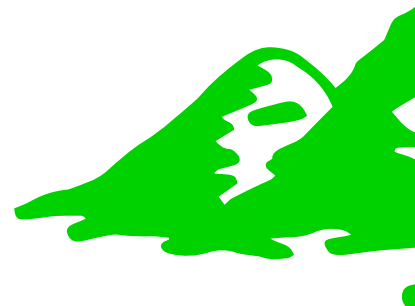


BACKGROUND

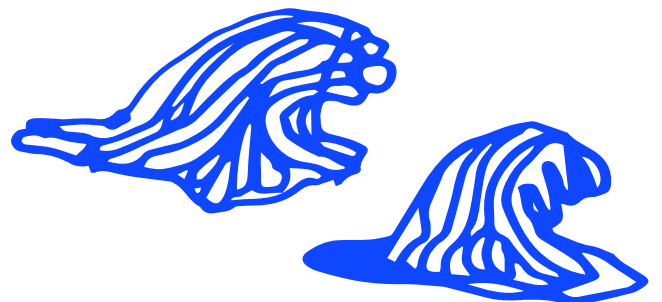
Thesprotia, a rugged and mountainous region in Epirus, Greece, consists of many settlements and small villages. While suffering shrinkage, they show a variety of self-organized initiatives and social encounters created mostly by women. These practices provide post-growth imaginaries through various levels of organizing and producing, sharing multiple resources, and gathering a community around them, by re-using abandoned public infrastructure and creating open kitchens. Central to these efforts is acknowledging water's crucial role both as a community resource and a fundamental part of the local mythological and natural landscapes.





CONCEPT

The **GRRR WATERLANDSCAPES** workshop takes place in Thesprotia, an area of dispersed pastoral communities, mythical topologies and rough topography. Over the course of a week, participants will have the opportunity to delve into the water landscapes of the area, gaining insights into its mythological importance as well as exploring its political and social implications. The workshop is structured around three overlapping scales of work and research:



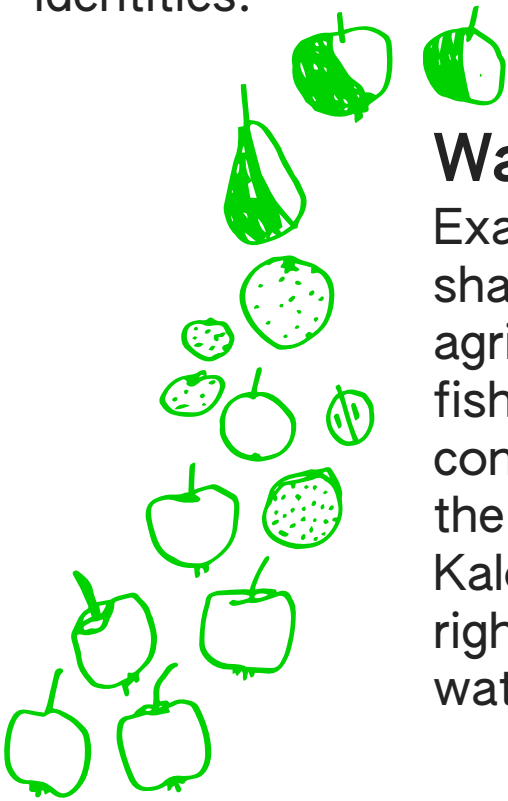
Mythological Waterways

On a regional scale, delving into the history of Acherousia Lake, Acherontas River, and Styx Lagoon, revealing water's deep-rooted place in the region's mythology and cultural identities.



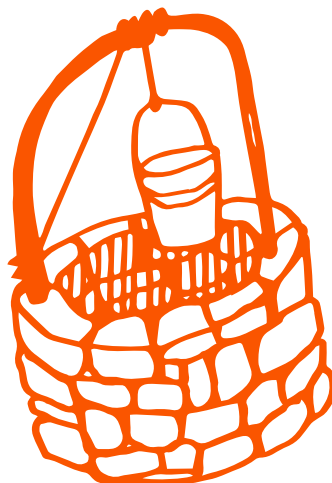
Water as a Lifeline

Examining water's role in shaping the region's economy, agriculture, husbandry, and fishing, and addressing contemporary issues such as the political dynamics around Kalodiki lake and coastal water rights. Who has access to water?



