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Architectural Sculptures of the Twelfth and the Early Thirteenth Centuries in Greece (pl. 21-32)

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ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURES OF THE TWELFTH AND THE EARLY THIRTEENTH CENTURIES IN GREECE*

(PL. 21-32)

The twelfth and early thirteenth century architectural sculptures of Greece are different from the contemporary Constantinopolitan ones, as A. Grabar recently pointed out. The Greek school flourished around the three important centers of Athens, Corinth and Thebes; however, remarkable finds have been located as far as Mistra, Arta and some of the islands, such as Andros and Euboea; the district of Mani is also extremely rich in architectural sculptures of a local character.

Some of the most important tendencies of the Greek school may be observed in four different groups of epistyles and cornices, the study of which has been based on some dated or approximately dated examples. In terms of style, the sculptures to be presented are particularly important for the study of the two-level technique and the evolution of the ornamental scrollwork, widely applied by Greek craftsmen during the period here examined.

I. The first of the works to be discussed in this survey is an unpublished epistyle of 1103 from Mani (Pl. 21, fig. 1). The three fragments of it have been reemployed in the belfry of the post-Byzantine church of Taxiarchai in Dryalos. A long inscription running above the decorated surface of the architrave offers the names of three donors:

* I am grateful to the National Research Institute of Greece for the grant which enabled me to undertake this research under the supervision of prof. D. Mouriki. I would also like to thank D. Hardy for the improvement of the English text.

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3. This scrollwork may well be the "Greek foliage" mentioned by Theophilus in the mid twelfth century. See Theophilus, De diversis artibus, ed. Dodwell, London 1961, 45 - 47, 80.
An additional brief inscription engraved over the leaves of the *champlévé* scroll at the left end of the epistyle supplies the date:

$$+ INΔ(IΚΤΙΩΝΟΣ) IA + -(ΕΤΤΟΥΣ) SXΙA'$$

The decoration of this epistyle consists of six *champlévé* panels alternating with five high relief elements, i.e. three conventionalized acanthus leaves and two bosses. The two outer panels are covered with *champlévé* scrolls, while the rest of them contain pairs of roundels enclosing palmettes.

It is interesting to note that the last donor may be the one mentioned in a commercial act of 1118 in Crete⁴, but it is not clear whether the word *ΤΟΥΜΑΡΧΗΣ* refers to an official of the Byzantine state⁵, or whether it is used as a family name. On the other hand, inscriptions engraved over the surface of *champlévé* scrolls often occur in late eleventh century epistyles, cornices, or ties from Mani, attributed to the workshop of the marble carver Nicetas⁶.

The bosses, the roundels enclosing palmettes and the *champlévé* scrolls are familiar in the earlier sculptures of Mani, as e.g. in the marble ties of St. Theodore of Vamvaka (1075)⁷. The detached acanthus leaves on the other hand, which appear for the first time in late eleventh century epistyles in the Peloponnesus⁸, and the Asia Minor⁹, gradually become a typical element of the two-level architraves, mostly occuring in twelfth century Greek monuments. It is highly possible that the application of such high relief leaves flanked by zodia or ornamental panels should be attributed to the imitation of early Christian cornices decorated with alternating coffers and consoles¹⁰.

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⁴. Miklosich-Müller, Acta et diplomata VI (1890), 96.
⁶. N. Drandakis, Νικήτας Μαρμάρας, Δωδώνη A' (1972), pls. XIa, XIVa and XV.
⁷. Ibid, pl. I.
⁸. E. Stikas, L'église byzantine de Christianou en Triphylie, Paris 1951, figs. 36, 37, 38.
⁹. A. Grabar, Sculptures byzantines, II, op. cit., pl. XVa, b.
¹⁰. As those of Alahan Monastery in Asia Minor. See M. Gough, Alahan Monastery, Anatolian Studies 17 (1967), pl. VIa, b and pl. Xa.
II. The second dated work to be examined in this survey is an unpublished epistyle from the church of Taxiarchis in Mesaria, Andros. Taxiarchis is undoubtedly the most interesting medieval church of the island, securely dated as it is to 1158, by an inscription engraved around the impost of its northwestern support. The same inscription offers the names of the two proud founders, Konstantinos Monastiriotis and Eirene Praep. As both names correspond to those of distinguished Constantinopolitan families, the two donors may well be considered members of the ruling aristocracy of the island which was densely populated and particularly prosperous during the twelfth century, when it was serving as a leading center of silk textile production in Greece.

