

## HOUSES IN ÇEŞME (KRINI) IN ASIA MINOR

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### **Abstract**

*This study will be dealing with the different types of houses that existed in Çeşme, Asia Minor and the ways in which they were internally and externally maintained, depending on the owner's economic standing and profession. In addition, we will be studying the utilities, furniture and domestic utensils used, as well as drapery, that is, how it was decorated. In contrast to the modest furnishing, residents of Çeşme placed great emphasis on how a house was draped, so as to give it a functional as well as decorative character. In this way they met their needs while simultaneously satisfying their sense of aesthetic.*

*Folk art consisted of the simplest forms of production and was able to respond to the needs of a domestic economy while at the same time reflecting the standard of living and culture of a society. The traditions of Çeşme related to houses and their interior decoration is now a cultural heritage, elements of which continue to be preserved, while many have influenced the modern Greek residence.*

**Key words:** *Asia Minor domestic, Çeşme of Asia Minor*

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to research, collect and record those elements associated with the culture and daily life, household, and the cottage industry oikoviomata refugees from Cesme (Fountain), Asia Minor, to highlight local culture of this city, preservation of historical memory and protect the cultural heritage of the Greeks of Ionia.

For the preparation of this study was an overview of existing literature, Greek and foreign, and used photographic and archival material of the Eritrean refugee clubs N. and N. Ionia, Hestia New Smyrna and KE.MI.PO. (Center for Promotion of Culture and Promotion of Asia Minor) Nea Ionia. In gathering information, using the method of interview Tsesselis nine informants, and oral testimonies of the Archive Centre for Asia Minor Studies. The interviews were conducted in the period from August 2004 until May 2005. The completion of this work, other than family memories, contributed the information given by the Secretary of the Association of Refugees in New Fountain Fountain Kalamaria, the President of the Association of Minor New Eritrean Refugees and the head of the Department of Genealogy Trees Foundation of the Hellenic World.

This study is the first study to Cesme on issues of local culture and traditions associated with domestic life. As a result of the investigation, the elements are related to Asia Minor literature on relevant topics are fragmented. Also, most first- generation refugees have fled from life. It was therefore extremely difficult to collect data. The most important elements on which the study are based on the recollections of respondents from the memories of families and wider social environment who gave the younger a vivid impression of a way of life now lost, and their experiences until adulthood because the refugees living in settlements with several strongly social exclusion by 1940, which allowed their lifestyles to keep many details about the special delivery.

## **I. Houses**

The need for a home is a primary need in humans. It is the personal space one is directly connected to. Essentially where an individual's social life is born and shaped, later developing on a broader basis. It is only natural that a space so vital would win a human being's devotion and arouse in him/her the desire to adorn it. Houses reveal the economic well-being, standards of living and culture of a region, as well as its art, with main reference to architecture. In this particular geographical region, different peoples, cultures and traditions crossed tracks for centuries, and despite the odd problem, lived together peacefully exchanging mores and other elements of folk culture.

The people of Çeşme were born, married, and eventually died in the family house. Therefore they tried constructing houses that were absolutely functional for their daily needs. A residence always depended on the economic and social standing of a family and the sentiment of home ownership was so intense that it was considered degrading for a "proper" householder to be renting a home (Simiriotis, 111).

A few medieval buildings have been saved till today, that were called "Genovese" without this meaning they were built by the Genovese however. For the inhabitants of the peninsula of Erithrae, the term generally denoted anything old, Byzantine or Italian in style. This type of house had arched openings on the ground floor, pilasters on its stone doors, engravings on the lintel and arched transom windows.

Below we shall attempt to describe all the different types of houses the inhabitants of Çeşme lived in, according to their social class.

### ***1. Building and Construction Materials***

Stone to be found outside the city of Cesme on one side was white tufa limestone while on the other side of town, at Lithri, one could find red andesite (Simiriotis, 112). Ancient blocks of stone from Lithri (present-day Ildiri & ancient Erithrae) were widely used for building all kinds of structures and walls. They would use the same ancient grayish-red bases from Lithri to build and rebuild the town and villages. They would take them from ancient citadels, graves and houses. This is why houses were built of such huge stones. Furthermore, they used the sarcophagi from Lithri as basins for all of Çeşme's fountains. Caiques would also continuously sail over from the island of Hios, loading up stone blocks from Lithri for the building of houses on Hios (Varlas, informant).