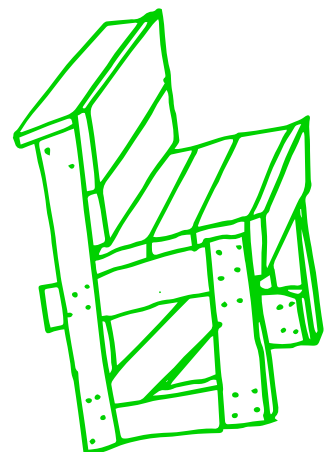
Water as a Co-living Infrastructure

Investigating the role of water in shaping communal living spaces, particularly through revitalizing an old school building with the design and construction of a communal kitchen and the implementation of effective water management solutions.

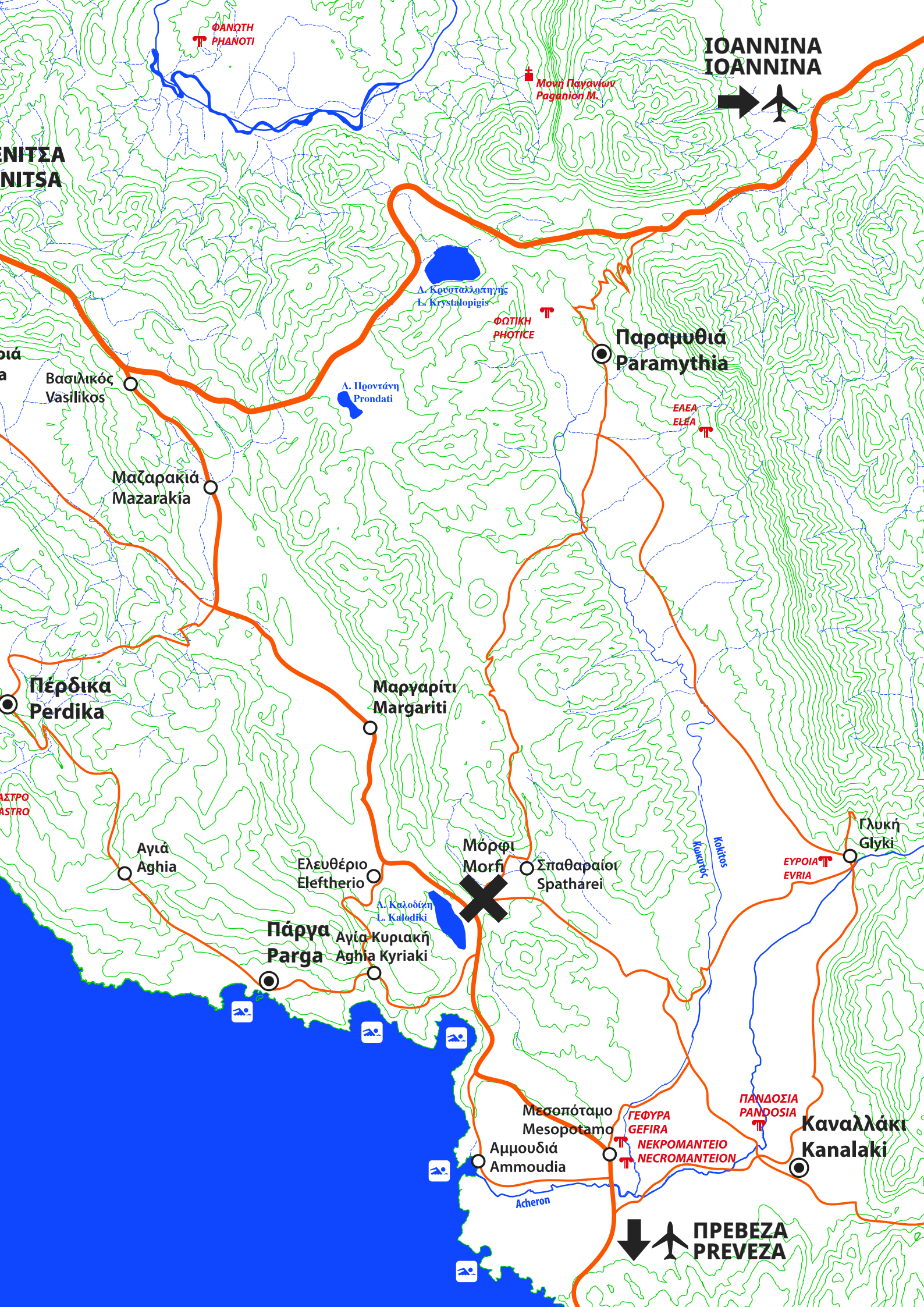




The workshop will include different forms and formats both tangible and intangible such as recovering mythological routes, taking care of neglected infrastructures, and mapping places of biodiversity through local legends and myths. Places like Kalodiki Lake, Morfeas Cave, or the Stinx Lagoon would be some of the places where the participants would engage with Greek mythology and territorial development, learning by doing. We would focus on entangled relations, multiple scales, and interactions, using an ecosystemic approach where drawing a map, writing an article, preparing a meal or building a kitchen is equally significant.







ΝΙΤΣΑ
NITSA

ΙΟΑΝΝΙΝΑ
IOANNINA



ΦΑΝΟΤΗ
PHANOTI

Μονή Παγώνιον
Pagonion M.

