

## FOLK SCULPTURE

Ismini Patta (2007)

The ancient Greek sculpture plunged, when Christianity established. Every element of the pagan world had been rejected. So, sculpture had been restricted into a pure decorative factor.

Then in post Byzantine times, sculpture material as wood, metal and stone were used strictly in the context of the folk art. Unknown craftsmen left us precious samples. They have combined artistic elements from the West, East and the folk tradition. Their dexterity is can be seen in fountains, architectural relief, decorative wall plaques on houses and churches.

Especially in the Ionian Islands, till the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, carving survived as an independent professional activity. But it is in the Cyclades that all stone- carving techniques have been preserved. Particularly, Tinos island has a long tradition in marble sculpture especially in 'intels' that they were put above the entrance of the house. The 'intels' represented the element that divided the outside world from the private space. Their function was to prevent any demonic or criminal power to come in.

On the other hand, the 'fanlights' are a separate category of intels, very common in Tinos. They were placed over the doors or the windows following the shape of a perforated relief arch . Practically, they allowed light to reach the inside. They have been decorated with various depictions.

A good example of folk sculpture made just before the appearance of the academic sculpture after the liberation of the Greek state in 19<sup>th</sup> century, is the wind mill made by Chazantonis Lytras –father of the painter Nikiforos Lytras, in 1837. Today their profession declines constantly. Should the state provide them a subvention?

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(Target market: ‘ The voice of Pireus’)