

## THE STONE CRAFTSMEN IN EPIRUS

---

The stone craftsmen had a hard work, in order to design and make a great stone building. Their working hours were exhaustive, and all of them were dry-haired, weak, sun-dried ... hungry. They practiced as craftsmen the "craft of arts" the architecture that surrounds the natural environment. They made the most appropriate treatment and use of the materials they encountered in their workplaces and according to local conditions and needs they planted the spontaneous architectural designs that their genius gave them, helped by the distant and glorious tradition.

### **The craftsmen**

"All their art was one word: Slowly. The slower they worked, the better the craftsmen were. They sang and whistled to be forgotten and not to hurry. They were celebrating their day off. These people were hardy mountainous populations with their minds brushed off by the lack of goods that sparingly their hometown gave them. They were housekeepers, honest in their dealings, peaceful and law-abiding.

### **The works style**

All the work of any building was made entirely by the boulder or the company. Their basic materials were stone, the mud of water, sand and lime. The necessary and useful tools are many and varied: The chisel, the hammer, the spirit, the triangle, the apron, the corner, the choke, the skeleton, the piss, the saw and the clay.

### **Bridges**

Epirus always had two fears. On the one hand the robbers and on the other the evil encounter with impassable rivers. And if for the first one he could do nothing, for the latter, he dreamed of stone bridges that had to set up on their own.

Single arc, double arches and many other bridges in Epirus, creations that are in the tradition of our place. All of them were made of stone. These bridges spread out in Greece and especially in Epirus in such a wild and barren place, exalted the Epirus landscape. The stone bridge is characterized by the variety of figures and the fiction of the folk craftsman.

The constructions and works of the craftsmen of Epirus are so many and varied, so that the phrase that they "built the world" was right. They built a brilliant bell tower in Filippiada and Dimitsana, amazing bridges, floating above the rushing rivers such as the bridge of Arta and the bridge of Plaka. In addition, the stone fountains, usually in the center of the village, the meeting place of women for pumping water or for washing the clothes.



**THE BRIDGE OF ARTA**



**THE BRIDGE OF PLAKA**

## **Our location**

Thesprotiko is a village of the municipality of Ziros in the prefecture of Preveza. The name of the village until 1927 was Lelova. Today at the 2001 census of Thesprotiko has a population of about 2,000 inhabitants. Geographically, it is the capital of the Lakka area of the prefecture of Preveza (Lakka Lelovou), which is a beautiful valley that includes the villages of Krania, Tyria, Rizovuni, Galata (Blimetiti), Zervos, Papadates, Meliana, Assos (Nassari) Nikolitsi, Elia (Dara), Platania. Traditional in Lakka Lelovou were also the villages of Stephanis, at the southern entrance of the valley and Romia in the east, as certified by their real estate properties. The valley is formed between the mountains of the Thesprotiko Mountains in the west at an altitude of 1250 meters in the east at an altitude of 1270 meters.

## **Thesprotiko village**

The name Lelova is very old with unknown origin. However, in the central church of the village Panagia Labovitissa, built in 1974 on Ali Pasha of Ioannina, there is a ceramic inscription with the year 1429 coming from the previous church that was demolished. The local tradition refers to the settlement of two smaller villages on both ends.

It is a great pilgrimage of the area, as it hosts a genuine, miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary that came from Labovo. It is dedicated to the Birth of the Virgin Mary.

## **The stone buildings in Thesprotiko**



### PANAGIA LABOVITISSA

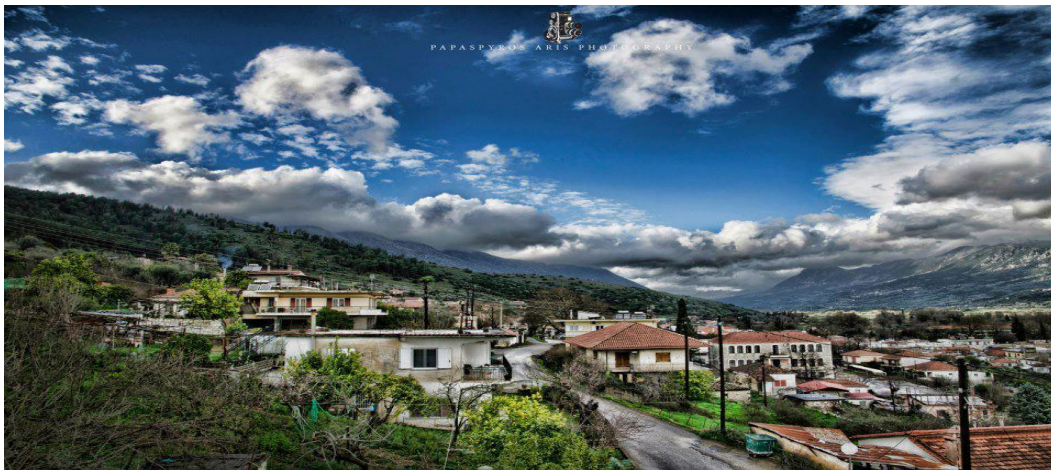
Also the Preveza Prefecture of Thesprotiko impresses with its old mansions and with its wonderful school which is traditional and built entirely with stone.



### OLD PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THESPROTIKO

In conclusion, we find that the Thesprotiko and generally various regions belonging to Epirus are characterized as areas that preserve the old tradition

and old building made of stone, as mentioned above. It is worth mentioning and suggesting that these areas deserve to be visited by every human being, since in general Epirus is a pole of attraction as long as the old building and the beauty they have.



**THESPROTIKO FROM HIGH**