

# ΑΓΙΡΟΚΑΣΤΡΑ

MUSEUM CITY



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας





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# GJIROKASTRA

MUSEUM - CITY



ΔΗΜΟΣΙΑ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΘΗΚΗ	
ΚΟΝΙΤΣΑΣ	
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Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

**GREAT CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN TO  
PRESERVE AND FURTHER BEAUTIFY  
THIS TOWN WHICH IS A MARVEL-  
LOUS ARCHITECTURAL ENSEMBLE  
MASTERFULLY BUILT BY OUR ANCES-  
TORS, BY OUR TALENTED BRICK-  
LAYERS AND STONE CARVERS.**

**ENVER HOXHA**

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας





## GJIROKASTRA MUSEUM - CITY



Engraving of the 19th century.

Very rich in great architectural-urbanistic values the museum city of Gjirokastra is one of the important centres which throw light on the nature of the late Medieval Albanian town. Under the constant solicitude of the Party for the heritage of the material culture of our people, this city, just as all the other monuments of culture, is under the protection of the state. Studies and the restoration work carried out so far in Gjirokastra have made possible the publication of this al-

bum, which, in a concise form, reflects the architectural-urbanistic values of this museum city. Gjirokastra's important architectural-urbanistic realizations bear convincing testimony to the vitality of the ancient Albanian people, and the high level of their culture. At the 7th Congress of the PLA, Comrade Enver Hoxha stressed: «The national character and the popular spirit are expressed through the truthful reflection of reality, from the standpoint of the Marxist-Leninist ideology, the assimilation of all the experience of our culture, both its old progressive traditions and its new revolutionary elements, in a critical way, proceeding from the class standpoint, and firmly relying on the people's creativeness».<sup>1</sup> Broader information on the character and history of development of the museum city of Gjirokastra, along with the other achievements of our people's culture in general, helps the reflection of the national spirit and physiognomy also in architecture.

The purpose of this album is to represent the architectural development of this town, dwelling on the most typical and essential construction elements.

Hence, the album is intended not only for the broad masses, but also the students indirectly or directly interested in the Albanian architecture.

The album is divided into four part; the first deals with the development of the city, which is rea-

<sup>1</sup> Enver Hoxha, Report at the 7th Congress of the PLA, Tirana 1976, p. 152 (Alb. ed.).

lized through its main elements: the castle, the bazaar, the dwelling quarters and the places of worship. The main place in the album is occupied by the Gjirokastra dwelling house, one of the most outstanding realizations of Albanian architecture in this field, described in general type as well as in its internal and external construction. Then comes a review of the achievements reached so far in the restoration activity in the city, as well as of part of the modern construction. A special place is devoted to the representation of buildings of historic value, connected with important events or outstanding personalities of the struggle for freedom and independence, as well as monuments erected in memory of outstanding patriotic and revolutionary figures and events.

#### THE MUSEUM CITY OF GJIROKASTRA

The city of Gjirokastra occupies a central position in the Drino valley. Since ancient times several roads connected it with Vlora, the Delvina basin, and through Këlcyra gorge, with many other centres of South Albania. The mountainous regions of Upper Kurvelesh, Pogon and Zagoria, as well as Dropull and Lunxhëria, are long since linked with Gjirokastra as the chief centre of the area.

The city lies at the foot of Mali i Gjerë, on rugged terrain of narrow valleys, steep slopes and a few meadows. On this terrain full of contrasts rises a steep hillock, on which the castle, the ancient part of the city and its centre, has been built. Its position commanding the open city quarters has always played a first-rate role in the general view of the city, while it begins to lose its function as a defence construc-

tion beginning from about the second half of the 19th century.

From the data obtained so far, the earliest information about the city of Gjirokastra is given by the Byzantine chronicler I. Kantakuzenos in 1336. He mentions Gjirokastra as «Argyrokastron», once as a city and then as a castle. In the second half of the 14th century, Gjirokastra became the centre of the Zenevisti feudal lords, and in 1419 it fell in the hands of the Turkish invaders. Because of the important role Gjirokastra played during the 15th century in South Albania, it became the chief centre of the Sanjak of Albania. The most accurate data about the city are provided by the fiscal register of the years 1431-1432. According to it Gjirokastra had at that time 163 dwelling-houses. The expansion of the city outside the surrounding walls must date back to the first half of the 14th century.

During the 15th century, Gjirokastra shrank to only 143 dwelling houses in the years 1506-1507. During the 16th century and on, it again began to grow, and so in 1583 it had 434 dwelling houses. During the 17th century, its growth is quicker, mainly because of the onsetting decay of the natural economy in the countryside. It is at this time that Gjirokastra nearly reaches its present-day extent, with the principal lines of its urbanistic composition being already drawn.

Data about the development of the city in the 18th century are almost totally lacking. They begin to appear at the beginning of the 19th century in the writings of foreign Albanologists and travellers. They deal with the richest and most intensive period in the construction of the city, with the creation of new ensembles and the consolidation of the existing ones.

The peculiarities of terrain have played an important role in Gjirokastra's urbanistic development.