In addition, at Ayia Paraskevi of Çeşme there were three quarries from which they would export stone for floors as well as the building of houses (Saranti, 1940).

The houses were built by practical-minded craftsmen who knew their work well. They worked the local stone well and did so with care and devotion. In addition to the locals at Erythrae there were also craftsmen from Lesbos and the Cyclades. There were all kinds of craftsmen: builders, plasterers, white-washers, painters, carpenters, blacksmiths and joiners (Antona, 113).

When laying the foundations of a house they would conduct a blessing ceremony and usually slay a cock. On the stone arch over the front door they would carve the date the house was built and usually a saying, such as "mine today, yours tomorrow" (Valampous, 111).

### ***2. Stone Sculpture***

Popular stone sculpture, with relief carvings either in stone or marble, offered impressive samples of the higher art of its representatives, who also took charge of the various stone adornments of the building. The stone carvings had a charm all of their own, as the hard stone turned into a work of art at the hands of the folk artist, reflecting his care and dedication, patience and sensitivity.

Many traditional elements were visible as were Byzantine and Western influences. Craftsmen needed to collaborate with masons so as to construct the large basement doors for houses or the yard walls of mansions, as well as smaller doors in houses, arched windows, fireplaces, columns and stairways, the hundreds of water fountains of the region, the bell-towers, the memorial tombs, the church floors and so much more. They would generally work their craft on every marble or stone section of a church or other building. Their subjects included themes from the animal and plant kingdoms as well as fantastical animals, two-headed eagles and crosses. Usually, their techniques were of a naïve approach typical of folk art; nevertheless, they produced some masterful works of sculptural art (Stamelos, 1993).

## **II. Houses in Çeşme**

The house one lived in always depended on the economic and social standing of a family. Distinct types of houses were the Resperiko and Fritza country houses, the Common house, the Town-house, the Mariner's house and finally, the Mansion. A common characteristic for all six types and their yards, even the lower parts of their trees, was their white-wash for reasons of hygiene (Bourchas, informant).

### **1. The Resperiko Country House**

This was a term for farm houses built at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Most of the older houses were farm houses. Farmers who mainly worked in vineyards, olive groves and vegetable gardens were called Resperides. The houses were tower-shaped. They had two floors with a katoiyi (basement), anoyi (upper level) and a large yard for the animals (Koromila and Kontaras, 1997).

Other characteristic farm houses were the Koulas which was tower-shaped, and the Fritza (Simiriotis, 112).

At the time of the Great Rebellion (Tenekidis, 1978), during which the Janissaries were attacking Christians, people were hiding as much as they could and most houses also had entrances in the back that were permanently open so that they could come and go without going out onto the main road (Poulakis, 111).

### **2. The Fritza Country House**

This was a term for cottage-style farm houses (Martakis, informant – Petridou, interview). They had a central arched vault made of stone called a vortos, a large hall for laying out raisins, a terrace called a doma and an ample onda (living room). They also featured a storeroom called a paraspito or dami (Simiriotis, 113). Outside, at the back of the house there was a space known as the haroumi or topos which was always blooming with flowers and other aromatic plants. In the yard there was also a hencoop, called a koumasi, and a watering trough for the animals (Koromila and Kontaras, 1997).

### **3. The Common House**

By convention, these were two-storeyed and spacious with lots of helpful extra spaces, in tune with the ways of the Anatolian craftsmen (Kokkalis, 111).

The basement or katoi as it was called, was constructed from stone taken from the local quarries, and served as a storeroom in which to pile up the harvested goods and household provisions. It was here they kept their barrels of wine and pots of tsipouro (the local spirit), as well as the pickles, dried fruits and fruit conserves the women made as provisions for the winter (Lina and Papadopoulou, interview). The loom and laundry were also to be found on the lower level.

There was a fireplace in the laundry where wood was lit to heat the water used for washing clothes, which they later hung up to dry on the hayiati (veranda) (Valampous, 112).

There was a stable for animals to the side of the house called a magazi. They usually kept such animals as sheep or goat and donkey or mule. The stable was shaped by two stone arches with skillfully engraved iron work and the doors could be locked (Kokkalis, 112). The remainder of the house was often constructed using the bagdati and tsatma (lath and plaster) method, with wood and mud for insulation and protection from earthquakes (Linias, interview).

