

# 1. Introduction

‘At the arrival of the meanest Bey of a Galliot, neither Latins nor Greeks ever dare to appear but in red caps, like the common Gally-slaves, and tremble before the pettiest officer. As soon as ever the Turks are withdrawn, the Naxian nobility resume their former haughtiness: nothing is to be seen but caps of velvet, nor to be heard of but tables of genealogy; some deduce themselves from the Paleologi or Comnenii; others from the Justiniani, the Grimaldi, the Summaripa’s...’

Joseph Pitton de Tournefort (1718, 168)

## 1.1 THE CYCLADIC CASE STUDY

The Cycladic islands (Figs 1.1 and 1.2) have always been a desirable holiday destination for most European and overseas tourists. Monuments and archaeological sites of all historical periods on the islands are accessible and generally admired, particularly those of Greco-Roman antiquity, dominating both Greeks’ and foreigners’ perception of what is *Greek* and what defines Greek culture and identity. Monuments of the Byzantine, Venetian and Ottoman eras, however, are remarkably well preserved and comprise evident markers of the most recent centuries of Cycladic history.

The large number of Late Medieval *kastra*-settlements in the Cyclades, Byzantine churches and secular buildings of Venetian and Ottoman date, all comprise important evidence for the examination of socio-economic conditions and living standards in the *Post-Roman* Aegean. Venetian aristocratic families, whose names and descendants still exist today (Summaripa, Venieri, Dellarocca, Ragoussi, Ghizi, Baffi and others) were entrusted in the early 13th century with the task of extending and developing the *Repubblica Serenissima*’s trading activities in the Aegean, Cyprus and the Levant. Most of these families (having intermarried with local populations) still retain the memory of their noble rank and tell the stories of their ancestors’ deeds.

The incorporation of the Cyclades into the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the 16th century started to blur the picture of Late Medieval daily material life. Post-Medieval humble domestic architecture in Cycladic towns and tower-houses in villages and the countryside, notarial deeds, dowry documents and foreign travellers’ accounts and drawings offer ample evidence for investigating commercial activities, daily life and socio-cultural identity.

It is the combination of the aforementioned material remains and related socio-historical factors that made me write this book, in order to provide ‘an archaeology’ of the period, and unravel the story of island material life in the pre-Modern Cyclades.

More specifically, this monograph examines the *built environment* and the *domestic material culture* of the Cyclades islands in the Aegean, from the Venetian era, through the years of Ottoman domination and the Early Modern period (13th-20th centuries AD). The aim is the reconstruction of everyday domestic life in towns and villages, the identification of socio-cultural identities that shaped or were reflected on pre-Modern material remains, and the history of island landscapes through the study of certain aspects of material culture. The term ‘material culture’ here refers to island settlement layout (fortified settlements-*kastra* and undefended nucleated villages), domestic buildings (housing of urban character, peasant housing and farmsteads), ceramics (locally produced and imported glazed tableware), internal