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This has made the city quarters stand more or less as separate units. But these units are not so separated from each other as to break the unique picture of the city. The quarters of «The Old Bazaar», «Pllaka» and «Hazmurat», built on two almost parallel ridges, constitute the most characteristic and picturesque group of Gjirokastra's constructions. Their compactness, their successful adaptation to the terrain and the diversity of their view make these quarters remarkable. The great ensembles of «Palorto» and «Manalat» quarters, built on steep hill slopes, have a different composition. In their block-like architecture, these quarters bring out well the volume of their buildings. Against the dynamic back-ground of Gjirokastra, these ensembles stand out for their monumentality and a certain uniformity. Both ensembles of «Dunavat» quarter, masterfully linked with the terrain, are of a freer composition and their buildings more individualized, making the whole more colourful, yet without impairing its unity. A freer construction is come across in «Cfaka» quarter. This ensemble stands out for its connection with the terrain and its rich greenness.

Gjirokastra belongs to the group of those urban centres set up on sloping terrain, which trace their origin to their castles. In this large and more characteristic group of Albanian towns, Gjirokastra stands out for the diversity of its terrain, which has produced the special characteristics of its quarters, as well as the great dynamism of their composition. You cannot embrace Gjirokastra at a glance, it appears differently from different angles, often it is hidden from

the sight only to appear further on in all its beauty. The urbanistic composition of this centre and its urbanistic values show clearly that the development of Gjirokastra has taken place according to some principles and norms, which have been followed by its citizens and implemented masterfully by its builders, to which both the nature and the hand of man have made their contribution.

The castle is undoubtedly one of the most magnificent constructions of the city. The construction of its surrounding walls is adapted to the terrain. It has three main entrances. According to hitherto data, the construction of the castle dates back to the second half of the 13th century. Judging by its present condition, it has gone through two construction stages. The first stage, or, to be more precise, the castle itself, was not fortified on its south-western side. This section of its fortifications, which constitutes the second stage, belongs to the construction activity of Ali Pasha Tepelena, i.e. the years 1811-1812. Within its surrounding walls, the castle preserves several buildings, many of them in ruins, which indicate that, apart from the garrison, there were also civilian settlements there. Bold feats of engineering, such as the covering of huge surfaces with a system of vaults, etc., are met with in that part of the Gjirokastra castle which was built before the Turks or that which was reconstructed by Ali Pasha Tepelena. Thanks to present — day restoration work, the National Museum of Arms has been set up in this castle, and many of its values have been recovered.

Worthy of mention is the about 10 km long aqueduct of the castle, which brought water from the Sopot Mountain. The construction of this aqueduct, about the years 1811-1812, was connected with several works of art, among which a two-arched bridge that linked Shkëmbi i Çeribashit with the castle, which was completely destroyed by the anti-popular monarchic regime, as well as another bridge over Manalat quarter.

The bazaar of the city represents an important construction complex. According to available sources initially the bazaar was situated nearer to the castle and precisely in the place which bears the toponym of «The Old Bazaar». At the outset of the 17th century, the construction of the new bazaar began on the territory where it lies today, i.e. in the centre of the city. With regard to its relationship with the inhabited part of the city, the Gjirokastra bazaar, as all the other centres of handicrafts and trade of contemporary Albanian cities, constitutes a unit in itself, separated from the dwelling quarters. The site and the main urbanistic lines of the bazaar belong to the 17th-18th centuries, but its constructions, in their present conditions, mainly date back to the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. About the third quarter of the 19th century, after a devastating fire, the bazaar was reconstructed. Its original streets were enlarged and whole blocks of shops were reconstructed into almost the present-day view. From its urbanistic aspect, the Gjirokastra bazaar is a classic copy of this kind of complexes, with blocks of several shops in parallel rows. The sloping terrain accounts for its constructions in descending blocks. Its outer architectural structure is unique, and dates back to the same period. What strikes one's eye most is the broad use of polished stone in columns

and pillars, cornices, etc. Straight lines are mostly used but vaults are not absent, either. The bazaar of the city is remarkable not only for its architectural elements, but also for the fact that these elements are used also in the dwelling houses of the same period. This incorporates the bazaar into the architectonic complex in the city. The bazaar now restored preserves its function to this day.

A number of social buildings and places of worship are distributed in different quarters of the city. The latter, after the people did away with religion, stand only for their architectural values. Against the marked monumental character of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house, their size and structure do not bring them out clearly in the ensembles where they belong. Worthy of mention is the mosque in Mechite quarter, which may have been built in the first half of the 17th century. Its construction does not represent particular values, apart from a water pipe in the lower part of the minaret, a unique case. The mosque of the bazaar of the year 1757 is more important. The stone minaret rises high above the dome and adds to the monumental character of the mosque, which, regardless of its important values, does not play its full role in the composition of the centre, because of the flat terrain on which it is built. There are smaller mosques in other quarters of the city. In comparison with the mosques of the other Albanian cities, those of Gjirokastra do not have particular typological characteristics. That which distinguishes the Gjirokastra mosques is their small size as well as their poor decoration, especially in their exterior. The Gjirokastra mosques are typically monochronic. The ashy colour of the stone sets the tone to their outer appearance and adds to its monumental character. Just as the bazaar, these buildings merge fully with the

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architecture of the city, from which they have taken many elements, both in their general treatment and their architectural-constructive details.