The yard was large and paved using irregular black slabs. It was here that the men would sit in the late afternoon to drink their ouzo and rest. There was a large door at its entrance so that a mule loaded with crates could fit through. In the yard there was also a hencoop called the koumasi, a watering trough called a foundana for the animals, the hreia (lavatory) and an always white-washed well, for watering and washing, which was always covered to avoid accidents involving children (Koromila and Kontaras, 1997). At the far end was the oven. The poorer houses did not have an oven but rather a tsimenea, a fireplace where they could cook. They would burn dry vines called krouvoula, which were stacked up around shops and houses in agricultural areas after being brought back from the countryside by loading up donkeys. Behind the houses there was also a bostani (fruit and vegetable garden).

An external winding stairway made of stone with a platform at its turn would lead up from the yard to the veranda (hayiati). Here the family would rest on small stone benches with flower-pots blooming around them on shelves called baloudes, which resembled ledges and extended above the benches. Housewives had many pots with flowers and other aromatic plants. The favorite and most common plants among the inhabitants of Çeşme were begonias, jasmine, basil, geraniums, mastic plants, lilies, hyacinth, roses, carnations and quince from the Bosphorus (Tsipni, interview).

Housewives painted their houses and yards with whitewash to maintain hygiene. They would whitewash the exterior of the house, the terraces, stairs, the bottom of tree trunks, the flower-pots and their shelves, the hencoop (a necessity in every home), the well and the oven (Valampous, 113).

A door on the hayiati (veranda) led to the anoyi (top level) of the house. Here were the family's main living quarters. It was the main part of the house with the kameres (bedrooms), kitchen, and the ondas (living room). The ondas also served as a reception room and was kept clean, tidy and bright, thanks to its many windows. The majority of houses for common people had one bedroom for the entire family, unless it had many members, in which case the number of rooms increased accordingly. In the kitchen there was a fireplace or tsimineia. There was no dining room and the family ate in the kitchen (Valabous, 1985 – Petridou & Tsipni, interview).

The floor had a mosaic or tiles laid out in colourful patterns; simple or depicting scenes, flowers, lions or Byzantine designs (Lina & Papadopoulou, interview). The roof tiles were made of ceramic or gereni slate. Gereni is a hard clay resembling concrete found in local quarries. The houses also had kiosedes, which were narrow covered wooden balconies. Housewives would sit here after finishing their chores and update themselves on the comings and goings on the street below (Valabous, 1985 & 113).



A typical street

#### **4. The city House**

Over the years, Çeşme began to be urbanised because of the development of shipping and trade, the good functioning of its market and the economic progress that followed. This also influenced the architecture of houses. The difference between the standard house and the town house lay in its size, the better quality of materials used and the lack of extra utility spaces, since families no longer kept animals.

Town houses were well-built, very well cared for and beautiful. They were also constructed of stone on two levels, an anoyi (top floor) and a katoyi (lower level) below or more rarely, to the side of the house. The roof was four-sided with ceramic tiles.

The economically well-off sometimes had Maltese slabs laid down in their yards, brought by ships from Malta, which were cut square by machinery. In addition, they would burn coal and not krouvoula (dry vines) in a fougou (portable oven) made of tufa limestone (Simiriotis, 113).

As far as everything else was concerned, the layout was the same as with the standard houses. The bedrooms, kitchen and ondas (living room), always clean and neat because it was also used as a reception room, were all on the anoyi (top floor). The point were the walls met the ceiling were painted with an ornate border of ancient Greek or religious patterns, usually meanders or flowers related to the church. Blue, the “colour of Greece” was used in order to distinguish it from the red of the Turkish flag (Bourchas, informant). There was a hayiati (veranda), as usual, full of flowers. From here an external stone stairway that was always freshly whitewashed led up to the ondas (living room) (Saranti, 1940).

#### **5. The Mariner's House**

Mariners resided in specific neighborhoods and their homes had a distinct beauty. The corners of the houses bore distinct engravings (Koromila and Kontaras, 1997). A seaman's or fisherman's house was constructed differently from that of a farmer's because there was no need for large areas in which to store goods produced by the family's agricultural activities. In addition, the seaman's house had no need for a yard since he did not keep any animals.

A stone or marble stairway led up from the central entrance to the antre or hallway. There were doors on both its sides leading to the rest of the rooms in the house: the onda (living room) with the ceiling border here too lending colour with its characteristic Greek designs; the bedrooms and the kitchen. Shops were to be found on the katoi (lower level) (Antona, 113).