Λ. Κρυσταλλοπηγής
L. Krystalopigis

ΦΩΤΙΚΗ
PHOTICE

Παραμυθία
Paramythia

Βασιλικός
Vasilikos

Λ. Προντάνη
Prondati

ΕΛΕΑ
ELEA

Μαζαρακιά
Mazarakia

Πέρδικα
Perdika

Μαργαρίτι
Margariti

ΑΣΤΡΟ
ASTRO

Αγιά
Aghia

Ελευθέριο
Eleftherio

Μόρφι
Morfi

Σπαθαράρει
Spatharei

ΕΥΡΟΙΑ
EVRIA

Γλυκή
Glyki

Πάργα
Parga

Αγία Κυριακή
Aghia Kyriaki

Λ. Καλοδένι
L. Kalodiki

Μεσοπόταμο
Mesopotamo

ΓΕΦΥΡΑ
GEFIRA

ΠΑΝΔΟΣΙΑ
PANDOSIA

Καναλλάκι
Kanalaki

Αμμουδιά
Ammoudia

ΝΕΚΡΟΜΑΝΤΕΙΟ
NECROMANTEION

Acheron

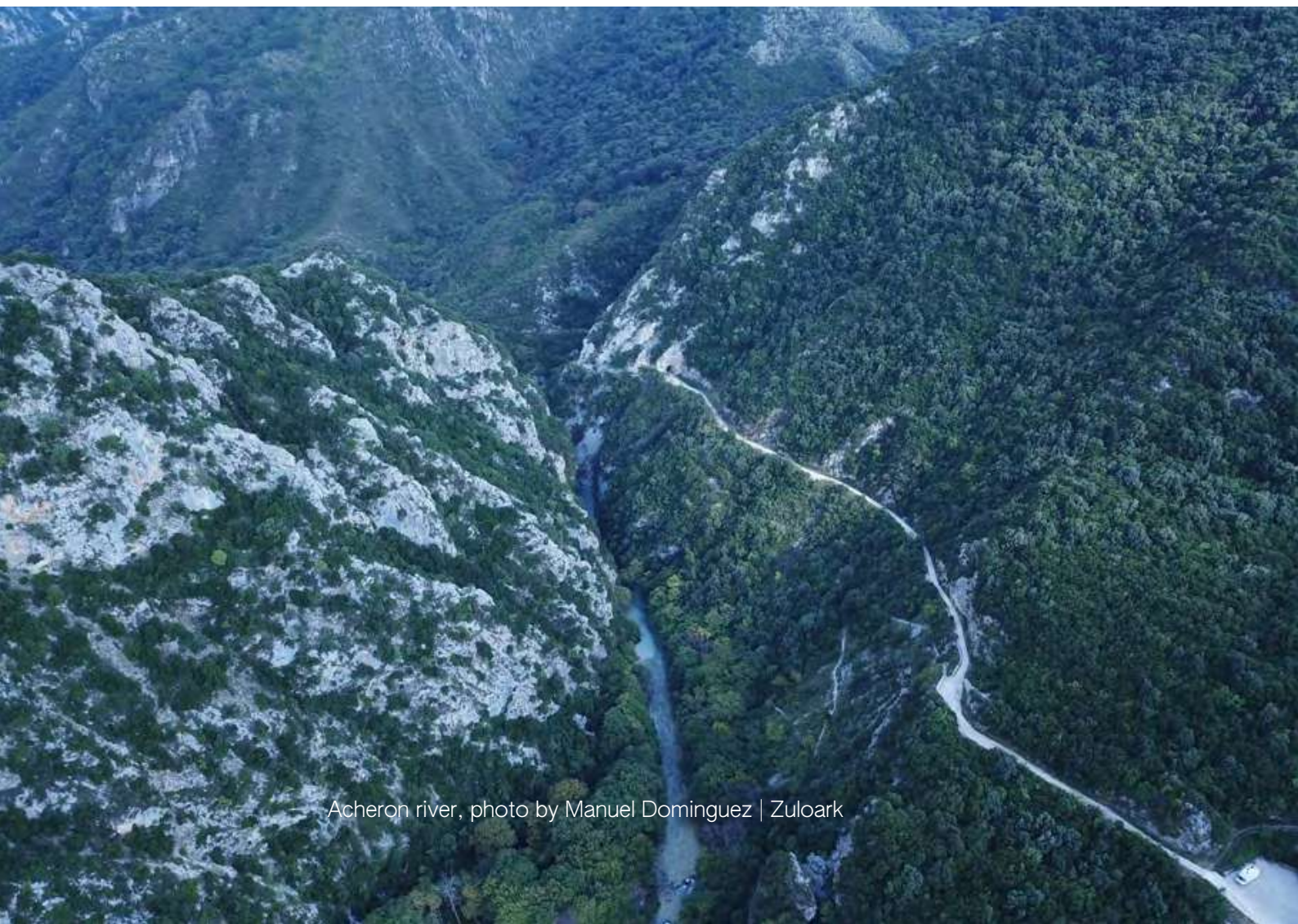
ΠΡΕΒΕΖΑ
PREVEZA



THE REGION

Thesprotia is part of the Epirus region in Northwestern Greece with a history that dates back to the late Bronze Age. Mentioned in the Epic Cycle, it is renowned as a place where Odysseus is said to have sailed and married Queen Callidice. Until the Middle Ages, the region was part of the Byzantine Empire, followed by the Ottoman Empire, until its annexation to the Greek state in 1913, marking its significance as the last area to be integrated into Greece. Parallel, the coast of Parga along with the islands of the Ionian Sea, represent a distinct historical area shaped significantly by the long Venetian rule, creating a unique cultural identity with profound Italian influences.

The wider region is rich in mythological sites, many of which are associated with elements of water, such as the rivers Acheron and Cocytus, believed to connect the living to the underworld; the potential source of the Styx fountain (and its cave); and Acherusia Lake, also known as the 'black lake', which dried up in the 1950s, giving rise to the corn valley of Fanari. Additionally, there are numerous significant archaeological sites, including the Necromanteion (Oracle of the Dead) and the ancient cities of Gitana and Ephyra.



