

Application
to Extend the area of the
LESVOS PETRIFIED FOREST-EUROPEAN and GLOBAL GEOPARK
and the recognition of the LESVOS ISLAND GEOPARK
for membership in the **European Geoparks Network**

**MONUMENTS &
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES**



LESVOS – GREECE
2011

PREHISTORIC, CLASSICAL and ROMAN PERIOD

The settlement of Thermi

The prehistoric settlement of Thermi was identified and excavated by Winifred Lamb in the period 1929 – 1933. During 2004-2008 the settlement was further excavated.

It is located on the east coast of the island 12 Km away from the coast of Asia Minor. This position made it the most important port of the island at that time (the port which could not be revealed as due to the erosion it has been washed away). The plain of Thermi is the most fertile of the island. The settlement was founded on a low hill between two streams, around 3000 BC and flourished during the third millennium BC.

The settlement is divided into 5 building phases and it is one of the best researched settlements in the NE Aegean.



View of the prehistoric settlement of Thermi

Kaloktistos wall

The site has not been excavated and there is not enough evidence available concerning its history. The well-built ("kaloktistos") retaining wall, constructed in the so-called Lesbian masonry is dated to the Archaic period. Today it is visible up to the height of around ca.3 m. The area was declared an archaeological site in 1960, 1991 and 1992, and more specifically, the fortification wall was declared in 1964 and a group of retaining walls near Kaloktistos, in 1962.

(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



The well-built ("kaloktistos") retaining wall

Archaeological site of Nicomedia Street

The excavations in this site brought to light part of a large Roman building with several rooms arranged around an impluvium (atrium). West of the Roman building, part of the late classical wall of the fourth century BC was revealed. This fortification wall protected the city from the north. It is connected with the northern port and the respective port facilities. In the region have been revealed significant port facilities, serving the commercial and passenger traffic of the ancient harbour as well as public buildings, well constructed tunnels and the entrance of the channel of Euripus.

In the third and second century BC the area was the location for the handicrafts such as ceramics and terracottas (manufacture clay figurines). The use of this site was continuous from the 7th century BC up to 350 AD. In the 19th century it was used as a Turkish cemetery.



The archaeological site of Nicomedia Street

Temple of Cybele

The site is located in Achilleos Street. At the south-western part of the site, walls and pipes of a roman building were identified, many of which incorporate architectural stone parts of older buildings. In the central part of the site a vaulted building was identified, having a width of 5.50 m and a length of approximately 8.30 m.

The building dates to the Classical and Hellenistic period.

It was destroyed by fire. In the same area four wells were identified with classical and Hellenistic pottery parts inside.

To the west of the site and at a deeper level, it was revealed an early archaic arched building protected by a strong wall, built with the lesbian



The Temple of Cybele

technique. Given the findings and particularly those of the marble statue of the goddess Cybele with a lion on her knees, it was identified as the sanctuary of the goddess. We know from sources that such a temple was built in the ancient wall, east of the Euripus channel.

Euripus channel (Ermou Street)

Euripus was the water channel, which connected in ancient times the two ports of the city, the Southern or also called as Triirikos and the Northern Port, that was also called Megas, Malois or Emporikos (Commercial). The Euripus separated the so-called "island" from the mainland. "Island" was called the area including the Castle and part of the town east of Ermou Street .

Euripus had a length of 780 meters and a width of about 30. It was a natural fortress and the core of the city around of which were built the most important public and worship buildings. The expansion of the city west of Euripus, towards the hill of Agia Kyriaki took place approximately during the late Classical period [380-330 BC]. Communication between the two parts of the city was with bridges made of white marble. Euripus was covered during the Middle Ages and later replaced from the town market. Nevertheless it preserves its importance until today, as it is the axis of religious and economic life of modern Mytilini.