#### **6. The Mansion**

The houses of the wealthy were grandiose, neoclassical in style and made exclusively out of locally hewn stone or grey stone from Phokaia (present-day Foça) or from Thymiana on Chios. The use of baked brick was less common (Koromila and Kontaras, 1997).

Mansions had balconies with skillful engravings and marble stairways. The entrance had engravings made out of iron or wood, and made with great care, dedication and craftsmanship. The rooms were spacious and furthermore featured a dining room.

During festivities they would lay the stairs with rows of carpet fastened down by bronze rods. They had spacious parlours laid with Anatolian carpets. In order to open the front door they used a *sitzimi*, a thin rope tied to the latch or the door handle. This *sitzimi* reached up to the upper floor of the house so that when the doorbell rang they could pull the rope and open the door without the need to come downstairs (Trovas, 1976).

### **III. Household Utilities**

The furnishings of a residence and the utensils available were directly related to the daily needs of a family. The modestly decorated houses reflected the people of Çeşme's way of life as well as the more general social and economic conditions. The furniture and household utensils were limited in relation to today's standards. On the contrary, great emphasis was placed on the way the house was draped, giving both a practical as well as decorative side to the process. In this way they covered their basic needs while simultaneously satisfying their sense of aesthetic.

More specifically, folk art was capable of representing the simplest forms of production as well as responding to the needs of a domestic economy. At the same time, it was able to reflect the living and cultural standards of a society which had specifically created strict mores and customs and followed a very specific way of life. The type of furniture and decorations used hardly ever altered with the passing of time. Certain raw materials were often unavailable or their processing became difficult. This, in addition to the simultaneous development of commerce, led to the rise of a kind of wandering craftsman and trader who was not confined to narrow local limitations but served the needs of the wider geographical area (Historical Ethnological Company of Greece, 1993).

Furthermore, the rise and development of important branches of craftsmanship, such as metalwork, pottery and woodwork, stems from the need for people to satisfy the needs inside their homes, such as constructing furniture and domestic utensils. The means of decorating extended from drapery to the use of "ornamentation" and decorations on utensils and furniture, while self-contained objects took on a decorative role (Meraklis, 1992).

#### ***1. Furnishing***

The quality of the furnishing was dependent on the economic capabilities of the family. All the same, certain basic pieces of furniture were to be found in all houses. The bedrooms contained the family members' beds, made of cast iron and due to their weight, assembled in parts. They had a tall headboard, often adorned with skillful engravings, while the more well-off families' beds had four slender, tall columns. A mosquito net would hang from the ceiling. It was most common however to sleep on mattresses placed on an elevated wooden surface covering an empty boxed space which could also serve as a trunk. Mattresses and pillows were woolen. For infants they would always have wooden cradles or bronze ones with high banisters (Linias and Tsipni, interview).

There was always an icon-stand in one of the corners with an oil-lamp that was always lit. There was a table-like piece of furniture made of wood and marble housing the *lavomano* (washstand), basically a jug full of water and a basin for washing.

In the kitchen there was a low table called the *sofras*, where the family ate. They would sit around the *sofras* on chairs, cushions or short stools. Cooking utensils were placed on shelves in a spot higher up in the room. In addition, there was a metal tap in the kitchen together with the fireplace where they cooked. They used paraffin lamps for lighting.

In the *onda* (reception/living room) there was a buffet holding the house glassware. In the *katoyi* (lower level), next to the supplies, apart from the loom many houses maintained, there was also a table with chairs around it for the family to sit on during their free time (Linas and Papadopoulou, interview).

## **2. Ceramics and Pottery**

Making ceramics is an age-old tradition in folk art and enjoyed a resurgence following the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. With progress in living conditions as well as the arts, pottery developed from a domestic into a workshop craft. The skill of ceramic and earthenware folk artists was singularly impressive. Many household utensils were created with the art of simplicity and sense of measure, revealing a direct link to ancient Greek tradition. The manufacturing was impressive, the clay well-worked, the ornamentation modest, combining shape and colour harmoniously (Korre-Zografou, 1995).