The Taxiarchis epistyle has remained unnoticed so far, reemployed as an upright of the post-byzantine marble screen of the church which replaced it. Though some parts of it were mutilated and its limited high relief elements were carefully roughened out, the rest of the surface remains in a surprisingly good condition. The surviving part of the Taxiarchis epistyle comprises six panels (Pl. 21, fig. 2). The first from the left is occupied by a summarily modelled representation of a peacock rising on a plain ground (Pl. 22, fig. 3). Next to the peacock, an elongated panel is covered by intersecting bands gradually transformed into acanthizing palmettes used as space-fillers (Pl. 22, fig. 4). This panel was succeeded by a high relief boss now unfortunately chiselled off. The remaining panels were arcaded and separated by double knotted colonettes. The first two of these panels are covered by overlapping grooved bands, the ends of which are also turned into acanthizing palmettes (Pl. 23, fig. 5). The last surviving panel which doubtlessly

12. Ibid., 29. On the Monastiriotis family see also Miklosich-Müller, Acta et diplomata 4 (1871), 231; P. Le merle, Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin, Paris 1977, 42. It is interesting to note that according to Michael Choniates Leo Monastiriotis was visiting Athens between 1182 and 1204: S. Lam brós, Μιχαήλ Χονιάτου τοῦ Χωνιάτου, τά ουκόμενα II, Athens, 1880,19.
13. Ibid., 6.
15. On the origin of these bosses see A. Grabar, Sculptures byzantines, II, op. cit., 78.
16. On the original apotropaic significance of such knots see Lasc. Bouras, Δύο βυζαντινά μανουάλια ἀπὸ τή Μονή Μεταμορφώσεως τῶν Μετέωρων, Βυζαντινά 5 (1973), 140.
marked the centre of the epistyle is occupied by a “templon element”, i.e. a foliate cross, covered by an arched, high relief frame, which is now also hacked away.\(^{17}\)

Thus the arrangement of the Taxiarchis architrave partly retains the eleventh century pattern of the arcaded panels, which was current in the western coast of Asia Minor\(^{18}\) and the nearby islands of the Aegean Sea\(^{19}\), as well as in mainland Greece and the district of Mani\(^{20}\). Zodia representations at the two ends of cornices or epistyles were, on the other hand, widely applied in eleventh century works, though in less balanced compositions\(^{21}\).

What nevertheless appears to be the original contribution of the Taxiarchis craftsman is the elegant and refined interpretation of the acanthizing scroll. The pronounced linearism of this ornament is achieved by a particularly crisp carving with sharp ridges, which repeat the flowing outlines of the grooved stems or those of the acanthus lobes. Compared to the tenth century floral ornament of the Panaghia screen in Hosios Loukas (Pl. 23, fig. 6), the scrolls of Taxiarchis exhibit a new interpretation of the much thicker stems, while the palmettes acquire an almost classical, acanthizing aspect. An unfinished lintel from the Agora of Corinth (Pl. 24, fig. 7), exhibits the process followed in the execution of such scrollwork. It seems that the craftsman started by opening the drillholes thereafter used as guiding points; he continued by removing the ground, thus creating a champlevé surface and finished by opening sharp ridged grooves over the surface of the stems and the leaves. The abstract grace of the Taxiarchis ornament is parallel to that of the icon frame of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi\(^{22}\), and reveals a certain amount of classical influence, while its expert design and academic precision remind one of the elaborate rinceau patterns of the contemporary painted ornament.