Euripus survived in the minds of people through the history of the old man named Faonos who was transporting with his boat passengers who wanted to cross the sea passage. The goddess Venus, transformed to a poor old woman, asked him to transfer her with his boat. He did so selflessly and the Goddess, as a reward, transformed him into a young and handsome man.



The ancient port edge

Northern port

The northern port of Mytilini was the largest port of the ancient city and served the commercial and passenger traffic, linking the rich city with all ports of the Mediterranean and the opposite coast. It is known by the name Northern Harbour, Great, Malois, because of the Sanctuary of Apollo Maloen that existed in the region. Later it was named Port of St. George, and today it is known as the port of Epáno Skála.

According to the ancient writers Xenophon and Thucydides the basic structure dates to the years of the Peloponnesian War, ie between 428 and 406 BC. The objective for its construction was to defend the city. At that time the port was expanded and replaced the smaller inner breakwater.

The port is defined by two breakwaters, the first located at the castle side, has a length of 250 meters and a width of 7.50 meters and the second has a length of approximately 100 meters. The entrance of the harbor is estimated at approximately 100 meters.

The breakwater was constructed of massive blocks. In the northern arm are gaps every 38 m for the free movement of the sea waves.

In 1373, during the Gatelouso times, a tower with the name of Loranta existed at the entrance of the harbor. The tower was captured in 1462 by the Ottomans and survived until the 18th century.



The ancient northern port of Mytilini

Theatre of Mytilini

The first architectural phase of the theatre is dated to the early Hellenistic period, as is suggested by the figurines and architectural parts which were found either in situ or as spolia used in the masonry of the castle. The theatre was remodelled in the late Roman period. The horseshoe-shaped cavea would have a capacity of about 10.000 people. Plutarch, in the life of Pompeius (Pompeius, 42) informs us that the Roman general admired the theatre of Mytilene and reproduced its plan in the theatre that he built in Rome in 55 B.C.

The first excavations on the site were carried out in 1928 by D. Evangelides, who resumed the investigation in 1958, especially in the area of the orchestra and the skene. The site was cleared and drawn by Vassileios Petrakos in 1967.

In 1968, the Ephor of Antiquities V. Petrakos undertook the reconstruction of the peripheral wall of the orchestra and the restoration of the two rooms to the west of the orchestra.

The last architectural phase of the theatre, dated to the Roman period, is the one seen today. The circular orchestra has a diameter of ca. 24.20 m. and is separated from the cavea, now completely ruined, by a wall with marble orthostates. The skene is divided by three corridors; in the middle corridor a built drainage channel was uncovered. Two rooms, quarried out in the rock of the cavea, were found to the west of the orchestra.

(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



The ancient theatre of Mytilini

Hellenistic Gallery-Seaside Wall

In the frames of the construction of Mytilini's new City Hall in Epano Skala, extensive excavations revealed in 2000 a Hellenistic gallery and a bath of younger age. The initial discovery of this important building was done in 1928 by Dimitri Evangelidis.

The gallery has a rectangular shape, oriented EW. It has been almost completely revealed reaching a length of 87 meters and a width of 16 meters. Its eastern edge was not found as it continues beneath a modern building. The gallery is limited by the southern and northern walls, which are made from local quarry blocks following the isodomic construction system. The northern wall, which is identical to the seaside wall, is very strong, as its outer sides were built with blocks while the interior was built of limestone and small irregular stones. Inside the building there was a colonnade supporting the roof. Square shaped foundations held 20 octagonal columns with spacing 3.15 m. The gallery, on the basis of architectural elements, is Doric. In later times, over a part of the gallery a rectangular bath with six rooms and ducts was constructed. The use of the gallery was probably for trade, as it was in the heart of the commercial port of the ancient city.



The Hellenistic Gallery-Seaside Wall

Fish-tank of Mytilini

The construction of the fish-tank has external dimensions 6.60 X5,50 m. The walls have a width of 0.65 m and today they are retained up to a height of 2.18 m. For the construction of the inner sides regular rectangular blocks were used , while outside the walls are supported by strong constructions, consisting of atones and strong hydraulic mortar.