It was only natural for a ceramics industry to flourish in a place such as Cesme where one can find the adequate red clay soil needed. *Fayetiana* ceramic-ware tended to dominate in Cesme homes, at times modest and at times rich in decorative elements, both in the molding and painting. The folk artist depicted scenes from Greek mythology and history, from the religious life and traditions of the church, from daily life, from the world of animals and plants. Decorative plates and jugs with charmingly painted scenes was commonplace (Danos, 1969 – Stamelos, 1993).

The inhabitants of Çeşme widely used ceramic utensils and containers in their everyday lives. They fell into two categories according to their use: transport and storage, the later being larger, limited in their variety of shapes and usually without ornamentation. In general, most were cheap and crudely made vessels. On the other hand, tableware and domestic utensils, which were fire-proof cooking utensils for everyday use and were related to the processing, transportation and storage of food, varied in shape and colour (Bakirtzis, 1989).

To meet the needs of transporting and storing produce such as raisins and olive oil, both produced in great amounts by the people of Çeşme, different vessels were used. For raisins they used earthenware jars that closed with clay lids. For olive oil they had the *kiuppi*, which was an oblong jar. To store and transport wine they used a long-necked amphora called *alaouta* (Beretas, 113). Meanwhile, to fetch water from the well in the yard or nearby fountain, they used different pitchers like the *stamna* or the *bourboula* from Hios (Psaropoulou, n.d.). They would collect milk in glazed clay pots called *bournies*, which they also used for *pastelaria* (quince paste) (Poulakis, 112).

Some houses possessed a ceramic *foufou*, a portable oven, often quite small. Its upper section was basin shaped. Near the base there was a grill and on the bottom it was open and conical to place fuel inside (Korre-Zografou, 1995).

There were two types of fireproof cooking utensils, deep or shallow. The cooking utensil par excellence was the fireproof glazed *tsoukali* or *hitra*. It was a closed, round pot, which may or may not have had handles. Another common utensil was the *gastra* (crock). The most typical utensil for the oven was the *yiouvetsi* (casserole) (Danos, 1969).

Bowls and basins of different sizes were available in every home for mixing and cleaning. A specialized type was the *zimarolekani*, a small bowl glazed with enamel that was used to prepare the yeast for kneading. In addition, they separated basins from bowls (Psaropoulou, n.d.).

The ceramic domestic utensils they had at their disposal for food could have been earthenware, glassware, enamelware or terracotta. However, they were most commonly *fayetiana*, that is, earthenware glazed with white enamel. The enamel protected the edible content from the clay and allowed great ease in washing, while peripherally there was a thin, border ornamentation in colour. In the kitchen there were cups, the salt holder and the sugar-case. The special dinner set was placed in the buffet, its shelves decorated with tasteful lacing, and it was to be found in the

onda. Decorative containers were few, such as ceramic cases and jewel-boxes. The more wealthy households also had porcelain dinner sets and decorative accessories such as porcelain frames for photographs (Papadopoulos & Tsipni, interviews).

The basin and jug of the lavomano (washstand) were made of porcelain. The house also possessed candle holders and the candles were made from pure bees wax (Trovas, 1976 and Linas, interview).



Storage jars and cooper and brass utensils on selves with typical lace embroidery

### **3. *Silver, Gold and Metal Utensils***

One of the most admirable and impressive conquests of folk art is silverwork. From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards new peaks were reached, satisfying the demands of up and coming strata of the population, chiefly the merchants. Silversmiths worked steadily in established workshops or travelled from place to place. The scenes depicted and various simple or complex decorative elements used, reveal all the skill of the folk artist, masterfully composing, demonstrating man's ability to mould all the magic radiance of his imagination into a tangible piece of work. The art of working silver and gold reached its highest point of perfection with ecclesiastical items: icon plating, crosses, candleholders and more (Stamelos, 1993).

During the construction of houses, metal-workers would display distinctive skill in making window handles, locks, door knockers, winches, the iron fences on balconies that seem to have been "knitted" etc (Linas, Papadopoulou and Petridou, interviews).

The houses had large copper braziers. The trivet found in the fireplace was made of bronze and used for somewhere to position the copper cauldron. The flower-pots on the hayiati (veranda) were made of zinc alloy, as was the oilcan. The jugs used to serve water at table were made of better quality metal. A typically copper cooking utensil was the harani (frying pan), which required frequent tin-plating. Another important utensil was the sini, a round copper baking pan (Psoma, interview and Trovas, 1976).