The two churches of the city also possess architectural values. The first was built in the quarter of the «Old Bazaar» in 1784, and the second in «Varosh» quarter in 1776, and it was reconstructed in 1833 after a fire. The only public bath of the town is in «Mechite» quarter and belongs to the beginning of the 17th century.

The dwelling house is the sort of construction which sets the tone to the city, it is its main composing element, its most outstanding architectural achievement. In a relatively great number of variants the Gjirokastra dwelling house occupies a special position, constituting a separate type in the topology of the Albanian urban dwelling-house, with peculiar characteristics in its composition, planimetry and volume, and its special architectural-constructive elements.

Preserving its essential characteristics on the general architectural plane, the Gjirokastra dwelling-house has incessantly developed with the passing of time, from its distant origin to the beginning of the 20th century. This development of this Albanian dwelling house, which expressed the development of the way of living, also shows of many possibilities of this type, one of the most outstanding of the Albanian dwelling-house. There are many instructive examples of the variants of this type, which show that it was not an achievement which later on became something

unchangeable and stereotyped, but it was, on the contrary, a successful summing up of experience, with relatively broad limits for new contributions in compliance with the concrete conditions of every case. In the conditions of the exploiting society class differentiation is clearly evident in the rich typology of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house.

With the planimetric and volume composition as the basic criterion of its classification, the Gjirokastra dwelling-house appears in three variants: the perpendicular variant, the one-flanked variant and the two-flanked variant. There are also special solutions, though not included in any of the above variants, still possess the characteristics of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house.

The perpendicular variant is the most simple and at the same time the basis of the further typological development of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house. From the compositional aspect, it represents a prismatic block with a rectangular basis, with two or three storeys. The two first storeys are linked with outer stairs. This dwelling-house is remarkable for its closed character, appropriate especially for defence purposes, its simple and compact composition, its characteristic position in regard to terrain, as well as its height.

The one-flanked variant constitutes the most common kind of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house. It has been mastered well by the builders, who, preserving its main compositional principles, have in many cases added new creative elements to it. The two-flanked variant, one of the most characteristic of the Gjiro-

kastra dwelling-house, is the tallest. In both these variants, the Gjirokastra dwelling-house appears finer and more complete. The hitherto data show that their formation dates back to the beginning of the 18th century, or even earlier.

The morphology of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house shows the unmistakable genetic links between its variants. All these various forms are joined together by a single concept, but they are separated by its degree of development, the concrete way of its realization. This continuity and diversity of forms, as well as their great number, are strong arguments for the natural development of this architectural category. Along with the planimetric volume, the Gjirokastra dwelling-house is rich in various architectural constructive forms and elements, which in unity with its general structure make for outstanding achievements. The period from 1800 to 1830 may be considered as the classic period of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house. During that time a great number of big buildings of outstanding architectural values were erected, which bear more clearly the essential characteristic of this type. Keeping to some fundamental principles, along its development, the Gjirokastra dwelling-house has gained some new characteristics and has lost some old ones.

The Gjirokastra dwelling-house is remarkable for its height. Usually it is three-storied, in some cases, even four-storied. Its planimetry stands out for its great compactness. It has different forms, but it preserves the grouping of different rooms round connecting halls. Rooms communicate with the latter and often with one another. The basic compositional unit is the three-storied perpendicular variant, which, repeating itself in different cases, creates different schemes. The composition of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house is very free. Thus, different solutions are possible

within the same variant, especially with regard to the ground, which is often broken. Volumes are also uneven, making the building appear even higher than it is in reality and in many cases, perceptibly enriching its side views. But, that which gives the planimetry and volume of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house diversity and height is the semi-floor, passing from the ground floor to the upper floors. The sloping terrain has created the possibility of increasing the surface of every storey, thus ensuring an organic link with the terrain. Gjirokastra, just as Berat, provides us with a series of fine examples of the connection of constructions with the terrain.

Since the formation of the perpendicular three-storied variant, the Gjirokastra dwelling-house established a functional differentiation between the floors, which remained one of its important features, until the 80-ies of the last century. The loss of this characteristic is linked with the use of the ground floor for living space, and it remained no longer uninhabited.

What draws one's attention in the various variant of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house, in its rooms, as well as in its special architectural-constructive elements, is their typifying tendency. It is true, this element is a general characteristic of popular constructions, but in this case it appears very clearly. Worthy of interest is that this typification has not impaired in the least the originality of this special construction, which was bound to face the builders with some problems. The latter have been able to find new solutions to each case. Typification as never suppressed the innovative spirit of the builder, but has served as a sound basis, on which new elements could be adopted only after their rationality was tested.

The Gjirokastra dwelling-house is remarkable for the detailed functional study of each of its elements

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which are always placed where they should be. This is clearly seen in the interior of the house so rich in immovable furniture like coupboards, sofas, niches, etc. The immovable furniture, organically linked with the construction, constitute an important feature of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house, just as of the Albanian dwelling-house in general. This solution makes for spaciousness of rooms. Beside low sofas and other such furniture, nothing intrudes into the volume of rooms, which appears in all its warmth. Wooden elements, often carved, also play an important role in the decoration of rooms. Decorative wood carvings change in compliance with the function of each room: the most beautiful ones are in the reception room.

