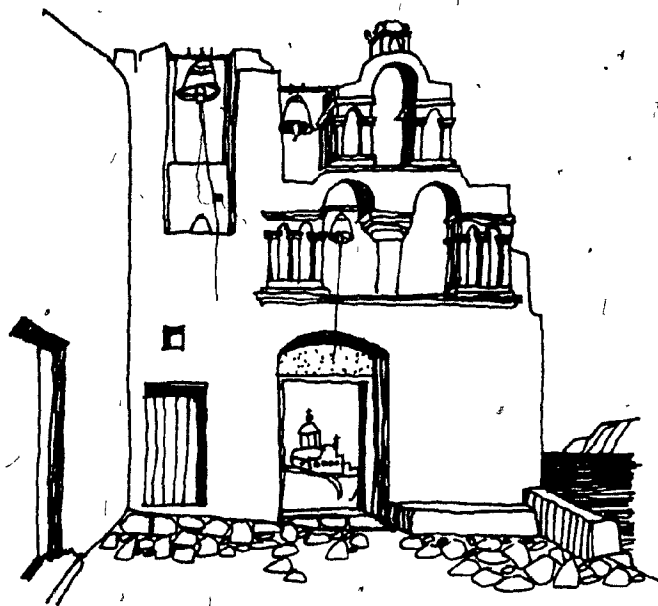


Fig. 62i. Thera. Belfry over a street in Oia

many arches. Belfrys are placed on top of the western walls of the churches, over the entrance gateways to the churchyards, or they are sited over the streets emphasizing the presence of the church.

In the interior of the Orthodox church the altar or *bēma* attracts the attention. It occupies the whole area east of the *eikonostá-sion*, behind which only men are allowed. In later years, however, the word "altar" is used with the limited meaning of "table". It is almost invariably placed either in or in front of an apse. In the walls near the altar there are generally a few niches and square holes which contain various lamps and candles.

The *eikonostá-sion* is the screen which separates the altar from the rest of the church; it is placed across the east end, and is always raised by at least one step above the rest of the church. Although the main purpose of the screen is to frame a very large number of icons, it may also be an extensive area of the most elaborate carved wood work depicting an extraordinary number of scenes and figures.

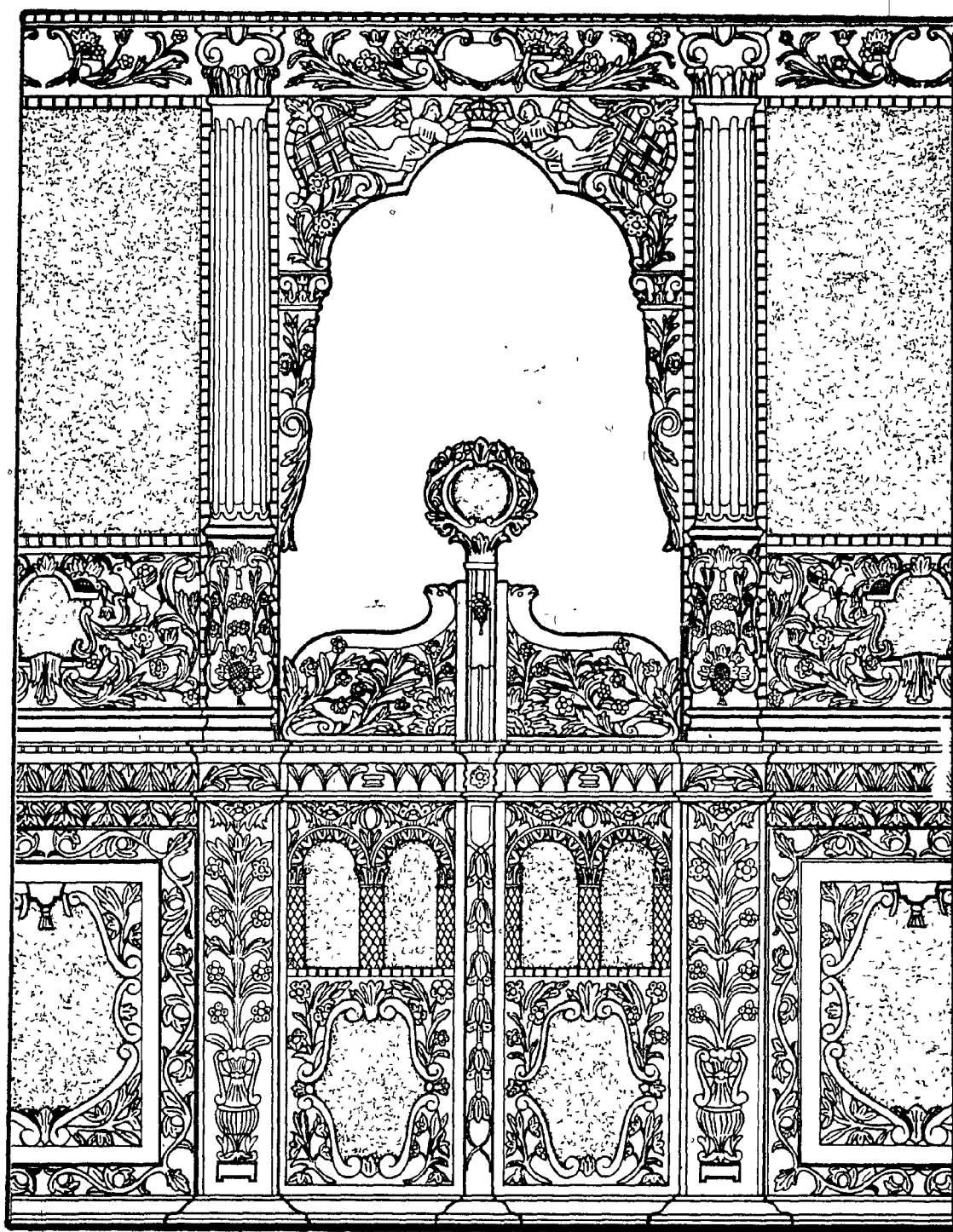


Fig 63a. Chios. *Eikonostásion* of Hagios Tryphon at Nymita. (after Smith 1962: plate 193).

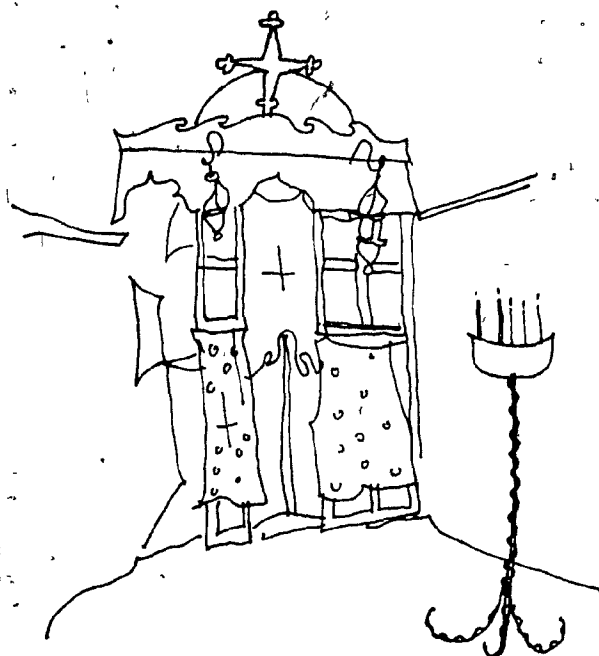


Fig. 63c. Mykonos. Simple church interior (after Konstantinides 1953: 36).

The rest of the church furniture is fairly simple. The stalls, reading desks, and bishop's thrones* are made of plain wood. The *manouália* (candlesticks), which stand in front of the *eikonostásion*, are made of brass and conform to a uniform pattern being one meter in height and having a solid stem of turned brass divided into a number of bands.

The simplest and smallest of the Post Byzantine churches consist of a barrel-vaulted rectangle or they are single-aisled flat-roof basilicas.

*Every little church has one of these thrones, even though it is probable that no bishop has ever visited all of them, when one considers how innumerable are the churches in the islands.

Larger churches very often have two naves side by side. The explanation of at least some of these examples is that they were used by both Latin and Orthodox faiths. The largest churches of all have three naves, each with separate altars and *ikonostásions*. According to their plans, the churches are classified as single-aisled, two-aisled, and three-aisled churches and their form is presented in the following sections. Formations of clusters of churches as well as precincts of churches are also presented and discussed



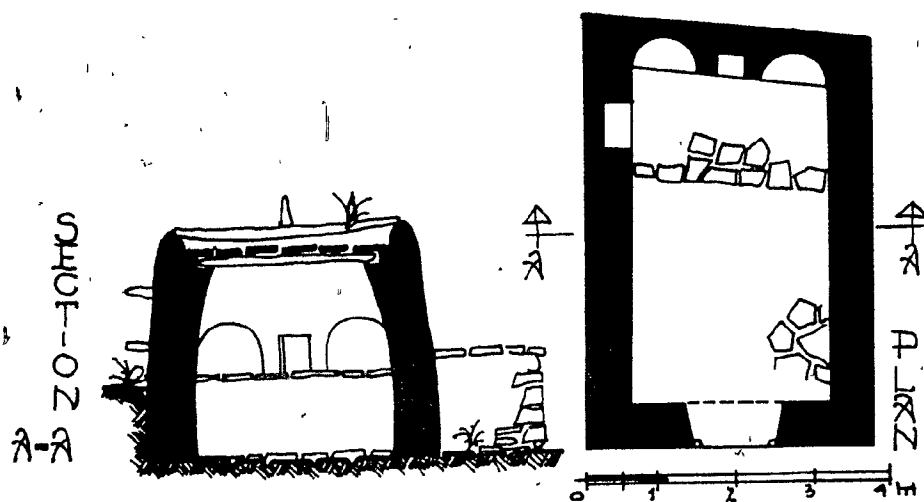


Fig. 65ai Kythnos. Church with curved walls stepped outwards (after Vasileiades 1962:21)

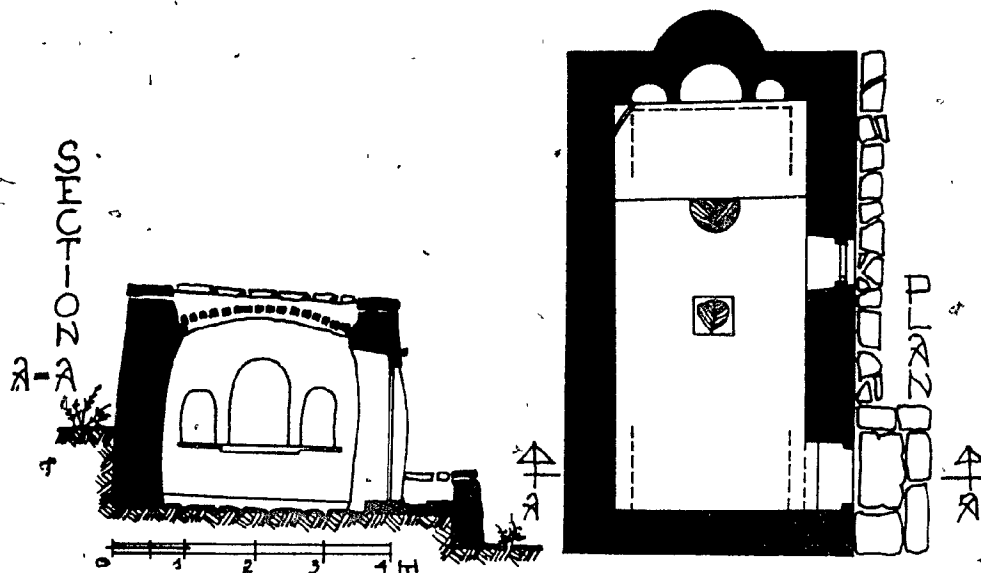


Fig. 65aii Sifnos Church with curved walls and curved beams (after Vasileiades 1962:24)

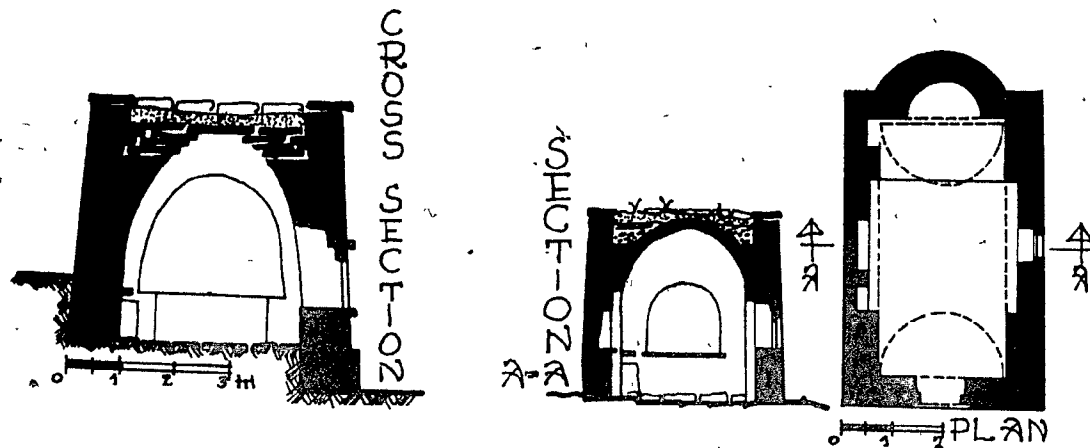
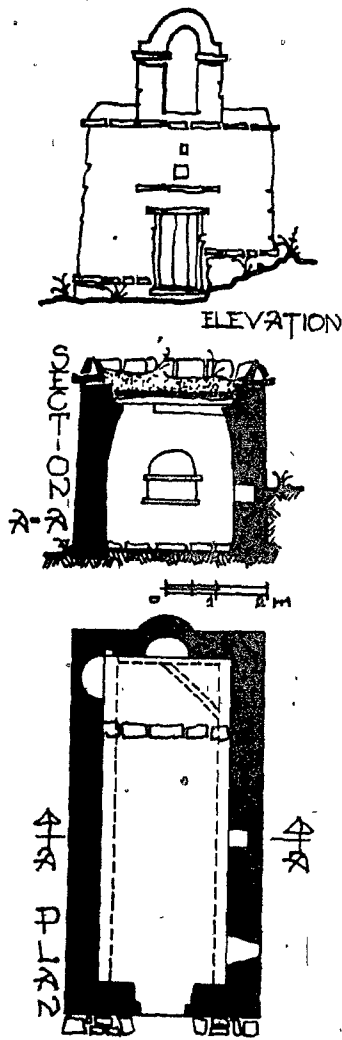


Fig. 65aii Tenos. Church with curved walls stepped inwards (after Vasileiades 1962:29)

Fig. 65aii Tenos. Church with vaulted roof (after Vasileiades 1962:29)

Single-aisled Churches



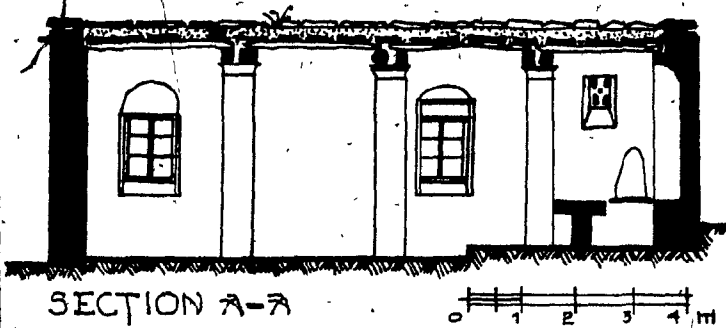
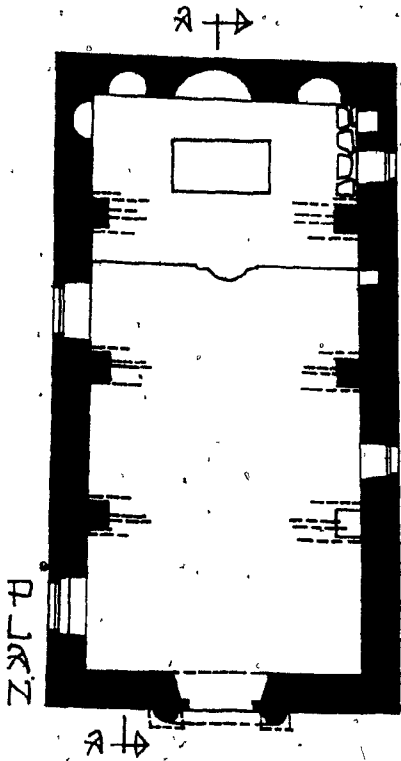
Single-aisled churches, the simplest form of ecclesiastic architecture, are most frequently found in the Aegean islands. There exist different types of single-aisled churches. The most common have narrow aisle widths, and flat roofs which span, by simple means, between the two side walls. One of the interesting features of such churches is that their cross-sections form a series. This series shows the evolution from spanning the roof on the two vertical walls to forming a vaulted roof. According to this, the following variations can be distinguished:

- churches with vertical walls supporting the roof;
- churches with curved walls supporting the roof;
- churches with curved walls which are stepped outwards supporting the roof;
- churches with curved walls and curved beams supporting the roof;
- churches with curved walls which are stepped inwards supporting the roof;
- churches with vaulted roofs (Vasileiades 1962:16-32).

Fig. 65i Kythnos Church
with curved walls
(after Vasileiades 1962:18)

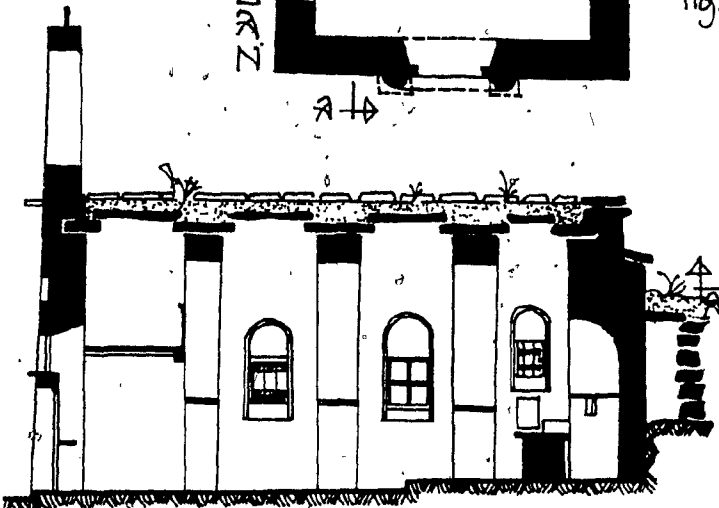
Other types of single-aisled churches have beam and columns, arches, a mixture of arches, columns and beams, and some are covered with domes. Plans and sections of the various types are illustrated on pages 65a and 66a. As a rule the plans of the churches have a simple orthogonal

66a



SECTION A-A

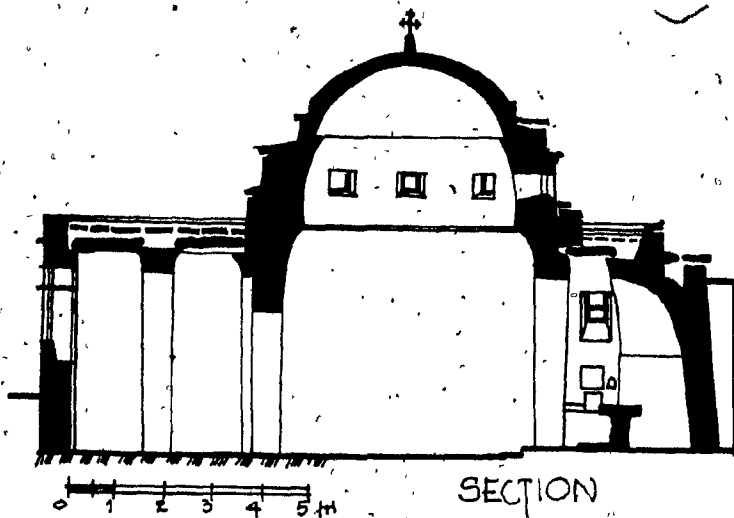
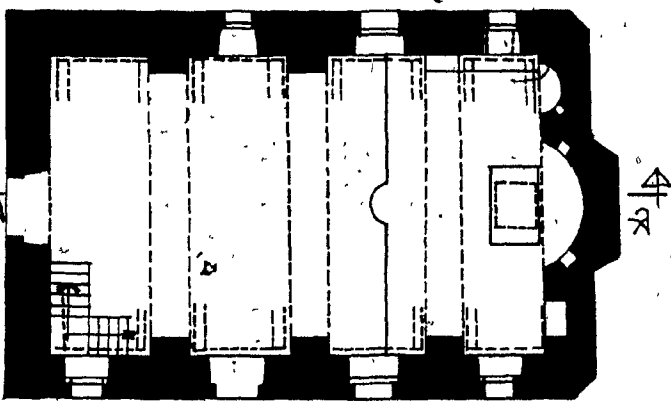
Fig. 66a. Tenos. Single-aisled basilica with beams and columns (after Vasileiades 1962:36)



SECTION A-A

PLAN

Fig. 66a. Andros. Single-aisled basilica with arches (after Vasileiades 1962:55)



SECTION

Fig. 66a. Tenos. Church with dome (after Vasileiades 1962:94)

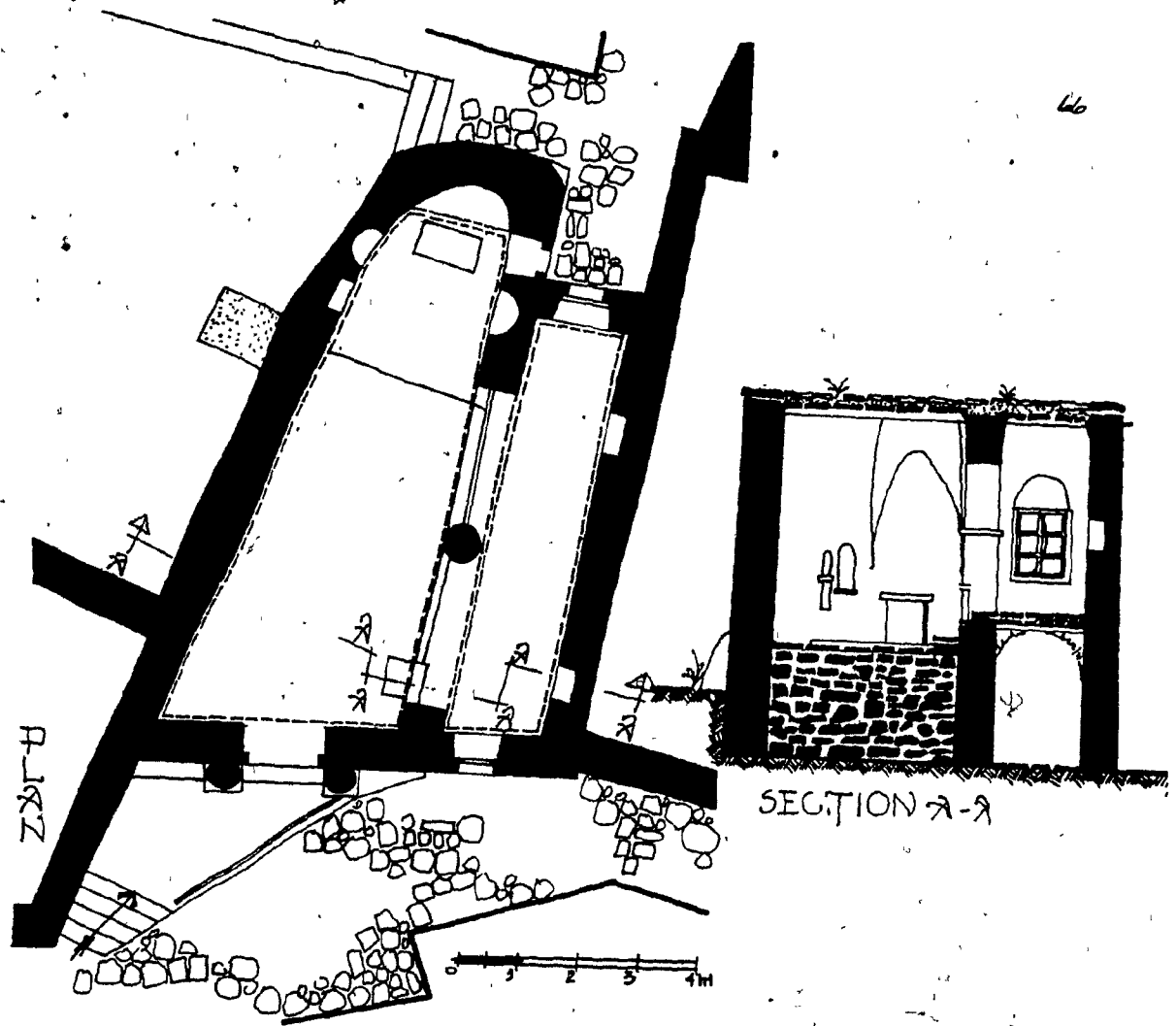


Fig. 664. Tenos Church on tight site (after Vasileiadis 1962: 141).

shape and a niche to mark the sanctuary on the eastern wall. A variation worth mentioning is the single-aisled basilica with two sanctuaries which consequently necessitate two niches on its eastern wall. Such basilicas were used by both orthodox and catholic communities as it is explained in the section on the two-aisled churches. When the site does not permit orthogonal planning, the churches adjust to the tight sites and as a result form interesting plans.

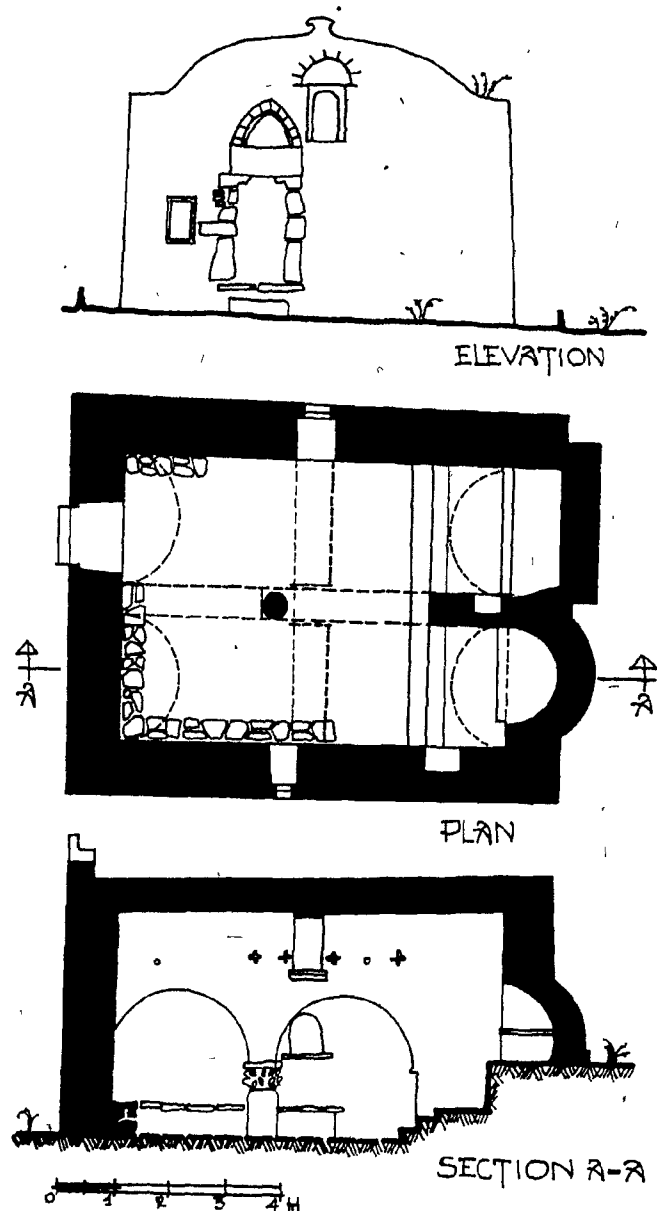


Fig. 67. Naxos Two-aisled church (after Vasileiades 1975:101)

Two-aisled Churches

There exist many two-aisled churches in the Aegean. A careful study by Demetrios Vasileiades proves that these churches came to existence because of functional rather than constructional reasons*. That is, two-aisled churches were constructed to serve a mixed community of both orthodox and catholic members. Such parishes held their masses together by members of different dogmas occupied different aisles (usually the wide aisle was reserved for the orthodox) but had distinctly separated sanctuaries. Catholic and Orthodox masses took place either
a) Simultaneously (Paskales 1948:16)

* For detailed information see D. Vasileiades, *Hi Epipedóstegoi Metabyzantinai Vasilikai tōn Kykladon*, (Athens: Kypraios Press, 1962). D. Vasileiades, "He Axonikē Toxostoichia stēn Aigaiopelagitikē Ekklesiastikē Architektōnikē," *Technikā Chronikā* 365-370 (1955): 114-117. D. Vasileiades, "Monóklites Vasilikēs me' Dyo Kōgches Hieroi," *Zygos* 78-79 (1962): 69-73.