These particular traits of the acanthizing scroll are also observed in two different slabs probably serving as fronts of sarcophagi the one

17. Such elements usually mark the centre of epistyles or doorframe cornices.
18. A. G r a b a r , Sculptures byzantines, II, op. cit., pl. XIII.
19. A. O r l a n d o s , Βυζαντινά γλυπτά τής Ρόδου, ABME 6 (1948), fig. 167; idem, Monuments byzantins de Chios, Athènes 1930, pl. 7.
20. The prothesis epistyle of the catholikon of Hosios Loukas must have served as an important model. See A. G r a b a r , Sculptures byzantines, II, op. cit., pl. XXVa, b. C f. N. D r a n d a k i s , Νικήτας Μαρμαράς, op. cit., pl. Ia, IVa, β, XII, XV.
21. Ibid., pl. LXXVIIa.
22. Ibid., pl. LXXVIIa.
found in Athens, near the church of the Holy Apostles (Pl. 24, fig. 8)\(^{23}\), and the other in Arta (Pl. 24, fig. 9)\(^{24}\). Both of these slabs, which are closely related to the Taxiarchis epistyle, should most probably be attributed to the third quarter of the twelfth century.

III. A well known fragment of a marble cornice in the Byzantine Museum of Athens, reasonably attributed to the monastery of St. John the Kynegos on Mt. Hymettus (Pl. 25, fig. 10), represents the dated basis of the third group of sculptures here examined. The fragment which most probably served as a doorframe cornice is dated by an inscription engraved over the carved surface to 1205\(^{25}\).

The Kynegos cornice represents a typical example of the so-called two-level technique. Thus a bird, probably a pheasant\(^{26}\), bends to peck its chest next to a rounded boss covered by a cross, whose foliated serifs form heart shaped palmettes. The low relief ornament of the background is closely related to that of the Taxiarchis architrave, though its execution is less accurate and crisp. However, it is significant to note the ascending importance of the high relief elements. The representation of the bird fashioned in considerable relief exhibits a certain respect for the natural forms, while its surfaces are rendered in a detailed, decorative manner.

The stylistic traits of the Kynegos cornice are also encountered in some high quality sculptures in the monastery of Sagmata in Boeotia, founded by Clemes, a pupil of Hosios Meletios, active in the early twelfth century\(^{27}\). Most of these sculptures were used as building material in a nearby post Byzantine chapel\(^{28}\). However, it appears that some of this material belongs to the original marble screen of the catholikon, also furnished with elaborate opus sectile and mosaic pavements which may well be considered contemporary with the architectural sculptures\(^{29}\).

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25. Ibid., 111.
26. Two identical birds decorate the restored epistyle of the Kynegos screen.
Three of these fragments with an elaborate bead and reel moulding running along the base of their carved surface should be attributed to the same epistyle (Pl. 25, figs. 11 - 13). Moreover, it is obvious that the last two fragments, which fit one another, formed the right end of the architrave. The centre of this part was occupied by a high relief acanthus leaf, flanked by two zodia, a hare and a bird fashioned in moderate relief. It is significant to note that the lobes of the acanthus leaf are thick and softly modelled, while the form of the zodia is remarkably expressive and lively. Elongated bosses\textsuperscript{30} covered with interlaced patterns, palmette scrollwork or acanthus derivatives succeeded the zodia, eliminating the surface of the ornamented ground.

Thus the Kynegos cornice and the Sagmata epistyle form a group of closely related sculptures which can be dated around the turn of the twelfth century. Compared to the Taxiarchis epistyle, these fragments display a new interpretation of the background which is now conceived as a unique surface covered with low relief ornaments; these contrast the projecting elements, which increase in number and plasticity. The negative effect of the extremely crisp carving with the sharp ridges gives way to a softer interpretation of the scrolls, while elements of an accentuated plasticity, such as the acanthus leaf, are added.

IV. The church of Samarina in Androusa near Kalamata, retaining a considerable part of its elaborate screen “in situ”, offers the basis of the fourth group of sculptures to be discussed\textsuperscript{31}. However, the monument is only approximately dated to the late twelfth century according to its badly damaged frescoes\textsuperscript{32}, and on architectural evidence. The bema epistyle and those of the lateral sections survive with only minor damage separated by two lavishly decorated icon frames (Pl. 26, figs. 14 - 15). It seems that the shafts of the screen were removed at an early date to be replaced by an ugly brick construction of the early 20th century.