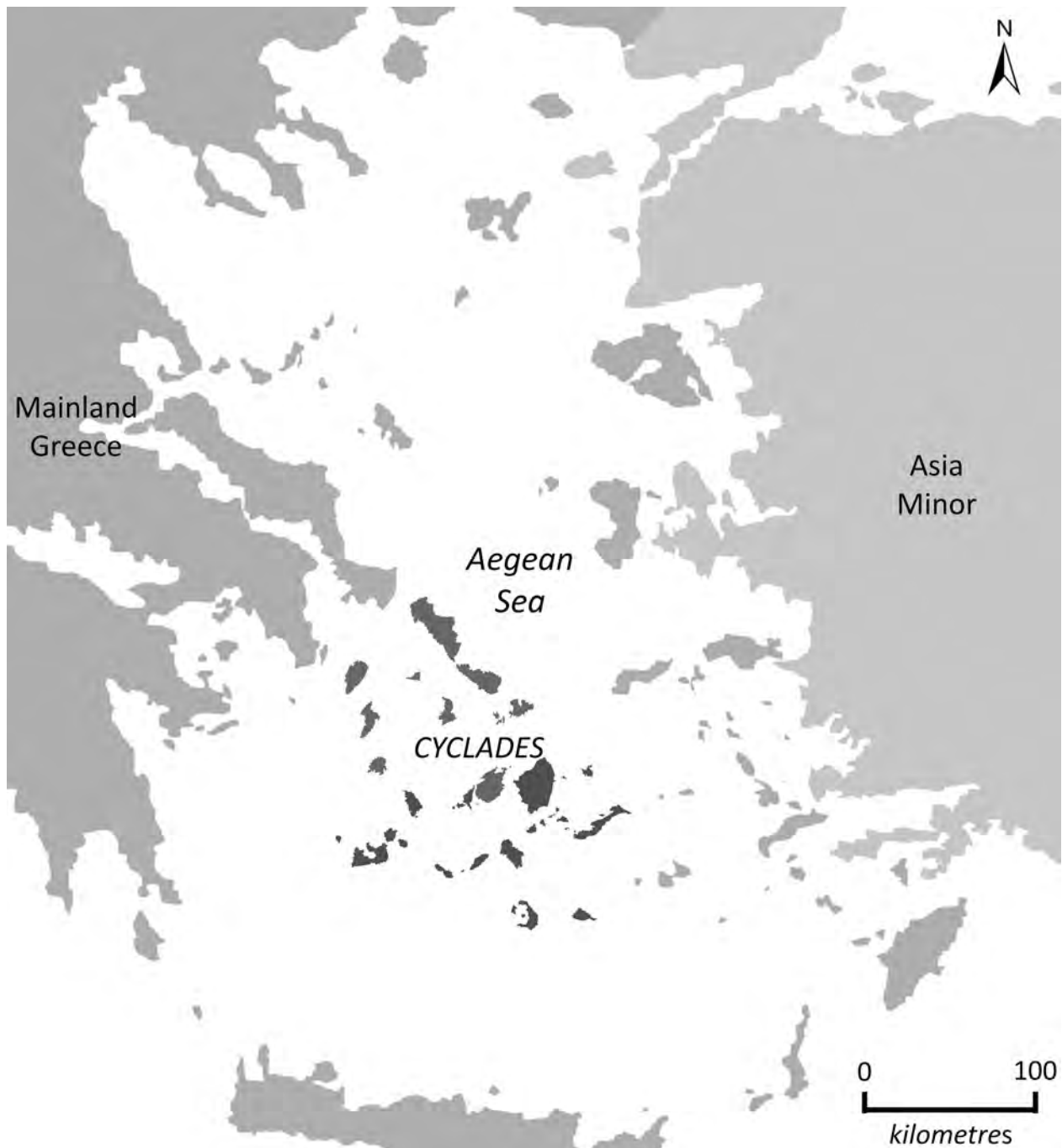


Fig. 1.1 Map of the Aegean and the Cyclades

fittings (built structures and mobile fittings) and island-costumes (male and female dress codes). Special focus is placed on the identification of socio-cultural identities with the aim to explain changes in material culture and society through comparison

with other neighbouring regions (*i.e.* Medieval and Post-Medieval Mainland Greece and other Aegean islands, Italy and Asia Minor). It goes without saying that housing and portable household artefacts are of prime importance since they provide abundant

