

***Wood-carved church-screens in Cyprus of the period of Ottoman rule (1571-1878)***

Marina Kyriakidou

We aim at tracing, recording, plotting and studying (via comparison, evaluation, dating) the “Wood-Carved *Templa* of Cyprus during the Turkish Occupation (1571-1878)”, which up to this day, have not been studied in a methodical or comprehensive manner. We have located about 100 woodcarvings and their fragments (Sanctuary Doors, Crucifixes at the top of the iconostasis flanked by Theotokos and John the Evangelist [the so-called *lypera*]) which date back from the 16th century to 1878. No works have been traced back to the first 50 years of the Turkish Occupation (1571-1620). The 17th century *templa* follow the structure and adornment of the 16th century *templa*, with some minor variations, are to be found mostly in churches of villages or monasteries on the mountainous or semi-mountainous Cyprus and contain few inscriptions that have survived. More 18th century - especially of the second half - *templa* have been found. Much information regarding their painters, woodcarvers, the prelates, etc is derived from the inscriptions written or incised on the woodcarvings. Most of the *templa* that were constructed during the abovementioned century follow the standards of the 17th century and mainly belong to village churches. From the middle of the century a new type of *templa*, now in a baroque style, is also found in town churches and monasteries both in Cyprus and Greece. It is characterized by a more complex structure and rich and impressive decoration. A new, simple type of temple, with printed decoration and without gilding also emerges in the same period. The production of wood-carved *templa* continues through the 19th century with a 30-year interruption (1821-1851) due to the Greek War of Independence, during which we observe the construction of isolated parts but not of integral works. Only a small number of *templa* follow the standards of the 17th century, whilst most are constructed according to the new model which emerged in the mid-18th century, with some minor variations. One *templon* has been found to follow generally the simple type of the 18th century. Nineteenth century *templa* adorn mostly churches in villages and towns, while very few adorn monasteries.