A pipeline was used for transporting the sea water into the tank. At regular intervals notched grooves are visible, to which vertical metal barriers were adjusted. Large rectangular holes would serve to breed fish or solidifying the dams.

At a later period after the abandonment of its original use, the tank was filled with soil, sand and mainly pottery dating from the late second century BC to the 2nd century AD.

Inside the tank were identified dozens of vessels, that were left inside after the abandonment of its original use and are related to serving of food, and wine, the preparing and storing of food, and the lighting of the ancient houses during a symposium.

Vessels, such as jugs, plates, bowls, bottles, mini-bowls, lamps, small amphorae, pans, craters, amphorae, brazier, and other kitchenware complete our knowledge of the pottery of Lesbos providing valuable information about how the food was served and the utensils for preparing food during the Roman period. After it was not used as a tank it was rebuilt to be used as an H-shaped propyl.



The Fish-tank of Mytilini

Messon temple

In the area "Messa", where the settlement Messa is also situated, 9km southeast of Agia Paraskevi and just 800 meters away from the National Road (direction Mytilene), the ruins of an important Temple have been discovered. The temple, which housed the "Common of the Lesbian cities", dates back to 4th century BC, was dedicated to the Aeolian trinity of Zeus, Hera and Dionysus. It is a temple of Ionic order, with eight columns, unique in the Greek territory. The name of the temple comes from the ancient name "to Messon" (the Middle), which denoted the center of the island. Its central position is what made it to become the

holly center of worship in the whole island of Lesbos. This was the place where, every year, common celebrations of all residents of Lesbos took place and more specifically the worship of Hera, which was the protector of all Aeolic generations. To honor her, a beauty pageant was organized where Lesbian women, wearing chlamyses, competed in beauty.

During Christian ages, the temple was converted to an old Christian cemetery Basilica, while in the late Byzantine years, a smaller temple dedicated to Taxiarchi (Archangel Michael) was built. Through the centuries, the little church turned to ruins, but the worship of Taxiarchis continues even today, on the ruins of the old Temple. All works for the emergence and renovation of the temple, carried out by “K’ Unit of Prehistoric and Classic Antiquities”, were completed in 2005, and today, one can visit a museum, where architectural parts of the temple are on display, as well as an outdoor theatre. The archeological site remains open daily, except for Monday, during the entire year.



The Messon temple

Klopedi sanctuary

The Klopedi sanctuary is a characteristic example of Lesbian Archaic architecture. It lies on the top of a high plateau to the west of the modern town of Aghia Paraskevi. The deity to which it was dedicated has not been identified. Excavations have partly uncovered the remains of two Archaic temples but later occupation has not been attested, as the site has not been systematically excavated. In the Second World War and especially in the following years, the area suffered severe damage.

The excavations at Klopedi were begun in 1920 by D. Evangelides and continued in 1971. During these two campaigns, the ruins of two temples were partly uncovered but the monuments were again buried in order to be better preserved. In October 1993, the 20th Ephorate carried out salvage excavations to uncover the architectural remains, so that they could be photographed and drawn. In 1992 a guardhouse and a storeroom were constructed at the archaeological site, and in 1993 extensive clearing was undertaken, along with the rescue excavations.



The Clopedi sanctuary

The most important monuments of the site are: 1. **Remains of an Archaic temple** (21.70 x 18.40 m). Parts of the foundation of the crepis and the two lower steps of the stereobate have been revealed. 2. **Archaic temple**. At a distance of 13 m. lies the the second structure, which was built of trachite and had the typical dimensions of an Archaic temple (37.50 x 16.25 m.). It is a large peripteral temple, oriented E-W, facing to the east, with a pteron of 46 columns in total. Of the building are preserved only the three-stepped crepis, the walls

of the sekos and a pedestal, probably of an altar. The tall and slim, unfluted columns and the peculiar Aeolic capitals are the characteristic feature of the structure .