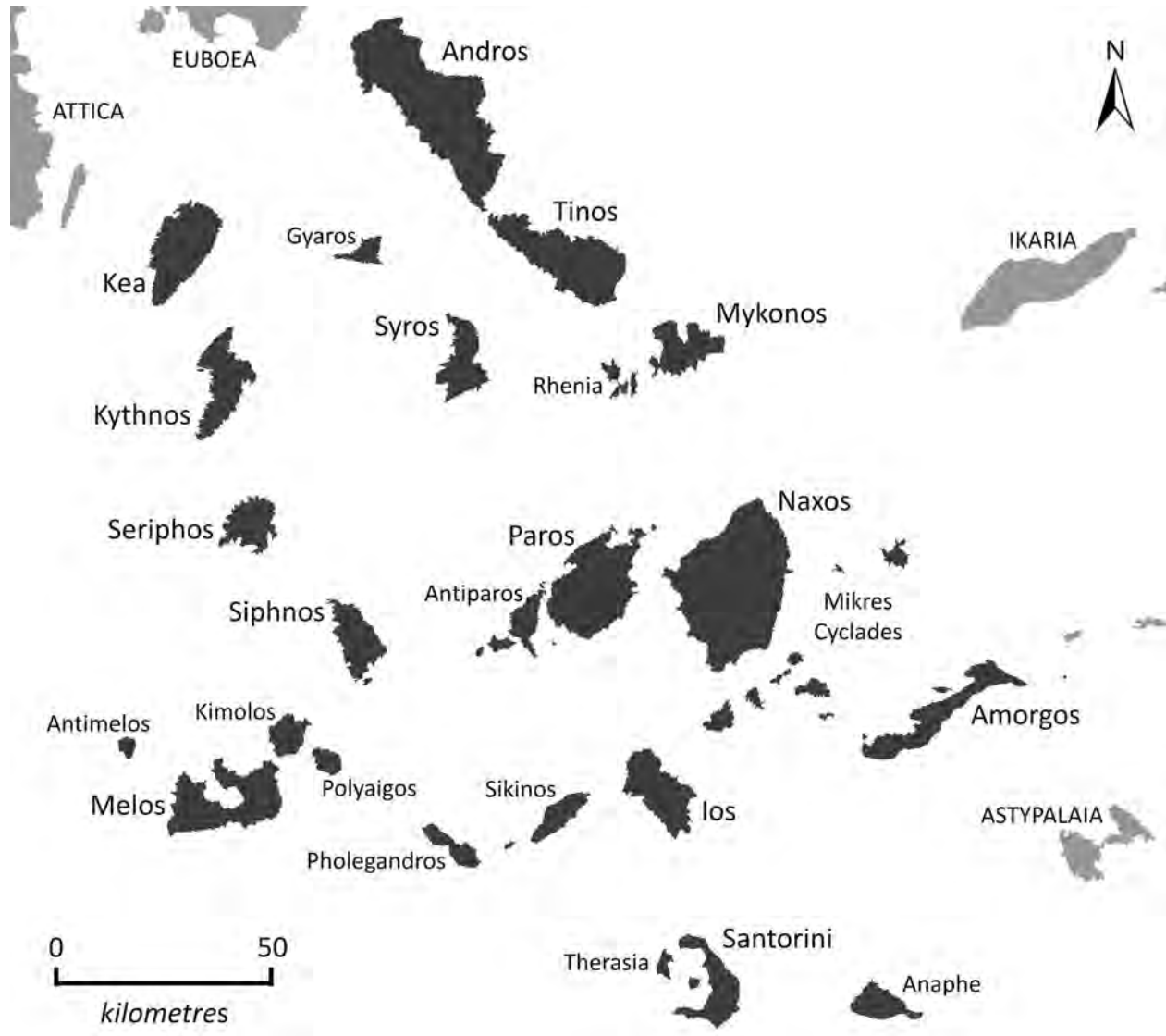


Fig. 1.2 Map of the Cyclades islands

information about past social behaviour and living standards.

The study of *Crusader*, *Ottoman*, and *Early Modern* archaeology and society in Greece has been generally neglected by archaeologists and other scholars, with few notable exceptions, *e.g.* the archaeological surface surveys on the Cycladic islands of Melos and Keos (Renfrew and Wagstaff 1982; Cherry *et al.* 1991). The ultimate aim of this book is to provide a synthetic analysis of Medieval and Post-Medieval material culture and society in Greece, taking the Cy-

clades as case study. It is an inter-disciplinary study, involving the disciplines of Archaeology, Topography, Architecture, History, Art-History, Social Anthropology and Ethnography. Primary data collected during archaeological survey, as well as published data and studies from a variety of disciplines and methodological backgrounds are analysed and given their socio-economic and cultural interpretation with the aid of textual information.

The basic contribution of this study is to provide a fine example of how varying aspects of Medieval

and Post-Medieval material culture represented in different sources throw light on changing human behaviour. It also sets the basis for the establishment of Medieval and Post-Medieval Archaeology and Material Culture Studies in Greece, in parallel to on-going developments in Northwest Europe and the United States. Thus, the main points of reference for the present study and its contributions can be summarised under four headings:

- a. Review of the historical and socio-economic background: scanty information about the social and economic history of the Cyclades has been collected from a variety of sources in order to pinpoint population trends, economic developments and social formation and how these relate to material culture and domestic life.
- b. Review of previous studies: a presentation of previous studies attempts to pull together descriptive information on the structural development of housing forms in the Cyclades from different sources, providing the basis for the final quantification and interpretation of domestic space use. In addition, a short review of the research on Medieval and Post-Medieval pottery in Greece, accompanied by a typo-chronological catalogue of the most common Medieval and Post-Medieval ceramic forms, provide the basis for the discussion of aspects concerning eating habits and table manners.
- c. Gathering and presentation of primary archaeological data: since the archaeological record for the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods in Mainland Greece and the Cyclades is still developing, representative original data on settlements, domestic architecture and pottery has been collected in the field. The detailed presentation of this data is a first attempt to establish a typo-chronological sequence for a variety of aspects of pre-Modern material culture in the Cyclades.
- d. Integration of previous studies with original data and their socio-economic and cultural meaning.