68a

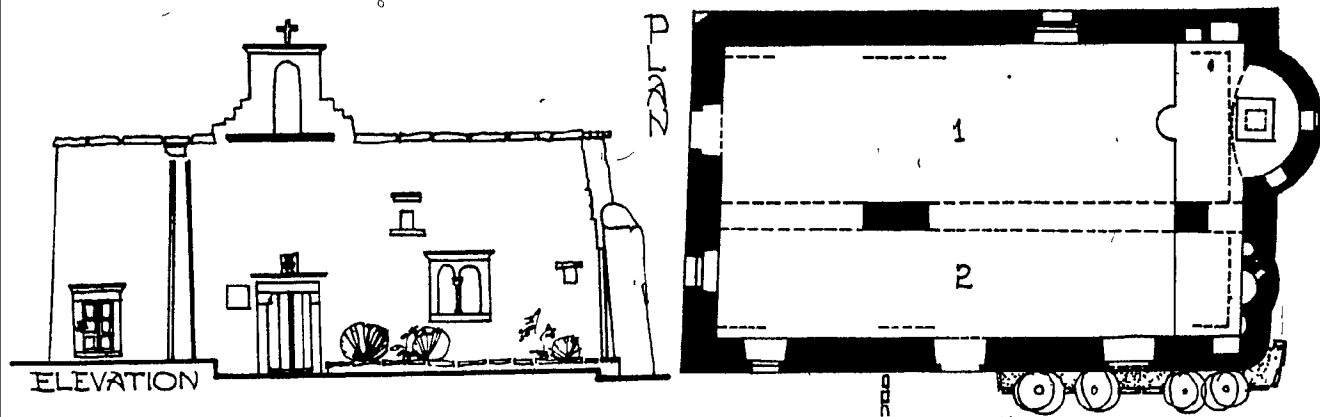


Fig. 68ai. Kimolos. Two-aisled church with unequal aisle widths (after Vasileiades 1962: 183).

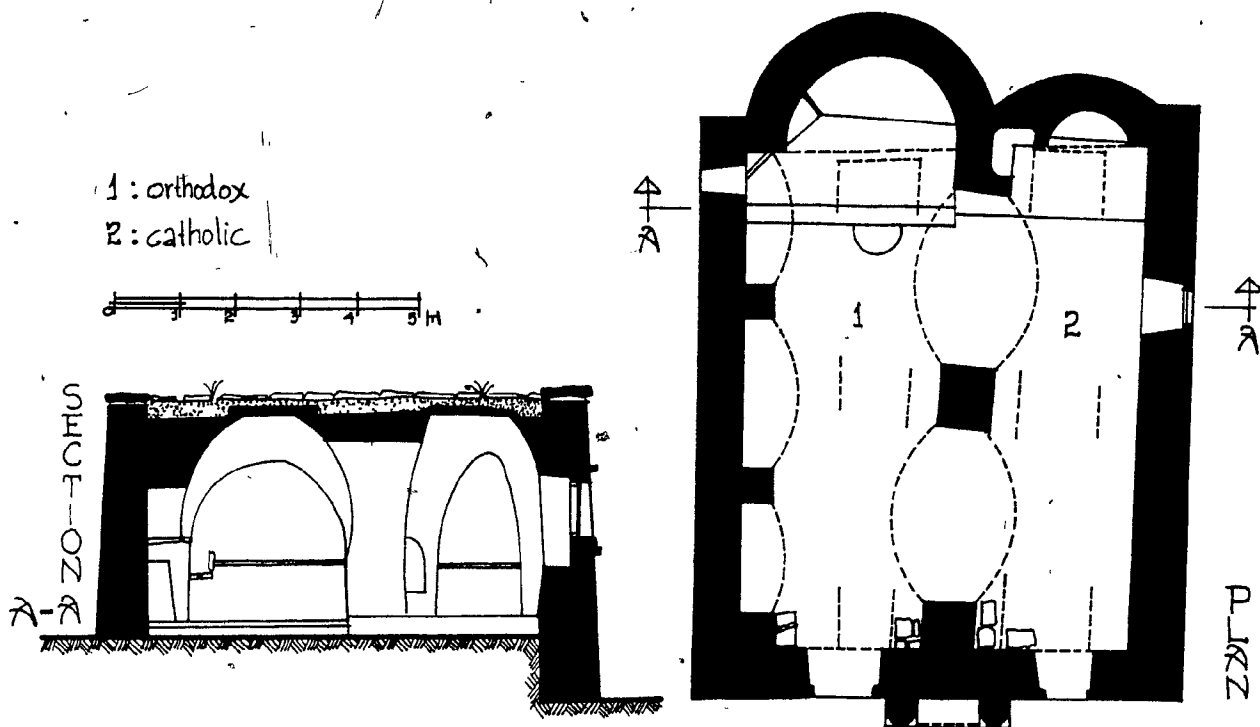


Fig. 68au. Tenos. Two-aisled church with unequal aisle widths (after Vasileiades 1962: 186).

in which case the Catholic priest would begin by reading the passages from the Holy Bible and the Orthodox priest would continue (Drosos 1870:13); or on different days (Saros 1949:204), usually Saturday for the Catholics and Sunday for the Orthodox.

This tradition was established in the Aegean during the Venetian Occupation when many Catholic families came from western Europe and settled on the islands. Furthermore the tradition was preserved through the Turkish Occupation by inter-marriages between Catholic and Orthodox Christians.

Today, two-aisled churches are almost exclusively Orthodox and are dedicated to two different saints; nevertheless, in the Island of Tenos and Naxos there still exists a small number of such churches whose separate sanctuaries are dedicated to both an Orthodox and a Catholic saint (Vasileiades 1962:215).

Illustrations of different ways of separating the two aisles are given on pages 69a and 69b



69a

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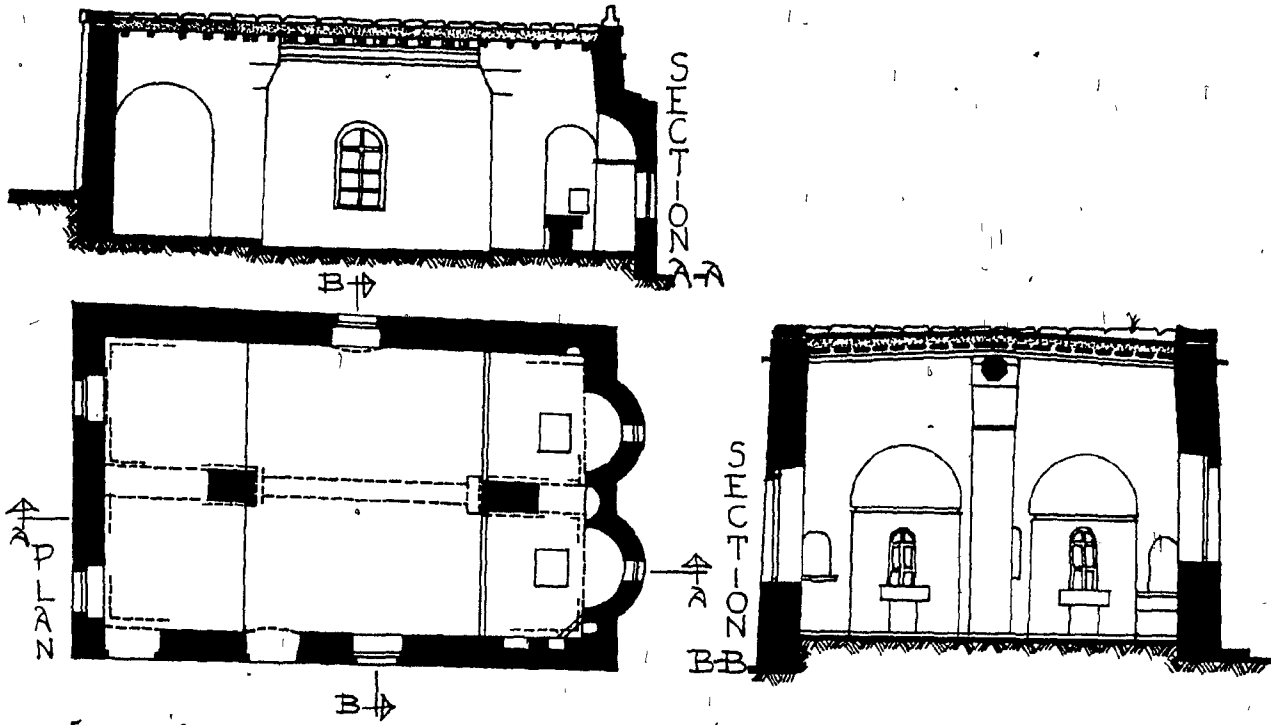


Fig. 69ai. Sfynos Two-aisled church with an axial beam (after Vasileiades 1962:146)

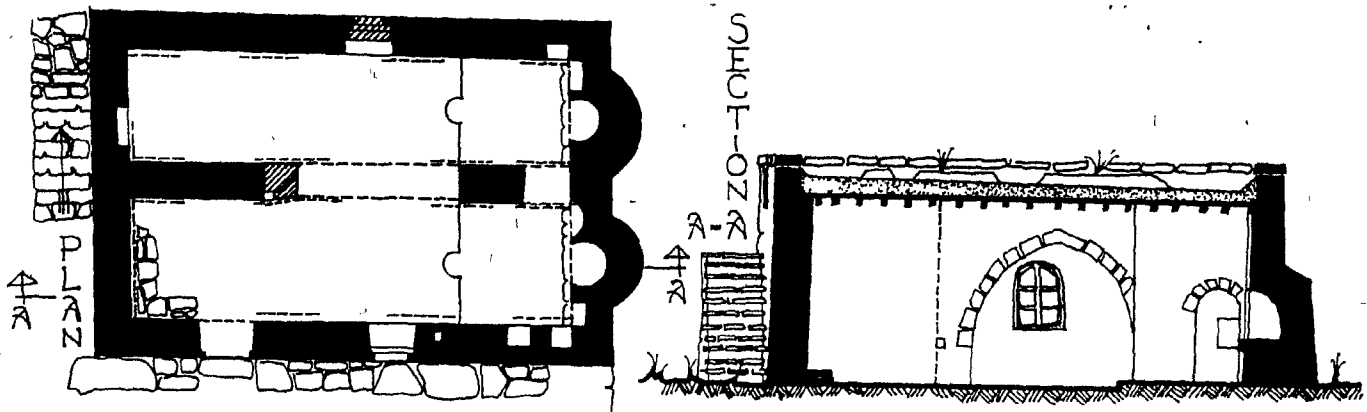


Fig. 69aii. Kimolos. Two-aisled church with one axial arch (after Vasileiades 1962:152).

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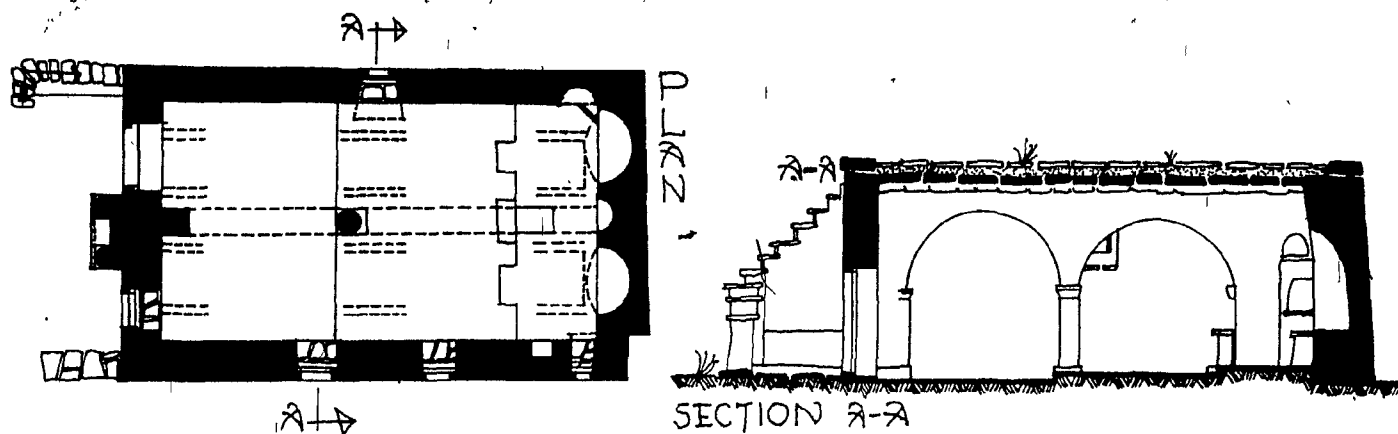


Fig. 69i. Tenos. Two-aisled church with two axial arches (after Vasileiades 1962: 157).

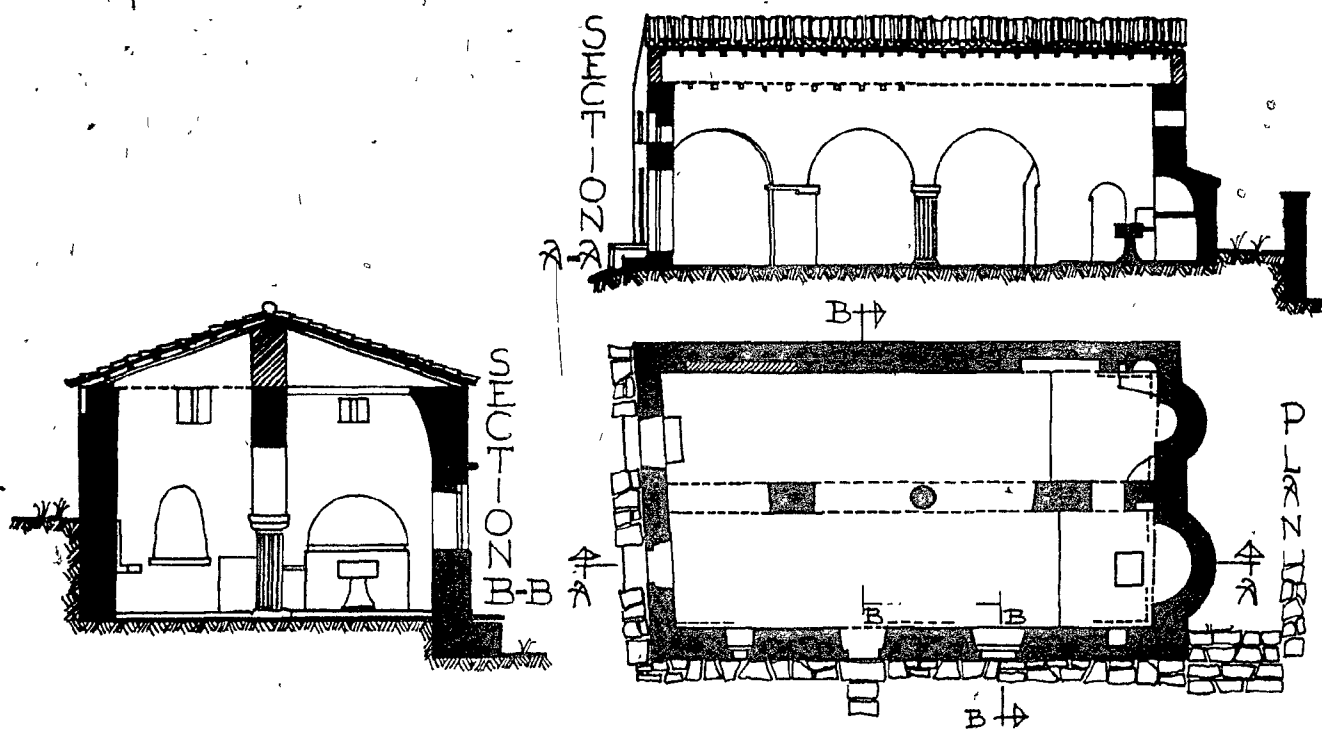


Fig. 69ii. Kythnos. Two-aisled church with three axial arches (after Vasileiades 1962: 174).

70a

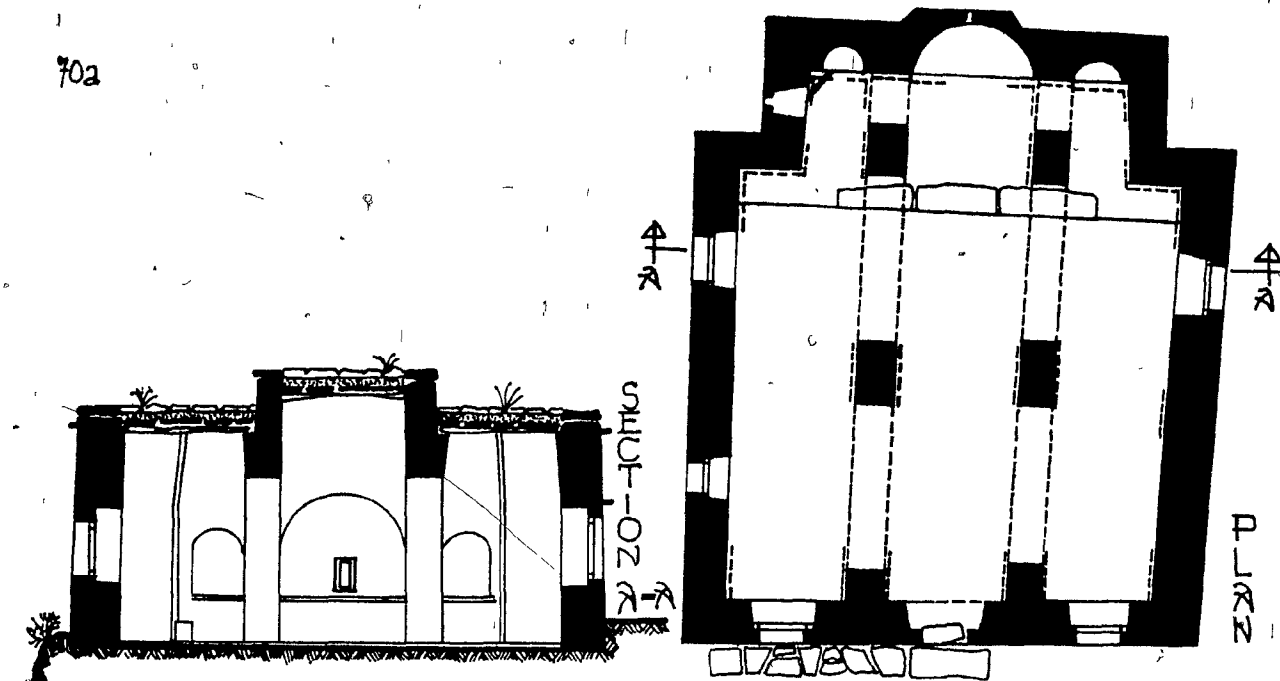
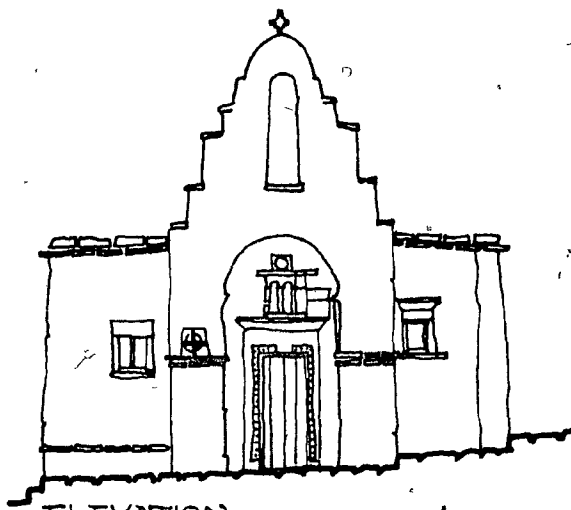


Fig. 70a. Andros. Three-aisled basilica with equal aisle width and with its central aisle higher (after Vasileiades 1962: 227).



ELEVATION

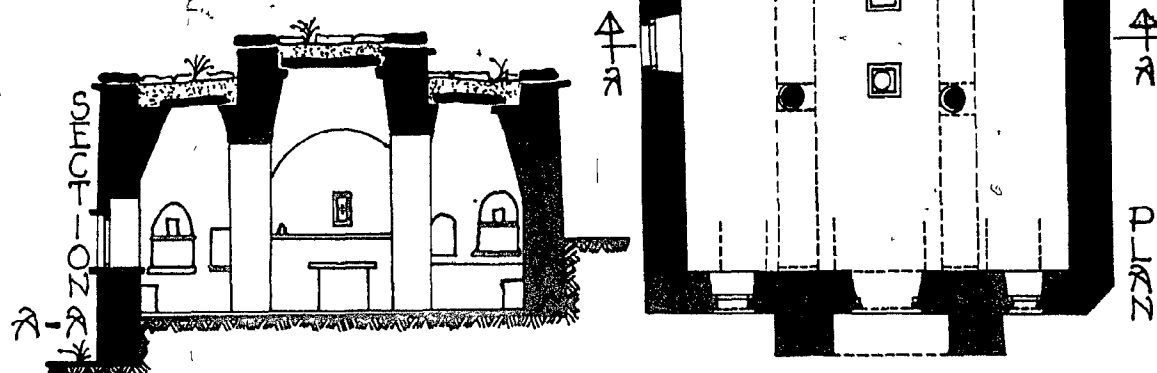


Fig. 70b. Andros. Three-aisled with unequal aisle widths and with its central aisle higher (after Vasileiades 1962: 230, 231).

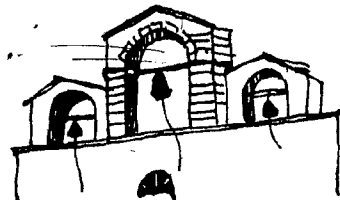
Three-aisled Churches

In the Aegean islands, as a rule, the three-aisled churches are basilicas which are dedicated to a single saint; but there also exist a number of churches where each aisle is dedicated to a different saint, effectively creating three churches interconnected in a row.

The plan of these basilicas originated in the Near East. This was proven by a comparative study of plans and sections of the Aegean three-aisled basilicas, with the oriental ancient three-aisled basilicas found in Crete, Rhodes, Cyprus, Asia Minor, and Syria (Vasileiades 1962: 248-257). Most of the basilicas are covered by flat roofs (only a few are vaulted) and have the following common characteristics:

- a) their plan is divided in three aisles by load-bearing axial arches;
- b) their aisle-width is the same in all aisles or slightly larger in the middle aisle;
- c) their height is the same in all aisles or slightly higher and with no windows in the middle aisle.

The different types of three-aisled basilicas are shown on pages 70a and 71a



71a

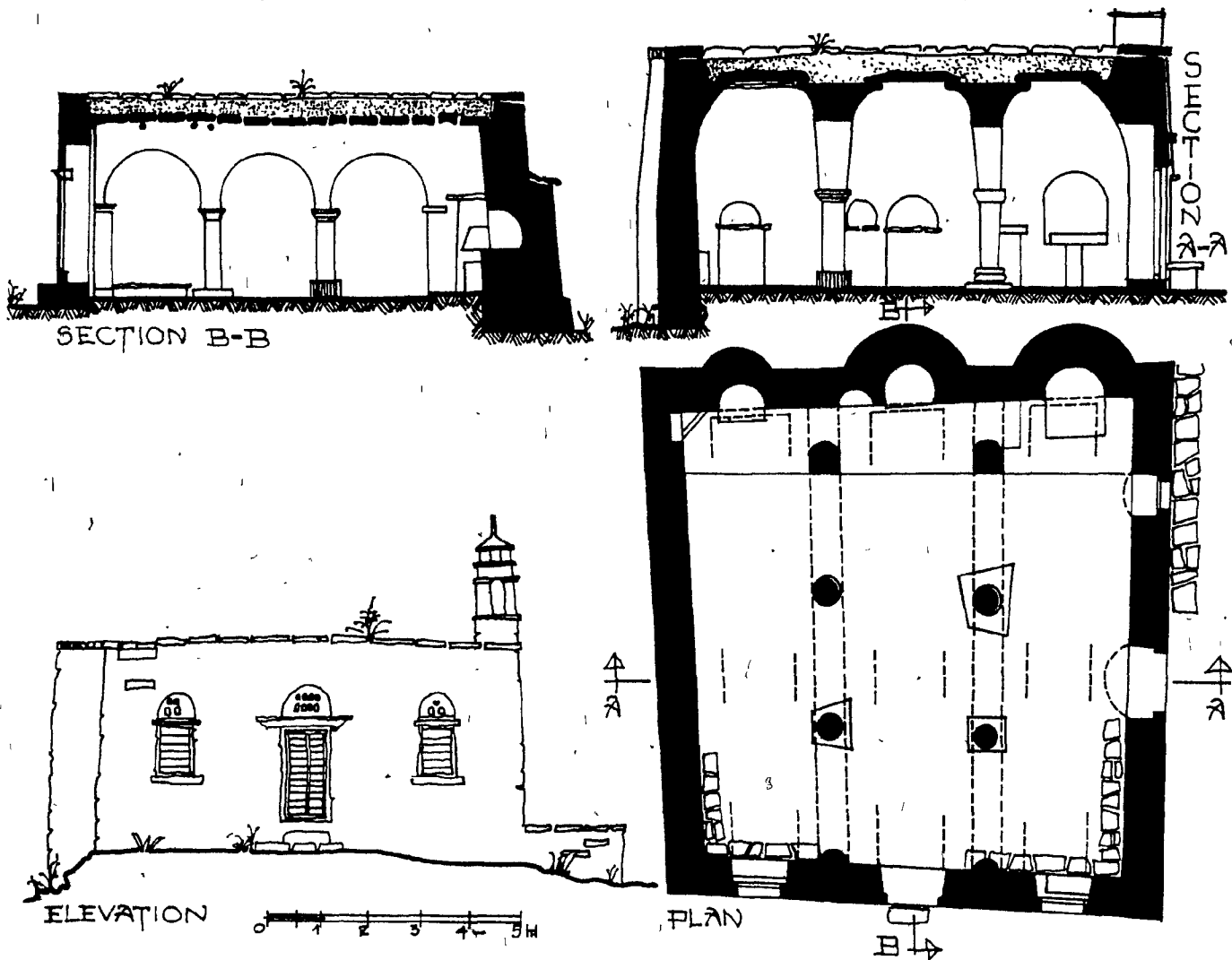


Fig. 71a. Tenos. Three-aisled basilica with equal aisle widths and uniform height.
(after Vasileciades 1962: 225, 226).