Acheron river, photo by Manuel Dominguez | Zuloark

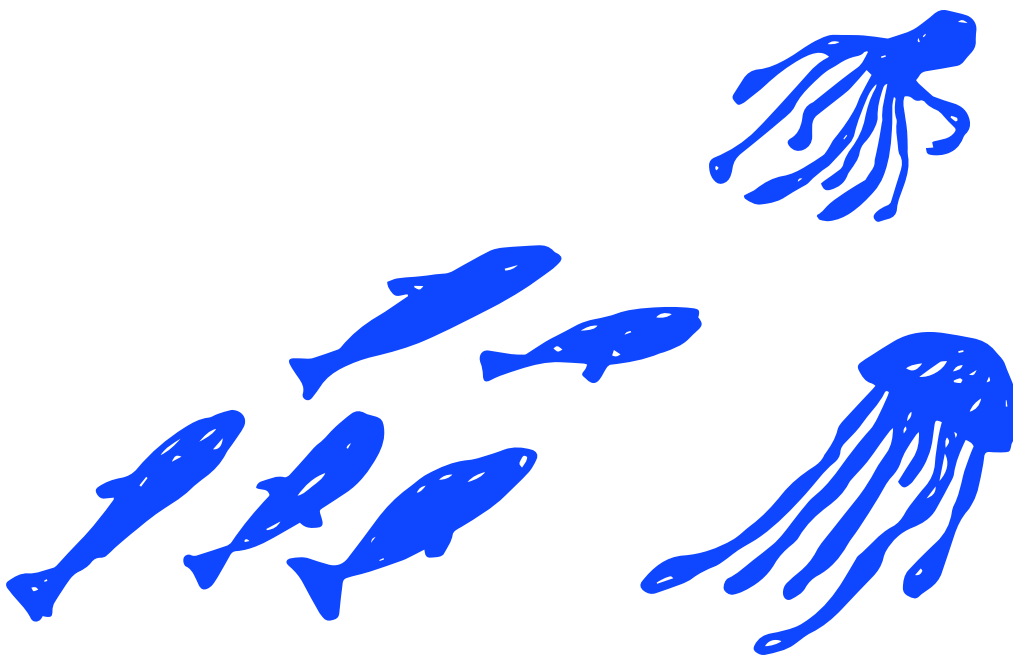


Laniolia Variety by the coast, photo by Juan Chacón | Zuloark

Thesprotia's geography, characterised by its rough topography, creates a sense of enclosure, especially in the northwest, while its coast is covered with dense olive groves (Lianolia Variety). This geographical distinction has contributed to a multicultural identity with Venetian influences along the coast contrasting with the Ottoman influence inland. Historically, the region was a blend of Christian and Muslim communities speaking an Albanian-Greek dialect that persists in several villages until today.



Margariti's old Ottoman village, photo in the local archive



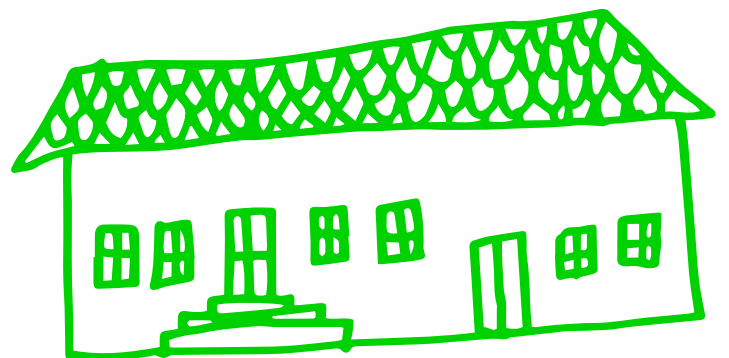
Recent decades have seen a sharp contrast between the heavily tourist-developed coast, lacking environmental protections, and the depopulating interior villages, where the population has almost halved in the last three decades. The 1990s witnessed significant migration to urban centers while the coastal touristic towns (Parga, Sivota) developed rapidly and without a cohesive regional plan.

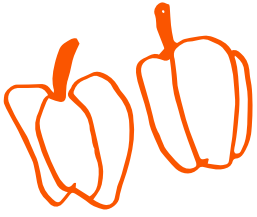


The development of Lychnos beach, photo by Manuel Domínguez | Zuloark

MORFI AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

Our workshop's activities will be centered around the village of Morfi and will be extended to the whole region, towards Acheron River and Ammoudia, the heavy touristified coast of Parga, Kalodiki lake and the surrounding villages of Eleutheri, Margariti (the local central/administrative village) and Spatharati. These locations form a triangle encompassing the natural reserve of Kalodiki Lake and a fertile valley, which historically served as the economic heartland for local communities. This area, particularly central between Morfi/Spatharati, Eleutheri, and Margariti, highlights the blend of natural and agricultural heritage that has defined the region's way of life.





The valley and its surroundings, once thriving from the 1950s to the 1970s with crops such as corn, lentils, beans, and notably, the region's famous melons, began to face decline in the 1980s. This downturn was primarily due to unsuccessful attempts at land consolidation and the implementation of inadequate water irrigation systems by the government. The impact of these changes has been profound, marking a significant shift in the local agricultural practices and economic stability.

A key aspect of our workshop will focus around the biotope of Kalodiki lake, which has significantly deteriorated due to human actions and climate change over the last few decades. The lake has been particularly impacted by the excessive extraction of water to meet the demands of the nearby town of Parga, alongside the adverse effects of global climate shifts. By exploring the biotope's challenges and the historical economic shifts in the valley, we aim to gain a deeper understanding of how human activities, government decisions, and the need for environmental sustainability interact in this region.



