



# NATIONAL INVENTORY OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF GREECE

## FORM OF THE ELEMENT Tinian Marble Craftsmanship

### I. Brief presentation of the element of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

#### 1. Other names:

Marble sculpture, the art of marble, marble-carving, stone-carving

#### 2. Identification and definition

The construction of an object, self-contained or part of a larger construction, made of marble (extraction of raw material, squaring, design, decoration, assembly, installation) and its relevant social and economic aspects (workshops, tools and techniques, machinery, apprenticeship, clientele, products, mentalities).

#### 3. Domain of ICH

- Oral traditions and expressions: Both technical terminology about tools, techniques and customary craftsmanship on the one hand, and sayings, traditions and anecdotes on the other, are classified as oral tradition. The former impart technical knowledge and skills and the latter impart social attitudes and behaviors. The particular motifs and patterns (cypresses, ships, etc.) conceived by marble craftsmen are inspired by oral traditions and are accordingly put to use.
- Social practices, rituals and festive events: There are certain rituals and festive practices that are implemented on certain occasions, such as the opening of a quarry, the transition from the stage of apprenticeship to that of master craftsman, the festivity of Saint Charalampos, the patron saint of marble craftsmen et al.
- Knowledge and practice about nature and the universe: Quarrymen and marble craftsmen possess empirical, albeit accurate, geological knowledge of the composition and structure of marble-bearing rock layers, the properties of each kind of marble, the manipulation of its swirls and veins, its schistosity, etc. They also have knowledge of certain elements of the material's mechanical behavior and pathology.
- Traditional Craftsmanship: Specialized techniques (and the socio-economic practices that accompany them) are transmitted empirically and orally from the master craftsman to the apprentice and thus pass from one generation to the next. They are similar to the respective ancient Greek techniques and at times they become more simplified or complex depending

on the specific historic context. They gradually integrate technical innovations (extraction with blasting charges, “Italian” wedges, wire cables, etc.), and/or stylistic ones (Baroque, Neoclassical, Neobyzantine).

#### **4. Place**

South Aegean Region, Cyclades Prefecture, Municipality of Tinos, Historic Community of Panormos (Ekso Meri, Pyrgos).

#### **5. Key-words**

Traditional technical knowledge and techniques, marble crafts, quarrying, marble sculpture, Tinos, groups of masters and journeymen (*kompanies*), workshops, Panormos School of Fine Arts, Museum of Marble Crafts, master craftsman, apprentice, quarries, marble splitters.

## **II. Communities, Institutions and/or individuals concerned**

There are many Tinian quarrymen, marble craftsmen and sculptors, active or retired, that live in Tinos or elsewhere and are engaged with the art of marble.

There are also many institutions that are actively involved in the promotion of marble crafts as a cultural good. The most significant among them are:

- Pan-Hellenic Holy Foundation of Evaggelistris of Tinos («Museum of Tinian Artists»)

Address: Evaggelistris 1, Tinos

Postal code: 84200

Telephone: (0030) 22830 22256

Fax: (0030) 22830 22196

E-mail: piietinou@otenet.gr

Website: [www.panagiatinou.gr](http://www.panagiatinou.gr)

- Cultural Foundation of Tinos (permanent Yannoulis Halepas exhibition)

Address: Tinos

Postal code: 84200

Telephone: (0030) 22830 29070

Fax: (0030) 22830 29134

E-mail: [info@itip.gr](mailto:info@itip.gr)

Website: [www.itip.gr](http://www.itip.gr)

- Museum of Marble Crafts

Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation (PBGCF)

Address: Pirgos, Panormos Tinos

Postal code: 84201

Telephone: (0030) 22830 31290

Fax: (0030) 22830 31293

E-mail: piop@piraeusbank.gr

Website: www.piop.gr

- Panormos School of Fine Arts

Address: Pirgos, Panormos Tinou

Postal code: 84201

Telephone: (0030) 22830 31225

Fax: (0030) 22830 31225

E-mail: pesktpt@yahoo.gr

Website: www.tinosartschool.gr

- Panormos Spiritual and Cultural Center of the municipality of Tinos «Yannoulis Halepas»

Address: Pirgos, Panormos Tinou

Postal code: 84201

Telephone: (0030) 22830 31262

Fax: (0030) 22830 31462

E-mail: pnekepa@gmail.com

Website: —

- Brotherhood of Tinians in Athens

Address: Asim. Fotila 40 & Alexandras Avenue, Athens

Postal code: 11473

Telephone: (0030) 210 8217361

Fax: (0030) 210 8217361

E-mail: adelfotistinion@yahoo.gr

Website: —

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### **III. Description of the element of ICH**

#### **1. Short description**

The art of extracting and processing marble in Tinos, influenced by Byzantine art, was fully developed during the late Venetian Rule (17<sup>th</sup> c.). Its transmission involves empirical apprenticeship and involves unique cultural features. The tradition of Tinian marble craftsmen working both in Greece and abroad led to the artistic prominence of several Greek sculptors.