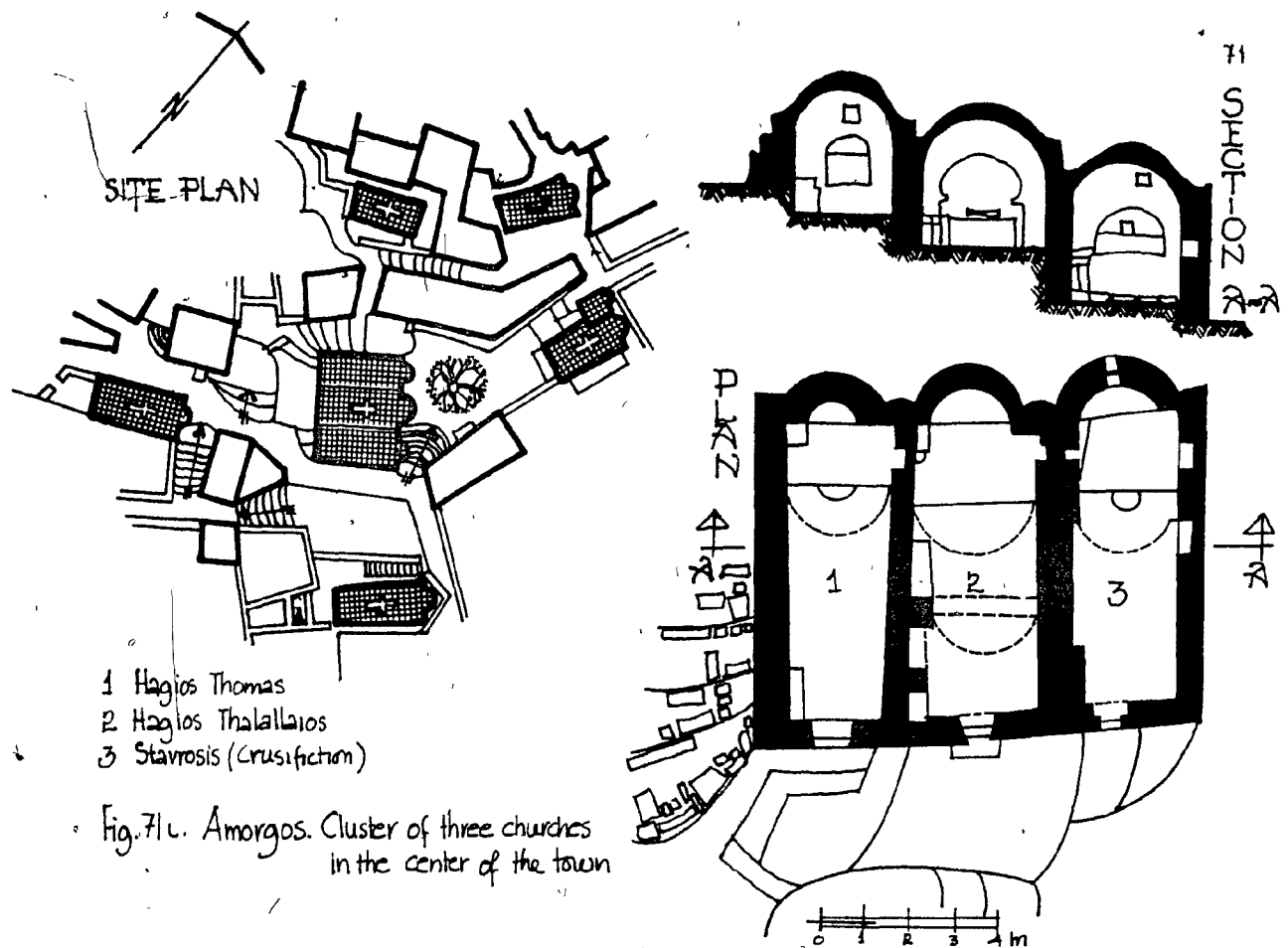


Fig. 71. Amorgos. Cluster of three churches in the center of the town

Clusters of Churches

Clusters of churches and chapels were built in the Aegean islands since the Byzantine years. Such clusters are known to ecclesiastic architecture both in Byzantine as well as in the western medieval tradition. For example, couples of chapels on two levels were constructed adjoining western cathedrals or in castles and bishops' residences. The ground level chapel was a crypt, a charnel house, or was used by the community at large; while the upper level chapel was reserved for the feudal lord and his family, or for the bishop (Vasileiades 1961:45). In the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine tradition, the ground level chapels were usually mortuaries, charnel houses, or foundation bases; while the upper level chapel was dedicated to the celebrated saint.

72a

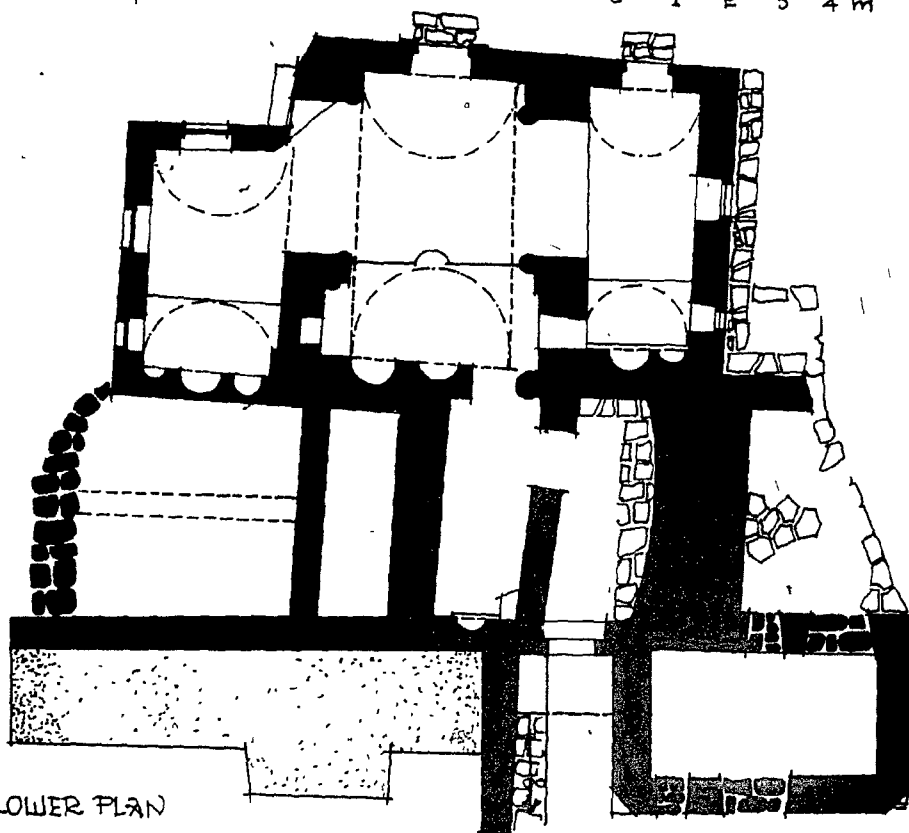
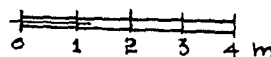
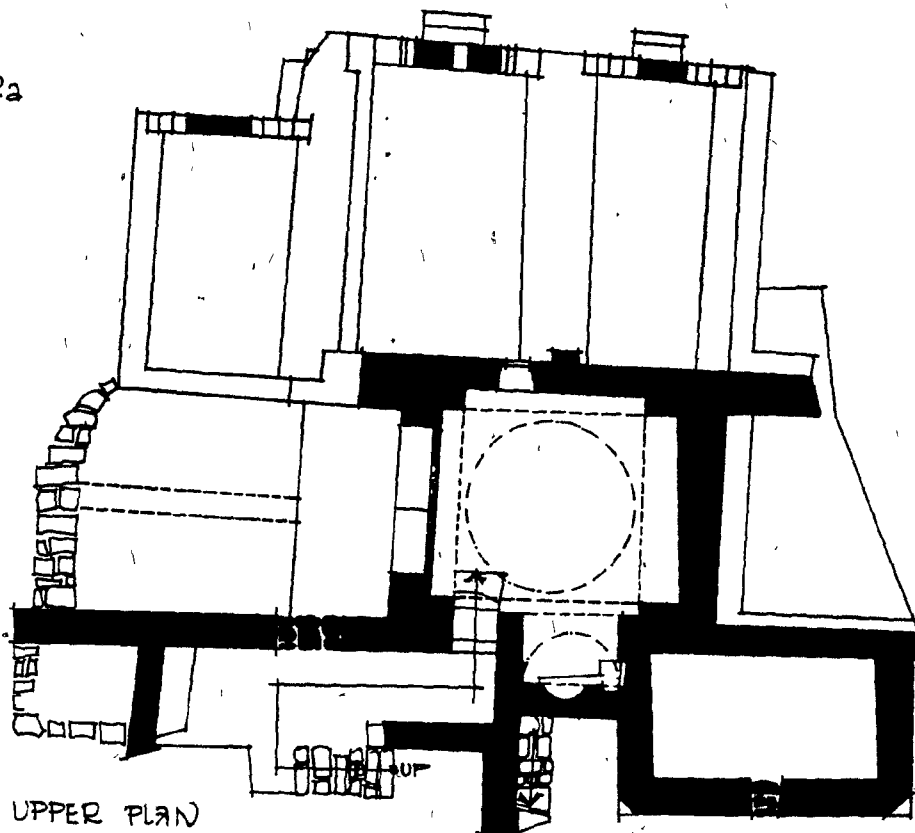


Fig 72a: Mykonos Panagia Paraportiani (after Vasileiades 1961: 8, 9)

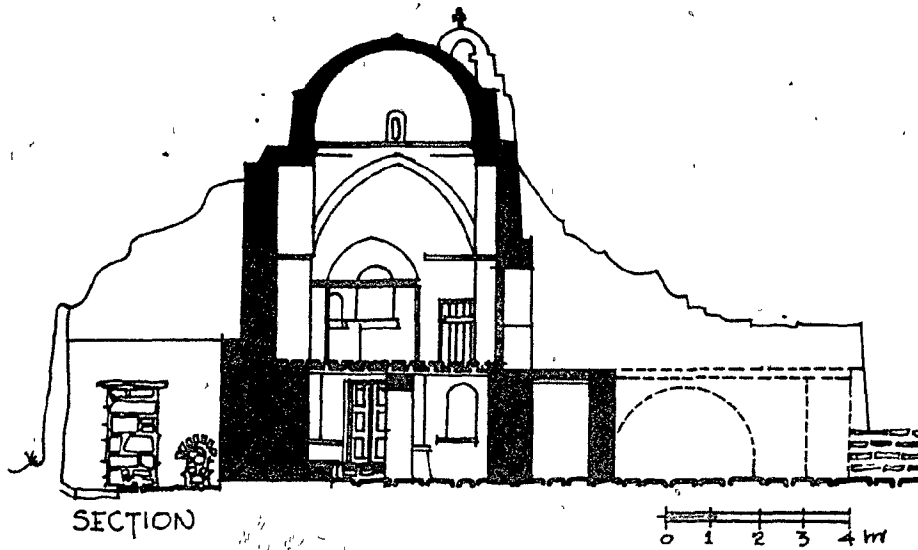
The most unusual and inspiring group of chapels of the Greek islands is Panagia Paraportiani on Mykonos. The name, Paraportiani, describes the site on which the cluster is built, near the small entrance, *parapórti*, of the former medieval wall* of the city. Paraportiani today is a cluster of five chapels on two levels. Four of these chapels are on ground level, and the fifth one is on the upper level. Three of the ground level chapels are built on the western side, in a row, and are joined together by an arched opening. They are small, single-aisled vaulted basilicas with niches carved out of the eastern walls without forming apses.

The chapel on the second level is dedicated to Virgin Mary (Panagía) and gives its name to the whole complex (Panagia Paraportiani). Its entrance is reached by a small staircase on the eastern side, hidden behind a ruined wall which was formerly a buttress (Goldfinger 1969:76). The chapel has a single-aisled cruciform plan crowned by a dome. The four short unequal arms of the cross are restrained within the thickness of the exterior wall and are covered by barrel vaults forming a square on top of which rests the dome. Due to the small dimensions of the chapel (interior dimensions . 4.30x4.80m.) the dome is not supported by free-standing interior supports but by four pendentives that carry the weight to the walls. Some peculiarities of the chapel are that its sanctuary is rectangular, it does not lie on the

*Possibly this wall was formed by the houses as suggested by A. Wace, "The Towns and Houses of the Archipelago," *Burlington Magazine* 140 (1914): 99.

73a

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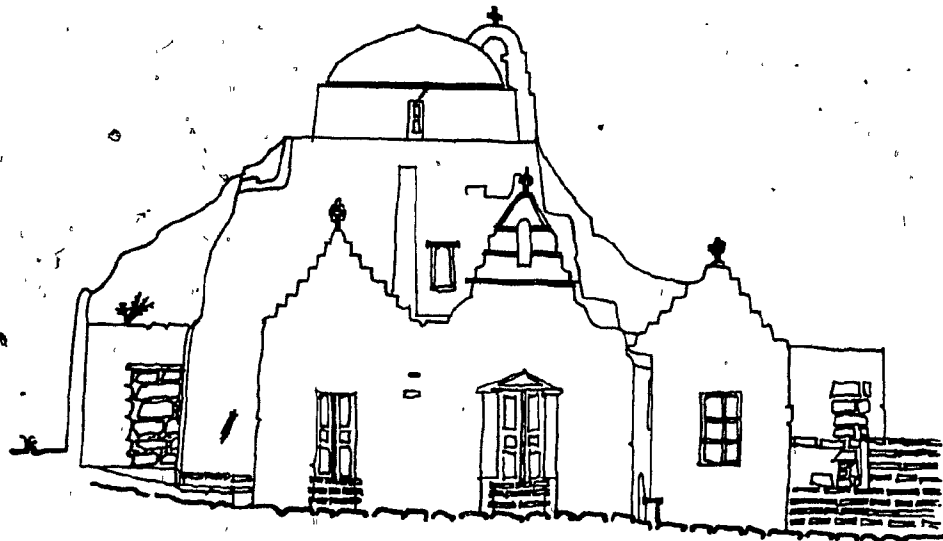


SECTION

0 1 2 3 4 m

Fig 73a. Mykonos. Paraportiani (after Vasileiades 1961: 11).

0



WESTERN ELEVATION



Fig 73i Mykonos Paraportiani (after Vasileiades 1961: 11, 15). EASTERN ELEVATION

main longitudinal axis, and is cantilevered thus forming a porch on the ground level.

The plan of the chapels, the belfry which is a free standing buttress; the hidden entrance, the stone staircases, the climbing to two different levels, the successive changes of direction at right angles, are undoubtedly very impressive to both worshipers and observers alike.

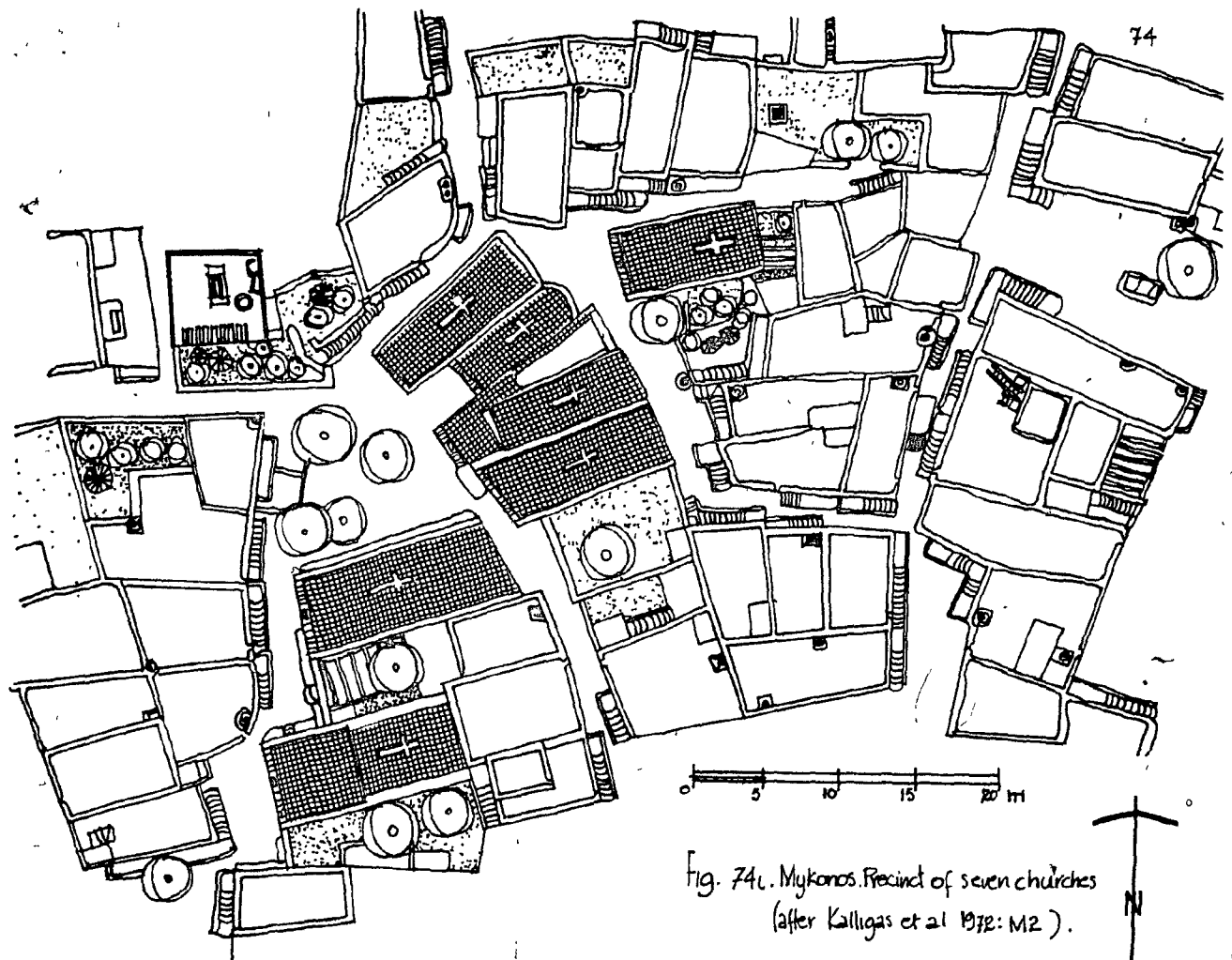


Fig. 74c. Mykonos. Precinct of seven churches
(after Kalligas et al 1972: M2).

Precincts of Churches

The existence of a proliferation of small chapels woven into the urban environments of the Aegean islands has already been mentioned. Since these environments are dense, it is natural that the large number of chapels dispersed over the fairly small areas occupied by the towns are built close to each other. The concentration of the chapels in small areas is sometimes so high that the chapels form precincts by themselves. It is interesting to note that precincts of chapels appear next to irregular small squares forming static focal points or climaxes in the

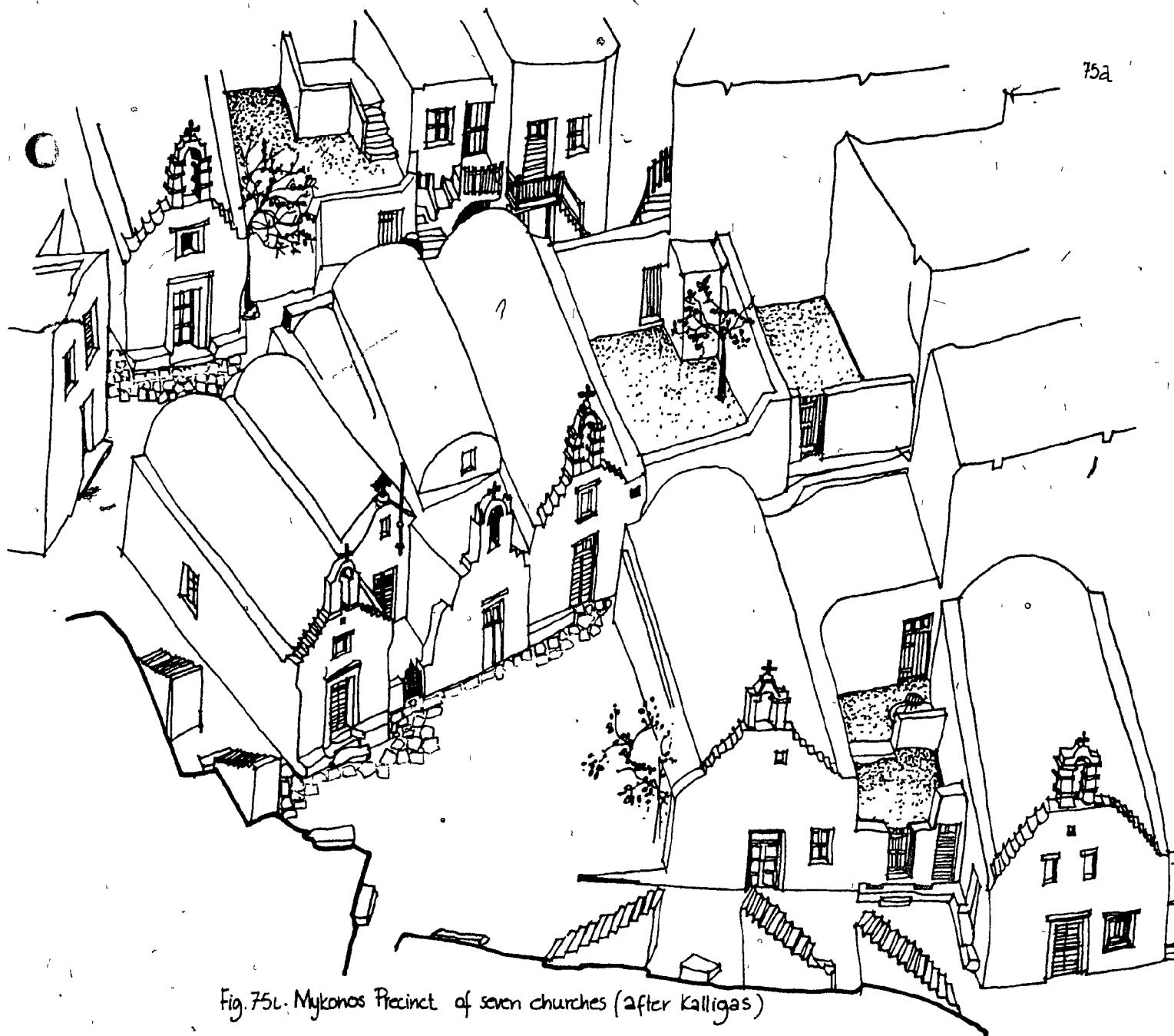
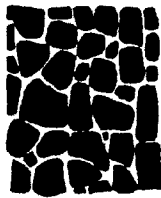


Fig. 75L. Mykonos Precinct of seven churches (after Kalligas)

towns.

In Mykonos there are 360 little Orthodox chapels for a population of 3600 (Ernest and Mitarachi 1960: 82). There one finds such precincts of chapels. A good example is the one known as the Neighborhood of Seven Churches, where seven chapels with interesting belfrys on their facades are crowded around two small irregular squares



Streets

The Italian architect Alberti wrote in 1450 an interesting note:

"But even in a small town or a fortification it is best if the roads do not lead directly to the gates but rather are twisted, especially the roads close to the walls and underneath the towers of the walls. Even in the center of the city it is best if they are not straight but rather twisted like a river's bed. Thus, being longer the city will appear bigger, and they will contribute to the city's beauty and will provide to people with better services. In addition, the twisting will offer to the pedestrian the joy of discovering a new building with every turn. The facade and entrance door of each house will look into the middle of the street. In small cities it is both healthy and pleasant to have such an open view.

Also in these streets all houses will gather sun during certain periods of the day, and will be cooled by the breezes, while the strong winds will be neutralized by the streets' turns and twists. Add to this the fact that if the enemy succeeds in entering he will face danger from all sides: from the front, the back, the sides, and the top because the people will fight from the roofs as well." (Chatzemichales et al 1968:4). Furthermore, the old towns which today have kept their basic characteristics unaltered, suggest that their inhabitants felt strongly the need to create interesting features in them. The people understood that an opening, or widening of the road, a small square, some green space or even a single tree in the right place would be of great help in creating an interesting living space (Moutsopoulos 1967:49).

76a



A.K.

Fig. 76a. Naxos. View of Chora.

The threat of pirates was the reason for seeking a naturally defensive site, and for planning narrow streets with unexpected dead ends. But at the same time, squares and street openings were created and an accent was placed on the town authorities. These were authorities of divine character (churches), and of social character (palaces and castles of noblemen).

Chora* of Naxos is chosen to serve as an example of how the streets function in such an urban environment. Chora, with a population of 3,200 is the capital of the largest of the Cyclades islands. The main features of its natural setting are: a hill overlooking the sea, the small adjoining island of the "palaces", and a meadow surrounded by mountains. Two different types of formation are distinguished in the structure of the town: a) the primary formation of Kastro which is based on a system of defense where the houses are built side by side with the outer ring of houses constituting the fortification walls of the town, and b) the subsequent formation of the rest of the town outside Kastro, which

*Chora of Naxos flourished in ancient times and traces of a Cycladic - Mycenaean settlement are still visible. When Marko Sanudo went to Naxos in 1207 he found a small settlement and a fortress on the hill. He seized the town, established Naxos as the capital of his dukedom, and built the castle called Kastro. In 1537 the Turks occupied the island and in 1566 it was sold to a Jewish ruler. In 1690 Tournefort counted 4,000 inhabitants, and mentioned schools, fortifications and a harbor. In 1877, the construction of a carriage road was started and the subsequent rapid growth followed the linear axes of the coastline and of the carriage road (Chatzomichales and Polychroniades 1974:84)



Fig. 78a. Naxos Street in Chora (after Djelpey 1952: 42)

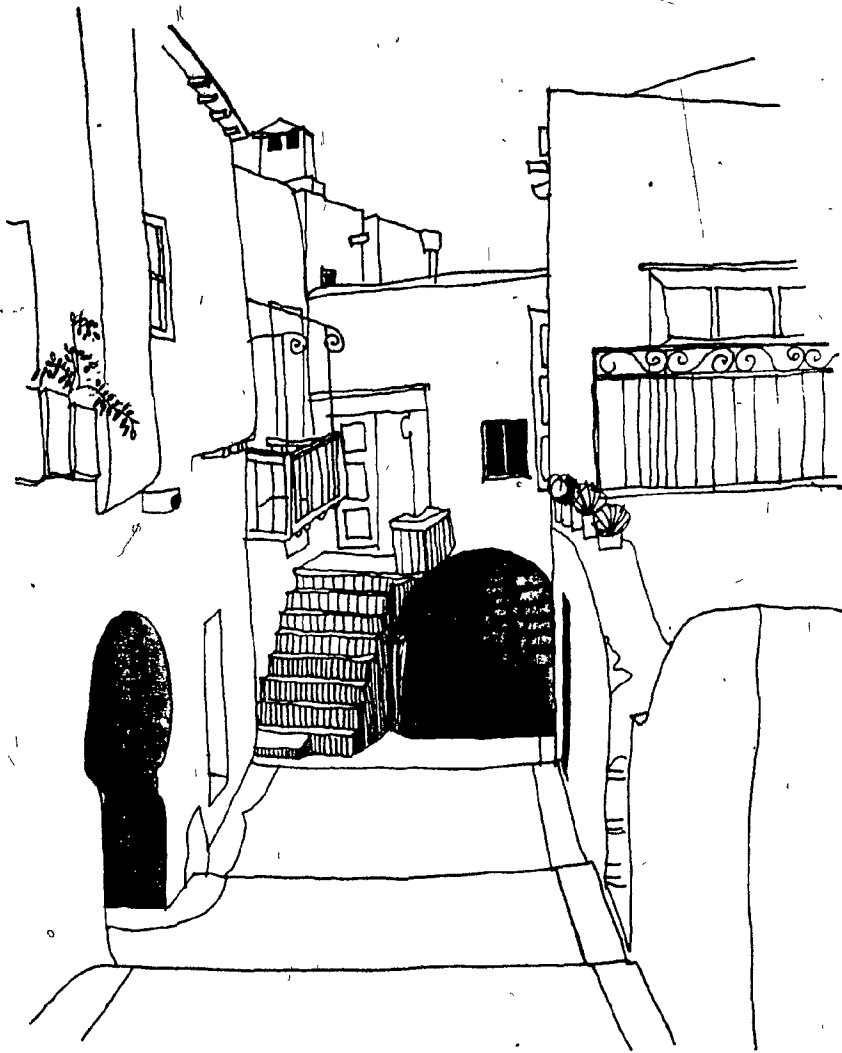


Fig. 73 L. Naxos. Street in chora (after Papas 1957: 42)

developed more freely, with a smaller degree of organization.