As usual, the bema epistyle of Samarina is the most heavily decorated one (Pl. 27, fig. 16). Its carved surface is delimited between a frieze covered with inlay decorations and an elaborate bead and reel moulding similar to that employed in the Sagmata screen. Seven high

\textsuperscript{30} For other elongated bosses see A. Orlandos, Βυζαντινά μνημεία της Άνδρου, op. cit., fig. 10.
relief elements rise at regular intervals from its ornamented ground covered with palmettes, plaited crosses or interlaced patterns accentuated by drill holes. The general arrangement, and most of the elements used, are based on the pattern of the refined screen of the Saviour church in Christianoupolis attributed to the second half of the eleventh century and repeatedly imitated thereafter in several churches of Mani, the richly decorated epistyle of the Taxiarchis church of Charouda, for instance.

The centre of the Samarina epistyle is occupied by a high relief templon element resembling the form and the decoration of the icon frames (Pl. 27, fig. 17). At its two sides rise two extremely stylized acanthus leaves (Pl. 27, fig. 18). Two rounded bosses whose curved, openwork surface was hacked off, succeeded the two acanthus leaves. However, it is obvious that the most meticulously rendered elements of the screen are the two powerful zodia, a lion and a griffin, decorating the two ends of the architrave (Pl. 28, figs. 19-20). The two zodia, grasping two smaller crumbling animals, are partly sculptured in the round, revealing an unprecedented sense of plasticity. Though their heads are missing, the bodies display a doted surface also peculiar in metalwork and the minor arts, while their mane is fashioned in parallel undulating lines, offering an extremely decorative effect.

The centre of the inlay frieze on top of the carved architrave is occupied by a pannel depicting two addorsed griffins separated by a tiny hare (Pl. 28, fig. 21). The rest of the frieze is covered with geometric patterns usually employed for the decoration of opus sectile pavements. The ground is only slightly recessed and carefully roughened to accept some coloured inlay. The underside of the epistyle was plain, like that of the Sagmata screen, except for a roundel with inlaid decorations, which marked its centre. The gradual abandonment of the

33. E. Stikas, L’église byzantine de Christianou, op. cit., figs. 36 - 38.
35. See e.g. the peacocks decorating the crown of Leo VI, A. Grabar, Opere bizantine, in II Tesoro e il Museo di San Marco, Florence 1971, pl. LXXIV.
36. The same heraldic composition occurs on a twelfth century marble slab reemployed on the eastern facade of the Metropole at Mistra. See G. Millet, Monuments byzantins de Mistra, Paris 1910, pl. 47.
37. Only a tiny part of this roundel is visible today. However, it can be clearly discerned in an old picture of the Millet Collection. See A. Grabar, Sculptures byzantines, II, op. cit., pl. LXXIc.
sculptural decoration of the underside is easily explained by the use of icons which according to recent views were introduced by the late eleventh century.

The rich inlay decoration of the Samarina epistyle, as well as that of the icon frames which resemble to a certain extent those of Porta Panaghia at Pyle, have led A. Grabar to suggest that the Samarina screen was probably reworked during the Palaeologan period. However, two identical icon frames reemployed in the Metropole of Mistra (Pl. 29, figs. 22-23) bear the same inlay decorations. It seems that these two icon frames as well as fragments of a marble epistyle reemployed in the church of St. Sophia of Mistra (Pl. 30, figs. 24-25), belong to a marble screen identical to that of Samarina. The close resemblance of the corresponding parts and the similarity of the inlay decoration of the icon frames suggest that both screens were carved at one time, by the same craftsmen, who copied a common model with remarkable ability.

Thus it is ascertained that sculpture in the round, low relief scrollwork, openwork and inlay were employed at the same time for the embellishment of the Samarina screen, which may well be considered the most advanced and sophisticated application of the two-level technique in Greece. In terms of style, a similar interpretation of the acanthus leaf and the particular elements of the ornamented ground are also to be observed in an elaborate cornice of a marble doorframe in the monastery of Hosios Meletios (Pl. 31, figs. 26-27), as well as in three fragments of a marble epistyle from the monastery of Hosios Loukas in Boeotia (Pl. 32, figs. 28-30). Thus it seems that the Samarina workshop,
which was undoubtedly highly thought of, was not only active in the south Peloponnesus, but in two of the most important monastic foundations of the Greek mainland around the critical turn of the twelfth century.