According to evidence and the excavations that took place, the temple went through four building phases before taking its final form, at around mid 6th century BC, when 46 Aeolic columns were placed in an external colonnade around it. The columns are not grooved, standing on a circular base and they lead to a uniform molded cap ("echinus") from where sprung the Aeolic capital. The aeolic capital is characterized by the two volutes that carry the abacus, while the carvings between them are considered to be influenced by the Ionic order. The divinity to which the Sanctuary was dedicated is not known.

The ancient quarry, found 1,5 km northwest of the temple, at the area Pelekanies, under mount Petsofa, is also remarkable. The stone of the temple was excavated from this quarry and even today the visitor has the chance to see broken columns, flywheels, floor plates etc.

Ancient Pyrra

Near the mouth of river Vouvari, we find the ruins of the ancient city of "Pyrra", now sunk into the sea and visible when the waters are calm, offering a breathtaking sight. Pyrra was one of the five city-states of Lesbos during antiquity. Its existence dates back to 10th-8th century BC until year 231 BC when a large earthquake destroyed the city and the tidal waves that followed sunk a part of it. The position of Pyrra was ideal. Built on a flat area over the sea, it controlled the surroundings. The wall built around it was 1,5 km long and included within its limits an area of 73 roods. There were gates at all the points where the natural paths of the steep hills led.

In the same area, the ruins of an old Christina Basilica have also been found. In the top of the hill of Pyrra, on which numerous building foundations and parts of ancient constructions are scattered, we can still see parts of the fortification of the ancient city, built according to the lesbien tradition. Close to the sea, there are still remaining parts of the ancient port, made of blocks of rocks. Life on the hill of Pyrra continued even after the destruction of the city, until the Middle Ages. The remains of this life are the three little churches (Agios Nikolaos, Agia Eudokia and Agia Foteini), whose ruins nowadays are to be found around the hill, as well as the renovated chapel of Agios Dimitirios.



The Ancient Pyrra

Roman aqueduct

The Roman aqueduct of Mytilene was probably constructed at the end of the 2nd or the beginning of the 3rd century A.D. Because of its typical classicistic elements it was considered to have been built by Hadrian. It was used to transport water from the copious springs of mount Olympos to the ancient city of Mytilene, at a distance of ca.26 km. It supplied the city with large quantities of water and its carrying capacity has been estimated at 127.000 cubic meters a day.

Part of the row of arches of the Roman aqueduct of Mytilene is visible at the site called Moria. The preserved section is 170 m. long and includes seventeen arches. Every opening is subdivided into three arches supported by a pillar and each pillar is crowned by a capital bearing a cymatium and abacus. The wall masonry is built in the "emplekton" system, with two parallel rows of stone filled with rubble. The pillars and the arcs of the arches are built of local marble.