In general, the structure of chora is created by the repetition of similar elements such as the dwelling units and the pedestrian streets. The structure has a built-in potential for assimilating changes. The human scale of the environment is maintained, and a network of open spaces where social contacts take place are created (Chatzeminichales and Polychroniades 1974: 84).

78a

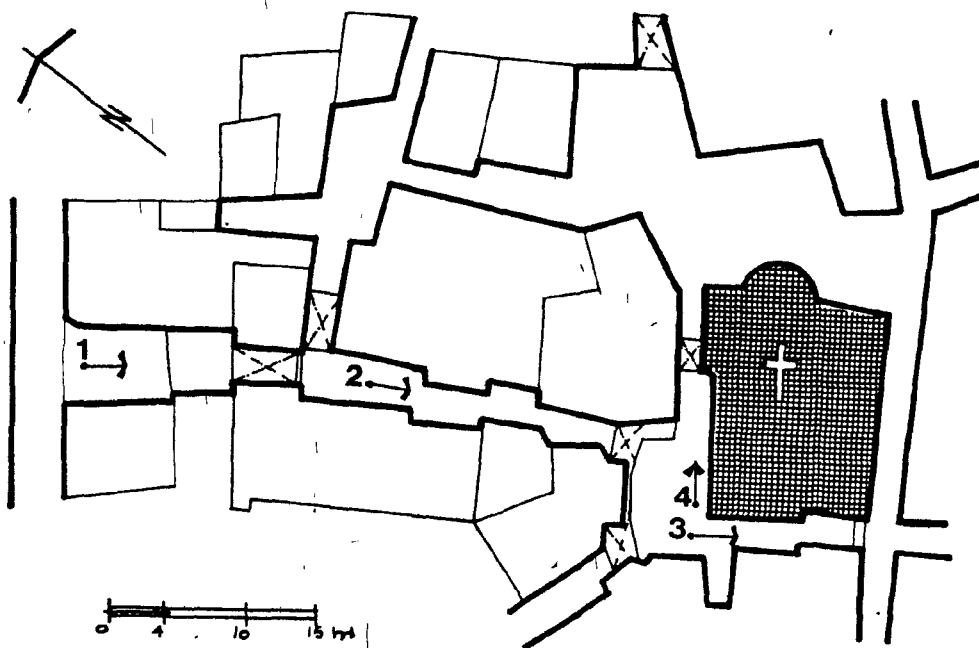
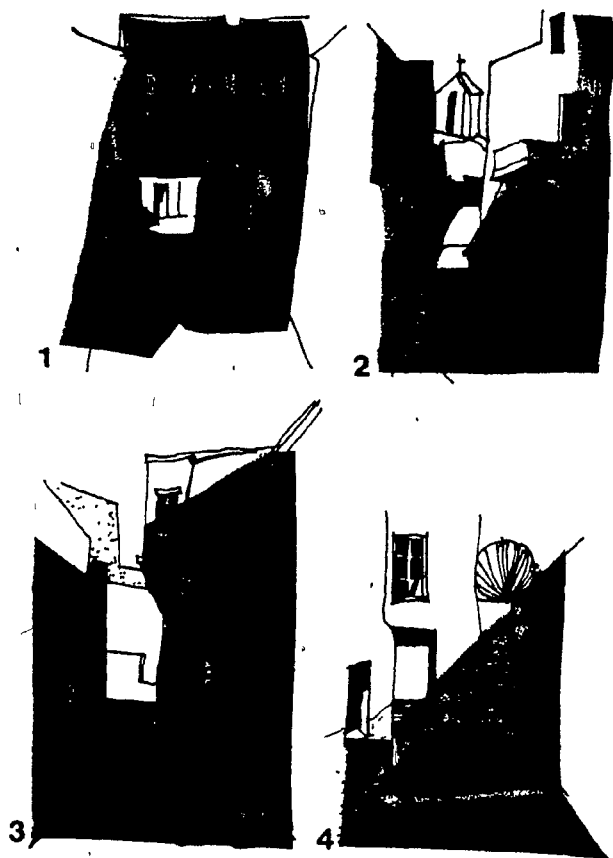


fig. 78a. Naxos. Residential street outside Kastro.

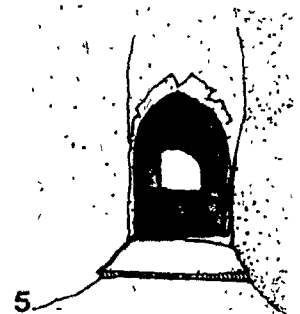
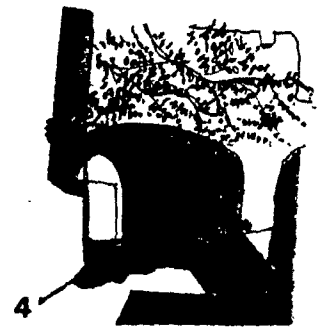
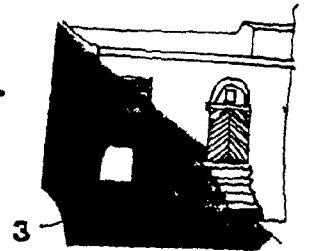
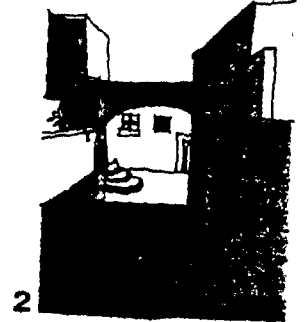
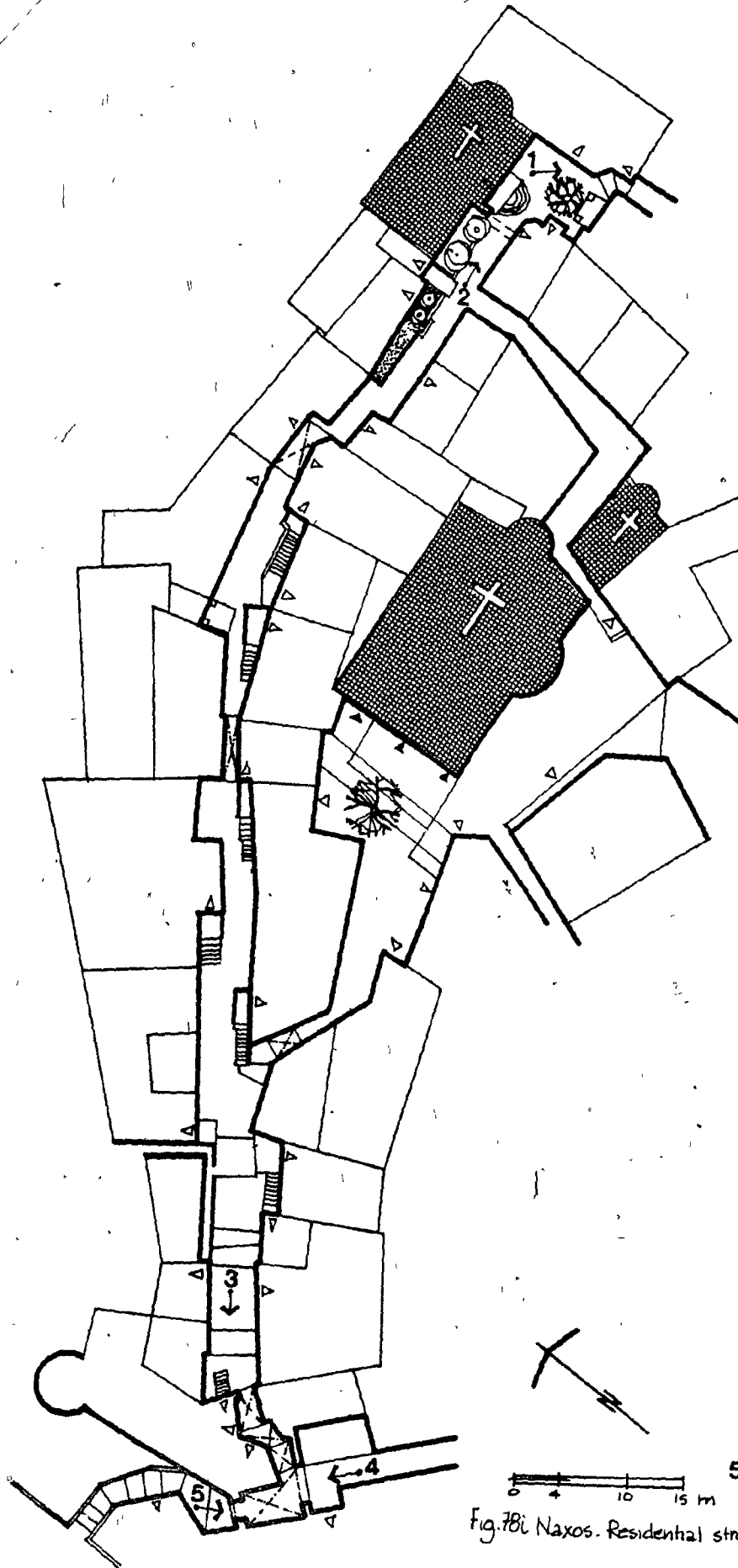
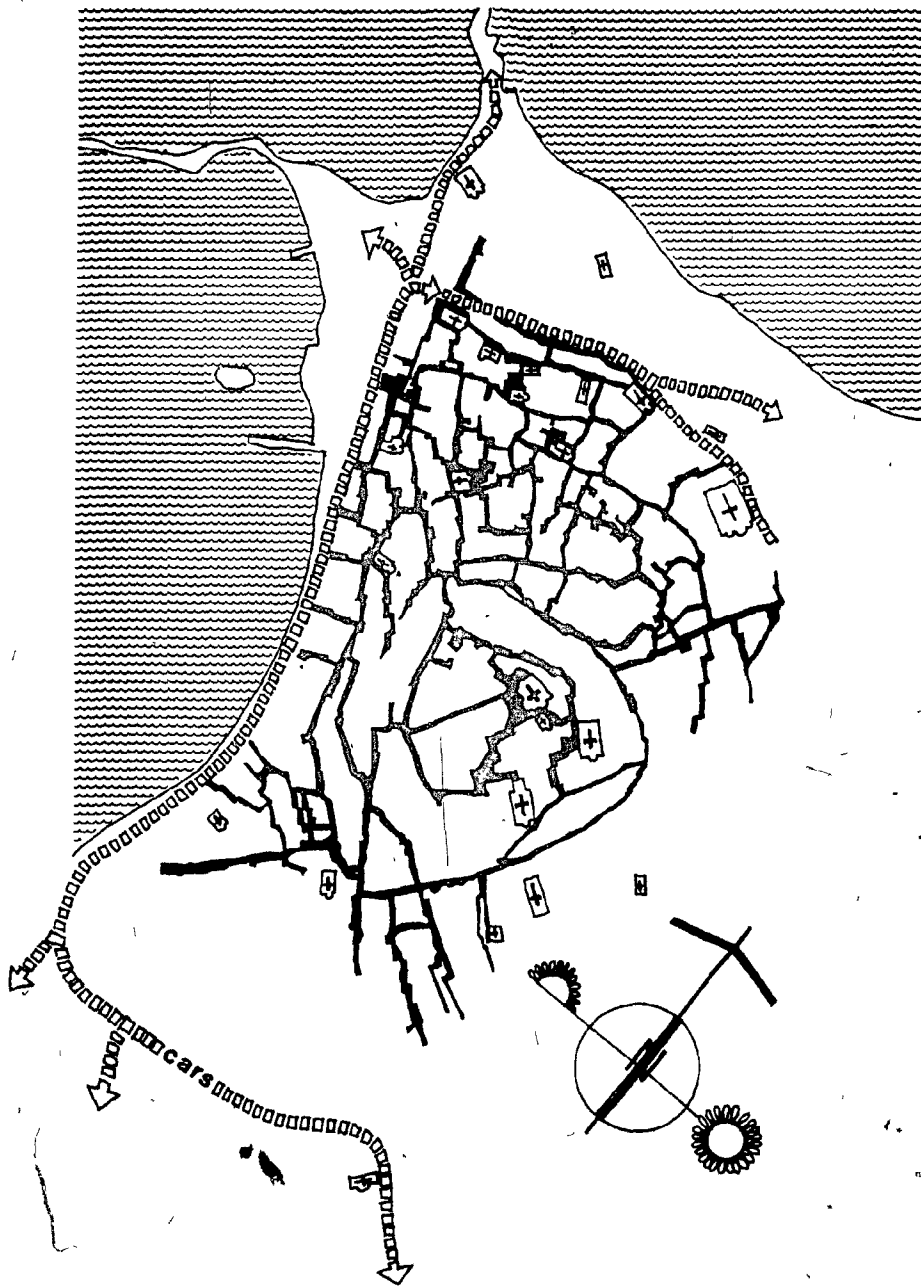


Fig. 78i Naxos. Residential street in Kastro

79a



0 50 100 150 m

Fig. 79a. Naxos. Pedestrian street network of Chora (after Chatzomichailis et al 1968:8).



Fig. 79. Naxos Residential, street elevation in chora (after Chatzemihales et al 1968: 13).

The pedestrian streets, having not undergone significant changes, maintain the original organization of the structure, and determine the character of the town more than any other single element. In Chora of Naxos, three quarters of the streets are for pedestrians. The vehicular traffic is routed to the outskirts of the town and through the seafront area leaving the original formation of pedestrian streets intact. Pedestrian streets serve as transitional spaces linking the quiet residential quarters to the bustling with public life new ones. They are 90 to 250 m wide and follow the natural contours of the hill forming a circular network around Kastro.

The street in chora is a way through the environment and not a through-way. It serves various functions; it becomes an area of commercial exchange, of social interaction, or a semi-private area linked to the house. The scale of pedestrian movement within the town is one of the basic factors determining the human scale of the environment (other than the scale of physical dimensions which correspond to anthropometric proportions). The walking distances are comparatively short, and there exist various points of reference and visual diversity facilitating orientation

80a

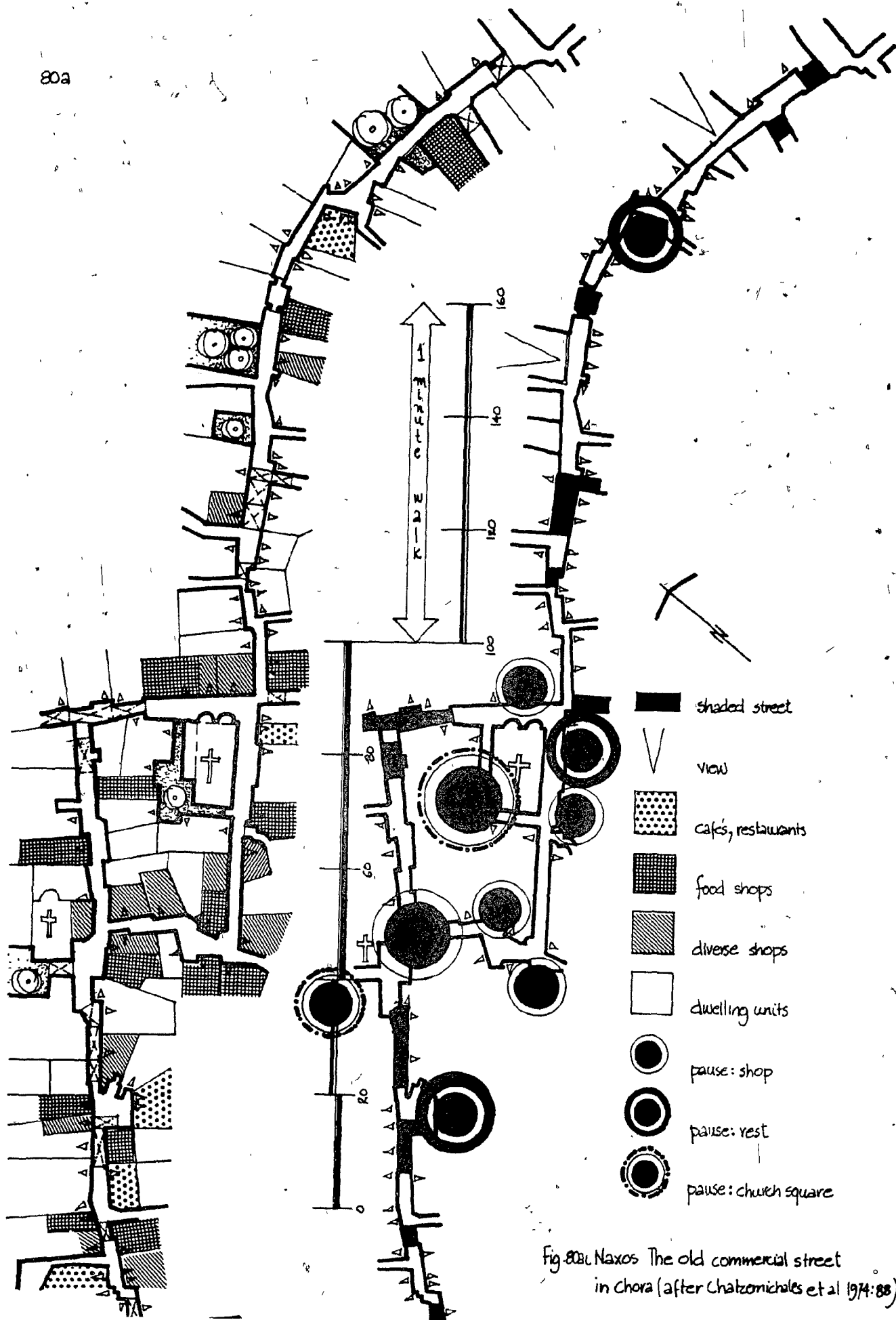


Fig. 80a. Naxos The old commercial street in chora (after Chatzomichales et al 1974:88).

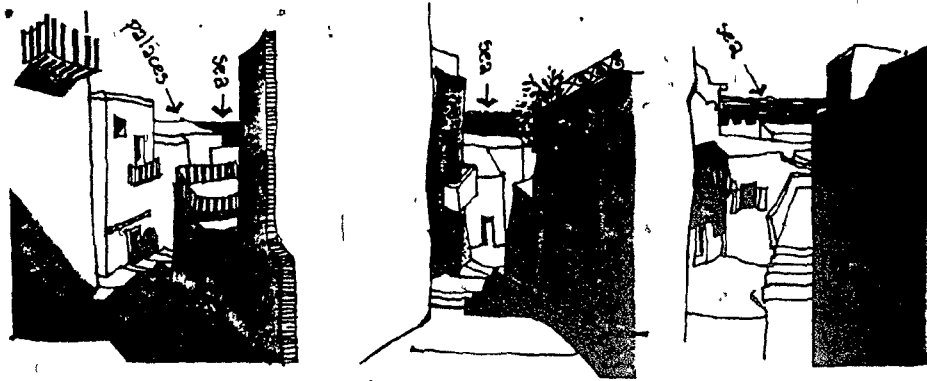


Fig. 80c. Naxos Successive visual impressions walking from Kastro towards the sea
(after Chatzomichalos et al 1974:95)

within the town. As the passing pedestrian climbs up the street towards Kastro, he has the opportunity of viewing the sea through openings between the buildings. He is also able to orient himself and see how far up the hill he has walked. Therefore, the relation of the hill and the sea reinforces the feeling of orientation while simultaneously providing a beautiful open view. The pedestrian has constantly changing impressions which are sometimes contrasting to each other such as light-shadow, noise-silence, public-private, and movement-pause.

Movement-pause impressions are basic features of the pedestrian street and are of particular interest for the purpose of this study. Movement is provided by the mere nature of the street since a street is the carrier of movement. Furthermore, streets are often narrow, and twisting enclosed by buildings that provide different views, the pedestrian's curiosity is aroused by the idea of what will be revealed at each turn of the street.

Pause is accentuated by a) optical artifices such as treating the

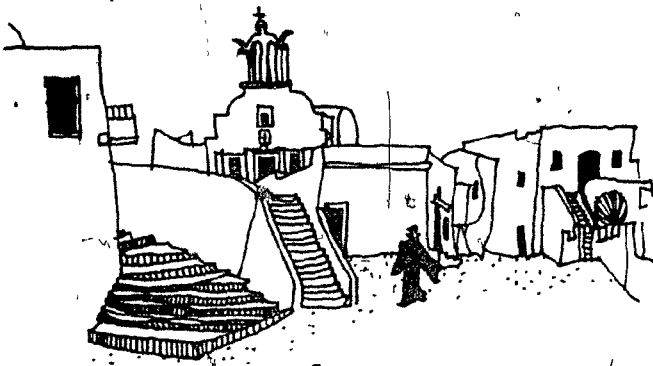


Fig. 81a. Naxos Square in front of a church (after Seewald 1958:141).

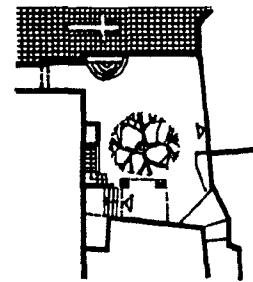
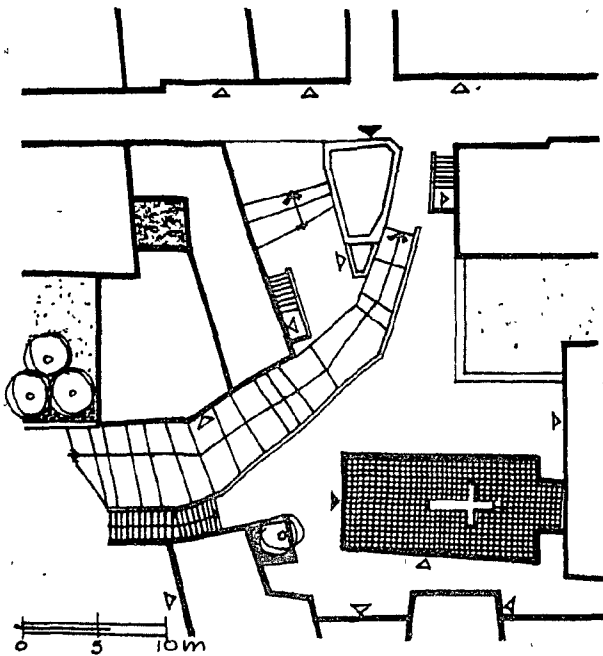
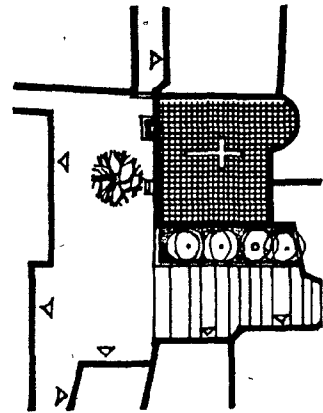
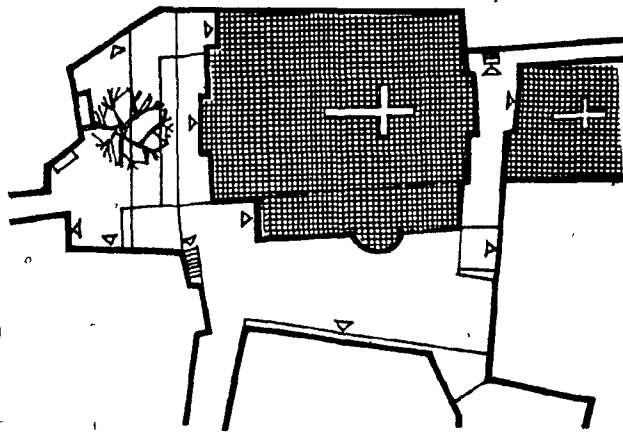
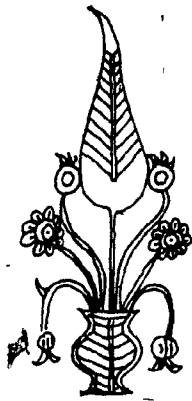


Fig. 81. Naxos. Pause next to churches (after Chatzomichales et al 1968:12).

frontal elevation of a building, often a church, in such a way as to provoke one to stop and look at this elevation; and b) widening the street thereby creating small squares. Such small squares have various functions, for example a) commercial noisy squares enclosed

by stores with merchandise hanging both inside and outside tempting the pedestrian to stop, b) quiet neighborhood squares with a tree or two and a bench inviting one and all to stop and relax also acting as community gathering places, and c) squares in front of churches for the parish to congregate before and after masses.



Platéies

The towns *platéies** have a definite sense of place which is molded and shaped by the behavioral pattern of its users, who clearly identify themselves as observers of and participants in the life generated in these centers of public activity. There exist certain similarities of the present day *platéies* with the ancient Greek agoras. Agoras were the center of the cities where social interaction, politics and business took place, but where economic functions were secondary and were regarded as a degradation of the agoras' original purpose (Thakurdesai 1972: 336). Likewise, *platéies* contain many coffeehouses, restaurants, barber shops and, sometimes, administrative centers where social interactions and political discussions take place; while most stores are located along a main commercial street. Both agoras and *platéies* are located in the center of cities at the junction of a number of streets. Agoras were the domain of men; women had no equal rights.

**Platéies* are the central squares of the towns (singular of *platéies*: *plátéia*).

■ church, ■ coffeeshouse, ■ man, ○ woman, ► movement



Fig. 84. Karpathos. *Plateia* of Elymbos during the feast of Panagia (after Philippides 1973:200).

Even today, the coffeeshouses which spread their tables outside and occupy a good part of the *plateias* are also exclusively used by men. They sit there to drink coffee, play cards and backgammon, discuss politics, or simply relax and watch the social life around them. In small towns, women generally avoid sitting and talking in the *plateias*. Furthermore, during certain festivities, their inferior social position is apparent and this status reflects traces of older social structures.

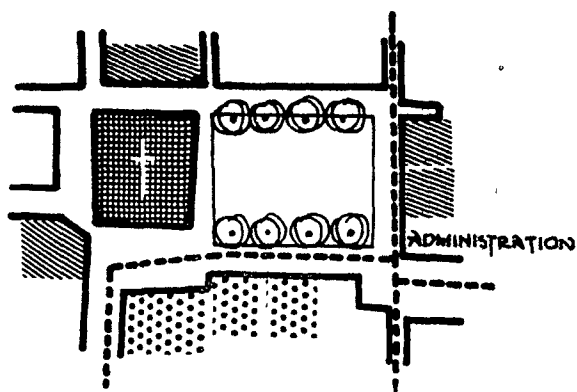


Fig. 85ai Chios. The plateia of Pyrgos
(after Thakurdesai 1972:338).

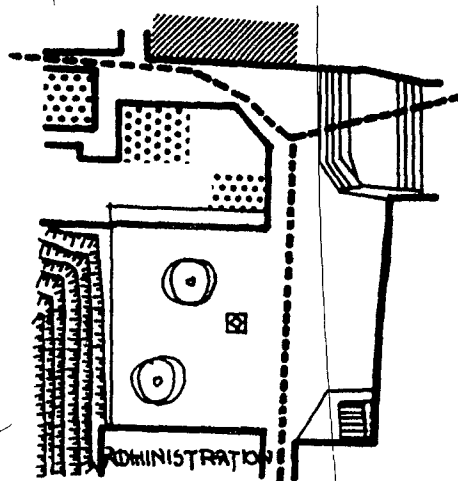


Fig. 85aii Kea. The plateia of Kea
(after Thakurdesai 1972:338).