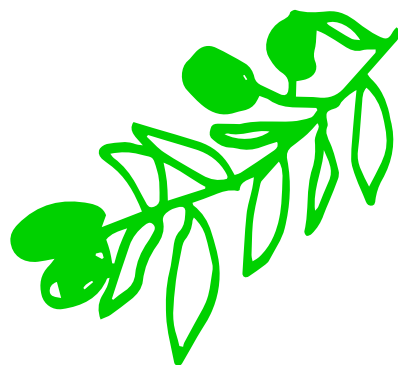
Kalodiki Lake - Spring 2020, photo by Christina Serifi | TiriLab



Kalodiki Lake - Autumn 2023, photo by Christina Serifi | TiriLab

THE COMMUNITY

In the area surrounding Kalodiki Lake, within the described surrounding villages, there exists a vibrant network of formal and informal groups, predominantly led by women. These groups have been actively organising against systemic oppression for the past thirty years. In the last five years, TiriLab has engaged with these groups, documenting their efforts, understanding their methods of organization, work, and collaboration. The role of these women, traditionally seen as caregivers within their families, has expanded into a format of care for their community. They play a central role in planning the local summer festivities, known as panigiria, and launching various initiatives that range from traditional folklore dancing to plastic recycling within the region. In many cases, they provide elderly with food and care.



We will be collaborating closely with two women's associations: Selimes from Eleutheri village and Kallidiki from Morfi. Both Kallidiki and Selimes have started repairing the local school buildings in their respective villages, abandoned since the 1990s, and repurposing them as spaces for their gatherings and activities. These spaces serve various community needs, including communal cooking, the preparation of local products like soaps and jams, and hosting meetings for the wider community.



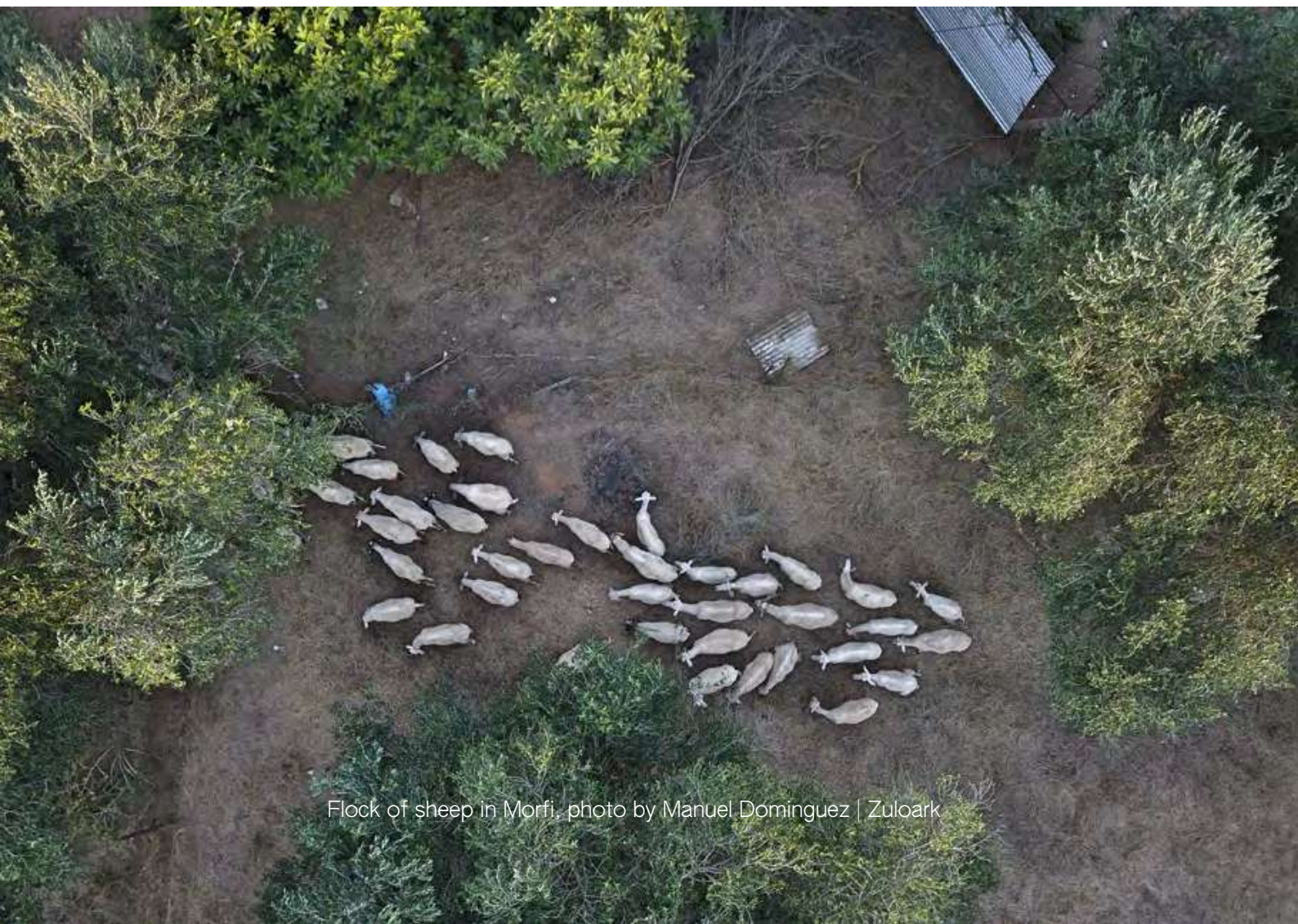
Selimes women association inside the school building in Eleutheri, photo by Juan Chacón | Zuloark