(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



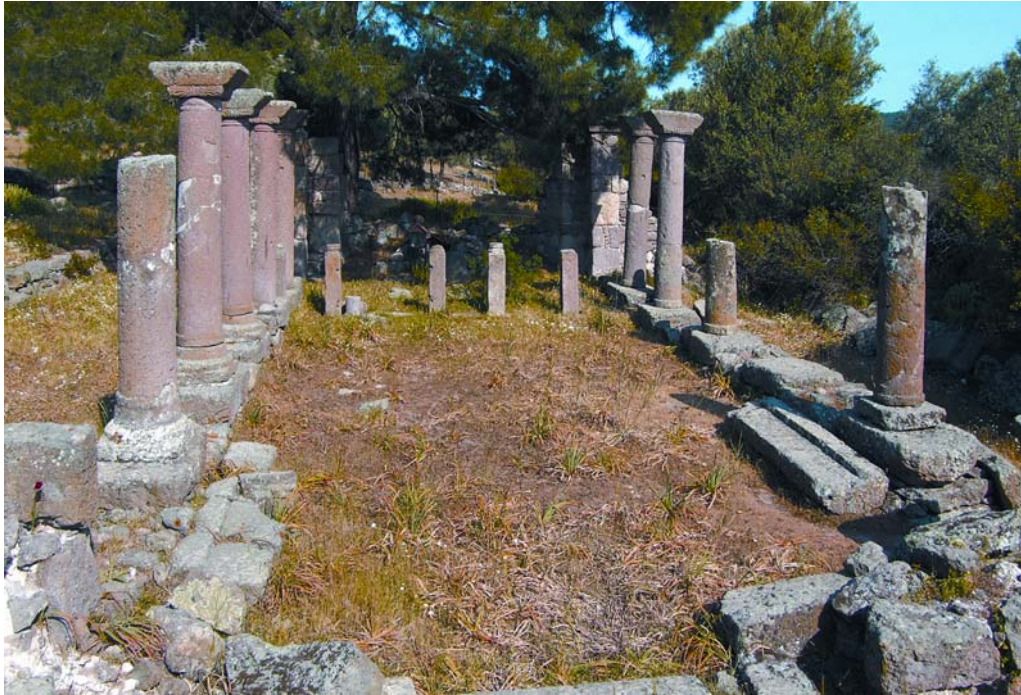
The Roman aqueduct at Moria

BYZANTINE AND POST BYZANTINE PERIOD

Basilica of Chalinados (Agia Paraskevi)

The remains of this Early-Christian basilica can be found along the main road that connects Ag. Paraskevi with Komi and Pigi. It is believed that this church constituted the nave of a small monastery and dates in the second half of the 6th century A.D.

(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



The remains of this Early-Christian basilica of Chalinados at Agia Paraskevi

Castle of Mytilene

Occupying the northwest part of a peninsula (former islet) is considered to be one of the biggest castles of The Mediterranean Sea.



The Castle of Mytilini

At the time of Justinian (6th century), a solid fortress of significant size was constructed on the summit of the peninsula. Francesco I Gattelusio (1355-1384) made significant additions to the main Byzantine kernel of the Castle. In 1462, the Turks conquered Mytilene and made several additions on the Castle.

The Castle is divided in 3 parts: the upper part, which occupies the higher part of the peninsula, the middle part, with the remains of many Turkish buildings, and the lower part, which is entirely a Turkish addition.

On 8 November 1912, the Greek fleet liberated Mytilene and the Greek flag was raised in the Castle.

(14th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities)

Fortress of Mithimna

It was founded during the Byzantine Period over the ruins of the ancient fortification, which are visible on the south moat. In 1128 it was conquered by the Venetians and from 1204 until 1287, it was occupied by Baldwin II of Flandre. At the end of the 13th century the fortress passed into the hands of the Catalans. In 1373, Genoese Francisco I Gateluzo reconstructed it. By 1462, it was under Turkish occupation. Its current form is a result of the Ottoman additions and repairs of the 15th and 17th centuries.

This is the second largest Castle on the island that crowns impressively the settlement of Molyvos.



The Fortress of Mithimna

(14th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities)

Castle of Sigrí

It was built on 1757 by the Ottoman fleet admiral, Souleiman Passa, in order to protect this significant port from the piracy. During the Ottoman occupation, it constituted the center of the small town, around which the settlement was developed. It is small dimensioned, with a square ground plan and square bastions in each corner. It is decorated with a blunt arch, typical of the Arabian architectural style.



The Sigrí Castle

(14th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities)

The Dragon's jump

The Dragon's jump (Tou Drakou to Pidima) is a geomorphologic formation created on volcanic rock. Its form led it to be used as a fortress ever since ancient times. It is situated in a distance of about 1.300m northeast of Napi and 200m from the road Napi-Mantamados, from where it looks spectacular.