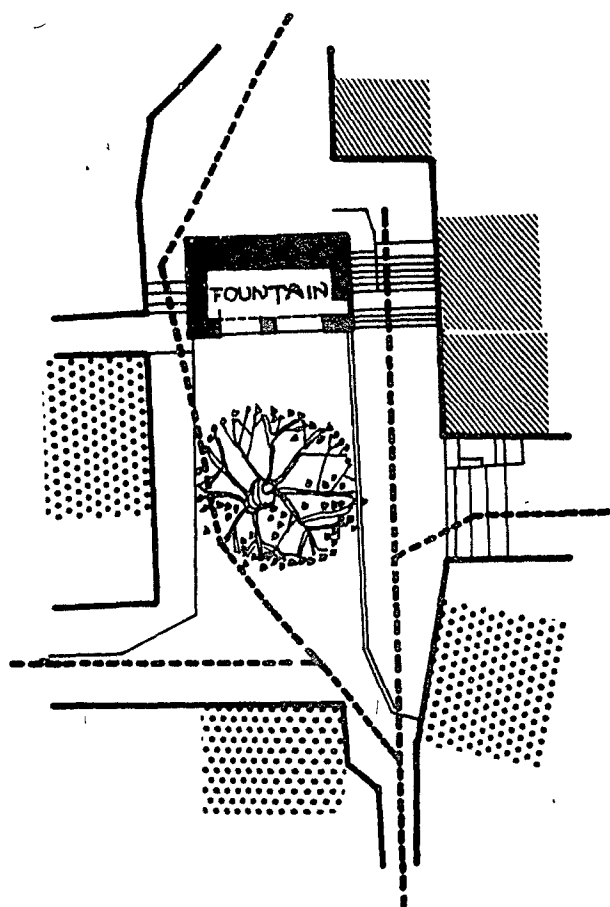


Fig. 85aiii Tenos. The plateia of Pyrgos
(after Thakurdesai 1972:335)

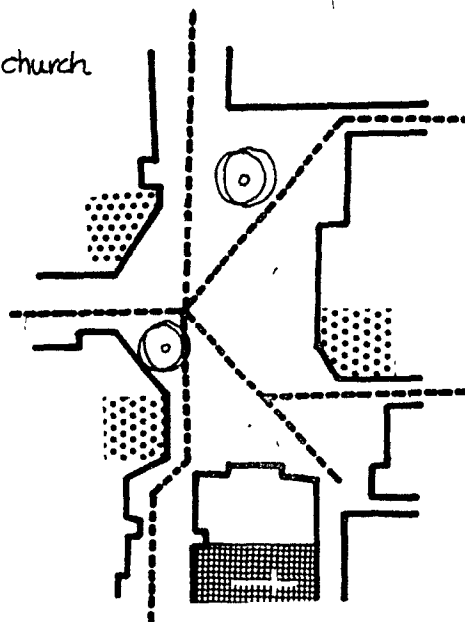
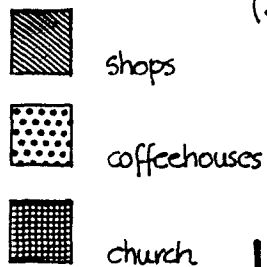


Fig. 85aiv Crete. The plateia of Anogia
(after Thakurdesai 1972:338)

For example, in Elymbos on the island of Karpathos, during religious feasts that involve communal dancing and take place in the *plateia* next to the church, the groups of men and women occupy different spaces. The men sit inside the coffeehouses or at tables set in the open, while the women stand clustered on the open porch of the church, on the steps leading to the square, or on the perimeter of the square. When the music starts playing the first group to dance are men, and only later do the women join them (Philippides 1973:199). Figure 84i shows the spatial arrangements of men and women before the dance (first phase), and during the dance (second phase).

The most favourable spots to sit are the ones that offer a view of the action on all sides, as well as possible participation and interaction with what is happening in the *plateia*. That is, popular "spots" are determined by sociability where maximum human contact can occur (Thakurdesai 1972:335).

In the *plateia* which is the focus of the town of Pyrgos on the island of Tenos popular places to sit are at the three coffeehouses. From there, one can easily observe the fountain and all that comes and goes from two diagonally opposite entry streets. Additionally, two of the coffeehouses are located at the intersection of the main town street with the *plateia*; someone is always passing by so that the people sitting in the coffeehouses can greet the passing pedestrians, start conversations, and therefore interact in this setting. On the other hand, almost nobody sits under the huge plane tree that offers shadow all over the central open space because from there they can not grasp the action fully (Thakurdesai 1972:335).



Fig. 86c Men resting in coffeehouse.

Similarly in Pyrgos on the island of Chios, nobody sits in the center of the plateia, but rather in the coffeehouses all of which are situated along the sides providing good views of the church's entrance as well as good views of the main movement as indicated in figure 86ai.

The church is often the center of attraction of the plateia

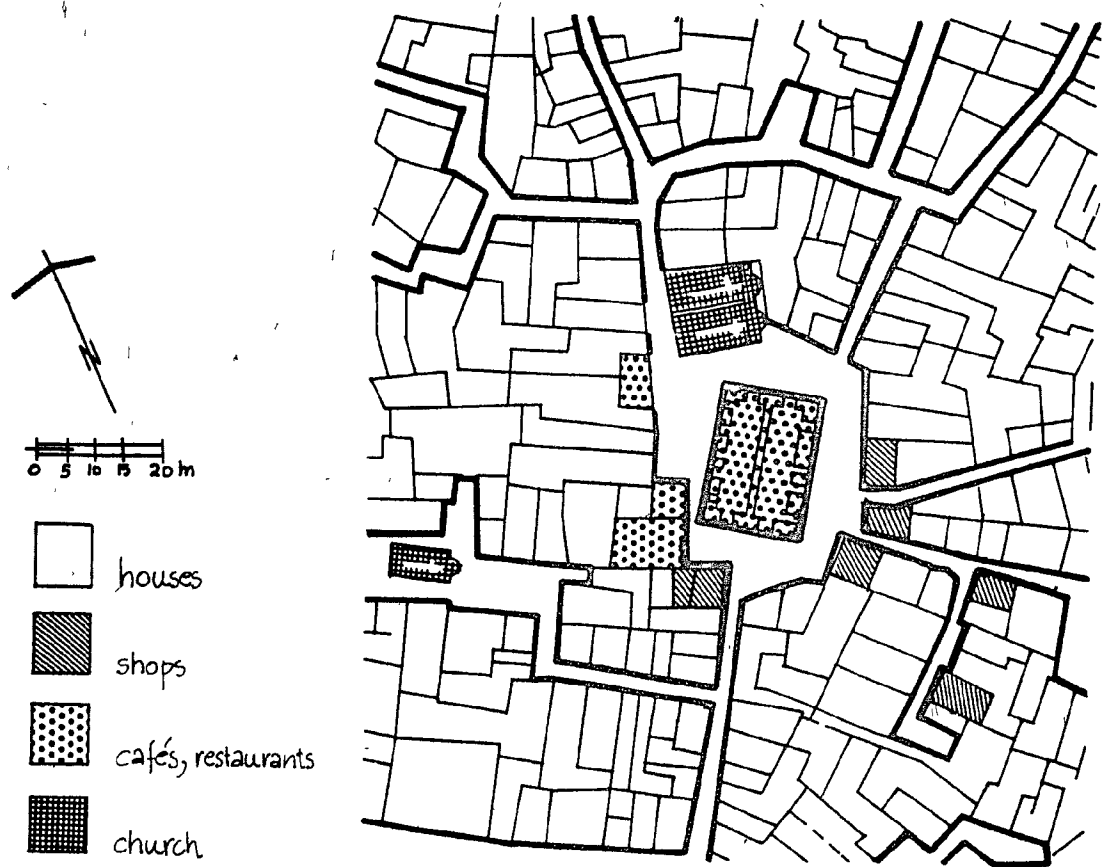


Fig. 87i Chios. The *plateia* of Olymboi (after Gavalas et al 1977: map 9).

Its facade usually faces the *plateia* and it is elevated by a few steps from the street level. For example, in Olymboi on the island of Chios, a fortified tower* in the middle of the city is surrounded by a relative large open space. A church faces the widest area which has become the *plateia* and dominates that space.

* The tower was renovated into a coffeehouse lately.

CHAPTER IV



CASE STUDY: SKYROS

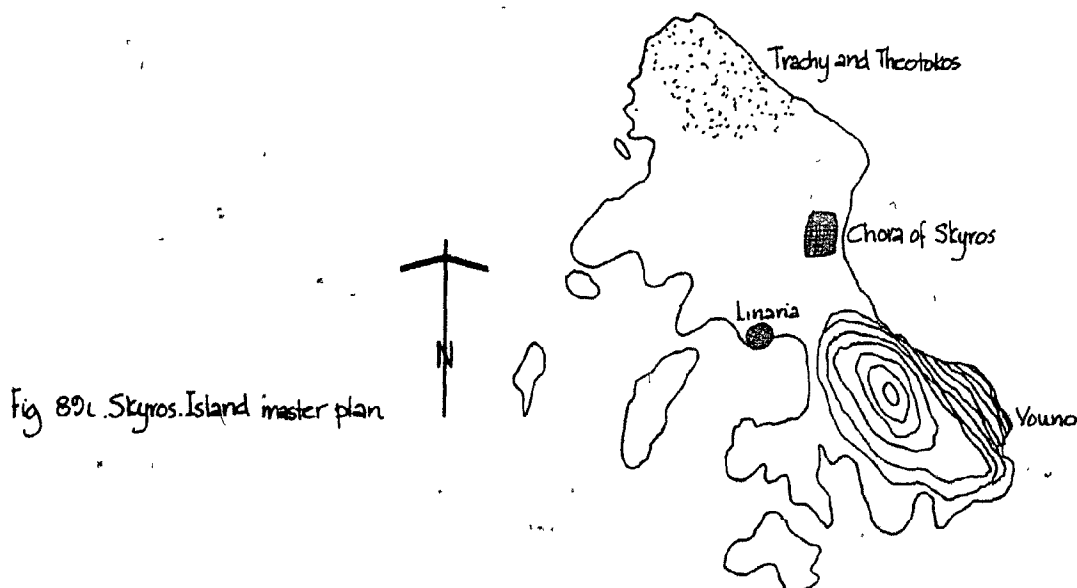
The island of Skyros, occupying an area of 218 square Kilometers, is the southernmost island of the Sporades. It is elongated in shape and isolated from the geographical entities of both the Sporades and the Cyclades. It lies 18 nautical miles east of Eubolia, 26 nautical miles south of Alonissos, and 48 nautical miles north of Andros, the northernmost island of the Cyclades.

Skyros is mountainous. Two mountain ranges are easily distinguishable; they are separated from each other by a flat valley 2.5 Kilometers wide. At the foothills of the northern mountain range called Olymbos 370 m. high (Karas 1971:2), lies the plain of Trachy and Theotokos, the largest of its nature on Skyros. This plain extends down to the sea ending in an accessible, sandy shore line. The north is covered for the most part by pine forests, olive trees, and fruit trees, and constitutes the most intensively cultivated area of the island.

The southern mountain range, 782 m. high (Karas 1971:2) is

called Kochylas or Vouno. Practically bare of vegetation with the exception of low shrubs, Vouno ends abruptly at the sea, forming an inaccessible shore line of cliffs. Devastating fires have destroyed many acres of forest in the past, and the grazing of goat herds has seriously impeded the reforestation efforts. The morphology of the northern part of the island is quite distinctly different from that of the south.

The climate of Skyros is mild and sunny throughout the year. Summers are not very hot and in the winter the temperature rarely falls below freezing point. During the summer months seasonal winds, called *metémia*, blow from the north-east. North-east and north-west winds prevail all year around. Seasonal rainfall is as follows: January 110.5 mm, August 35 mm (OTOME vol II:5).





Historical Background

Skyros has a historic pattern similar to the rest of Greece. There exist indications (Papageorgiou 1909: 55-87, 98-118) that the first inhabitants of the island were Pelasgoi, Kares, Cretians, and Dolopes. Dolopes who were a strong people and famous pirates, were the most important and most predominant inhabitants of the prehistoric years.

During Homer's era, Skyros belonged to the Kingdom of Achilleas. Various myths connect the names of Achilleas and Theseas with the island.

During the classical era, the strategic position of the island in the center of the Aegean sea (at the intersection of sea-routes connecting East and West, North and South) attracted the Athenians. Kimon used the excuse eliminating the piratical raids of the Dolopes to conquer Skyros in 468 B.C. He divided the land among the Athenian citizens who then established a colony on the island thus initiating its Greek character.

In 340 A.D. Skyros was conquered by Phillip II, King of Macedonia, and later fell under Roman rule until 396 A.D. when the Romans gave Skyros back to Athens as a gift.

During the Roman ages Skyros belonged to the Province of Achaia (name given to the mainland of Greece).

Under Justinian rule Skyros became a part of the Byzantine Empire. It so remained until the thirteenth century, when Moslem pirates attacked and destroyed the settlements of the island.

In 1204, when crusaders invaded Constantinople, the Aegean islands were divided among the conquerors, and Skyros was given to the Venetians. For the next four centuries the island changed hands

often and was governed by Venetian, Turkish, and Byzantine lords.

In 1538 Barbarosa, a dreadful pirate, plundered Skyros. From then to 1821, Skyros was under Turkish rule but part of the administrative powers were transferred to local Greek governing bodies. Tournefort, who visited the island in the beginning of the eighteenth century, described the island's government as consisting of three Greek elders and a Turkish *cadu* (Turkish judge).

In 1821 Skyros, together with the rest of Greece, revolted against the Turks and gained its independence.

With the Treaty of London in 1829 Skyros joined the kingdom of Greece (Kanas 1971:28).

Social Structure*

During the early nineteenth century the most important feature of the social structure of Skyros was the absolute power of the *árchontes* the large landowners of the community; the rich merchants, the owners of olive and water mills, etc, who also controlled local administrative, judiciary, legislative, and even religious functions. Turks did not interfere with the internal affairs of individual communities. They only collected the tax money and exercised justice in cases of severe crimes. The *árchontes* dominated the island community completely. Social organization served their best interests and helped perpetuate their control. Their privileged

*Information based on a) lectures by Manos Faltaris given in the Symposium of Laography in August 1978, and b) discussions with local elders.



Fig. 92a. Shepherd of Skyros (after Peske)

position was also guarded carefully with endogamy. This was an attempt to protect their exclusive status by restricting the numbers of families belonging to their social stratum. Since land was the tangible means of their supremacy, the accumulation of it became a major goal. Eventually they managed to gain control of all agricultural land that did not belong to the monastery, the churches, or the city of Skyros. The renting of this land to farmers and shepherds provided them with their income.

The remainder of the inhabitants can be classified into the following four distinct social strata:

- a) The bourgeois. This was composed of craftsmen, builders and merchants.
- b) The shepherds, who owned their own herds but rented the pastures.
- c) The farmers, who cultivated land which they rented from the *árchontes*.
- d) The general labourers and fishermen who lived outside the city along the coast (Evaggelinidou and Spinelle 1974: 50).

The social structure at that time was strongly characterized by patronage relations among influential *árchontes* and their entourage of lower status villagers and shepherds. Farmers and shepherds tried to gain the favor of one or more prominent *árchontes* so that they would be granted exclusive rights to their fields for grazing their herds or cultivating their crops. Sometimes *árchontes* would invite shepherds to build their shacks on their property thus giving more permanency to their relationship (Philippides 1973: 49).

Until the Second World War, the presence of the distinct social classes described above remained obvious and even today such social stratification can still be seen. Most of the families of *árchontes*

live in Athens and visit the island in the summer although some elders live in the neighborhoods around Kastro. These families still own land which they rent out. Shepherds and farmers still occupy their distinct neighborhoods.

Religious Organization

All the churches of Skyros belong to the metropolis of Karystias and Skyros, with the exception of the Monastery of St George which is the property of the Monastery of Megistis Lavras of Mount Athos.

The inhabitants of the town of Chora are divided into four parishes according to their neighborhood (parishes of Archontopanagia, Metropolis, St John, and St George.).

The most interesting features of religious organization in Skyros are the ecclesiastic fraternities. Such fraternities prospered in the past and are still in existence today.

Ecclesiastic fraternities were closed communities of men whose common purpose was that of sharing religious duties. From a sociological point of view, they were one of the most interesting ancient forms of human organizations. During the times of primitive worship, blood relatives established sanctuaries in honor of their great and glorious ancestors. Since they were to be buried in common graves, fraternity members devoted considerable time and energy to these sanctuaries. Solon recognized the organizations of *hierai orgai* (sacred orgies) and of *homotafes* (common graves) the existence of which was obviously older than his era (Pantazopoulos 1959:98).

The succession of idolatry by Christianity did not eliminate

this form of social organization. On the contrary it survived, changed form, adopted to the new conditions and became even stronger. Although the old idols gave way to Christian saints and martyrs, many of the organizational and ceremonial proceedings of the past remained. In Skyros, this tradition prospered and it was inseparably bound to the social, religious and recreational life of the Skyrians.

Up to the beginning of our century there existed organizations based on castes of origin and occupation. There also existed, as mentioned above, religious organizations: the ecclesiastic fraternities. Fraternities slowly pushed aside all other organizations and especially those of economic character. Their role was important because through them, Skyrians preserved their customs. Their members were involved socially as well as economically. Fraternity members could belong to different socio-economic castes, and a large part of their social life revolved around their church and their religious responsibilities. Although fraternity members were not monks or priests they performed many religious activities, and consequently, these activities acquired a less solemn and more humane character (Fallouts 1972: 3). Economic involvement resulted from the assignment of fraternity members as administrators of ecclesiastic property. Reliable information could be found in church codes, called *thésés*, basically log books that described the history of the construction of the church and the names of the owners. Details concerning the fraternity were also given, for example its financial standing, the list of fraternity members, the offerings to the saints, the contracts of land leasing, the appointment and salary of clergymen, the initiation of new members, etc. Thus, *thésés* books

Were sources of information on Skyrian families, on properties, and the general socio-religious life of its inhabitants. In case of loss or destruction of an older *theses* a new one was drawn up for two basic reasons:

a) so that the older owners and donors would continue to be commemorated,* and b) so that church property, including movable precious objects such as icons, sacred lamps, etc., would be protected from possible theft by greedy members. The honored saint was called to punish severely the transgressor. A typical example of such re-drawn *theses* is the one of Christos t' Ampase, re-written on October 16, 1792.

The property of the church was formed by the initial endowment of the owners and increased with the donations of new fraternity members and other Christians. Gifts of both land and precious objects (icons, sacred lamps, etc.) were offered either for the purging of the donor's soul or as means to enroll into the fraternity (Faltais 1972:6).

Skyrians willingly and generously made donations in order to join a fraternity. The right of their membership was also hereditary and freely transferable (offered, sold, etc.). Slowly, fraternities acquired large properties and together with the monastery of St George, the Diocese, and the *árchontes* became the richest landowners of the island. For example Skyropoula island and half of Reneia belonged to the fraternity of Taxiarches of Arous while the other half of Reneia belonged to the one of Hagioi Apostoloi (Faltais Anastasia 1972:5). They owned farmland, pastures, herds, and apiaries, and exploited all these resources

*Donation of property to the church was a reason for commemorating the donor during masses.

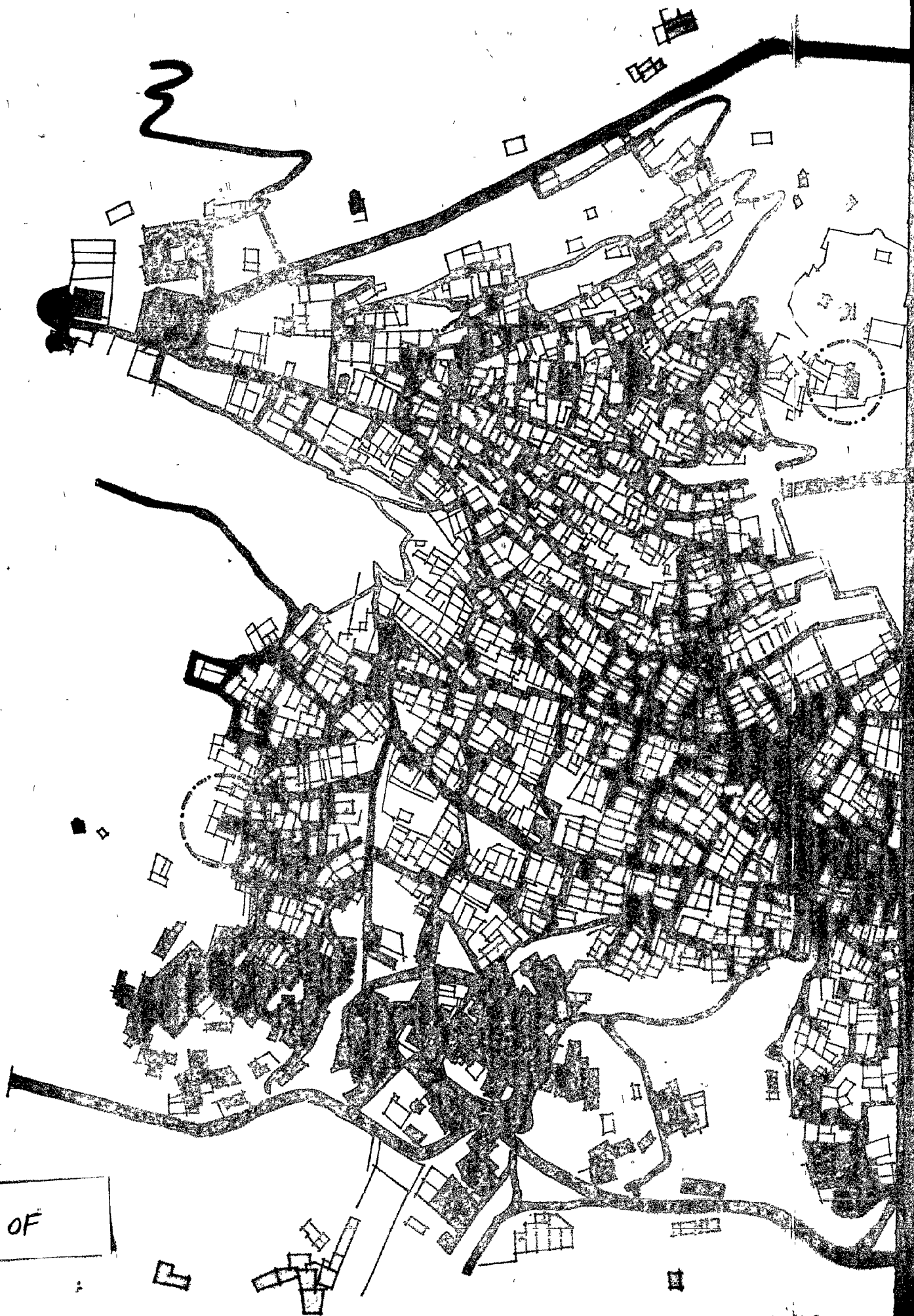
with the help of their members.

Fraternities were governed by trustees who were elected yearly. Trustees were obliged to register all important events, to bring up to date the administrative books, and to organize festivals in memory of the honored saint. Their zeal in planning impressive festivals was most often outstanding.

During the years of Turkish Occupation, fraternities reached high prosperity, for all parish churches belonged to them. After the Revolution of Independence this tradition began to decline because the members sold the property or divided it among themselves and offerings were greatly reduced (Ateses 1969:232). The newly formed Greek government closed down many monasteries and dioceses. It was then that the Diocese of Skyros and the monasteries of St Demetrios and of Christos sto Mavouma were expropriated. At that time some of the fraternities, either because they were honestly afraid that their property would be confiscated or simply because of opportunism, were dissolved and their property divided among the members. Thus, certain families profited greatly. This action had an effect on the moulding of the social hierarchy of the island.

As early as the last years of Turkish Occupation, due to the great economic interest in administering a fraternity, many families especially those belonging to the *árchontes* of Megale Strata (name of the aristocratic neighborhood meaning great street) managed to control the fraternities by a) being lifelong trustees, b) buying the shares of other members, or c) being the priests. During the Revolution and the first years of freedom most fraternities had already lost their democratic character and their land was promoted as personal property of the controlling families (Faltaitis 1972: 7).

Finally, with the "nationalization" of the parish churches, fraternities lost their power. Since then, this tradition is only alive in country chapels (Saint Mamas, Saint Artemes, Panagia he Lymbiane). Therefore, in some respects, the ancient tradition of religious organizations has managed to survive through the centuries, carrying elements of customs of an archaic civilization.



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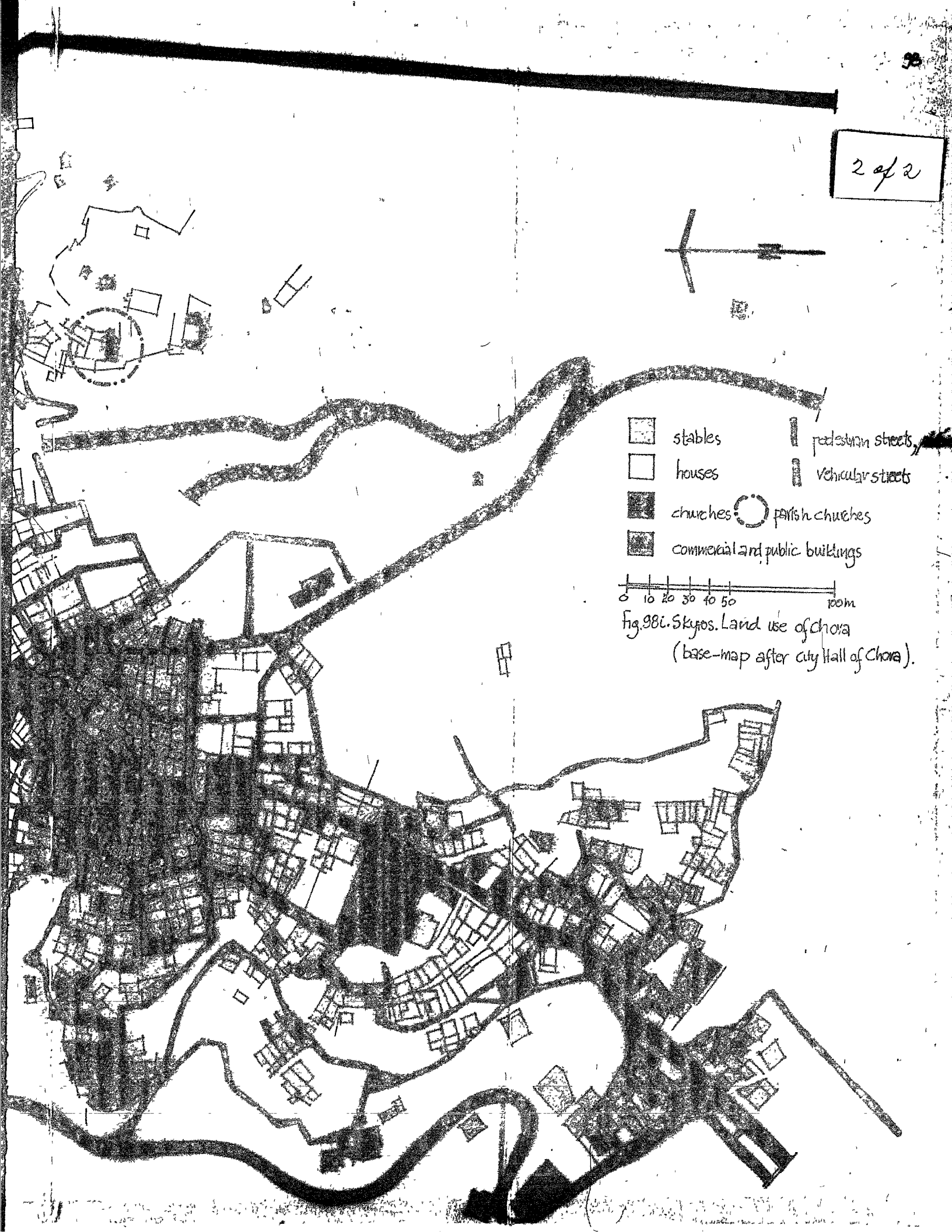


fig. 98i. Skyes. Land use of chora
(base-map after city Hall of Chora).



Built Environment

The built environment of Skyros constitutes a living example of a purely Greek environment which originates in ancient times, and has taken its present form by combining elements of Classical, Byzantine, and Post Byzantine Greece.

The choice of locations for the urban settlements of the island was the result of many factors such as climate, protection from intruders from the sea, and economic articulation of Skyros. The most important of these settlements, Chora or Chorio, became the administrative, economic, and cultural center of the island, and it is discussed in the present work.

According to tradition, the Dolopes first built and fortified the acropolis on the top of the "rock" which rised high above the sea. All subsequent peoples used this acropolis as their citadel.