#### **2. Description**

The use of marble is deeply rooted in Greek history, evidently since the Cycladic civilization during the third millennium BC. Modern marble sculpture was also significantly developed in the Aegean region, mostly in Tinos (17<sup>th</sup> c.). Marble crafts are still alive in Ekso Meri, an area that is infertile and full of quarries.

The rich Tinian tradition of marble craftsmanship was also expanded in Athens after 1830. Once in Athens, Tinians created a significant business center and collaborated with Greek and foreign architects for the capital's neoclassical buildings, temples and restoration of ancient monuments. Some of them were among the first graduates of the Polytechnic School. A large number of renowned artists (Dim. Filippotis, G. Vitalis, Yannoulis Halepas, Laz. Sohos, N. Gizis, Nikif. Litras et al) belong to this milieu. All of them came from families with a rich marble-working background and were taught the art of marble-working in family workshops.

During the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Tinians started operating workshops in many other Greek cities, while at the same time they carried on with their activities in Smyrna, Constantinople, south Russia, Romania and Egypt. In the 1930s there was a shift in ecclesiastical decoration towards the neobyzantine style, while during the late 1970s there is a re-emergence of reliefs with folk themes. Today there are many workshops of each type both in Tinos and in Athens.

The art of marble-carving is a «folk» one, in the sense that it expresses the collectivity and regional cultural identity of each specific area. In Tinos, marble art has always been transmitted from fathers to sons, or to kinsmen. It has always been structured on a familial basis, not only patrilineally but also through affinity. Both craftsmen and clients belong to the same technical and cultural environment and follow traditional and commonly accepted social conventions.

The particular use of marble-carving products determines their shapes and forms. The aesthetics of the craftsman, however, leads to their artistic decoration. Once again the artistic themes and the decorative motifs originate from the shared cultural tradition of craftsmen and clients and serve a metaphysical and symbolic function. There are certain amuletic and apotropaic symbols (crosses, pentacles, mythological creatures, beasts, etc.) that are chosen to decorate the fanlights that cover the relieving arch above doors or windows and prevent evil spirits from entering the house. The ever-protective presence of

saints is ensured by the substitution of the eroding painted icons with sculpted marble ones on the outside walls of the churches. Their constant propitiation is guaranteed by depictions of fountains and flower offerings. The marble tombstones are adorned with symbols of earthly vanity and relief tools bespeaking the deceased's occupation.

Every craftsman's primary goal is the building of a good reputation. The workshop owners are members of the upper class and are frequently active in civic affairs. The master craftsman is a social and professional role model for children, whose pastime from an early age is incising, even with just a nail and a stone, the marble paving flags of the streets. The social predominance of craftsmen over farmers, unlike in lowland and fertile areas, is also vividly reflected in traditional folk dance songs:

«My dear child does not sow, does not reap,

Only holds the mallet and carves marble

The most precious of all amber, the handsomest of all lads».

### 3. Spaces and means of performance or implementation of the element of ICH

#### • Spaces that are associated with the performance / realization of the element of ICH

Spaces that are inextricably associated with Tinian marble sculpture include the quarries, the splitters, the *fortotires* (loading piers), the workshops, the Panormos School of Fine Arts, the Museum of Marble Crafts in Pyrgos and several other museums and exhibitions.

Quarries: There are many quarries in Tinos, both large and small, not only in Ekso Meri but in other parts of the island too. Their common name is *damaria* or *pelekanies* (from the Greek verb *peleko*). The marble that is extracted there comes in various shades of white and grey and also in the famed green that has been known as *verd antique* or *ophite* since antiquity. Among the various island's toponyms, there are many that originate from the presence of marble, its extraction, its processing and its transportation. Besides the *pelekanies*, there are also some slate (*mavroplaka*) quarries.