CONCLUSIONS. The Mani epistyle and that of Andros which represent the earliest of the examples discussed are at the same time the only ones to exhibit some traces of the popular eleventh century patterns, namely of the interconnected roundels or of the arcaded panels. However, the increasing number of high relief elements (bosses, acanthus leaves, zodia or templon elements), led to the gradual decomposition and the final abandonment of these traditional patterns in favor of less restricted, though always symmetrical compositions.

In terms of style the rising importance of plasticity as seen in the evolution of the two-level technique leads to elements almost sculptured in the round (Samarina) and is followed by a certain respect for the natural form of the zodia depicted. It is also interesting to note that the most sophisticated of the two-level sculptures are further enriched by openwork and inlay decorations. In relation to the low relief ornament on the other hand, the sharp ridged technique observed on the Andros epistyle gradually gives way to a more fleshy interpretation of the floral ornament. At the same time, low relief scrollwork acquires a homogeneous acanthizing aspect distinct of most twelfth century sculptures in Greece and which is not to be seen in Constantinople.

All of the sculptures mentioned above with the exception of the Mani epistyle, typical of the local, somehow rustic and conservative works, are examples of high quality which reveal the growing technical skill of the marble carvers involved. The fact that several of them belong to monastic churches (Kynegos, Sagmatas, Hosios Meletios, Hosios Loukas), probably indicates a certain prosperity of monastic life. Moreover, it may not be accidental that the growth of a Greek school of sculpture with distinct characteristics during the late twelfth century and soon after it follows the rise of a local aristocracy and coincides with the desintegration of the central government, which preceded the Latin occupation of Greece. This idea is supported by the noble origin of the two founders of Taxiarchis of Andros, most probably responsible

44. On the desintegration of the provincial government of Greece see J. Herrin, Realities of Byzantine Provincial Government: Hellas and Peloponnesos, 1180 - 1205, DOP 29 (1975), 256.
of the refined sculptural decoration of the church. An increasing number of richly decorated sarcophagus slabs, two of which are mentioned in this paper, may also be related to the same social and economic developments of twelfth century Greece.
ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

ΑΡΧΙΤΕΚΤΟΝΙΚΑ ΓΛΥΠΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΩΔΕΚΑΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΩΙΜΟΥ ΔΕΚΑΤΟΥ ΤΡΙΤΟΥ ΑΙΩΝΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΛΛΑΔΑ

(ΠΙΝ. 21 - 32)

"Ο άρχιτεκτονικός διάκοσμος των έλλαδικών μνημείων πιστοποιεί κά-
ποιον άνθησις τής γλυπτικής στόν 12ο και στις άρχες τού 13ου αιώνα. Η
άνθησις αύτη ἐπισημαίνεται γύρω ἀπὸ τά σημαντικά κέντρα τῶν 'Ἀθηνῶν,
τῆς Κορίνθου καὶ τῶν Θηβῶν· οὕτως σημαντικά εὐρήματα ἐντοπίζονται
καὶ πολὺ μακρύτερα, στὸν Μυστρᾶ καὶ τὴν "Ἄρτα, ἢ ἀκόμη σὲ μερικὰ ἀπὸ
tά νησιά, ὅπως στὴν "Ἄνδρο καὶ τὴν Εὔβοια. Ἡ περιοχή τῆς Μάνης διατη-
ρεῖ ἕνα ἐντυπωσιακό πλήθος ἀπὸ ἀρχιτεκτονικά γλυπτά, ἐπαρχιακοῦ συ-
νήθους χαρακτῆρα.

Στὸ ἄρθρο αὐτὸ ἔχετάζονται τέσσαρες ὁμάδες ὁπότε ἀπὸ γείςα καὶ ἐπιστύλια
tέμπλου, ἢ μελέτη τῶν ὁποίων βασίζεται σὲ ᾽Ισάριθμα ἔργα πού μποροῦν
νὰ χρονολογηθοῦν μὲ σχετικὴν ἀκρίβεια. Στὰ ἔργα αὐτὰ μπορεῖ κανεὶς νὰ
παρακολουθήσει τὴν ἐξέλιξη τού χαρακτηριστικοῦ γιὰ τὰ μνημεία τοῦ 12ον
αἰῶνα διπλεπίπεδου άναγλύφου καθὼς καὶ τῶν ἐπὶ μέρους στοιχείων ποῦ τὸ
συνθέτουν.