The tin-plating was done by the tinker, who would pass through neighborhoods at regular intervals and make his profession known by crying out the phrase "I tin frying pans" in order to grab the housewives' attention. According to the witness of E. Lina, tinning was done as follows: He would melt tin solder in a vessel resembling a saucepan over an item resembling a fofou (portable oven). He would then hold the utensil with a tong, dip it into the hot mixture, take it out, drain it and finally hand it over to the housewife after it had cooled and hardened and was ready for use.



Cutlery was usually made of cheaper metal such as tin. Knives and scissors often needed sharpening. This job was done by grinders, who also passed through neighborhoods carrying the grinding wheel necessary for this task (Linás, interview).

The more well off had cutlery of finer quality material with delicate engravings, which they would purchase in Constantinople (Istanbul), Smyrni (Izmir), Trieste and Venice. They would also have heavy silver trays, used during celebrations to serve fruit preserves served out of silver jars. They had silver jugs as well, with beautiful engravings. Furthermore, washtubs found in mansions were round and made of brass (Poulakis, 113).

The irons they used were made of cast iron and were shorter and thicker than today's irons. They would be placed on a metal disc on a *foufou* (portable oven) to keep it clean until it became burning hot. Few clothes were ironed, usually underwear and their best clothes (Petridou, interview).

#### **4. Woodwork and Wooden Utensils**

Folk woodcarving has been connected to some of the highlights in capability, expression and achievement to be found in folk art as a whole. Anonymous folk craftsmen would offer their artistic impulses and the spontaneous power of their sensitivity, serving their craft with dedication (Meraklis, 1992). Folk woodcarving has a rich tradition and has given some fine works of art for domestic and social life which move and capture human sensibilities (Stamelos, 1993).

Folk artists either had their own workshops or banded together in groups of craftsmen, creating characteristic works of folk architecture throughout the coastline of Asia Minor. Their work is characterized by the harmony of its plasticity. Their imagination had spectacular charm and variety. Religious life made up the cornerstone of their inspiration, but they were also inspired by the world and nature. Their ties to tradition ran deep, yet at the same time they were influenced by the west.

Brilliant examples of this art were found in the decorative items in houses and various objects of everyday use, as in other ornamental accessories. A characteristic example was the *kasela* (trunk), which they looked after with great care since it was a basic part of a bride's dowry. The wood carver would pay it particular attention in order to make it impressive. It was almost always made of walnut wood and its carvings depicted scenes from the plant and animal kingdoms, popularly cypress trees, flowers, churches and two-headed eagles. Usually, the person ordering the trunk was obliged to provide the necessary wood (Papadopoulos, 1969).

There was an abundance of wood carvings giving a startling grace to the simple interior architecture of the house. Seats, chairs, stools, *sofra* tables, beds, more tables, doors, buffets, cupboards, bedside tables... Curtain rods were carved and with hooks. They had scroll patterns and an upper frame made of lumber or plywood (Lina and Papadopoulou, interviews).

Wood from the jujube tree would be used to make tools, doors and windows for the *Fritza* country houses. They also had tubs made out of wood or wood plank. The tubs made out of planks would warp and crack when left disused and without water too long, and needed to be treated with water or ash so that it could expand and tighten, before being ready for washing (Stamelos, 112).

Next to the oven one would find a shovel, a *masia* (fire tong), to help with baking bread, and a *panistis*, which was a long wooden pole with a wet rag tied to one end. They would use this implement to clean out the ashes and coals before using the oven. To give it time to rise, the bread would be placed on a *pinakoti* (leavening board), which was long and narrow with partitions numbered according to the size of the family (Trovas, 1976).

#### **5. Household Drapery**

The embroidered textiles put aside for domestic use or decorating the house were closely related to more general decorations, were defined by its style and made up an essential part of its

formal decorations. The richer embroidery had mixed silver and gold thread, and much of it was embroidered in white silk in varying subtle shades. Draping a house in Çeşme mainly involved laying down the bedding, floor coverings, wall coverings and decorations and finally, the curtains (Stamelos, 1993).

A colourful cotton material called *alatzas* was used to cover mattresses and pillows. A central part of the drapery of a house was the conjugal bed. Bedding comprised of sheets and cases for pillows, headboards and other coverings. Sheets were white and either made of wool or cotton. Cotton bed coverings were always embroidered or had lacing. The best bed-sheets reserved for the bride's dowry were made of silk. The most common bed coverings were quilts made on the spot by wandering quilt-makers. In order to make the quilt, they would beat the cotton with an instrument, as large as a bow, with a cord attached. The cotton would then open and puff up. On the outside part of the quilt they would usually put a sea-blue satin fabric with pink on the inside, while the ornamental patterns on the quilt were mainly triangular or square (Petridou, Tsipni and Papadopoulou, interviews).