The ancient acropolis or Kastro formed the initial nucleus of the settlement. Later on, a group of houses which followed the contours of Kastro were built and thus the settlement developed towards the north. Given the fact that, with the slightest danger people ran carrying their valuable properties to secure themselves

100a

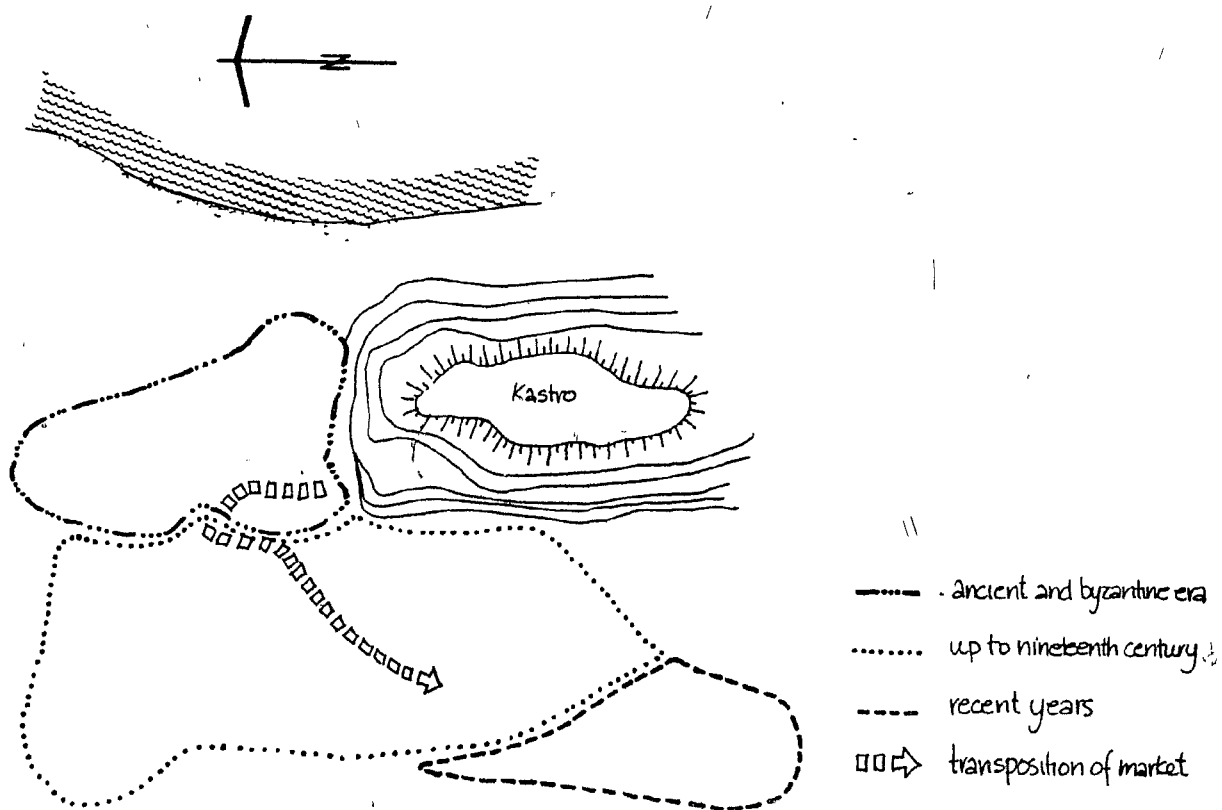


Fig. 100ai. Skyros. Development of chora (after OTOM.E vol I π15)

inside the fortification walls, it is hypothesized that each family owned a temporary roof inside Kastro as well as a house outside it.*

Around the oldest neighborhood, today's Borio, the first market and center of the settlement was formed. There the housing was very dense. In the second stage, development followed a western and then a southern direction. The market was transposed similarly; its moves always followed the central road whose course was traced parallel to the hill contours. Thus, although during the last century the centre of economic and social interactions was located close to the Archontopangia church, later it "moved" at least 200 meters to the southwest.

The apparent peculiar development of Chora on the western side of Kastro and not on the side facing the sea was the result of a combination of factors. These factors were:

- a) the morphology of the land;
- b) the need for protection from pirates;
- c) the need for protection from the strong winds, *meltemia*.

The structure of Chora evolved in a functional way on an interesting topography. High density and precise organization were achieved on one hand, and the waste of space and materials were avoided on the other. The dense concentration of buildings followed the tradition of ancient defensive systems. The lack of any strong parameter, which would have involved a fundamental change in the urban structure, as well as the close family relationships, the institution of the dowry, and the psychological make-up of the inhabitants, which by tradition demanded a cohesive

*Today, however, there is no explicit evidence for this hypothesis.



Fig 101a. Skyros View of Chora

ακ

community, helped to preserve the ancient network of buildings.

Socio-economic differentiation was reflected in the location of the neighborhoods. The more prestigious and wealthy a neighborhood the closer was its location to Kastro. The form of this settlement pattern could be best understood in terms of conditions prevailing in the region when Chora was first built. The raiding parties of pirates often obliged the inhabitants of the island to seek refuge inside the walls of Kastro, and consequently the land close to Kastro acquired high value because of its proximity to the protecting walls. Obviously the wealthy and powerful Skyrians acquired this land to build their houses.

Today, the wealthy landowners, merchants, scientists and civil servants still live close to Kastro. The class of shepherds is dispersed in various neighborhoods between the wealthy ones and the outskirts of the city. Farmers and poor workers live in the outskirts of the city (Euaggelinidou and Spinelle 1974: 57).

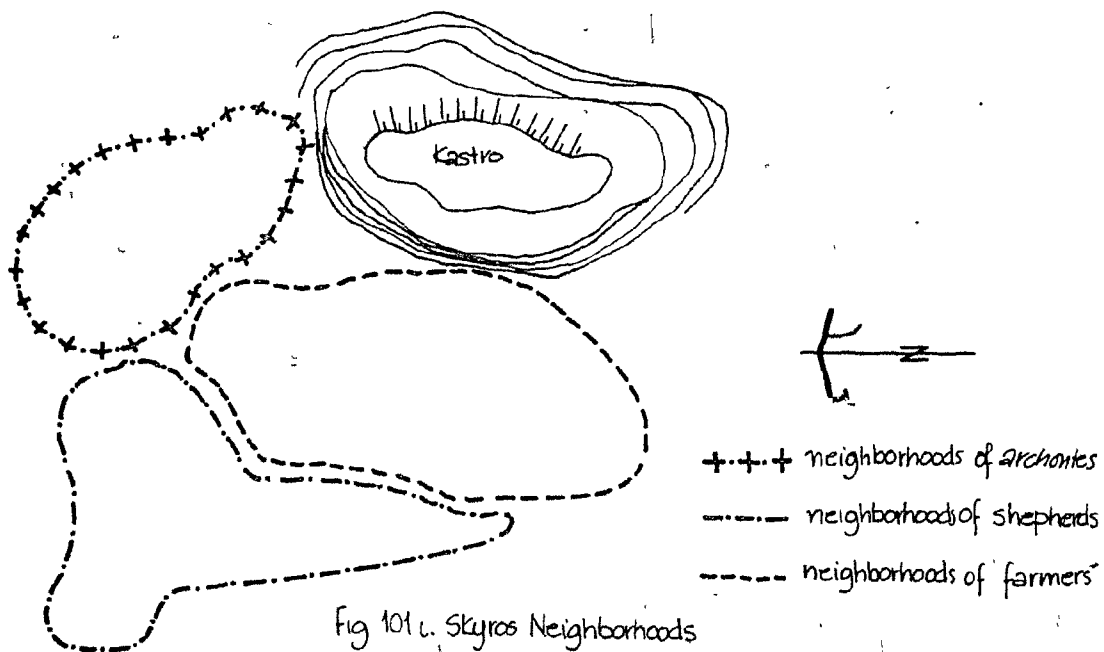
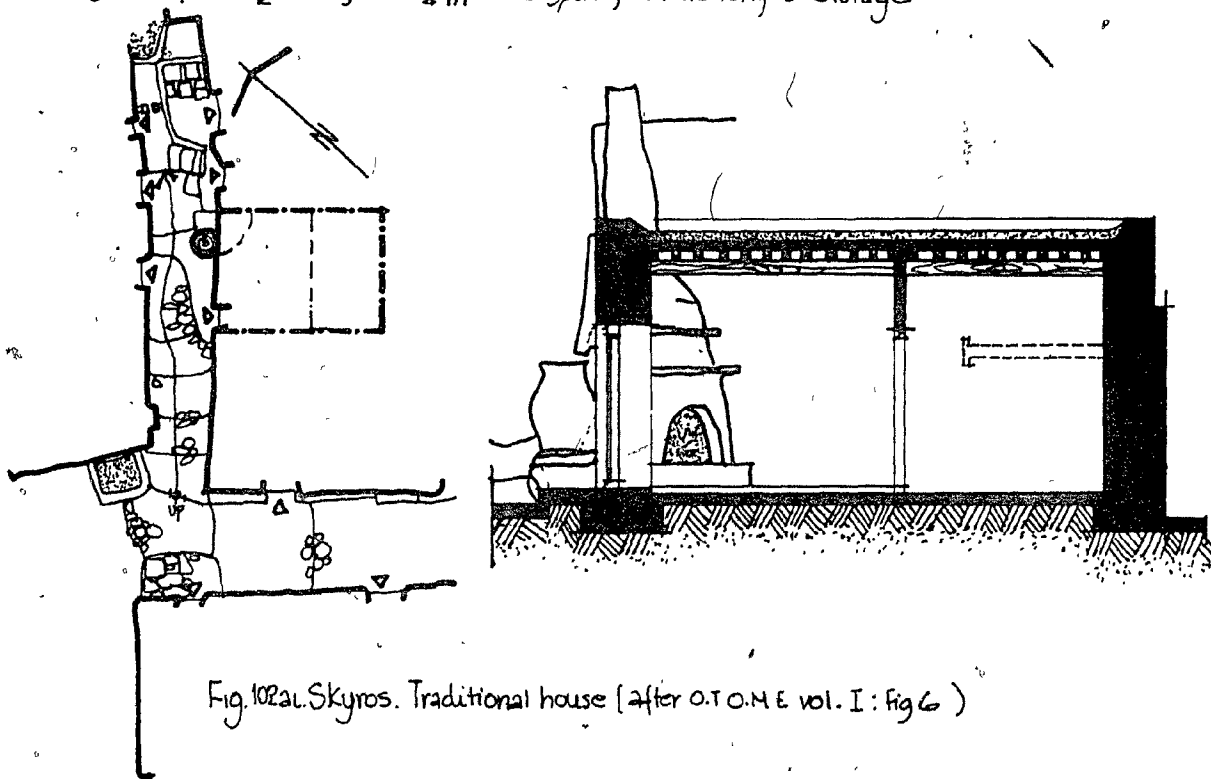
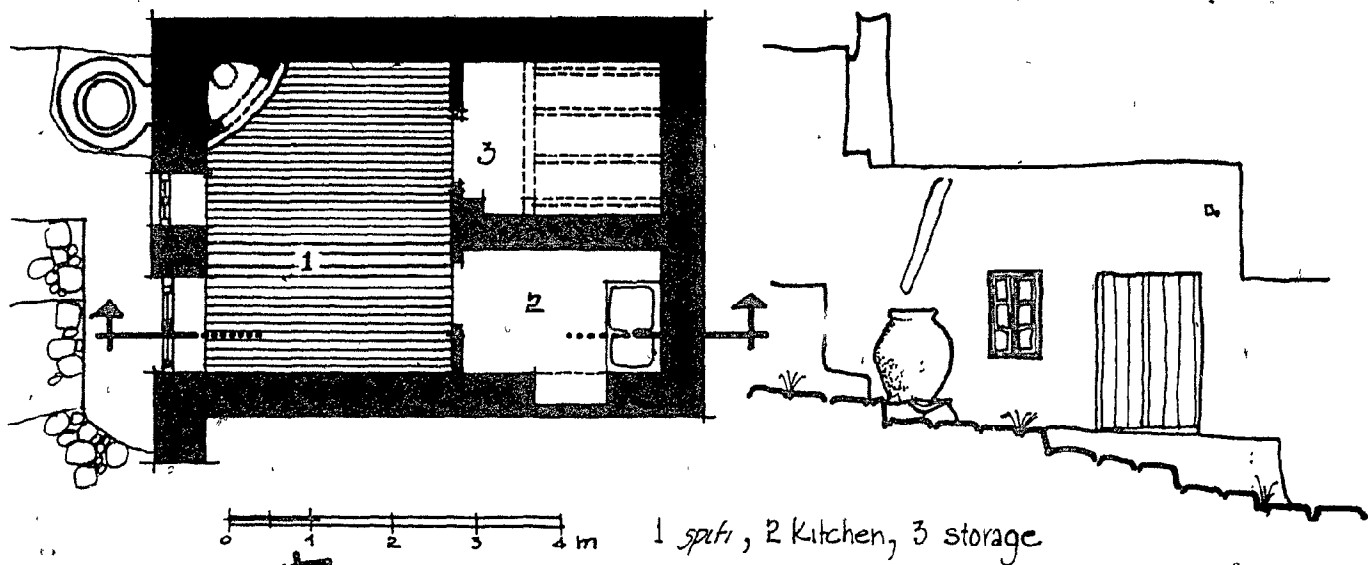


Fig 101. Skiros Neighborhoods



Houses

The typical house of Skyros is reminiscent of the ancient Greek house, since the majority of Skyrians who had always been farmers and shepherds stayed exclusively on the island and by building their houses themselves they conserved the form of the house.

In Skyros, as in other Greek islands, the same type of house is used by both townsmen and farmers; it is the narrow-front *monóspito* which adjusts perfectly to minimum lot size. It is determined by functional forces, and responds well to climatic conditions. As the word *monóspito* (single house/room) implies it contains a single large room usually 7m. long by 5m wide by 4.5m high, which is further divided into three distinct spaces according to function:

- a) *spíti* is the larger (4.20 x 5.00 m.) front part of the room where the family eats, relaxes, and receives visitors;
- b) *sfás* or *safás* is a raised wooden platform set against the wall, which usually faces the entrance; where the family sleeps;
- c) *apokrévatos* is the area underneath the *sfás* used as a kitchen and storage room. Large jars of oil and cheese together with other preserves are stored there. Water is transported in pottery jugs, which are placed in a special niche in the wall called *stamnóstátis*. There is no plumbing, no sanitary system whatsoever and frequently not even a sink.

The most remarkable decoration of the house is the *boulmés*, a wooden carved temple that serves as division between the living space and *apokrévatos*. The *boulmés* is crowned by a railing 40m. in height above the floor of the wooden platform. The *sfás* is therefore open to

103a

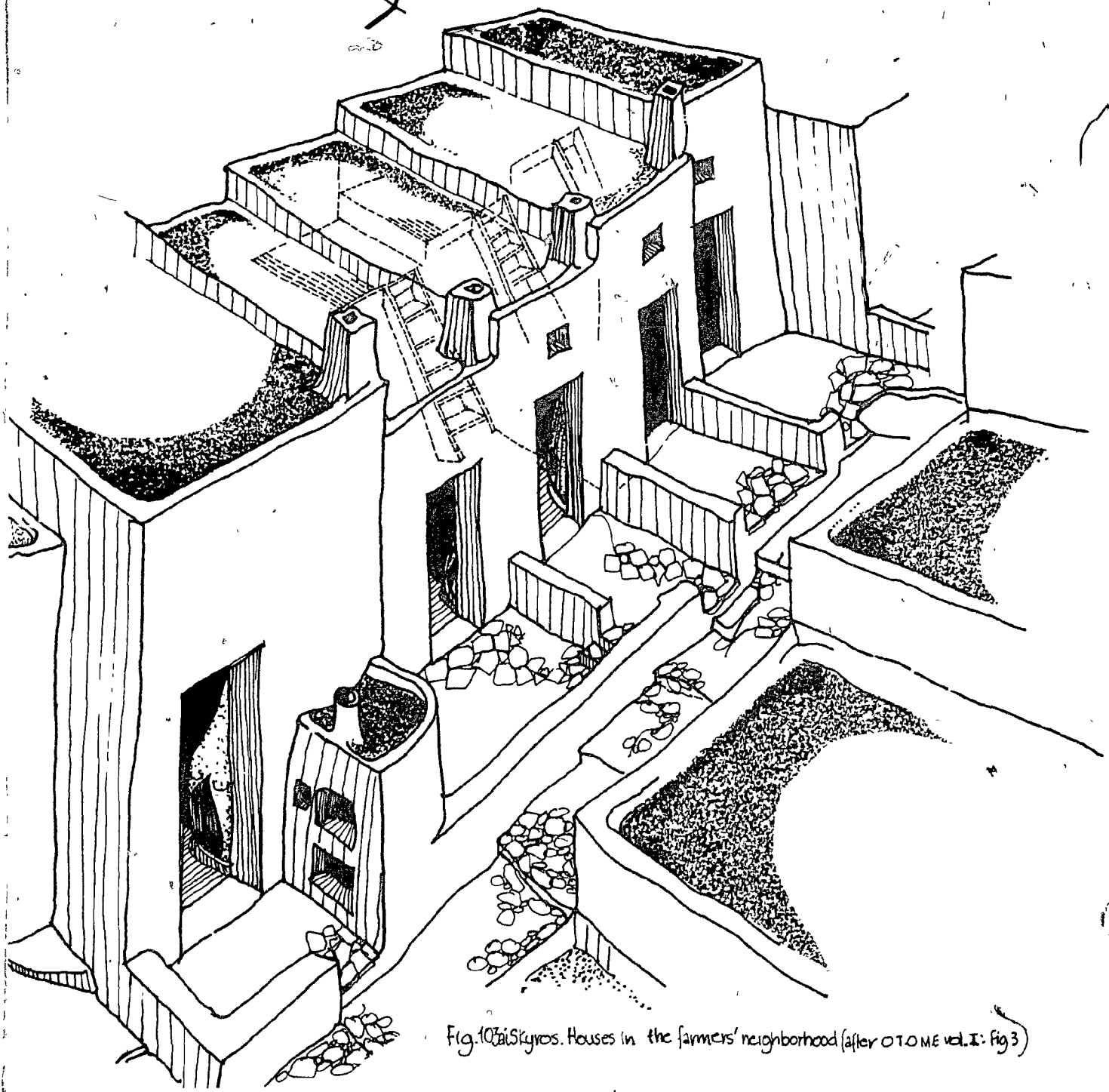
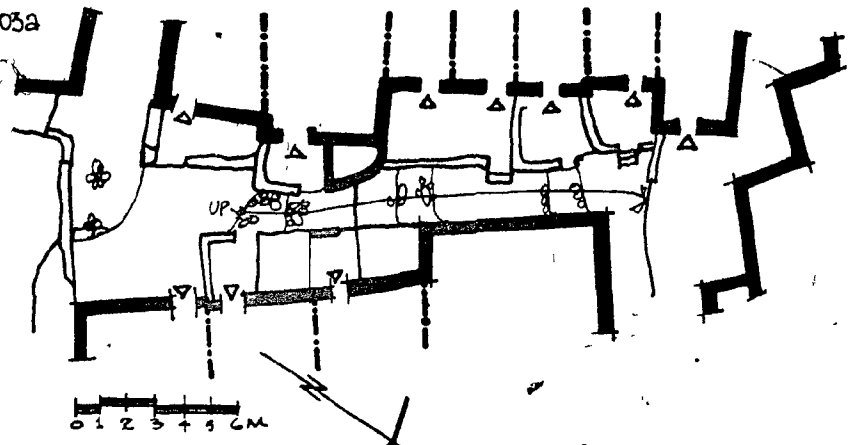


Fig. 103a Skyros. Houses in the farmers' neighborhood (after OTOME vol. I: fig 3)

the front part of the house, looks like a veranda and adds an illusion of space. A narrow staircase located on the side of *boulmés* leads from the main room to the sleeping area.

An important element of the house is the corner fireplace built on the street side close to which the table and stools are placed. The Skynian fireplace has a semicircular opening and two or three shelves loaded with decorative plates, vases, ceramic and copper objects. Walls have internal recesses for storage of utensils, and cupboards with decorated shutters. Plates and other cooking or eating utensils are placed on shelves. Shelves extend over the entire interior and are a showcase for the wealth of each household. The sacred corner, *eikonostási*, of the house lies above the *jár* and consists of a few icons lit by an oil candle.

In some islands of the Aegean the court of the house is enclosed by walls and retains privacy from the street, in Skyros, however, such courts are practically non-existent with the exception of houses of the wealthy that have bigger and more private courts*. There exists, nevertheless, a semi-private area of three to four square meters between the house and the street, covered with pebbles and enclosed by a low wall; people practically live in these semi-public areas when the weather is good. Basically when Skyrians leave the interior of their houses they are brought into direct contact with their neighbors. Everywhere people sit

* Eventually, the courtyard seems to have become a status symbol on the island and a rich family would be praised for owning the best courtyard and flower garden (Philippides 1973: 140).

104a

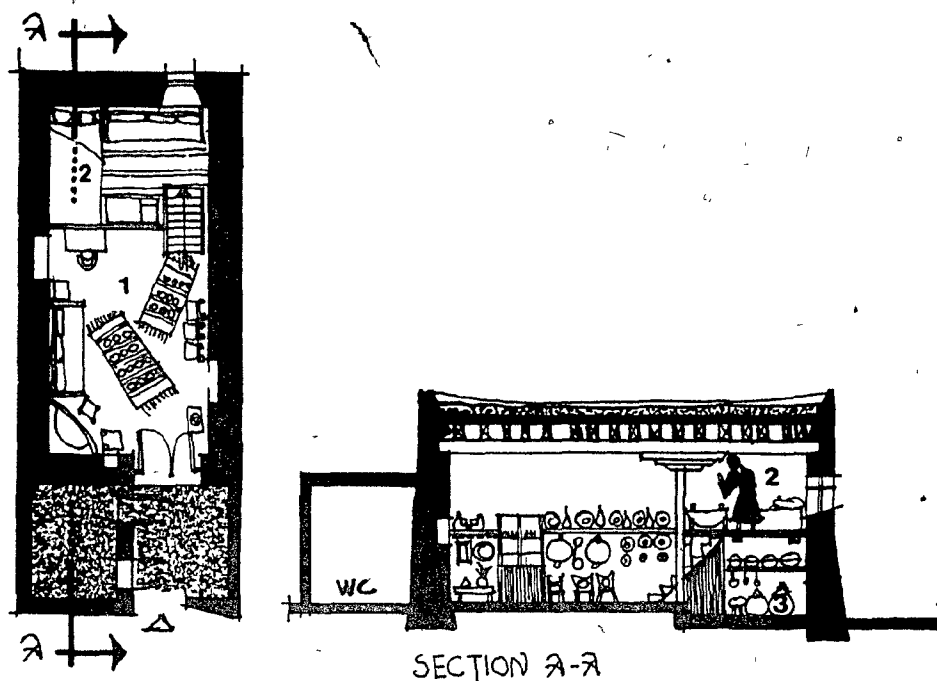


Fig. 104a. Skyros *Monóspito* in the farmers' neighborhood (after Arnaoutoglou 1975: 135).

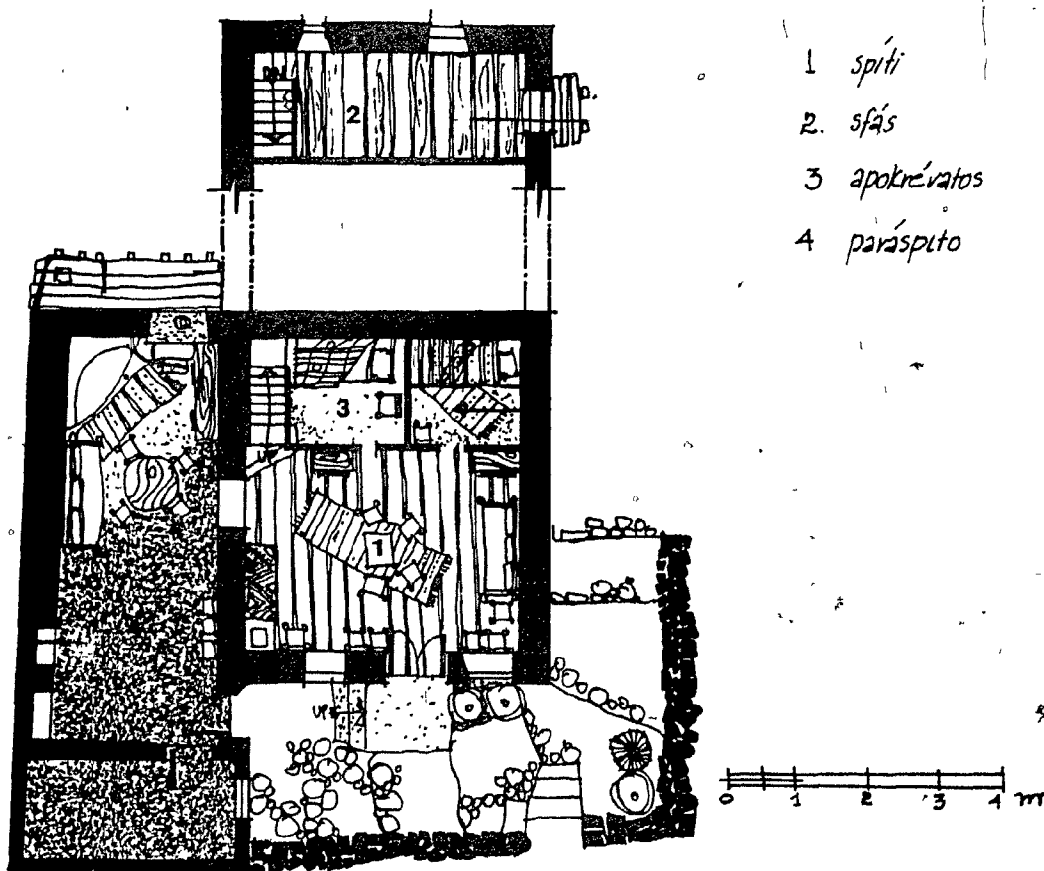


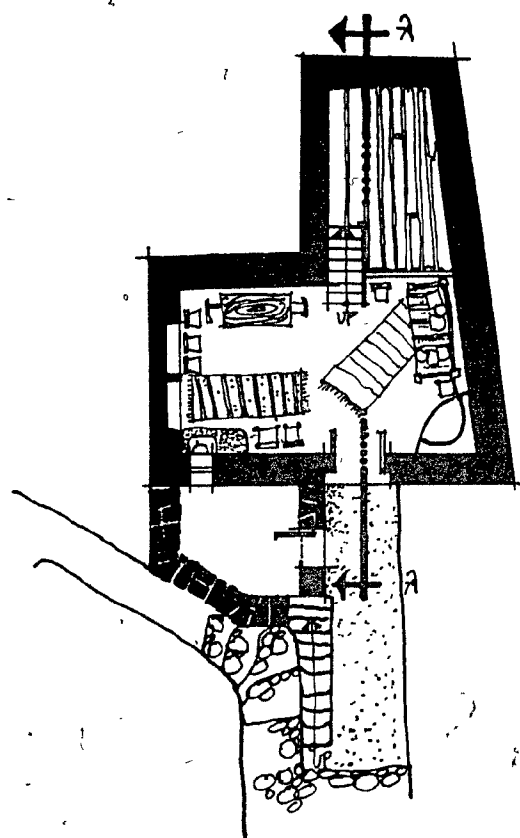
Fig. 104a. Skyros. Square plan house in the *archontes'* neighborhood

on staircases and thresholds and gossip or work in groups*.