## 1.2 CYCLADES RESEARCH PROJECT

The Cyclades Research Project is the field project undertaken by the author on seven Cycladic islands for the collection of archaeological data, which form the core of this study. A field-survey and study permit was granted through the British School of Ar-

chaeology at Athens and its former director Dr David Blackman. The permit was issued by the 21st Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities (Dr M. Marthari, director) and the 2nd Ephorate of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Antiquities (Dr Ch. Pennas, former director). The project was carried out during 1998, 1999 and 2000 with the assistance of Dr Eleftherios Sigalos (Leiden University) in 1998-1999 and Velissaria Vanna (University College London) in 1998.

Seven islands were selected for this study by the author, primarily on the basis of data availability and access to permits granted for archaeological research by the relevant archaeological authorities. The Late Medieval defended settlement of Kephelos on Paros was studied in detail; all surface remains were recorded with the aid of a *theodolite* and a digital plan was produced with the aid of ArcView and MapInfo. The site was gridded and all visible surface potsherds were collected. The surrounding area of Choria Kephelou was only partly field-walked in 2000. In 2001-2002, the remaining area of Choria Kephelou was surveyed by the author, a staff member of the 2nd Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities at that stage, carrying out an extensive surface survey in selected areas around Paros; only grab samples were collected. The Late Medieval remains of the castle-site of Apano Kastro on the neighbouring island of Naxos were also topographically recorded using a *theodolite* and a digital plan was produced with the aid of the MapInfo. Pottery grab samples were collected after the site was divided into three different zones. Survey work in the Late Medieval sites of Kastro and Zephyria/Millo on the island of Melos was based on a previous comprehensive study published by Guy Sanders (1996). The sites were re-examined in order to identify further evidence for Late Medieval and Post-Medieval activity, while pottery grab samples were collected from different zones. The Post-Medieval deserted hamlets of Mavro Chorio on Siphnos and Ismaili on Tinos were also topographically recorded, but low visibility did not allow the systematic collection of surface ceramic finds. In-situ study of a confined number of potsherds provided a preliminary dating for these sites. Finally, examples of Post-Medieval and Early Modern housing were studied from the still inhabited town of Plaka on

Melos, Chora on Ios, and the village of Aidonia on Andros.

All the aforementioned selected sites cover the period between the early 13th and late 19th centuries, as well as all types of island settlement-forms; from Late Medieval fortified settlements and hamlets to Post-Medieval towns, villages and Early Modern farmsteads. The study of these deserted or still inhabited settlement-sites provides sufficient evidence for island settlement layout and housing. Associated surface ceramics facilitate settlement dating and determine settlement character and type, providing additional information about socio-economic practices and cultural contacts. An additional study of domestic furniture and traditional costumes was carried out in local Folklore museums, enriched by further bibliographical research.

### 1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

It should be noted that the review of previous studies does not aim towards the complete presentation of every single published article or book relevant to the subject of this monograph. There has been a selective choice of representative studies that employ a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches. Primary research into Venetian textual sources or Ottoman tax-registers was by no means possible to include, as this involves specialised knowledge of a different nature, while the orientation of this study is mainly archaeological. It should also be realised that the present study does not comprise an exhaustive presentation and discussion of all tangible aspects of material culture and their meaning. Considering regional and micro-regional diversities between islands and island-groups in the Aegean, an attempt has been made to provide an analysis of representative samples of the material culture record. It is certain that a richer collection of archaeological evidence in the sense of more architectural data (*i.e.* the number of surveyed houses) or a larger number of surface potsherds would have provided a more integral picture of continuity and changes in the domestic sphere (architecture and household artefacts). However, it is not the aim of this study to trace specific developments of a single aspect of the material record. It is a comprehensive and interdisciplinary study, aiming towards the understanding of changing domestic be-

haviour and living standards through space (the Cycladic islands in relation to the rest of the Aegean) and time (from the Late Medieval to the Early Modern era).