They would place great importance on the preparation of the conjugal bed, which was especially heavily decorated in mansions. The essential elements of a conjugal bed were the bed coverings, the pillow cases for the *maxilaromana* pillow (bolster) and two ordinary pillows, the upper and lower bed skirting and the bride's slippers. The fabric used for all these pieces was the same: white or pale-beige silk. The embroidery was usually *Richelieu* lace made with *brisimi* (silk thread).

The bed cover was one-piece with a border made from the same material as side ornamentations and often, in the centre, the bride's monogram was to be found inside an embroidered wreath. The space between the wreath and the border was never left blank however. It could have butterflies, pomegranates as symbols of plenty or other symbolic ornamental designs. It was customary to place a *maxilaromana* or bolster pillow at the head of the bed. It was as wide as the bed. On top of it they placed two ordinary pillows. All three were placed in pillow-cases and also often embroidered with the bride's monogram. On the bed posts they would also peripherally place the upper skirting, a decorative pleat roughly forty centimeters wide. Below the mattress and around the legs of the bed they would place the lower bed skirting. It was the same size and embroidered in the same way (Arhiyenis, 1981).

On the walls around the bed or mattress they would hang wall coverings, textiles woven with wool or cotton thread used for insulation and keeping out the wall's coldness. Designs were influenced by folk traditions and mythology and they would often mix in *flos* (silk thread) to render the results even more impressive (Tsipni and Linas, interview).

In the bedroom as well as other places around the house they would lay down floor coverings. They used *kilim*, *velentzes*, *hrami* and *flokati* rugs, all woven by the women of the house on the loom, and less commonly carpets, because they were more difficult to make (Psoma, interview).

Tablecloths and napkins were also major parts of the decorations. A dowry would include tablecloths made of linen and hand-knitted *buratto* (Italian needle lace) for dining or having tea. Particular attention was given to the knitted doilies for serving trays, as the crocheted lace lent a certain character to the space. Finally, the household drapery was completed by the curtains. Most were knitted with a needle, but there were also simpler woven ones, or woolen (Tsagri, interview).

#### **IV. Houses of Refugees in Greece**

Following the traumatic rift caused by the expulsion of 1922, remembrance became a bridge of salvation, regenerating a past full of significance and guiding the refugees by virtue of necessity

to adapt to a new way of life. In most cases, refugees from Asia Minor were unable to take anything of their own with them, save their memories.

They settled on undeveloped expanses of land allotted to them by the state, in refugee neighborhoods in the towns and settlements in the countryside. Initially they lived in shacks under squalid conditions but later, through housing programmes by the Refugee Committee for the Reinstatement of Refugees, in houses assigned by lot and paid for in installments. Refugee houses either had four homes in a two-storey building or one home in a small ground level house, and they were always freshly whitewashed. As for Çeşme, the houses that were not knocked down are being renovated (Bourchas, informant).

## **Conclusion**

The family house, a reference point in the lives of the people of Çeşme, was fully functional in relation to the daily needs of a family and its way of life. Houses reflected the living standards and level of culture of the society of Çeşme, while also revealing the socio-economic class of its owner. Furthermore, they were impressive examples of the fine art of the region's craftsmen. The prevailing social and economic conditions in the area led to modest furnishing in the house, in contrast to the richness of its decorations, giving it a functional as well as decorative character at the same time. Domestic handicrafts and the existence of practical objects revealed the fine sensibilities and skill of the women and responded to the needs of the domestic economy. At the same time, folk art and furnishing reflected the care and dedication of the male population, of the skillful craftsman who loves his work.

These facts were determined by the geographical, historical and social conditions of the area in which they lived, an area which was a cultural and economic crossroad for a variety of peoples and cultures.

The progress and prosperity of the area was interrupted violently in 1922 with the Asia Minor Disaster when its inhabitants were uprooted from the lands of their forefathers and forced to resettle in mainland Greece. The refugees of Çeşme settled in different parts of Greece, enriching Greek folk traditions and greatly influencing contemporary Greek culture and society. It is a legacy that belongs to us all.

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