The room is the basic compositional element of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house. These rooms, as generally in all Albanian dwelling-houses, are: the reception room, the winter room on the intermediary floor and the summer room on the second floor.

Unlike its interior, which is carefully elaborated architecturally, the exterior of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house, even in its classic period, is little elaborated. Because of its composition, care is taken only of the main façade, and in some other variants, its flanks are also decorated. That which, seen from outside, is most impressive of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house, is its model, composition, and above all its monumentality and roughness, which distinguish it from the other types of the Albanian dwelling-house. But for the second storey which hardly breaks its roughness, its walled façade, creates a striking contrast with the

other part of the building. The decoration of the second storey and the broad eaves resting elegantly on picturesque corbels enrich the composition further. The functional differentiation of the storeys finds its expression in the outer architectural treatment. Outside, there are few architectural details, the special elements are usually mingled together, each making its own contribution to the monumental character of the exterior. But in some more developed variants, the backwalls and, in some cases, the side walls of rooms, are decorated with mural paintings. In general, the backwall of the reception room is decorated with panels in baroque style, and its sidewalls represent two lions in a dynamic position, one in front of the other.

One of the important features of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house is its defensive character. This feature is not the same in different times. It was on the rise until the end of the flourishing period of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house, then it begins to decline, only to disappear completely by the end of the 19th century. Yet not all Gjirokastra dwelling-houses possess this feature which also differs in different houses.

Of course, the Gjirokastra dwelling-house is not an isolated architectural phenomenon. But its connections with other Albanian dwelling-houses have been different in different times. Just as for all the dwelling-houses of Albanian towns, for the Gjirokastra house, too, the second half of the 19th century is a long period, during which it undergoes relatively important changes. It is the time expanding economic exchanges between different regions, of the growth of the national

bourgeoisie. In this period the Gjirokastra dwelling-house is confronted with new construction concepts, unevenly felt in its two fundamental elements, the planimetric-volume composition and the architectural treatment. On the compositional plane, the Gjirokastra dwelling-house preserves almost all its patterns and all its vitality. In the general architectural treatment of its interior and, especially, exterior, however, important changes take place. At this time, efforts are made to treat the exterior and the interior alike. The relatively large windows with wooden frames, the closed and relatively not so broad eaves, and the plastering of the exterior give a new aspect to this dwelling-house.

The remarkable achievements of this dwelling-house, especially in its developed variants, as well as its common features in the other variants, especially those with a central hall, call for a further extension of the time and place in which this type of dwelling-house was formed. The composition of this dwelling-house shows a clear evolution, with its beginning in the known perpendicular house, often with a semi-floor, which is known in Albania since the 14th century, as results from the ruins of Kamenica village (Saranda) and other places. This type of house finds suitable conditions in Gjirokastra and develops within a relatively short period of time, always preserving some basic compositional elements reminiscent of the simple variant. On its road of development this house, especially its interior, was enriched with architectural elements which cannot be conceived without connecting them with the time and territory. Thus, while many elements are found only in the dwelling-houses of Albanian towns, some others have an all Balkanic extension. But these architectural elements have not remained unchanged. They are organically linked with

the house. Hence, the Gjirokastra dwelling-house is a realization, which although original in its base, as its logical planimetric-volume development proves, made many other elements its own which are found in other variants as well, especially in the treatment of the interior.

The special features of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house are explained by the social-economic conditions of the life of this centre, which along with the features common with the other cities of the country, had its own special features, which underline the development of the Gjirokastra dwelling-house. This city, unlike the other centres of the late Middle Ages, Berat, Elbasan or Shkodra, known as centres of handicraft and trade, was until of late, by the end of the 19th century, only an administrative and exchange centre. There was a strong stratum of landowners in the city. Endowed with the necessary means, in the course of an ever more pronounced class differentiation, it was able to materialize, through the work of talented masters ever more developed variants of dwelling-houses. Quarrels between the feudals, feudal anarchy, the class aspect and other causes dictated many of the features of the Gjirokastra dwelling-houses, among which is its defensive feature.

For centuries on end, until the late period before the Liberation of the country, constructions in Gjirokastra were the deed of talented popular masters. The epithet popular is, first, linked with the fact that their centuries-long experience was transmitted from generation to generation. Secondly, this epithet shows that the masters belonged to the people, i.e. to the exploited classes, who made a living with their work. They were organized in groups of 15-20 members with a chief-master. Kolonja and Dangëllia were regions renowned for their skilful masons, and it is from there



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that the masters came to work in Gjirokastra. Against the background of the buildings of Gjirokastra stands out the figure of the talented Albanian master. As all popular builders, he was both the author and realizer of his own projects. This organic unity, or to be more precise, these two stages of the same process, are the main features of this popular creativeness. Other important features of the projects of these masters are their functional solutions, their appropriate details, etc. The master was well acquainted with the people's way of living, which allowed him to solve functional problems correctly. The centuries-long experience of these masters, as well as their technical ability, enabled them to construct fine buildings with only two basic building materials, the stone and the wood. They were endowed with great imaginative power without which the realization of their many projects which often presented difficult technical problems, would have been impossible. The buildings of Gjirokastra reveal people's inexhaustible capacities, their great creative spirit and their determination to forge ahead in the field of construction, always enriching their experience with new elements.