The Dragon's jump (Tou Drakou to Pidima)

The fortress, according to I. Kontis, is situated on the mountains, between old Arisvaia and old Mithimnaia, and it is hard to define whether it belonged to the one or the other city. What is also hard to explain is the presence of some fortifications found in the inner island, since researchers cannot explain their purpose of existence.

One of these is the “Dragon’s Jump”, which probably takes its name from the long distance in between rocks.

It is most probably a small fortress aimed to host some kind of guard, without ruling out the possibility that it was used as an observatory to serve the telecommunication needs of its time. Its view however amplifies the view that was actually a fortress and that its main purpose was to protect the city. Characteristic examples of lesbian architecture are found on the feet of the bigger rock, where there are parts of wall constructed in this specific manner.

Kremasti bridge

The medieval arch bridge of Kremasti (“Gefiri tis Kremastis”), under which runs river Tsiknias, also remains intact. The bridge was built by the Gatelouzi during the Venice Occupation of Lesbos (1355-1462) for military purposes (road connection with the castle of Mithymna and transfer of supplies to the observation tower in Lepetimnos) as well as for commercial reasons. The legend has it that the wife of the master builder was built inside the bridge.



The kremasti bridge

OTTOMAN PERIOD

Yeni Çami in Mytilene

Built on ca.1825 from Moustafa Aga Kouloxizi, this is the biggest and most recent mosque of Mytilene, located in the center of the ex Turkish agora. The whole building is made of stone, roofed with a dome, covered with tiles combining byzantine and ottoman stylistic elements. Its Mihrab is particularly impressive.

Since February 2000 restoration works have begun thanks to the remodeling and promotion of Mytilene's historical center, which had been carried out by the Municipality of Mytilene under the supervision of the 14th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities. The monument is now given to the public.



The Yeni Djami

(14th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities)

Valide Djami (Mytillini)

It is situated at Epano Skala, the old Turkish quarter of the city. The inscription plate mentions that the mosque was built in 1615 and thus it constitutes one of the oldest Islamic temples in Mytilene. It is built with stones and has one storey. A marble staircase (with three steps) led to the front yard that was paved with stones. In the middle of the front yard there was a multilateral fountain made of white marble and decorated with engraved arabesques. In its interior, the roof bore colourful decoration, which -after the Turks withdrawal - was covered with brown colour. The ornamentation of Mihrab (almost 6m high) was made of plaster.

(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



The Valide Djami

Çarsi Hamam in Mytilene

The Çarsi Hamam is part of the complex of the adjacent Yeni mosque, located in the center of the market of the ottoman neighborhood Asize. The building follows the conventional design of bath houses, its internal spaces divided into three, developed in a linear arrangement directing gradually from the cold room to the hot.



The Çarsi Hamam in Mytilene

This type exists since the ancient times and Roman baths. In the ottoman urban architecture, which continues the Byzantine urban habits, public baths were the place of welcoming strangers in the town. The baths were enrolled in the social and religious frame of Islam. Since February 2000 restoration and consolidation of Çarsi Hamam began by the Municipality of Mytilene under the supervision of the 14th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities. The monument was totally restored and given to the public (2001).

(14th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities)

The Mansion of Varelzidaina in Petra

Built in the late 18th - early 19th century, it consists one of the few surviving examples of a traditional mansion on Lesvos. Its architectural form is common in the Balkan area. It was clearly influenced by the fortified tower - structures with a stone ground floor and the lightweight upper structure. Significant features of the interior decoration include wall paintings with scenes of coastal cities, palmettes, garlands of flowers etc. and richly decorated wooden ceilings.

A fine example of the urban architecture of the late Ottoman period on Lesvos, which functions as a monument open to the public.



The Mansion of Varelzidaina in Petra

(14th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities)

THE 19th-20th CENTURY

Courthouse of Mytilini-Turkish High School

Following the flowering of literature in Lesvos during the second half of the 19th century, the Turkish Administration proceeded with the construction of the Turkish school of Intantie, at the area of Kioski, opposite of the Headquarters of the Ottoman Empire on the island.