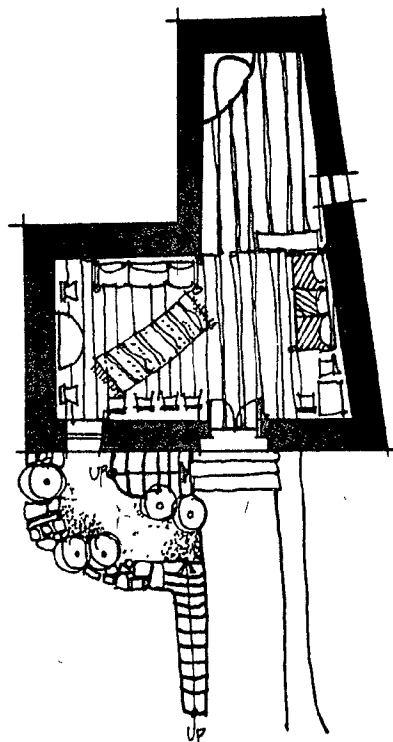
The square plan house is a later and more developed form of the Skyrian house and belongs usually to the wealthy. It has an approximately square plan area of 6.5 m long by 6 m wide. The *sfás* of the house is moved from the conventional (opposite to the entrance door side) to the left or right sides of the door depending where it is convenient to open windows. The general arrangement is comfortable. There exist many windows and hence plenty of light and good ventilation. The auxiliary spaces such Kitchen and storage area have been moved to a basement or to an additional room next door called *paráspito*, and the main house is used only for sleeping and entertaining during festive occasions. The *paráspito* becomes the center of daily life. In the winter time especially, the whole family spends the long evenings, before bedtime, in the Kitchen which is the warmest room in the house due to the burning fireplace and the relatively small size of the room. The square plan house sometimes stands out independent from neighboring buildings and always has a small private courtyard.

Figures 104a and 104b on the opposite side illustrate a typical square plan house of the *árchontes* in the Archontoparagia neighborhood, as compared to a typical narrow-front *monóspito* in the neighborhood of the farmers. In the square plan house the *apokrévatos* is transformed into two bedrooms while the kitchen and washroom are located in the

*It is suggested that the need for cooperation was high because of the piratical threat and the community members felt compelled to participate in a shared life, giving less emphasis to privacy.



PLAN OF KATOI



PLAN OF ANOI

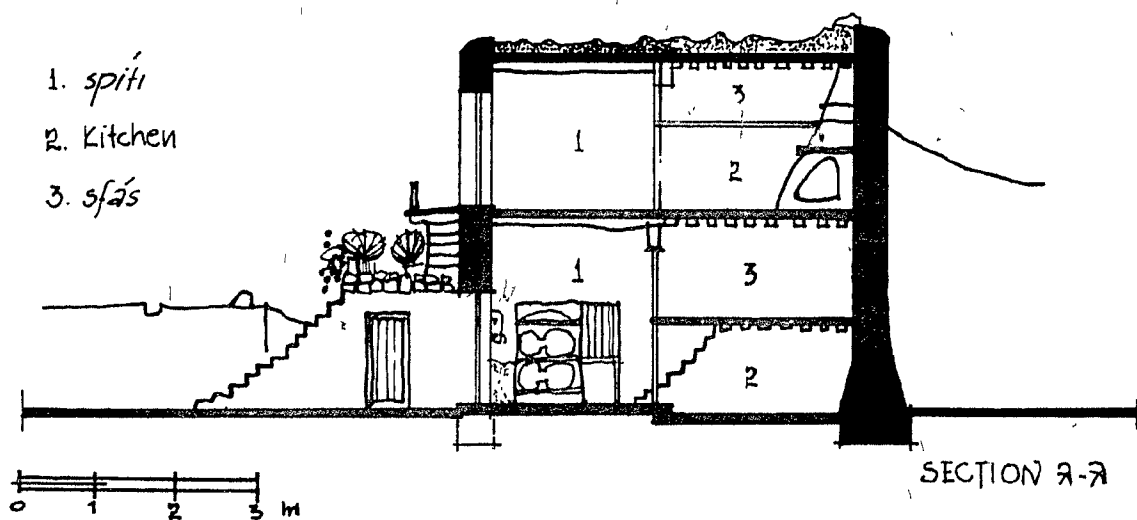


Fig. 105ai. Skiros. House in a neighborhood of shepherds (after Annaoutoglou 1975:134)

paráspito; the court is large and private. In the narrow-front *monóspito* everything is squeezed into twenty square meters. Recently part of the front court-like semi-private area has been used to build a washroom.

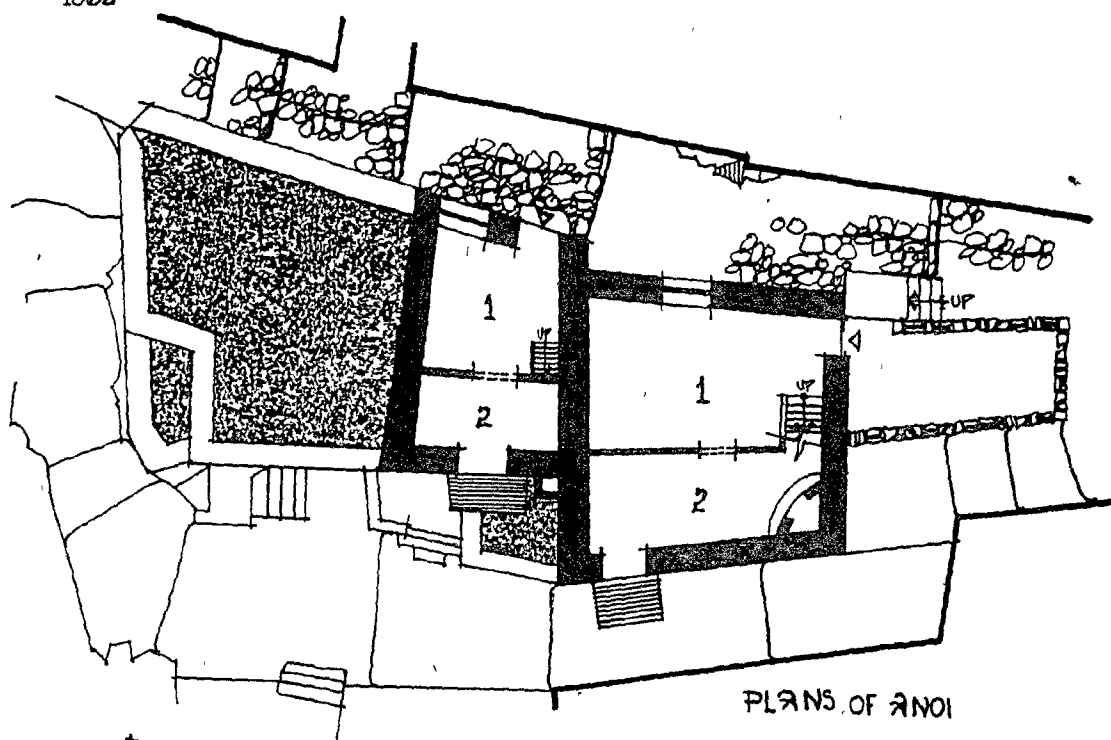
Shortage in building sites, coupled with the sloped land form and the tradition of providing each daughter with a dwelling unit as a dowry favor two and even three-storey buildings. Each storey is a different dwelling unit. If a family has a daughter the top floor, called *anói* is given to her and in such cases it is connected internally with the lower floor, called *katóí*, with a staircase called *klavani*. Whenever the two floors are owned by unrelated families, the dwellings have their own private entrances from the street. If the slope of the land permits, *anói* is entered from a different street at a higher level and in such cases it has the reverse arrangement from *katóí*. That is the lower plan has the *sfás* and the *apokrévatos* at the far end presenting the entrance door and a small window as a street facade. On the other hand, the *anói* presents an almost blank wall to the same street corresponding to the *sfás*. Rarely a balcony or a small window is opened to give light to the *sfás*. If the two dwellings are entered from the same street the plans have the same arrangement, and an external staircase leads from the street to the *anói*.

The staircases which lead from the streets to *anóia** are always made of stone. The top steps become progressively narrower as the height decreases in order to economize space for the narrow streets and the thresholds of the *katóia**. Often single staircases are divided by a landing into two staircases that lead to different dwellings, and thresholds interlace in various combinations with the staircases. Whenever possible, the

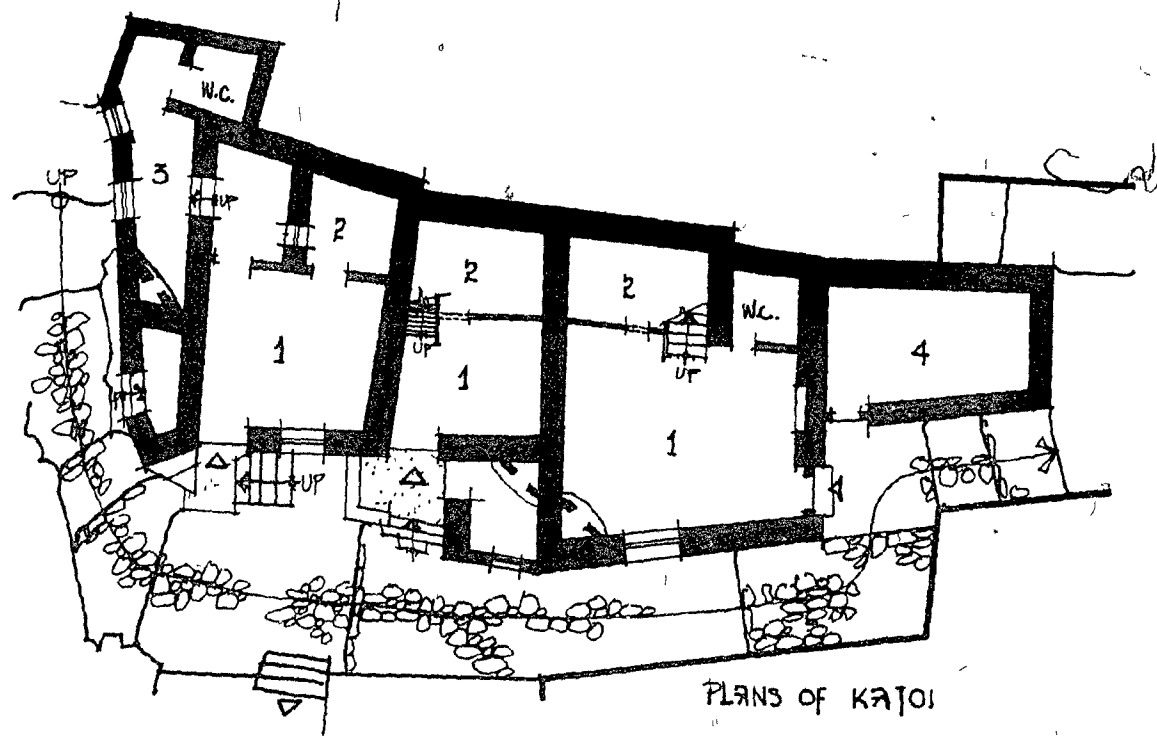
* *Anóia* and *katóia* are the plural forms of *anói* and *katóí*

106a

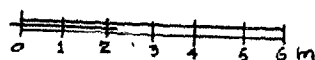
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PLANS OF ANOI



PLANS OF KATOLI



1. spiti, 2. apokrevatos, 3. Kitchen, 4. paraspito
Fig. Kbal. Skyros. Anoi and Katoli plans (after Branch 1966. 43, 44).

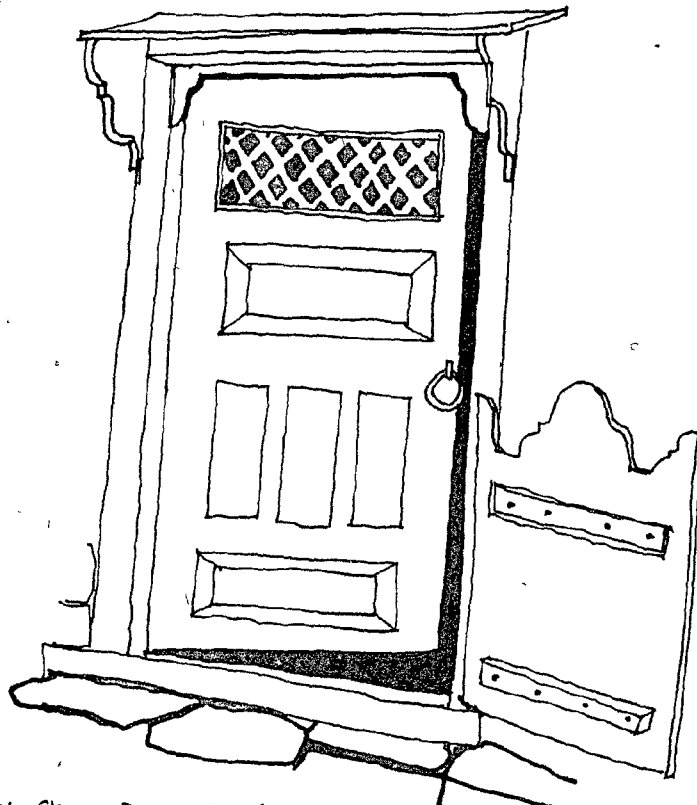


Fig 106. Skiros Door and *xóporto* (after Chatzimechale 1925:26)

space below the staircase is used to build a washroom or a small storage room.

The houses do not have many doors and windows. The entrance door is made of a decorated half door on the outside, called *xóporto*, and a full door on the inside. By leaving the inside door open and the *xóporto* closed extra light is admitted to the house while privacy is preserved.

The windows have also decorated frames and are sometimes fenced with wooden laces. Chimneys are either made of stone or water jugs and earthen casks are used for the job. Drainpipes run down the surface of the external wall leading to underground cisterns.

The houses are supported by bearing walls constructed of a local porous stone. The stones are covered by a thick layer of lime

aggregate which gives to the wall a flat but textured finish.

The flat roof has the form of a terrace and is supported by wooden beams. Since the width of the house is 45 to 50 m, a long beam running along the length of the house is needed. This beam is supported by a single post in the middle and by the two end walls. On the beam rest the wood joists followed by a layer of bamboo, a layer of dried seaweed or other dried grass, and finally a layer of a locally quarried earth called *melági*. *Melági* has the characteristics of being water proof, therefore, the rain water runs down the drainpipes and is collected in cisterns. The rain washes off the *melági* slowly, and for this reason every two or three years new *melági* is added in small piles of approximately a pile per square meter of roof. The rain water slowly dilutes these piles while simultaneously replacing the already washed off material.

The floor is formed by a layer of wet red soil on top of which fine sand is sprinkled. As the mixture dries it solidifies.

The colors used are always white for the walls, and gray, dark green, and natural color of wood for doors and windows.

Churches

During the years of Turkish occupation there existed 365 churches on the island. The elders' favorite story to explain the number of churches is the following: the Turkish Sultan published a firman according to which no Turk was to arrest and punish a Greek on a day of religious holiday. For this reason Greeks built 365 chapels devoted to different saints, one for each day of the year, so that they could have a religious

108a

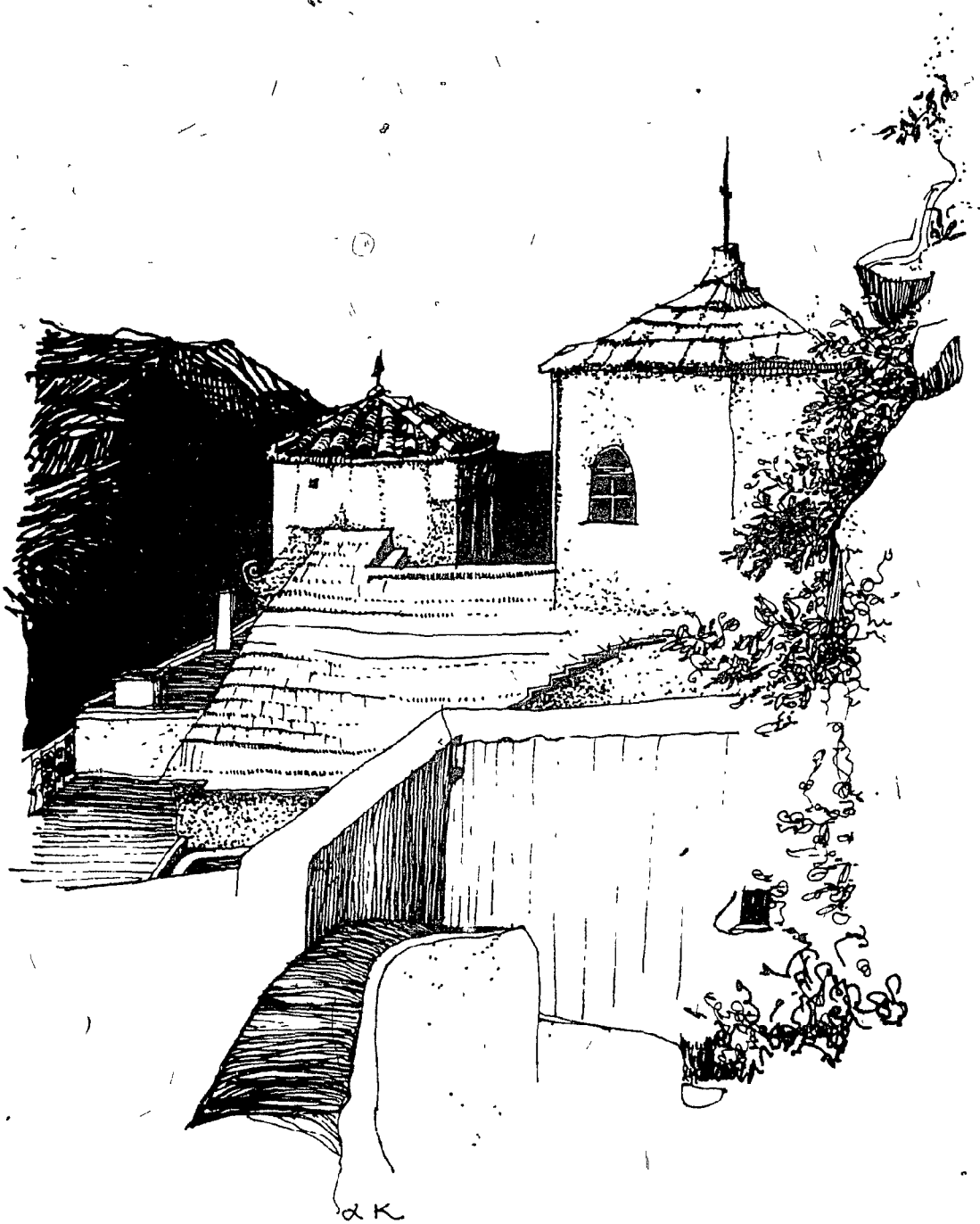


Fig. 108a: Skyros Church of St George.

celebration daily. Even today 163 of these churches (census 1971) stand in excellent condition and are used by a population of 2,350 (Kanas 1971:29)

In all respects such a large number of churches indicates the significance of religion in the Skynan life. It offers social support and its energies are also channeled into areas of social life through the ecclesiastic fraternities.

Most churches are simple flat roof basilicas. Some are vaulted and others are variations of Greek and Latin plans combining vaulted basilicas and domed sanctuaries.

Almost all of the churches of Skyros like the rest of the Aegean churches, with the exception of the church of the monastery (Orlandos 1961:119), were built either by ecclesiastic fraternities or by wealthy *árchontes*. A phenomenon primarily connected with *árchontes* was their ownership of private chapels in the fields or next to their homes. Each chapel carried the name of a patron saint and its feast day was celebrated once a year on its grounds. The members of the families that owned the chapels could be buried either inside the chapels or outside beside them. Privately owned churches not only symbolized the deep religious belief of the founders, but also attested to their wealth, and to the fact that the peace-loving, prosperous small-holders had found in this way a means of obtaining social distinction.

The tradition of a large number of small churches changed from the end of the nineteenth century on, when a preference started for large churches (Tzakou 1976:175). Parish churches were built as communal projects in accordance with an established custom of the

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Fig 109c. Skyros View of Chora from the monastery

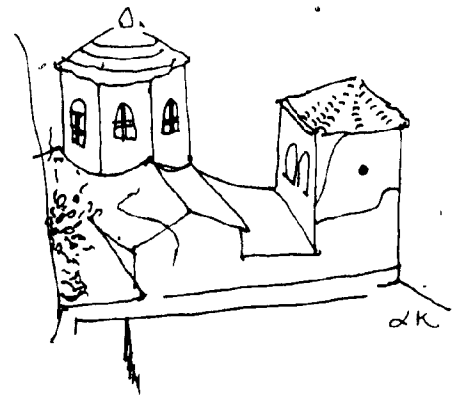


Post-Byzantine era (Chatzomidale 1949: 253, 254). The parish churches of Chora are: St George's church of the Monastery and Archontopanağia both in wealthy neighborhoods, Panagia Melikarou (Metropolis) in the shepherd's neighborhood, and St John's in the farmer's neighborhood

Features of the urban lay-out that are directly related to churches are discussed in the following paragraphs

(1) Churches as dominating elements and points of reference in the urban structure

The best example of this is the church of St George's of the monastery, holding the most prominent position of Chora while showing the importance of religion and emphasizing the power of the church. It is built high up on the hill on the rocks of Kastro overlooking the whole settlement. The monastery and the dome of St George's church are easily visible from all neighborhoods and from the fields, and can be considered as an outstanding point of reference in Chora



141a

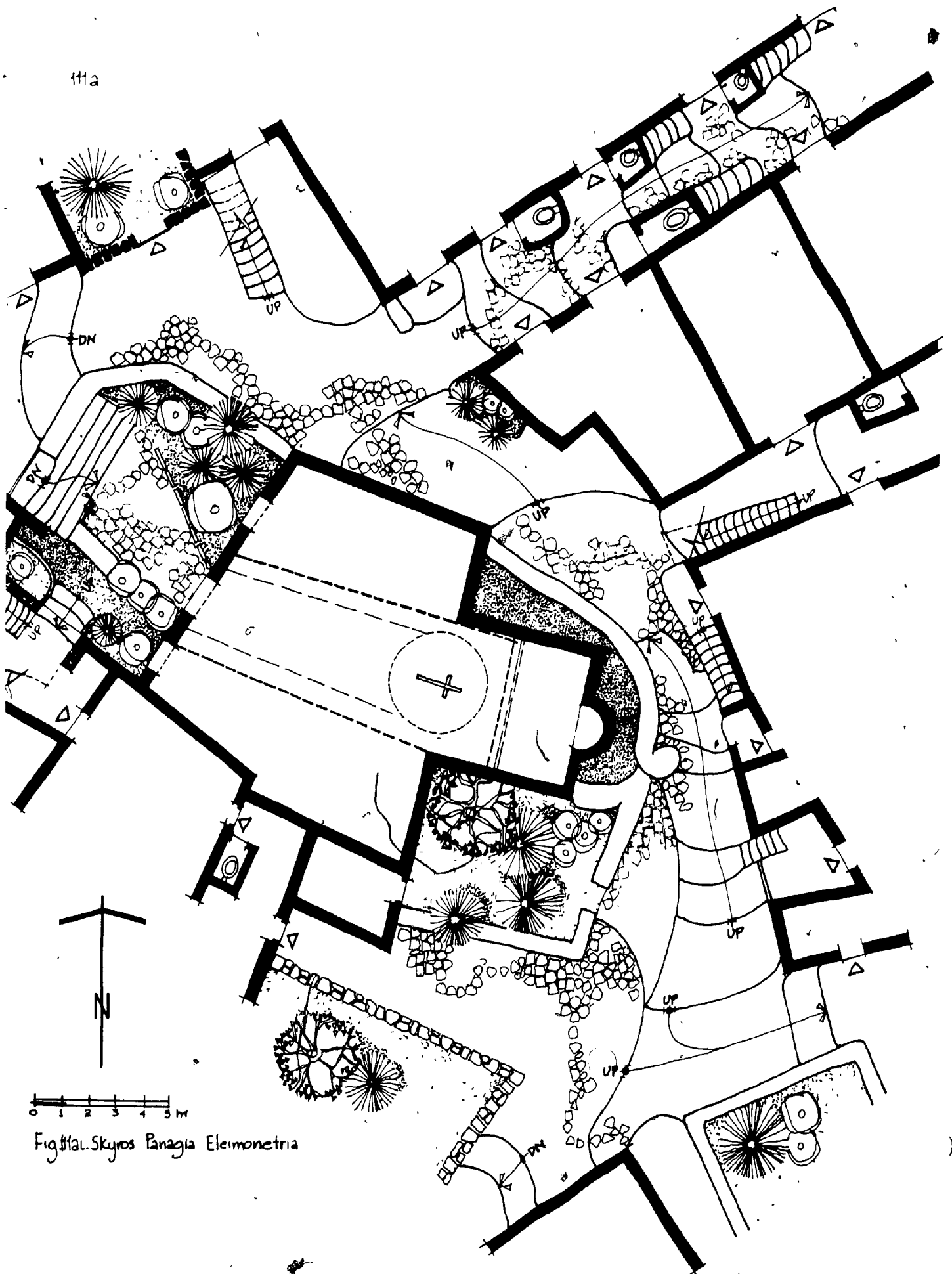


Fig. 11a. Skiros Panagia Eleimonetria

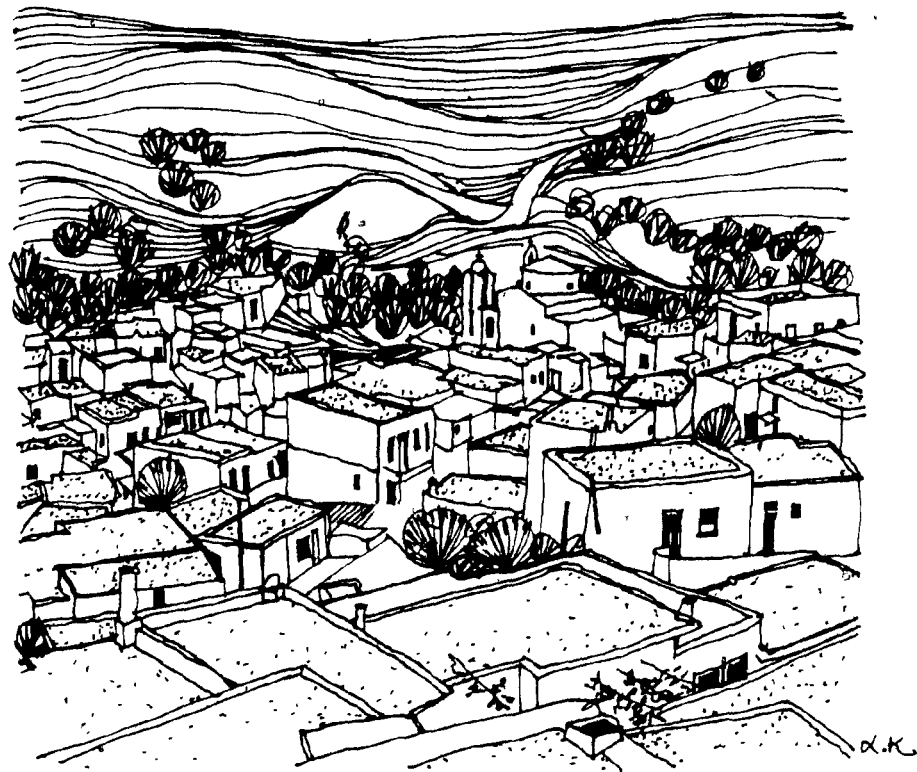


Fig. 111. Skiros St John's neighborhood around the homonymous church

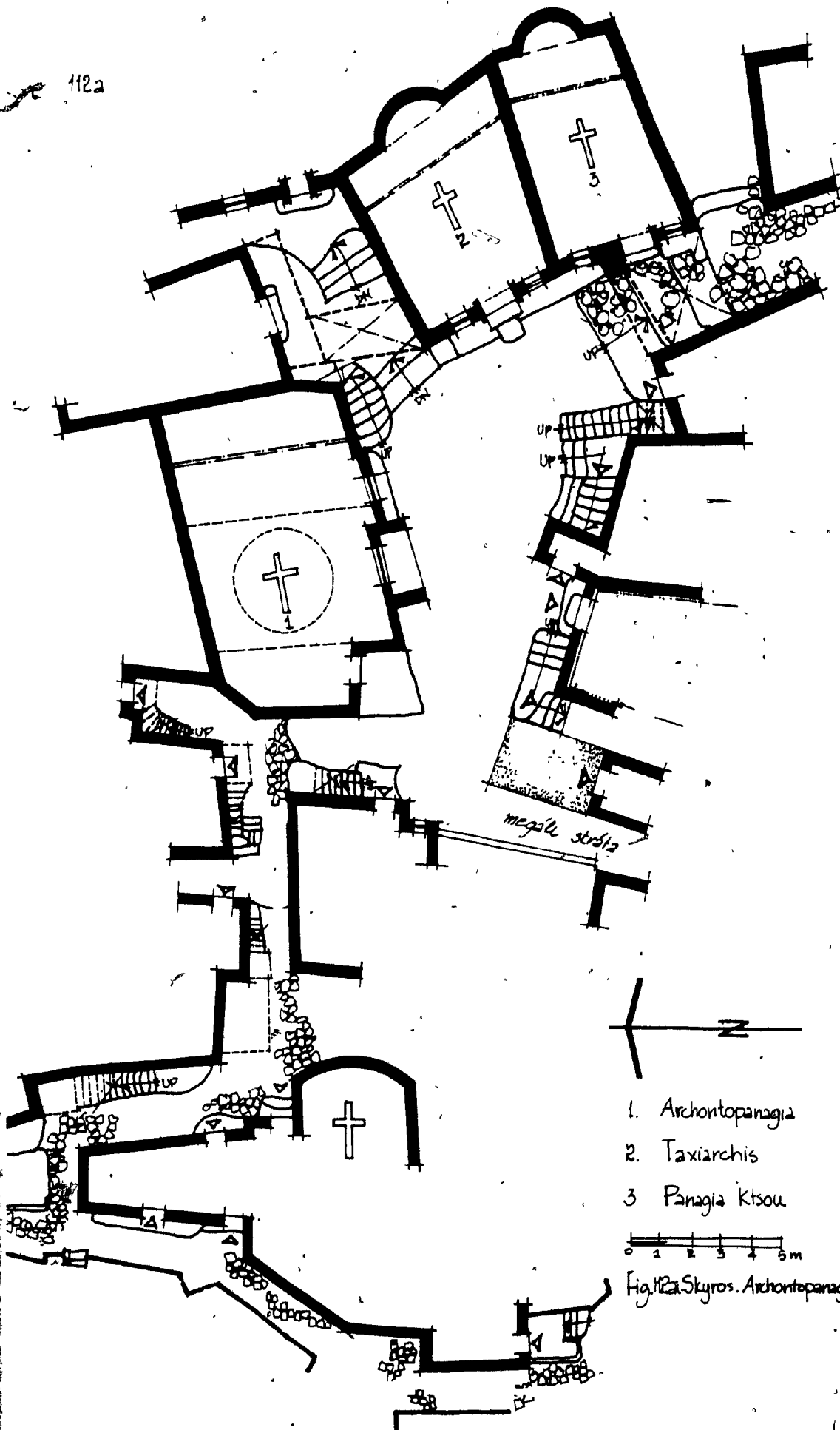
(ii) Churches as focal points of neighborhoods

The churches are key elements of the neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are often identified by the name of their main church like St John's neighborhood, Archontopanagia's neighborhood, and St Anne's neighborhood. In such cases the church building holds a central position and is a center of activity. The best example of this is St John's neighborhood with St John's church in its center, dominating and detached from all surrounding houses

(iii) Churches situated next to open spaces

Streets around churches are wide and often form small irregular squares. These small squares serve as gathering areas for the neighborhood

112a



1. Archontopanagia
2. Taxiarchis
3. Panagia Ktsou

0 1 2 3 4 5 m

Fig. 112a. Skyros. Archontopanagia square.

community, and they are used for the congregation of the parish before and after the mass.