Children's folklore dancing group from Katavothra, photo by Alba Carbajo Cano

The villages around Morfi have a limited number of young people, with both the middle and high school, located in Margariti, having about 60 students in total from the surrounding villages. Margariti and Eleutheri host the local cultural associations, while the village of Katavothra, in the end of Kalodiki valley, has a children's folklore dancing group.

Economically, the residents of these villages predominantly engage in sheep and goat farming, with cattle farming being less common. The seasonal nature of employment is significant, as many young individuals take up temporary jobs in Parga during the summer tourism season, which lasts about four months. Another key aspect of the local economy is olive oil production, facilitated by the cultivation of a local olive variety.



Flock of sheep in Morfi, photo by Manuel Dominguez | Zuloark



Typical local goat barn in the area, photo by Manuel Dominguez | Zuloark

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The school building in Morfi village would be the space where we will engage with the construction, repairing and maintenance activities. Following the first workshop with students and professors from Madrid's Architecture School (ETSAM) in summer 2024 in which we opened, cleaned, and repaired the second big classroom and constructed furniture, this time we will be focusing on the construction of communal kitchen which could be used by the participants of the two ASOC workshop but also by the local community for the local panigiria. The kitchen infrastructure needs to be light and movable. At the same time we can think about the future imaginaries of the school building and ways in which it can be used by the Kalidiki association and the community around it.



Aerial photo of the school buildings in Morfi and their surrounded area

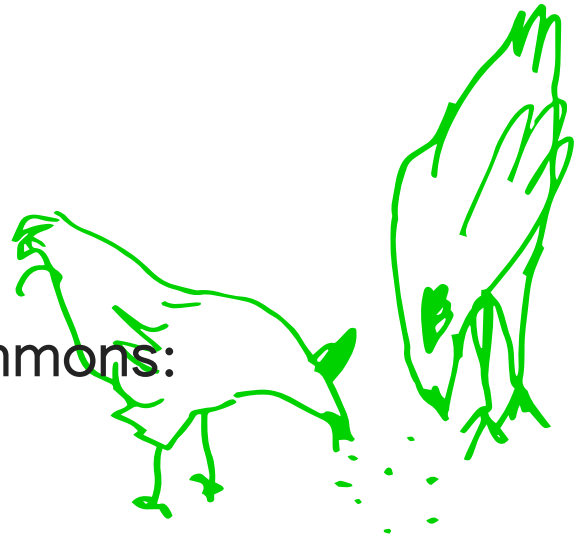
Future visions for the school building include exploring its potential uses by the Kalidiki group and the broader community. Nestled in the village center, surrounded by a green area of pine, wild pear, and morus trees, the site consists of three structures: the primary school building connected to the old municipal office, which stores local archives, and a third, now-deteriorated building that was once a kindergarten.

Our workshop will focus on building ‘wet’ infrastructures within and around the school, aiming to create spaces for large gatherings, community meetings, cooking, washing, and rainwater harvesting. This effort also prompts a reimagining of the school’s adjacent natural spaces, potentially incorporating wild gardens and shaded outdoor areas.



Current school interior. TransOikeiology workshop. photo by Christina Serifi | TiriLab

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