Τὸν πυρήνα τῆς πρώτης ὁμάδας ἀποτελεῖ ἕνα ἐπιστύλιο τέμπλου τὸ ὁ-
πότο ἐπαναχρησιμοποιεῖται στὸ κωδωνοστάσιο τοῦ μεταβυζαντινοῦ ναὸ
tοῦ Ταξιάρχη στὸ Δρύαλο τῆς Μάνης. Τὸ ἐπιστύλιο φέρει μιὰν ἐπιγραφή ποῦ
tὸ χρονολογεῖ στὰ 1103 (Πίν. 21, εἰκ. 1). Στὴ διακόσμηση τοῦ διακρίνονται
θέματα καὶ τεχνικὲς γνωστὰ ἄπὸ παλιότερα γλυπτά τῆς Μάνης, ὅπως εἶναι
οἱ ἐπιπεδόγλυφες άνθεμωτές ἐλικές, οἱ σηρικοὶ τροχοὶ καὶ τὰ «κομβία»·
dιακρίνονται δὺς καὶ ἔξεργα φύλλα ἀκανθάς ποῦ προβάλλουν ἀπὸ τὴν
ὑπόλοιπη ἐπιφάνεια τοῦ ἀναγλύφου, ὅπως καὶ τὰ «κομβία», δημιουργοῦντας
ἐνα ὑποτυπώδες διπλεπίπεδο. Τὰ φύλλα αὐτὰ ποῦ γίνονται ἕνα ἀπὸ τὰ χαρα-
κτηριστικά δείγματα τῶν γλυπτῶν τοῦ 12ον αἰῶνα ἀποτελοῦν τὰ παλιότερα
χρονολογημένα παραδείγματα.

Στὴ δεύτερη ὁμάδα γλυπτῶν περιλαμβάνεται ἕνα ἀδημοσίευτο τμῆμα ἐπι-
stυλίου ἀπὸ τὸ χρονολογημένο στὰ 1158 ναὸ τοῦ Ταξιάρχη Μεσαριᾶς στὴν
"Ἄνδρο (Πίν. 21-23, εἰκ. 2 - 5). Στὴν ἰδία ἐνότητα ἀνήκουν δύο πλάκες ἀπὸ
σαρκοφάγους από την 'Αγορά των 'Αθηνών (Πίν. 24, εικ. 8) και από την 'Αρτα (Πίν. 24, εικ. 9). Στά έργα αυτά κυριαρχεί ένα χαρακτηριστικό για τον 12ο αιώνα φυτικό κόσμημα από τριταινιωτούς βλαστούς με άνθεμωτές απο­
λήξεις σε χαμηλό ανάγλυφο, ένω τα εξεργα στοιχεία είναι πολύ περιορισμέ­
να. Το κόσμημα αυτό διαφοροποιείται ουσιαστικά από τις άνθεμωτές έλικες του 10ου και 11ου αιώνα χάρη στην κλασσικότροπη άποδοσή των άνθε­
μων, ποι με την εξαιρετική ακρίβεια στή χάραξη και την κρυσταλλική ύφη τους άποκτον και πάλι κάτι από το χαρακτήρα του φύλλου της άκανθας.
Η διακοσμητική άξη του θέματος βασίζεται στο γραμμικό του χαρακτήρα και στην εξαιρετική του εκλέπτυνση που θυμίζουν τα γραφτά κοσμήματα στήν τέχνη της ίδιας περιόδου.
Στην τρίτη ομάδα περιλαμβάνεται το έντεπιγραφο μπαμά κυρίως υφασμάτων από το ναό του Αγίου Ιωάννη του Κυνηγού στον Υμηττό, το οποίο χρονολογείται στα 1205 (Πίν. 25, εικ. 10). Στην ίδια ομάδα εντάσσονται επίσης μερικά θραύσματα έπιστυλίου από το περίτεχνο τέμπλο της Μονής Σαγμα­
τά (Πίν. 25, εικ. 11-13). Έδω, το βάθος διαμορφώνεται σε ένα άνθεμωτές έλικα και σε χαμηλό ανάγλυφο, ανάλογα με την άκανθα της άνθεμωτής έλικα του 10ου και 11ου αιώνα.
Την ίδια στιγμή εντυπωσιάζει η φυσικότητα στή στάση των πουλιών και των ζώων, καθώς και κάποια εμ­
φάση στη διακοσμητική ανάδειξη τις μορφές τους.
Το πιο σημαντικό έργο στην τέταρτη ομάδα είναι το έπιστυλίο τέμπλου της "Αγορά των 'Αθηνών (Πίν. 24, εικ. 8) και από την "Αρτα (Πίν. 24, εικ. 9). Στά έργα αυτά κυριαρχεί ένα χαρακτηριστικό για τον 12ο αιώνα φυτικό κόσμημα από τριταινιωτούς βλαστούς με άνθεμωτές απο­