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Under the constant care of the Party and the socialist State for the preservation of the positive heritage of the past, among other things, in the field of

architecture, as well, conditions were created for assessing and putting the big ensembles of Gjirokastra buildings under state protection. By special decision of the Council of Ministers, in 1961, Gjirokastra was proclaimed a museum city and put under the protection of the state. Since the issuing of this decision, large-scale research work has begun for the study and classification of constructions, as well as their restoration. As a result of this work, in 1973, special rules were approved for the protection and administration of the Gjirokastra museum city, as well as a list of the monuments of the first category, and the division of the city into zones.

According to the study on dividing the Gjirokastra museum city into zones, for purposes classifying its ensembles according to their values, it was divided into two big units: the historical centre and the free zone. The historical centre is made up of the museum zone and the protected zone. The museum zone, which includes the most valuable ensembles of the historical centre, is preserved in its entirety as an architectural urbanistic complex. The protected zone is the other part of the historical centre, which has also great values. The free zone is the part of the city which is not included in the historical centre.

The monuments in the museum city, according to their values, are divided into two categories: the monuments of the first category and the monuments of the second category. The monuments of the first category possess important typological, or architectural

values. All the other constructions are monuments of the second category and are preserved within the boundaries of the historical centre.

The putting of the Gjirokastra museum city under the protection of the state is also linked with large-scale restoration work, which ensures the preservation of this heritage in all its authenticity, both as works of art and historical documents. After this centre was put under the protection of the state, a restoration atelier was set up. The founding of the Institute of the Monuments of Culture, in 1965, gave a new impulse to the restoration work in this city too, it increased in volume and quality. In 1973, the atelier of the Monuments of Culture became a Branch of the Monuments, always within the framework of the Institute of the Monuments of Culture, thus creating conditions for the extension and deepening of the restoration work.

So far, important preservation and restoration work has been carried out in the Gjirokastra museum city, in the castle and the bazaar by cadres who have graduated the Tirana University. But the greater volume of this work belongs to the dwelling houses, which constitute the main part of constructions in the city. The restoration work in the dwelling houses is aimed at preserving their original elements and composition, intervening only in the cases when they are in danger of decay and when changes or additions damaging their values were made to them. In these cases after detailed study on the spot, additional work is carried out, especially in special architectural elements, always abiding by sound principles of restoration, which look upon the monument as a historical document in the first place. The restoration of these dwelling-houses has solved both aspects of the problem, the detection and preservation of the architectural

values of the building as well as the improvement of the living conditions of its inhabitants. Only a small number of them have been turned into social centres and museums.

The Gjirokastra museum city is living and will live with the time, with the new socialist reality, therefore, in compliance with the rules on the protection and restoration of its monuments, without impairing its urbanistic values, a series of social and industrial projects as well as dwelling-houses have been built and will be built. Within the historical centre, the need for social projects has been fulfilled through the adoption of the second category of monuments as in the case when a dwelling-house was turned into a polyclinic in Hazmurat quarter. Constructions in the free zone will gradually create new ensembles which will not affect the values of the historical centre.

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Gjirokastra is distinguished for its impressive architecture, as well as its outstanding contribution to the history of our people. It has always been a centre of the struggle against the foreign occupiers and social inequality. Speaking about the patriotic and revolutionary traditions of this city, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes: «... Our Gjirokastra is a museum city, first of all, on account of its glorious patriotic and revolutionary history, because of the ceaseless struggles and efforts of its sons and daughters for freedom and independence, for the Albanian language and the Albanian school, for democracy, and for our all-round economic and social develop-

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ment and progress!»<sup>1</sup>. This assessment by Comrade Enver Hoxha clearly speaks of the great contribution the sons and daughters of this city with a long history of efforts have made to the great struggle for independence and social justice. The period of the Albanian Renaissance is the continuation of the centuries-long patriotic and revolutionary efforts. Gjirokastra was deeply involved in the great movement of the National Renaissance, making its own great contribution to it through the rifle and the pen of its finest sons. The names of the patriots Bajo and Çerçiz Topulli as well as of many others who have fought with the pen and the rifle for the freedom and independence of the country, are a brilliant example of the heroic struggle this city of outstanding traditions, just as all the country, went through. The Gjirokastra patriots made great efforts for the Albanian school in the grave conditions of foreign occupation which tried by every manner of means to deny the Albanian nation even their existence and language. The Albanian school «Lirija» (Freedom), «the first rose of Gjirokastra», as Comrade Enver Hoxha called it, was an important achievement in the great struggle for national education. During the years from 1908 to 1924, several democratic leagues and societies and political clubs were founded in Gjirokastra, which were the direct result of the activity and efforts of the patriots of the Renaissance. Worth mentioning are the «Drita»

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<sup>1</sup> Enver Hoxha «Greeting to the Gjirokastra people», «Zëri i popullit» May 25, 1977.