The architecture was based on an oriental idiom style known as “Second Empire”, to be found in the standards established by the Turkish government for the public buildings of the provincial cities of its territory.

The administrative buildings built at this time were the New Governor, the City Hall, the Customs and others.



The Courthouse of Mytilini - Turkish High School

Ministry of the Aegean

The building was constructed in 1893 as the seat of the Turkish governor. It was used as orphanage for boys and then as the Ministry of the Aegean. Now hosts the General Secretariat of of the Aegean and Island policy.

Along with the palace of the Pasha Ampetin Dino, is the only building that was built in the palate of the Castle, which was the military's control center of the island during the Ottoman empire. The governor apparently replaced the old Konaki, destroyed by the great fire that leveled the city in 1851.



City Hall of Mytilini

The two-storied eclectic style building with the profound neoclassical elements was built in 1900 by the City which financed it to house its offices. Located at the city's quay, housed the city's services for many years. Today, the first floor hosts the City Council Assembly and a ceremonial hall, while the ground-floor houses the Library and halls for some of the City's cultural activities.

(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



The City Hall of Mytilini

Region of North Aegean Building

This two-storied impressive neoclassical building of the early 20th century dominates the center-most spot of the city. The building has a strict symmetry at the openings of its facets. It was initially built to house the City Hall's offices. Today hosts the Region's General Secretary office and the offices of the Regional Administration.

(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



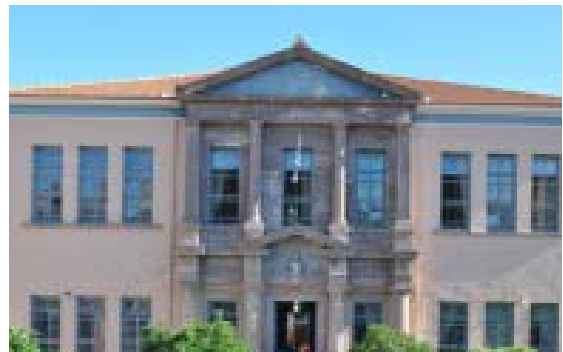
The North Aegean Region Building

Mytilini's Boarding School for Girls

It is a building of rectangular profile with a firm symmetry at the openings on both floors. Great emphasis is given to the main entrance's decorations of stone-made neoclassical elements (pediments, columns, lintels, etc.). Particularly interesting is also the big wooden staircase inside.

The building is located inside the city's historical center. Its construction was financed by the local benefactor, Z.Vournazos, but the architect's name remains unknown. The construction was completed in 1899 and since the building was inaugurated it has been serving as a school.

(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



Mytilini's Boarding School for Girls

First Gymnasium of Mytilini

It is an impressive building of neoclassical architecture and a rectangular "U" ground-plan shape. It is three-story high and consists of the basement (auxiliary spaces), the ground-floor (classrooms) and the first floor (library and ceremonial room). The facade is covered by white marble.

It was built between 1888 and 1890 by Argyris Adalis, a local architect, who had also worked as assistant to the German architects, Hansen and Ziller. Its construction was financed by the island's benefactors, M.Mitrelias and Z.Vournazos. In 1912 it was used by the Greek liberating army. It is located in the center of the city and is a touchstone for the local society.

(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



The First Gymnasium of Mytilini

School at Agia Paraskevi

The school building of neoclassical architecture of the early 20th century (1922-30?s) has a rectangular "U" ground-plan shape and shows a perfect symmetry at its openings. The formation of the school-yard area is also very significant.

The construction of the school building, one of the most attractive on the island, was financed with revenues of the town's oil-press.
(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)



The School at Agia Paraskevi

Multi-Cultural Centre at Polichnitos

This rectangular building is a characteristic example of the industrial architecture of Lesbos island -and most specifically of the area of Polychnitos- as it stands with its stone slovelikia that decorate every opening on the facets.
(<http://odysseus.culture.gr/>)