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σπαση της διακοσμημένης επιφάνειας και στην έγκατάλειψη των παραδο-
σιακών θεμάτων των τοξυλίων και των σηρικών τροχών, ένω το έκδηλο
ένδιαφέρον για την πλαστικότητα επί μέρους στοιχείων αυξάνει για να φθά-
σει σε σημείο αίχμης στην τέταρτη θέματα, διπου συνενώζεται με τη διάτρη-
tη και την ένθετη τεχνική. Την ίδια στιγμή παρατηρείται κάποια έξελιξη και
στα φυτικά θέματα ποιά καλύπτουν σε χαμηλό ανάγλυφο το βάθος των
dιακοσμημένων επιφανειών. "Ετσι η ψυχρή κρυσταλλική ύφη που παρατη-
ρείται στα φυτικά θέματα του Ταξιάρχη της Μεσαριάς υποχωρεί σταδιακά
gια να δώσει τη θέση της σε μια πιο σαρκώδη άντληση τον φύλλου της
άκανθας στην έννοια του Κυνηγού και του Σαγματά.
Τα έργα ποιο έξετάστηκαν ως έδω προδίδουν τη σταθερή βελτίωση της
τεχνικής των έλλαδικών μαρμαράδων που διαμορφώνουν μια τοπική σχολή
στο δεύτερο μισό του 12ου και στις αρχές του 13ου αιώνα. 'Η διαφοροποίη-
σή τους από τον Κωνσταντινοπολίτικη γλυπτική της ίδιας περιόδου δεν είναι ίσως άσχετη με την εξασθένηση της κεντρικής εξουσίας και
και με την παράλληλη άναπτυξη μιας τοπικής Αριστοκρατίας. Την ίδια
στιγμή ο έντοπισμός ένος σημαντικού άριθμού από τα γλυπτά που έξετά-
ζονται σε μοναστικά συγκροτήματα αποτελεί κάποιαν ένδειξη για την άν-
θηση τού μοναχισμού στην έποχή αυτή.

ΛΑΣΚΑΡΙΝΑ ΜΠΟΥΡΑ
Fig. 1. Mani, Dryalos, Taxiarhichis belfry. Immured epistyle of 1103.
Fig. 2. Andros, Mesaria, Taxiairchis (1158). Fragment of epistyle.
Figs. 3-4. Andros, Mesaria, Taxiarchis (1158). Fragment of epistyyle, details.
Fig. 5. Andros, Mesaria, Taxiarchis (1158). Fragment of epistyle, detail.

Fig. 6. Hosios Loukas, Panaghia. Diaconikon epistyle, detail.
Fig. 7. Corinth, Agora. Fragment of door lintel.  Fig. 8. Athens, Agora, Holy Apostles. Sarcophagus slab.  Fig. 9. Arta, Metropolis. Sarcophagus slab.
Fig. 10. Athens, Byzantine Museum. Doorframe cornice of 1205 (from Kyne-gos monastery). Figs. 11-13. Sagmata monastery, collection of sculptures. Fragments of epistyle.
Figs. 22 - 23. Mistra, Metropolis. Reemployed icon Frames.
Fig. 24. Mistra, St. Sophia. Fragment of reemployed epistyle.
Fig. 25. Mistra, Museum. Fragment of epistyle from St. Sophia.