(Light) Club, the society «Kundër Bastiljes» (Against the Bastille), the «Shpresa» (Hope) Club, the societies «Kandilja» (The Candle) and «Studenti» (The Student), etc.

Gjirokastra wrote the most glorious pages of its history in the stormy days of the National Liberation War. Speaking of the strong ties between the patriotic traditions and the National Liberation War, Comrade Enver Hoxha says: «It was on this glorious soil, in this great inexhaustible stream of patriotism and courage, in this great school of life that those sons and daughters of the people, were taught and educated, who, later on, in the difficult years of the fascist occupation, united around the Communist Party of Albania and became its flesh and blood, the glorious heroes of the Party and the people»<sup>1</sup>. Gjirokastra became an important centre of the National Liberation War, its finest sons and daughters swelled the ranks of the National Liberation Army. Many of them laid down their lives heroically for the cause of the revolution, such as Muzo Asqeriu, Bule Naipi, and others.

In order to reflect more broadly the great historical events Gjirokastra has gone through, under the care of the Party, a number of museums have been set up, which provide documents about the important events in the life of the city, and serve the patriotic and revolutionary education of the masses. The museums «The House of the Topulli Brothers», «The For-

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<sup>1</sup> Enver Hoxha «Greeting to the Gjirokastra people», «Zëri i popullit» May 25, 1977.

mer Gjirokastra Region» as well as «The Cultural Centre» near the bazaar of the city, in whose middle the obelisk dedicated to the pioneers of the Albanian education, school and language rises, occupy an important place in the cultural life of the city. Among the other museums the «National Museum of Arms» also occupies an important place. It has been set up in the Gjirokastra castle, where weapons used by the Albanian people and trophies captured by them in various wars of their long history are exhibited. Many monuments and memorials have been erected in the city to commemorate important events of the struggle against the occupiers and local reaction.

Thanks to the constant care of the Party, Gjirokastra is growing and flourishing just as all the rest of the country. Outside the historical centre, the new part of the city is developing at rapid rates. Many industrial, social and cultural buildings, as well as

dwelling houses are being set up there. The new quarters, with their houses of culture, schools, cinemas, kindergartens, creches, and health centres, without impairing the museum city, create a striking contrast between the old and the socialist new. Industrial production has assumed a vigorous development. New and modern enterprises and factories, in which hundreds of Gjirokastra people are employed, turn out important products for the development of the country's economy and the rising of the wellbeing of the people.

Thanks to systematic restoration work as well as new constructions, outside the historical centre, the Gjirokastra museum city bears testimony to the creative skill of our people and the unexampled progress in the conditions of the socialist order.

EMIN RIZA

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κομοτηνής



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη

**The city**

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



From the visit of our beloved leader Comrade Enver Hoxha in the Gjirokastra district, March 1978.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας





A view of the castle, engraving of the 19th century.