Nowadays, the main green marble extraction business belongs to «DIONYSSOMARBLE Co. S.A.» and before that it was owned by the British company «Grecian Marbles Ltd». The rest of the quarries belong to local people and are portioned into small properties (*partes*).

Splitters: There are two old splitters in Tinos, the installations of which still survive in part: the water-powered splitter at Fabrika that operated in the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the proto-industrial splitter at Vathi that operated during the interwar years. Today there are still some operational privately-owned quarries and splitters with modern equipment.

Workshops: Marble-carving workshops are simple and often depend on the space that the family can make available. They are accommodated in the basements of houses and in street-level shops, while an ancillary building, such as a *katastega* (shelter) in the quarry or a windmill, may also suffice, particularly for craftsmen working alone. Quite common is the semi-outdoor workshop, the so-called *baraga*, which has a timber frame clad with rhododendron twigs.

In the larger workshops care is taken to ensure proper lighting, with large windows, and for sufficient space outdoors, where raw blocks and semi-processed pieces of marble are

stored. The permanent equipment includes several workbenches (*teziakia*), a barrel full of marble dust for working on smaller pieces and a whetstone (*akona*) in the corner. On the walls there are shelves with tools and plaster casts, working drawings and stencils. The workshop's courtyard also plays a significant role, besides functioning as a storage space, especially during the initial phases of processing.

The Panormos School of Fine Arts: The «Panormos Preparatory and Professional School of Fine Arts» was founded at Tinos in 1955. The school aims at providing students from all over Greece with professional training in marble crafts during a three-year course of studies. The top two graduates of each year are entitled to enter the Advanced School of Fine Arts in Athens without examinations, where they resume their studies with a scholarship provided by the Pan-Hellenic Holy Foundation of the Evaggelistria of Tinos. Many of the school's graduates work on projects for the conservation and restoration of ancient and modern monuments in Greece (Acropolis, Academy of Athens, etc.) and abroad.

• **Equipment, modules and accessories (tools, vessels, uniforms, et al.) that are used for the preparation and performance of the element of ICH**

Tools: Marble is worked and shaped by the successive cutting and removal of parts from the initial block. Most of the tools that are employed for this process are identical with their ancient Greek counterparts. According to their use during the process of marble-working, these tools are classified and sorted in the following categories: **extracting, levelling and carving tools** (*sokosor bikouni, thrapina* or *ktenia, kouskouda, kopanos* and carving chisels such as *kalemia, velonia, pontilia, pontes, faganes, dislidika, lames, loukloudika, glosses* et al.), **trimming chisels** (*kopidi, kouskouda*), **cuttingtools** (*prionaki*), **drillingtools** (*paramina, makapi* or *pistole to, garifalo orastraki, arida*), **strikingtools** (*varia, matsakoupi, mantrakas*), **measuring and designingtools** (*pihis, gonia, stela, koubaso, falagini, zigi, alphadi*), **smoothingtools** (*ksistra, p ouria, smiriglia, kaigania*), **transporting and liftingtools** (*losti, ktrakylia, kylindros, kambana*), **ancillary tools** (*sfines, petala, mpala, koutalaki, kargadouros, tigani* for pouring molten lead), **installations and machinery** (*xylogaidoura, sentouka, teziaki, akona, grylos, vintsi, arabas, bakalis, palago, big a, telaro* et al.).

They can also be classified as quarry tools (extracting and squaring) and workshop tools (shaping, decorating and installing the final product), when the process of marble extraction and crafting is viewed as a whole. Some of them, such as the distinctive marble-worker's hammer *ma(n)trakas* and various carving chisels, are used in both spaces in different sizes (larger in the quarry, smaller in the workshop).

Drawings: Drawings have been an integral part of producing a marble carving since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first drawing models were designed by the empirically trained master-builders and marble-workers in pre-revolutionary Greece (i.e. before 1821 AD), who later became influenced by the capital's university-educated architects and began developing a more sophisticated form of drawing. Drawing remains, however, an empirically acquired skill. The drawings circulate from hand to hand and, although they are usually signed, they are considered a common legacy among the marble-carving community. They are copied, duplicated, recomposed and reused· they conform, that is, to the standards of handicraft production.