Chapters 2 and 3 provide a general theoretical and historical background to the study of material culture in the Post-Roman Cyclades. Chapter 2 summarises the meaning of various aspects of the *built environment* and *domestic material culture* and reviews the study of Medieval, Post-Medieval and industrial societies in Europe and the Aegean, in order to perceive the chronological boundaries and the limitations of archaeological data dealt with throughout this study. It also and most importantly outlines the methods undertaken for the understanding and interpretation of the Cycladic built landscape, the diachronic use of domestic space and changes in household behaviour and domestic material culture. Chapter 3 presents a review of the economic, political and population changes in the Cyclades from the 13th to the 19th centuries based on related primary information published by contemporary historians. The information on published literature included in this Chapter is as detailed as possible (also in the form of charts and graphs), and functions as the basis and background information for interpreting continuity and change in material culture and society.

Following the background information on historical and socio-economic developments, Chapters 4 and 5 provide a sound presentation and analysis of secondary data for the development of settlement layout and housing from the Late Medieval to the Early Modern period. Chapter 4 provides an overview of methodological approaches to the study of Aegean island-settlements and housing. It includes studies about a number of islands in the Cyclades, mainly published by Greek architects and art historians in article- and book-form. Chapter 5 comprises a presentation of different settlement and housing forms for each period, *i.e.* the Late Medieval to early Post-Medieval, and the Post-Medieval to Early Modern periods. This preliminary classification and dating of settlement and housing types is made on the basis of already published works, mainly written by architects.

Chapter 6 provides a detailed presentation of the primary archaeological data gathered by CY.RE.P., *i.e.* a

detailed outline of settlement organisation and layout in the Cyclades, through the presentation of the topographical survey and historical development of deserted and still inhabited settlements and their house-types on the seven islands of Paros, Naxos, Melos, Ios, Siphnos, Tinos and Andros. Following, Chapter 7 provides a detailed analysis of aspects concerning changes in settlement patterning, settlement layout and housing in the Cyclades throughout the period in question, partly based on the quantification of published information presented in the form of graphs (Appendix I). The analysis in this chapter is not solely based on the 'traditional' archaeological presentation of settlement-forms, house-types and their chronology; it also discusses aspects of settlement formation and household organisation of a primarily agrarian society from environmental, functional, socio-economic and ideological or symbolic perspectives. Moreover, it draws parallels with other Aegean regions, providing examples of identity formation and how that is reflected on the built environment.

Chapter 8 provides a brief history of research carried out on Medieval and Post-Medieval pottery from excavations and surface surveys in Greece, Cyprus and the Near East, followed by a detailed presentation of the main ceramic tableware (local and imported) of the 11th to early 20th centuries (typology, description and chronology). The final part of Chapter 8 comprises a detailed catalogue of selected potsherds (with pottery-drawings in Appendix II) from the collection of surface ceramic finds from the sites surveyed by CY.RE.P.

Having provided an analysis of the meaning of structural changes and developments in the built space, the following three chapters discuss aspects of daily life within the domestic 'shell'. Domestic daily life is translated here as food, diet and dining manners, in-

ternal fittings and domestic privacy and comfort, costumes and fashion. Having reviewed the main pottery shapes and glazed ceramic wares, Chapter 9 comprises a comparative study on the subject of diet and dining fashions in the Mediterranean and the Aegean during the Late Medieval and Post-Medieval periods. It further discusses the evolution of dishes and eating habits in the Venetian- and Ottoman-dominated Cyclades on the basis of written documents, pictorial evidence, ethnographic parallels and local traditions, as well as on conclusions drawn from the pottery-data collected by CY.RE.P. Chapter 10 presents aspects of domestic comfort and furniture through a parallel presentation of data collected during fieldwork on the islands and examples in Folk Museums (*e.g.* wooden low tables, chairs, chests, cupboards, and built features, such as niches, stone-built beds, hearths). Chapter 11 discusses aspects of personal attire and clothing fashions through a survey of published literature (and travellers' accounts and drawings). It presents evidence for island costumes, and their description and typology, followed by a discussion on changing costume fashions, personal appearance and the formation of socio-cultural identities.

Finally, Chapter 12 presents a special case-study of 18th-century Paros, in an attempt to review all different approaches applied earlier on different aspects of material culture, as an illustration of how changing human behaviour can be read through the analysis of different sources (textual, pictorial, ethnographic, historical, archaeological). The concluding Chapter 13 summarises how settlements were shaped, how household interiors were arranged, and how domestic material culture can be read as evidence for domestic behaviour, with an attempt to 'reconstruct' domestic life of the Late Medieval, Post-Medieval and Early Modern periods.