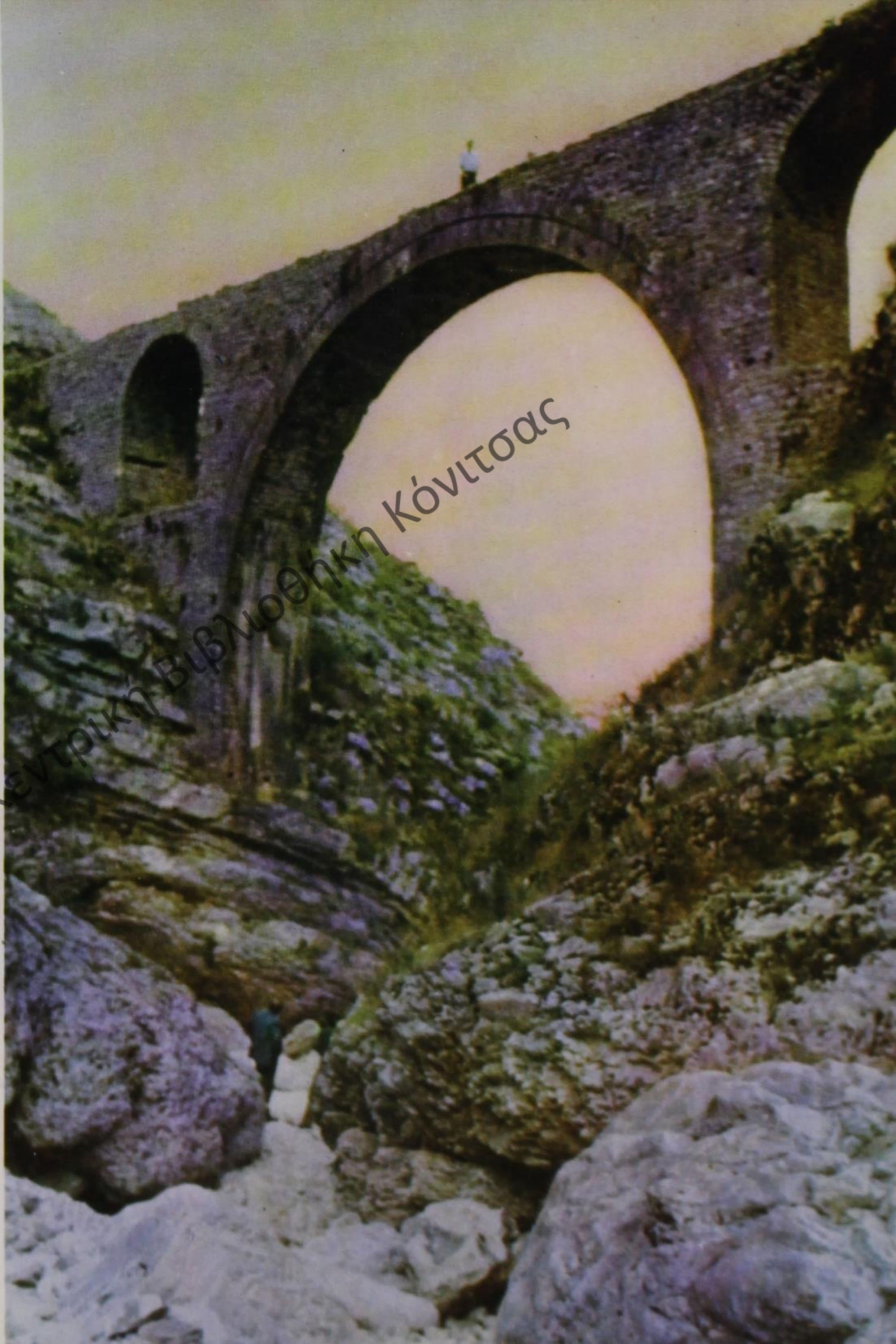


A view of the castle and «The Great Bridges», engraving of the 19th century.



A partial view of «The Great Bridges» destroyed in 1932.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



A view of the bridge and the aqueduct of the castle over the Manalat quarter.



A view of the Gjirokastra castle, 13th century.

The gate of the castle from the Eastern entrance.



A view of the castle from the Eastern entrance.





A view of the castle from the West.



A view of the castle and The Old Bazaar  
and Pllaka quarters.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κονίτσας





Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κονίτσας

Interior view of the castle and the environments, reconstructed by Ali Pasha Tepelena.

e main gate of the castle.



The artistic group of the young pioneers of the 8-grade school «Naim Frashëri» in the Manalat quarter.

A view of the interior environments of the castle.







A view of the city.



A view of the Old Bazaar and Pillaka quarters.

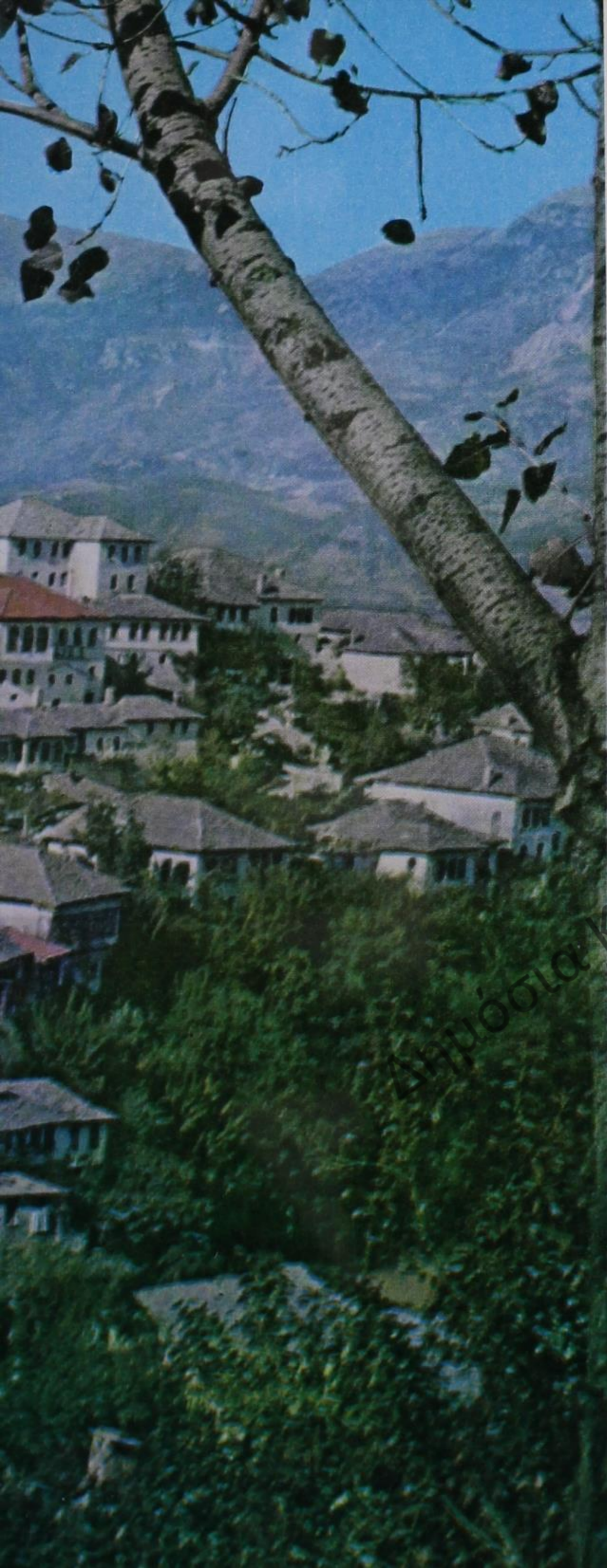


A street in the Cfaka quarter.