- **Products or material objects in general (handicrafts, tools, religious or secular vessels, goods, food, etc) that are developed as an outcome of the performance or implementation of the element of ICH**

The products of marble crafts are classified in accordance with their use: (a) marble implements and vessels, (b) architectural members and (c) marble sculptures or stone reliefs.

a) The extended use of marble in various implements and vessels in everyday life is indicative of its importance for the local communities of Tinos and other Cycladic islands. Such implements and vessels include *goudia* (mortars), *lekanides* (bowls) for *skordalia* (mashed garlic), *petrotiria* (cheese-presses) for curdling, kitchen and laundry sinks, crock cases, troughs, *chirogournes* for swine feeding, waterers for poultry and pigeons, *kouloures* for untying knots in fishnets, *pigadostomata* (wellheads), *xinaria* and *yntagoi* (water conduits), *kylindra* or *korkokylia* (rollers) for compacting the earth on the flat roofs, home iconostases, photograph and mirror frames, marble fruit, eggs and various minor ornaments.

b) By architectural members we mean those constructions and products of marble working that are used both in secular and ecclesiastical architecture: *plakostromata* (marble-paved streets), claddings, columns, frames, arcades, balconies, corbels, flower beds, terraces, staircases, doors and windows, pediments, memorials, etc. or iconostases, pulpits, episcopal thrones, icon stands, church facades, candelabras, tabernacles, crosses, bell towers and Catholic altar stones, baptismal fonts and holy-water basins.

The marble bell towers of the churches deserve a special mention since they are among the most characteristic marble constructions of Tinian masons. Being extremely tall, their side-to-height ratio can even reach 1:6 and 1:8. They usually have three floors (*fanaria*) and with squared corner pillars and monolobal or bilobal arches with smaller pillars in between. They sometimes have relief decorations, marble acroteria and perforated crown steeples (*korones*) with marble arched grooves.

c) By marble sculptures or stone reliefs we refer to surfaces, either independent or parts of architectural applications, that bear etched, relief or perforated decorations, such as coats of arms, lintels, door frames, fanlights (a special category of perforated lintels that cover the relieving arches above doors and windows), architectural plaques that are incorporated in the outside walls of the buildings, omphalions, fountains, tombstones (and neoclassical tomb monuments), memorials and children engravings on the marble paving flags of the streets.

#### 4. **Transmission of the element of ICH from one generation to the next**

- Description: Marble-carving workshops are characterized by a strict hierarchy of personnel. There are three main grades of craftsmen: the master who is also the owner (*afentiko, protomastoris*) of the workshop, the accomplished craftsmen and skilled journeymen (*mastoroi*) and the apprentices (*paragioi*). The accomplished craftsmen and journeymen (*mastoroi*) are paid a daily wage, while the apprentices learn the craft without remuneration. At an intermediary grade are the master's assistants (*mastorakia*) who are in the second stage of apprenticeship and earn a lower wage than the master or are paid by the piece.

- Modes and duration of learning / apprenticeship / initiation: Apprentices start with menial tasks, such as arranging the masters' tools (while at the same time becoming familiarized with them), cleaning the workshop and learning order and obedience. This initial phase is succeeded by the gradual learning of the craft (from the simplest to the most complex techniques) and, finally, drawing. Quite often the master "holds back" some of the "craft's secrets", which the apprentice then has to discover on his own. This is not always the case though, since some larger workshops tend to operate contrarily. Each master supervises one or two apprentices-assistants, over whom he exerts not only technical but also educative power. When, after at least four years, an apprentice completes his training and earns the title of master craftsman, the workshop owner gives him a small chest (*kaselaki*) with a set of tools as a kind of symbolic ritual that takes place before the masters.

As far as the teaching of marble crafts in the Panormos School of Fine Arts is concerned, the initiation process during its early years was not much different from that of a workshop. This process has somewhat changed nowadays, without nevertheless having abolished the handicraft quality of marble working. Besides marble crafts, the school's students also take courses on sculpture, painting, architectural design and art history.

- Institutions that are involved in the transmission of the element: Workshops and groups of journeymen (*kompanies*), workshops,

Panormos School of Fine Arts (since 1955),

Pan-Hellenic Holy Foundation of Evagelistria of Tinos,

Museum of Marble Crafts (since 2008).

#### **IV. History and genealogy of the element of ICH**

##### **1. Historical information or regional narratives about the emergence, continuity, presence and adjustments or modifications of the element of ICH**

There are a few findings of Tinian or reused marble that date from the 5<sup>th</sup> until the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD and indicate the practice of marble crafts in Tinos, if not yet systematic. The documentation of the practice of marble crafts increased during the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century AD, denoting that the resurgence of sculpture in the Middle Byzantine period was present in Tinos too. This is where we should locate the dawn of the neohellenic phase of marble crafts.

