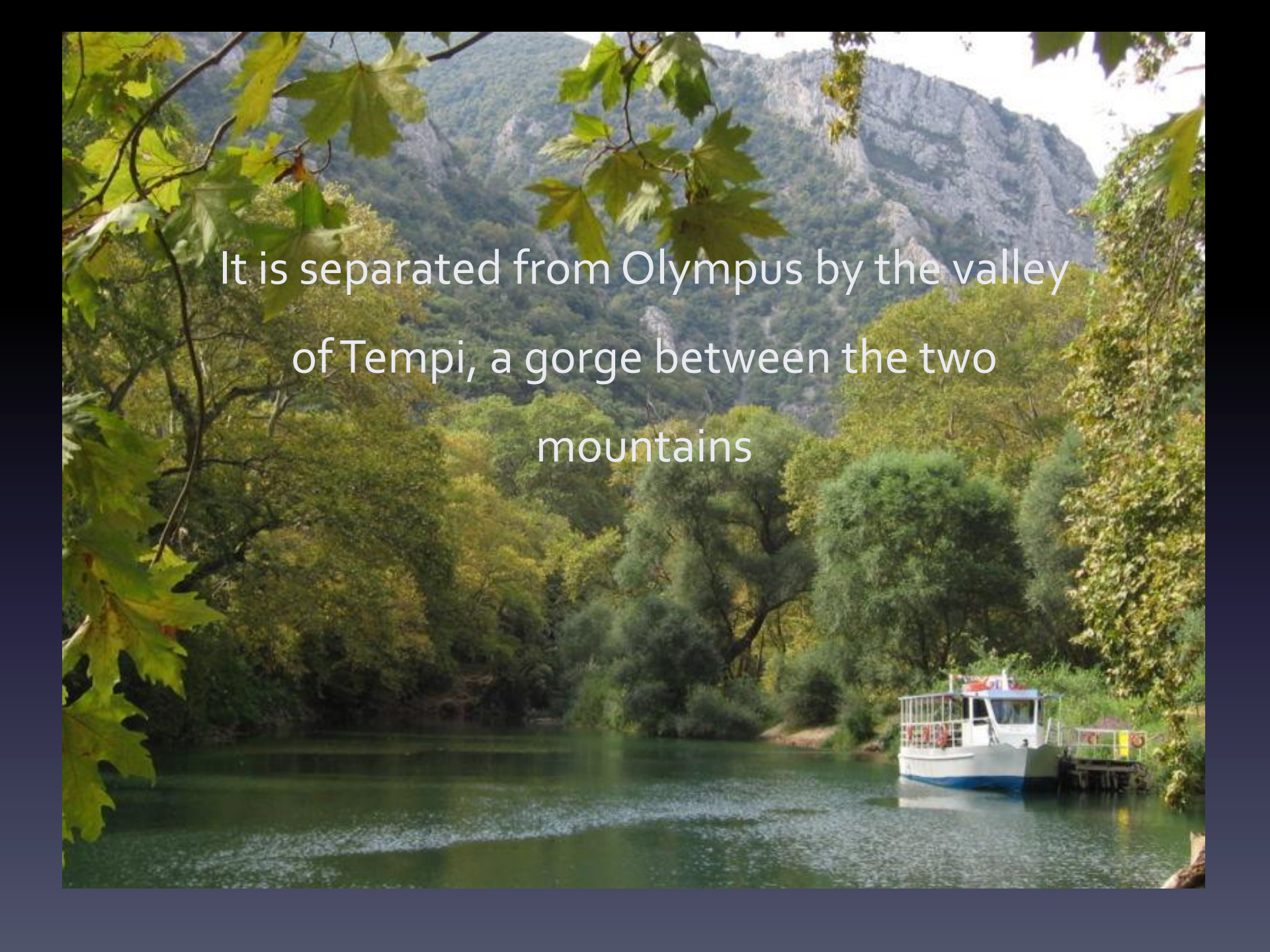" Traditional settlements

in Agia"

Kissavos is a legendary mountain next to mount Olympus

It is separated from Olympus by the valley of Tempi, a gorge between the two mountains

To the east, it borders on the Aegean sea.

The sea is what makes its climate ideal ...

The fertility of its soil is a factor for the
cultivation of fruit and vegetables while the lush vegetation…

…contributes to the breeding of livestock

For thousands of years the slopes of the mountain- eastern, southern and partly northern - were sparsely populated due to favourable climatic conditions and the adequacy of water that helped the growth of a variety of crops…

Those setllements on the slopes and foothills of Mt Kissavos grew and prospered during the last two centuries

Agia

MELIVOIA

SOTIRITSA

METAXOHORI

NEROMYLOI

MEGALOVRYSO

ANATOLI

MARMARINI

OMOLIO

...

MARMARINI

OMOLIO

STOMIO

SYKOURIO, SPILIA AND AMPELAKIA...

All the settlements experienced periods of economic growth that led to the construction of magnificent buildings, mainly mansions for wealthy families

Agia

The Alexoulis family mansion
Now housing the Archaelogical Collection

The building of houses depended upon the status and wealth of the dweller

Farmers and livestock breeders needed spaces for storing tools, raw materials and animals...

Merchants and manufacturers were more extrovert and dwelled in imposing houses, richly decorated, since they were only interested in showing off their wealth and power…

New buildings with neoclassic features began
to appear at the beginning of the 20th century

The building materials used were :

STONE

WOOD

TILES

The mortars used were made up of

a.Soil , preferably clay, due to its great adhesive properties especially when it is wet.

b. Kourasani – a mixture of sand, lime,goat's wool, and (for bridges) egg yolk

All materials had to be made available at a short distance so as to minimize the cost of transportation

Stones were obtained from local quarries or ravines…

The timber needed for the construction of roofs and floors was obtained from

oak and chestnut trees in the forest of Kissavos…

The tiles, made of clay, came

from kilns of small businesses

nearby…

The use of cement started, infrequently, at the beginning of the 20th century . By 1950, its use had dominated the construction sites

Limestone was obtained from local quarries in Anavra and Agia

However due to its costly transportation, it was only used for buildings of dwellers who could afford to pay ...

The neoclassic mansions of Agia , where lime was used extensively, were owned by families of merchants, lawyers and doctors.

SIZE, SHAPE & STYLE

Generally, most houses were rectangular in shape, imposing in size and with small openings for safety reasons as well as for saving energy.

In mountainous settlements most houses are three-storied buildings

The ground floor was used for storing hay, tools and animals.

The 2nd floor was used for accomodation and The 3rd floor was the space where silkworms were hatched .

 Sericulture had flourished in the region of Kissavos since 18th century

In some wealthy settlements such as Metaxohori and Agia the size of the houses was grandiose and impressive.

Sometimes, due to irregularity of the surface , some buildings were not entirely rectangular.

STONE MASONS

Most stone buildings were erected by teams of stone masons from Epeiros.
They were well-known for their craft and skills and they produced marvellous works of art

They did the same in our region .

They even passed their know-how to local craftsmen that carried on the tradition .

Unfortunately, today most stone constructions are built by non-Greek Workers

CONCLUSIONS…

Our architectural past – I believe- is our future. We need to preserve our rich architectural heritage that will promote the overall development in the region of kissavos…

Including tourism …
But, above all, it will make our
citizens proud, for our homeland
Is both beautiful and fertile…
What is more, it is full of history
and that is a solid heritage for the
next generations.

Thank you !