An example of a small irregular square adjacent to a church is the Archontopanagia square, the social center of the neighborhoods which were inhabited by the archontes of Skyros. The main street of the neighborhoods, *megáli stráta*, forms one of the boundaries of the square. At the opposite end of the square another small street starts which leads towards kastro and the wealthy neighborhoods around there.

In the case of Panagia Eleimonetria, a well defined square does not exist next to the church. The small streets however, that surround the church, become wider at that point forming an open space which resembles a square and is completely dominated by the church.



Fig. 112. Skyros. View of Panagia Ktsou (after Tarsoul)

113a

SECTION
102

A-A

0 1 2 3 4 5 m

Fig. 113a. Skyros. St. Ann's neighborhood.

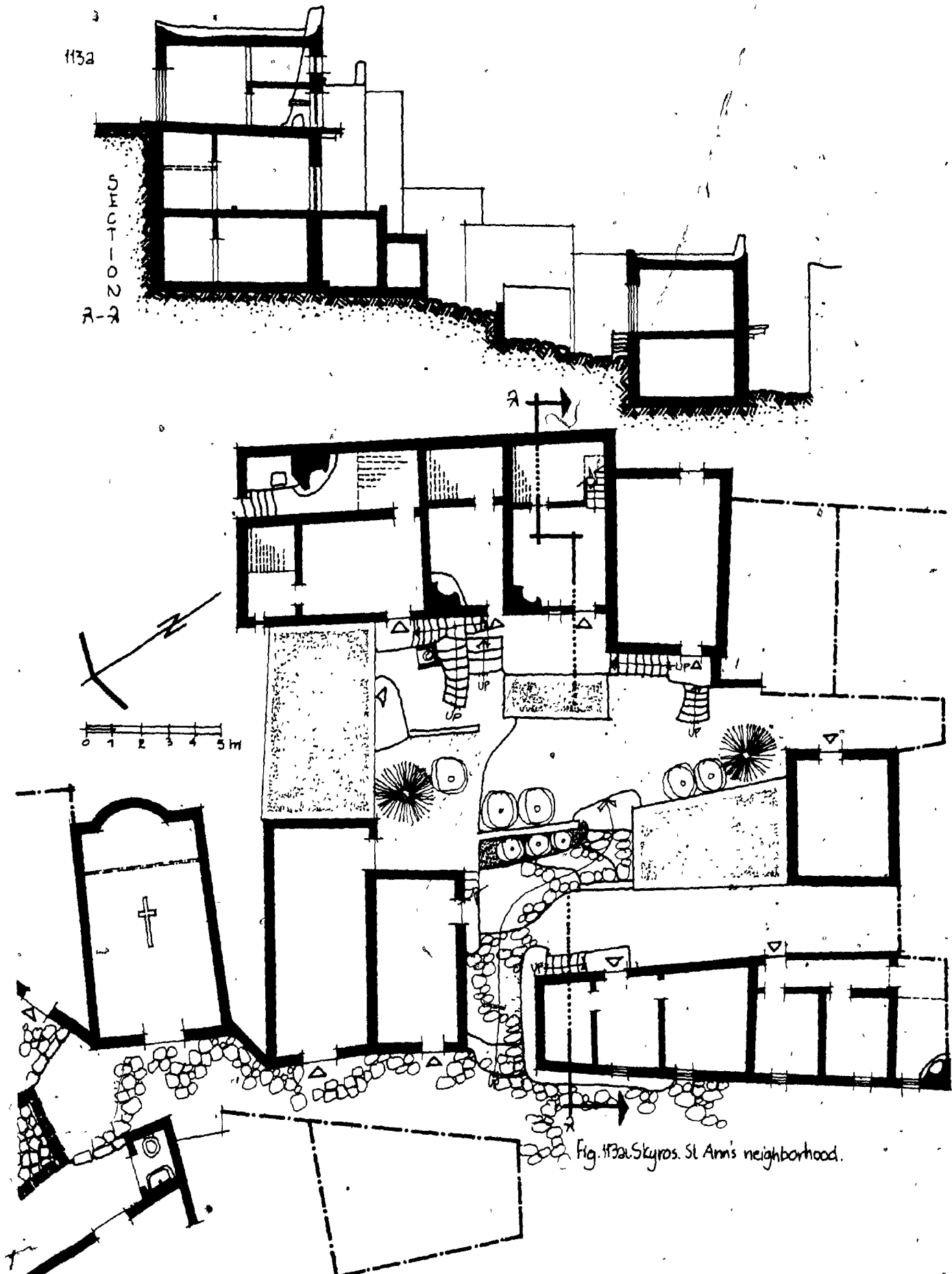




Fig. 113c. Skyrros. St. Ann's church

(iv) Churches adjacent to houses

Small churches are often situated in the midst of a row of houses. A visitor could easily by-pass them without noticing their existence. St. Ann is an example of a church built in such a way. The facade of the church blends well with the facades of the houses thus forming a continuous wall. A couple of houses south of the church, this sequence is interrupted by a narrow opening which leads to an unexpected interesting cul-de-sac.

114a

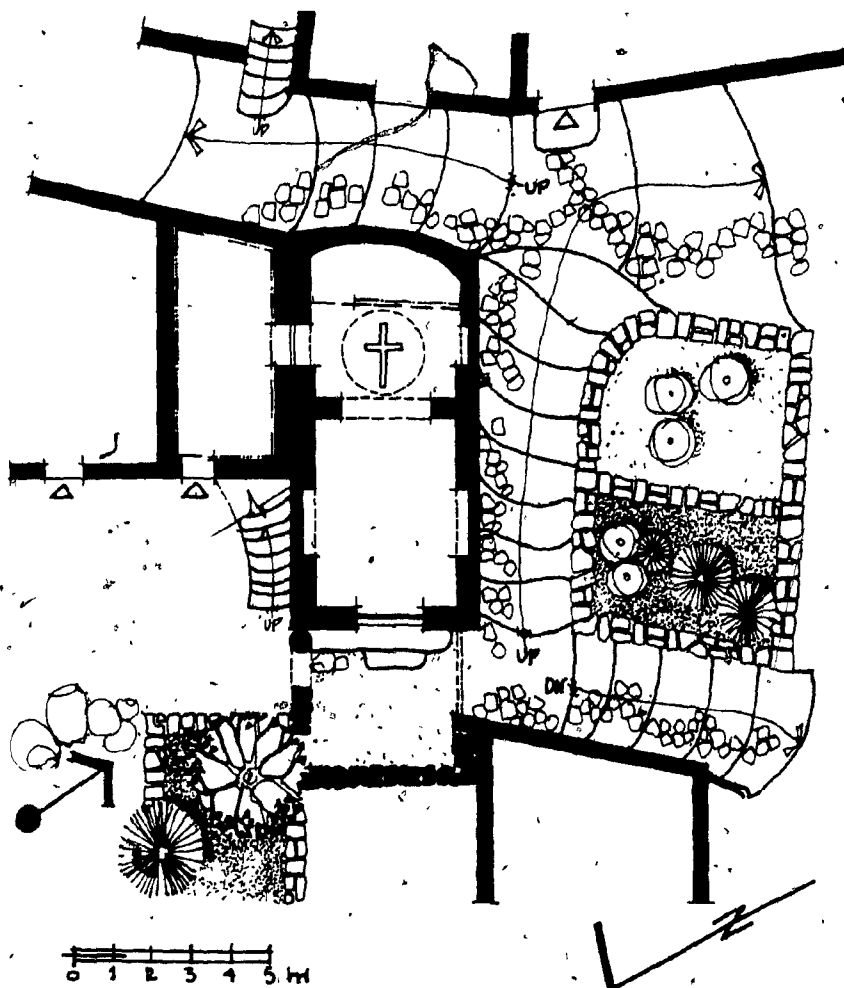


Fig. 114a. Skyros. Plan of Kyra Psomou church.

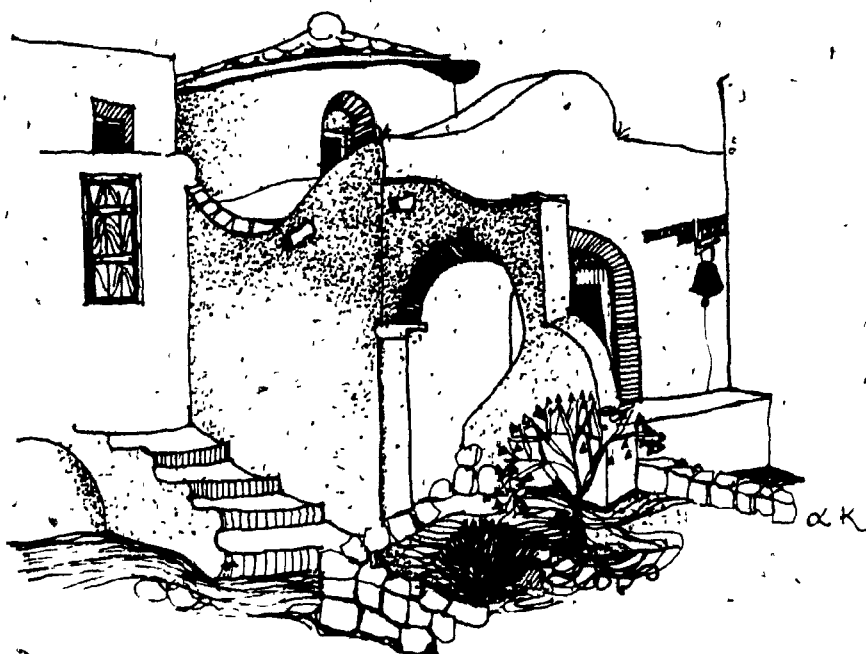


Fig 114i Skiros. View of Kyra Psomou Church

(v) Private churches

It was explained in earlier sections that wealthy families used to build their private churches. These churches were located on the family property and they usually shared the same courtyards with the owner's house.

One of the many interesting examples of private churches is the one of Kyra Psomou. A unique feature of this church is the existence of direct communication, through a door, between its nave and the adjacent *monospito*.



Fig 115a. Skiros View of Taxiarchis and Panagia Ktsou

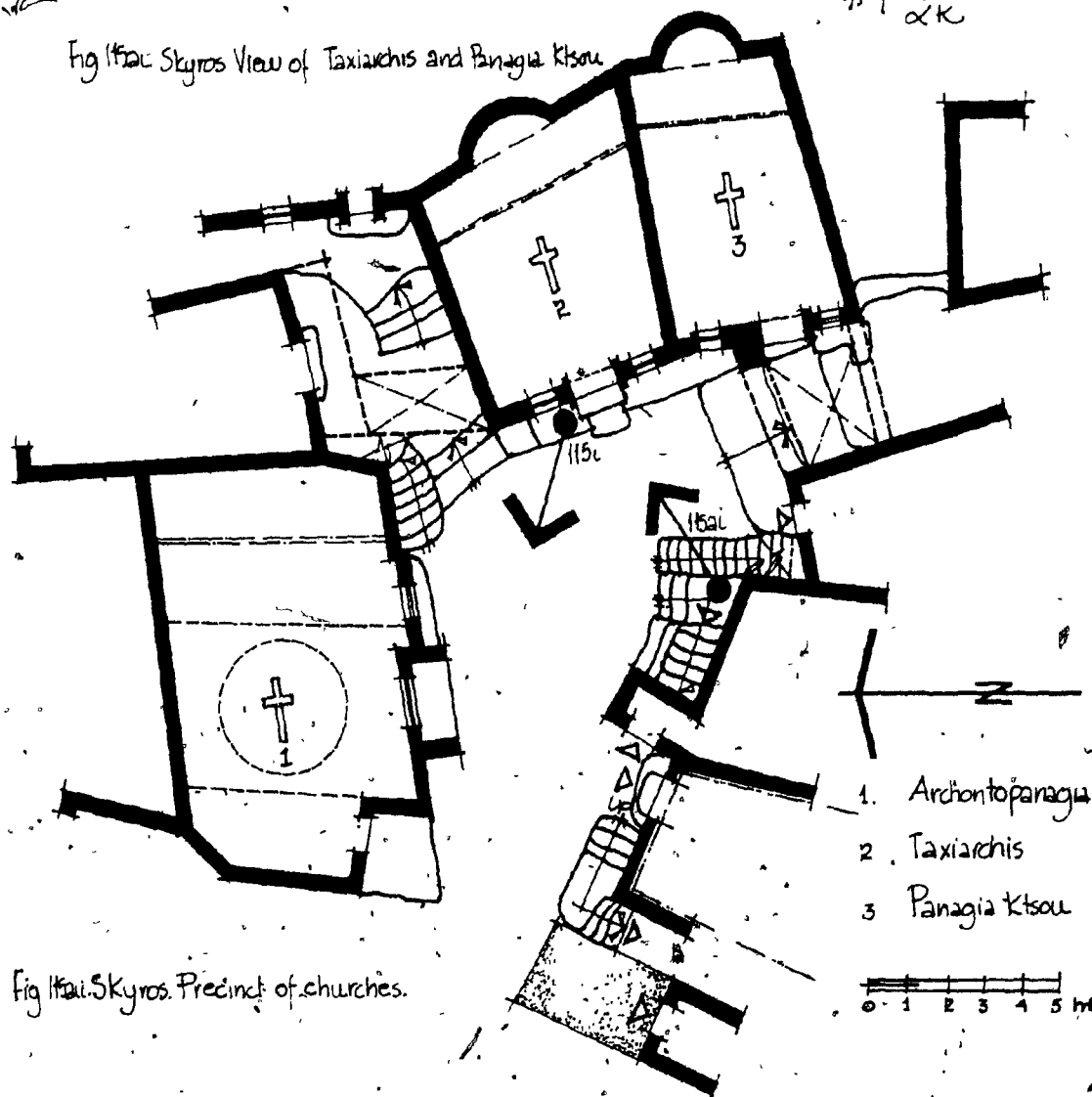


Fig 115a. Skiros. Precinct of churches.



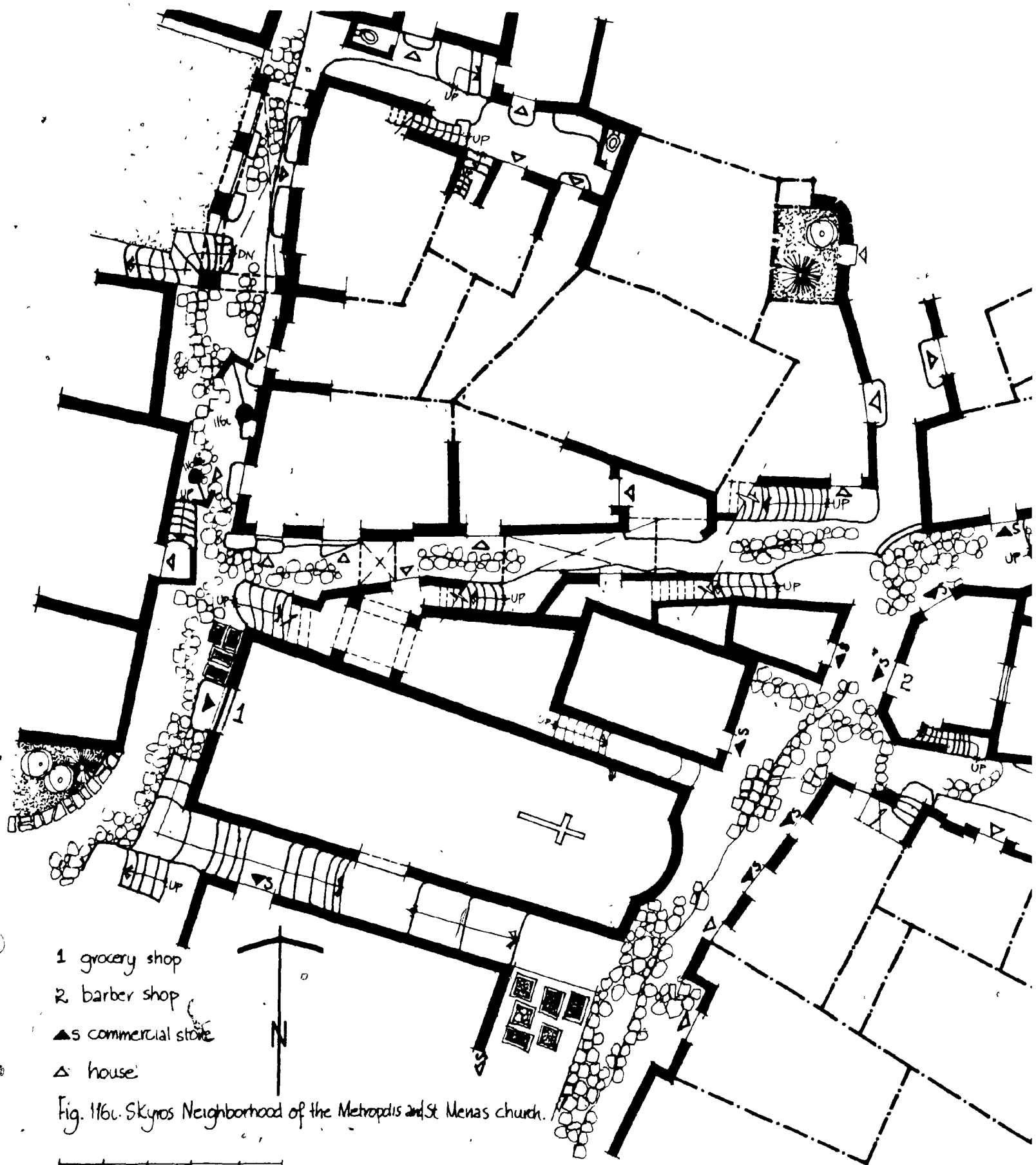
Fig. 115L. Skyros. View of Archontopanagia (after Tarsoul.)

(vi). Precincts of churches.

Wealthy families of Skyros live in neighborhoods around Kastro. Traditionally most of these families built private churches. There is such a concentration of chapels in these neighborhoods that precincts of churches are formed. An example of such a group of churches is the already mentioned group of churches (Archontopanagia, Taxiarchis, Panagia Ktsou) on the square of Archontopanagia.



Fig. 161. Kyros. The Metropolis.



0 2 4 6 8 10 m



2 of 2

Fig 116 Skiros View of arched street



Fig. 117c SKyros St Menas church

(vii) Churches above stores

Two unique cases where churches have been built on top of commercial shops can be seen in Skyros, those of the Metropolis and of the St Menas church

The Metropolis is constructed on top of a grocery shop. The church and the shop have separate entrances from different streets at different levels.

St Menas church is constructed on top of a barber's shop. It is entered from a street at right angles to the main commercial street, where the barber shop entrance is located.

The existence of separate entrances from different streets at different levels, together with the narrowness of the streets of Skyros allow the churches and the stores to retain their own separate identity.

118a

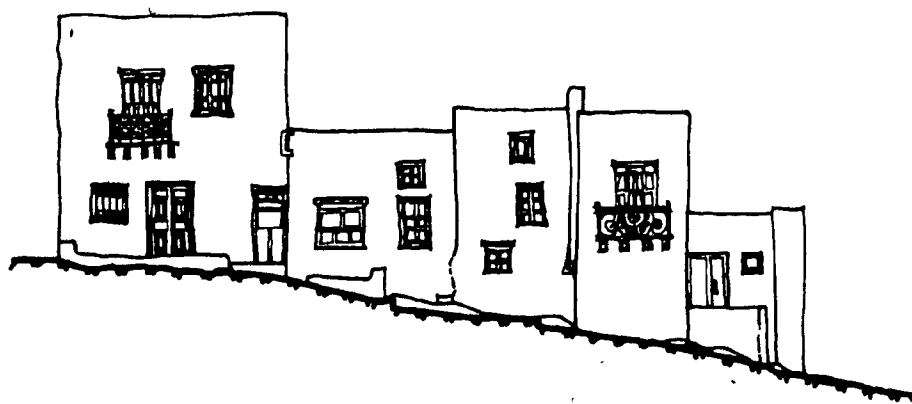
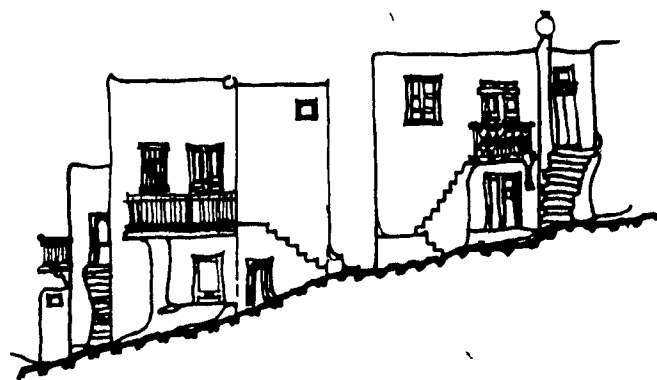
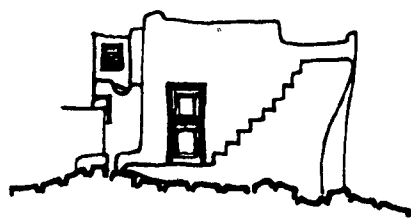


Fig 118a. Skyros Street elevations (after OTOME vol I: fig 9)

Streets

The circulation network of Chora entails both vehicular and pedestrian streets. A few vehicular streets exist which connect Chora with the harbor of Larnaca and with the beaches. These reach only up to the periphery of the city. The rest of the streets inside Chora are pedestrian streets, most of which are as old as the fortified settlement itself. They are twisted for both defensive reasons and for protection from the strong winds. They are long and offer to the passing pedestrian the joy of discovering a new building at every turn. Generally such streets are classified into four categories.

- a) The main market street, literally the spine of the city, embraces all social, spiritual, commercial, administrative, and recreational activities. The function of the street as a means of communication and as an element linking the various neighborhoods is strengthened by these activities.
- b) Streets that connect neighborhoods with each other.
- c) Streets that serve the houses of the densely populated neighborhoods.
- d) Dead-end streets serving clusters of houses in the center of neighborhood blocks.

The first two categories are considered primary pedestrian streets; they follow the contour lines and therefore have practically no slope. The last two categories are considered secondary pedestrian streets; they are narrow, usually at right angle to contour lines and steps are used to climb up steep slopes. In such narrow pedestrian streets the line where the house walls meet the street is painted dark grey to distinguish sharply private ownership (i.e. house) from public (i.e. street). This grey line is called an "eyebrow" and is an interesting feature of the street.

Platéia

The main square, *platéia**, lies towards the west end of the city at a considerable walking distance from Kastro. It is raised two meters above the street level and it contains a tiny almost decorative church, the administrative offices, and a coffeehouse:

The *platéia* is mainly used during holidays, when many young men and women return to the island from their work on the mainland. For the rest of the year the men prefer to sit in coffeehouses along the main commercial street.

- 1 *platéia*
- 2 coffeehouse
- 3 church
- 4 administrative offices

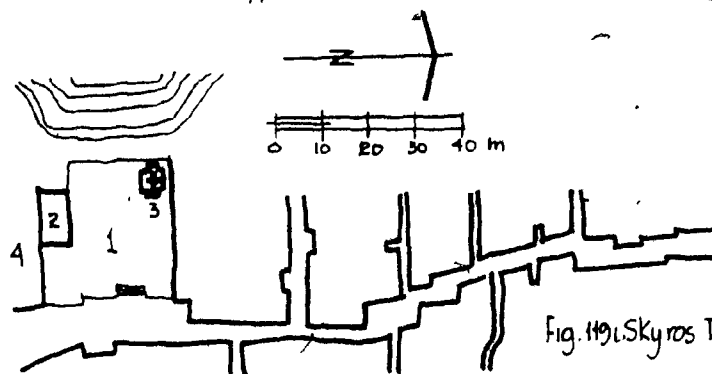


Fig. 119. Skyros The main *platéia*

*Platéia** is the singular form of *plateies*



CONCLUSION

The birth and the evolution of the form of the traditional Aegean island town has been influenced by historical as well as climatic and site conditions

The traditional island towns were established on strategic sites during the period of Venetian Occupation. The continuous threat of destructive piratical raids, during that period of time, necessitated their defensive character which is expressed by:

- a) a fortification system whereby the backs of the peripheral houses formed the defensive wall;
- b) a densely built urban environment;
- c) narrow and twisted yet functional pedestrian streets

The large number of churches interwoven into the urban environments of the traditional island towns was the result of:

- a) the significance of religion in the Greek way of life;
- b) the function of the church as the carrier of national aspirations and culture;

c) Turkish legislation that offered protection to church property

The basic dwelling unit of the traditional island towns is the *monóspito*. The form of the *monóspito* is the same as the one used by ancient Greek endogenous civilizations. Due to change of historical conditions, later modifications of the *monóspito* resulted in the formation of more complex dwelling units.

Chora on the island of Skyros is an example of an Aegean island town which has preserved well all the characteristics of the traditional planning and architecture.



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