The fact that Tinos was under Venetian rule from 1204 to 1715 was instrumental in the shaping of its cultural identity. Modern marble carving, among other things, has its roots in that period. The relative social stability, the construction of manors and churches, the Catholic Church's favorable attitude towards sculptural decoration (even today 1/3 of the island's population are Catholic), the coats of arms carvings and the contacts with Venice and Venetian-held Crete constitute some of the parameters that contributed to the development of marble crafts.

In 1309 the Venetian Senate procured marble with green veins from Tinos for Saint Mark's Basilica. The earliest extant stone reliefs in Tinos, primarily coats of arms, are dated to the 15<sup>th</sup> / 16<sup>th</sup> and the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The first organized team of marble-carvers appeared in 1662-64 and it was led by the first experienced and skilled marble craftsman and architect, Ioannis Frangiskos Apergis from Pyrgos. During the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, Tinian marble working

was a continuation of the 17<sup>th</sup> century craftsmanship, maintaining the same characteristics concerning the treatment of raw material, technique and style.

With the conquest of Tinos by the Turks (1715), the island was included in the Ottoman Empire's (a hostile force up to that point) sphere of financial influence. This process led to the extension of the local handicraft activity beyond the island's confines, both in its financial and artistic aspect. During that period Constantinople, being home to various influences and innovations, played a decisive role in the shaping of Tinian marble crafts. By working in or running workshops in the Ottoman capital, Tinians interacted with regional artistic traditions and imported several innovations to their native island. The most significant of those innovations was Ottoman Baroque, though in its re-modelled version.

All of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century was characterized by the gradual extension of marble-carving activity, initially to the neighboring islands and Mount Athos and later to the entire Greek Diaspora in Asia Minor, Romania, southern Russia and Egypt.

Further historical information is provided by dated monuments, craftsmen drawings, contracts and other documents, local newspapers, civil registers, etc.

Technique and style innovations were first imported through the interaction between Tinian and Italian craftsmen in Constantinople and Romania. The most important of those innovations were:

- The use of blasting charges (*fournela*) for extracting marble.
- The wire cable cutting technique for green marble that was introduced by «Grecian Marbles Ltd» (late 19<sup>th</sup> / early 20<sup>th</sup> century).
- The water-powered splitter at Fabrika.
- The electrically powered proto-industrial splitter at Vathi.
- The transportation of marble with flatbed cars on *decauville* tracks.
- The modern use of diamond cutting discs (*diamante*) and mechanical equipment for cutting and smoothing marble.

Many Tinian marble craftsmen and Panormos School of Fine Arts graduates work on projects for the conservation and restoration of the Acropolis monuments and other archaeological sites, where they offer their know-how and techniques on the restoration of ancient monuments.

## **2. Data update (at least once every five years)**

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## **V. Element's importance for Intangible Cultural Heritage**

- Workshops that keep producing works of marble carving (in Tinos, Athens and elsewhere) constitute the foremost institutions for transmitting the craftsmanship of marble crafts and disseminating its cultural value and significance.
- The Museum of Marble Crafts and the rest of the island's museums, as well as the Panormos School of Fine Arts, engage in various acts (exhibitions, educational projects, publications, etc.) for the promotion marble crafts on regional, national and international

level. Such activity enhances the value of ICH as a system of knowledge and of practices that contributes to sustainable development.

- Many regional institutions also engage in similar activities, such as modern marble crafts exhibitions, marble crafts and sculpture publications, conferences and meeting. Such institutions are the Municipality of Tinos, the «Yannoulis Halepas» Panormos Spiritual and Cultural Center, the Pan-Hellenic Holy Foundation of Evaggelistria, the Cultural Foundation of Tinos, the Brotherhood of Tinians in Athens, the Company of Tinian Studies et al.
- There are also several other regional and national institutions (Cycladic guilds and museums, universities and technical schools, the Open Quarry Museum of Penteli, etc.), as well as the Ministry of Culture and Sports, that have shown great interest in promoting the art of marble.

## **2.Safeguarding measures**

- Conservation and restoration of monuments carried out by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and private conservators as well.

(we should also emphasize the significant activity of the PBGCF's Museum of Marble Crafts and the Department of Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art of the Technological Educational Institute of Athens).

- Research, registration, photography / filming sessions, formation / enrichment of collections, digitization, publications.

## **Appendix 1**

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