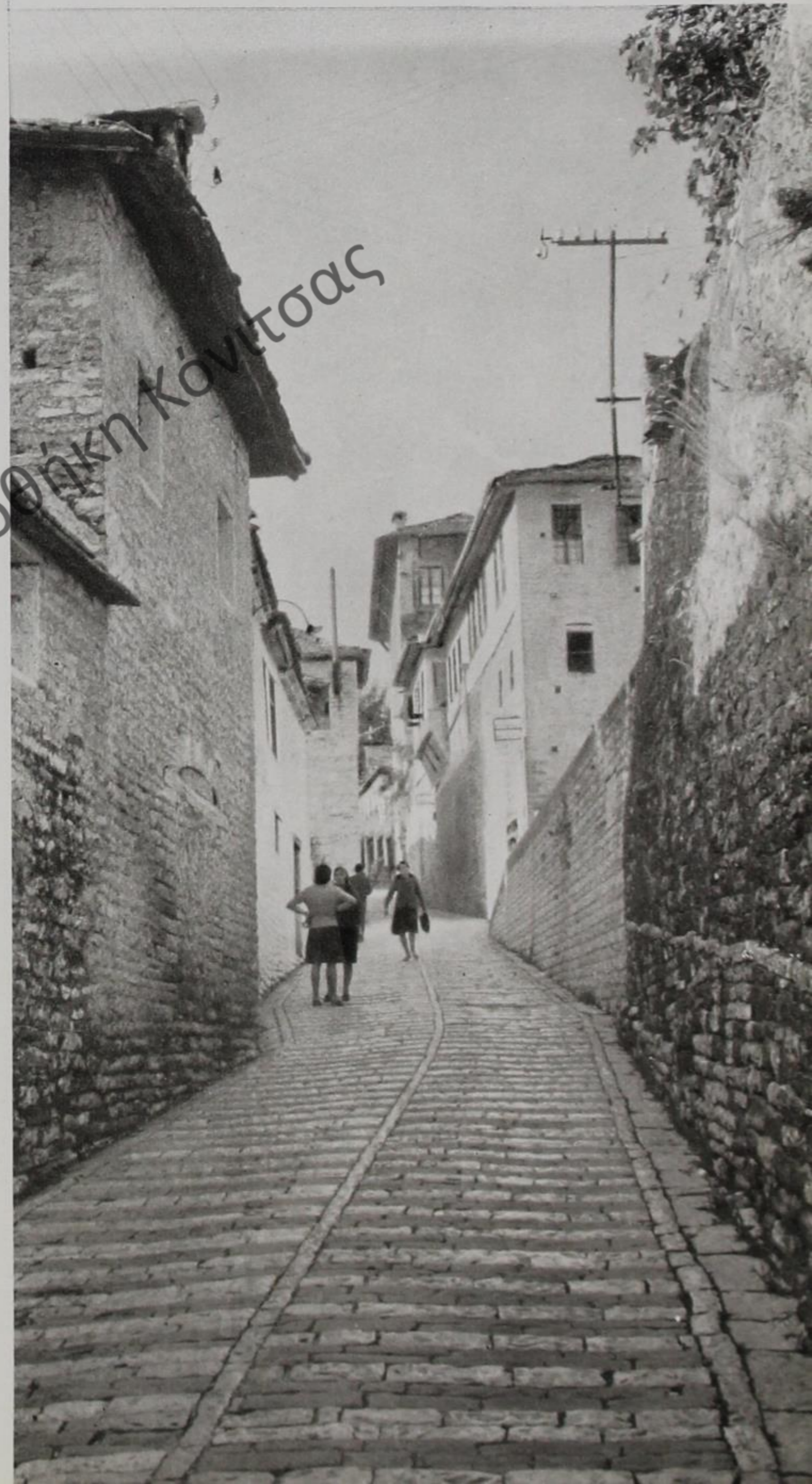
Δημοσια Κεντρικη Βιβλιοθηκη Κόνιτσας





A partial view of the  
Hazmurat quarter.

A street in the Hazmurat quarter.





A view of the Palorto quarter.



A street in the Tekke quarter.



A view of the Cfaka quarter.



A view of the Manalat quarter.



A partial view of the Dunavat quarter.



A street in the Old Bazaar quarter.

A street in the Dunavat quarter.



ΚΕΝΤΡΙΚΗ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΘΗΚΗ ΚΟΝΙΤΣΑΣ





A street in the Meçhite quarter.



Δημιος ο Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

view of a street in  
the Varosh quarter.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόντσας

A view of the Bazaar  
Pass and the Obelisk.



A view of the city bazaar.



The «Çerçiz Topulli» square.



Streets and shops of the bazaar.

Δημόσια



A characteristic street of the bazaar.



A Partial view of the  
bazaar and the Tekke  
quarter.



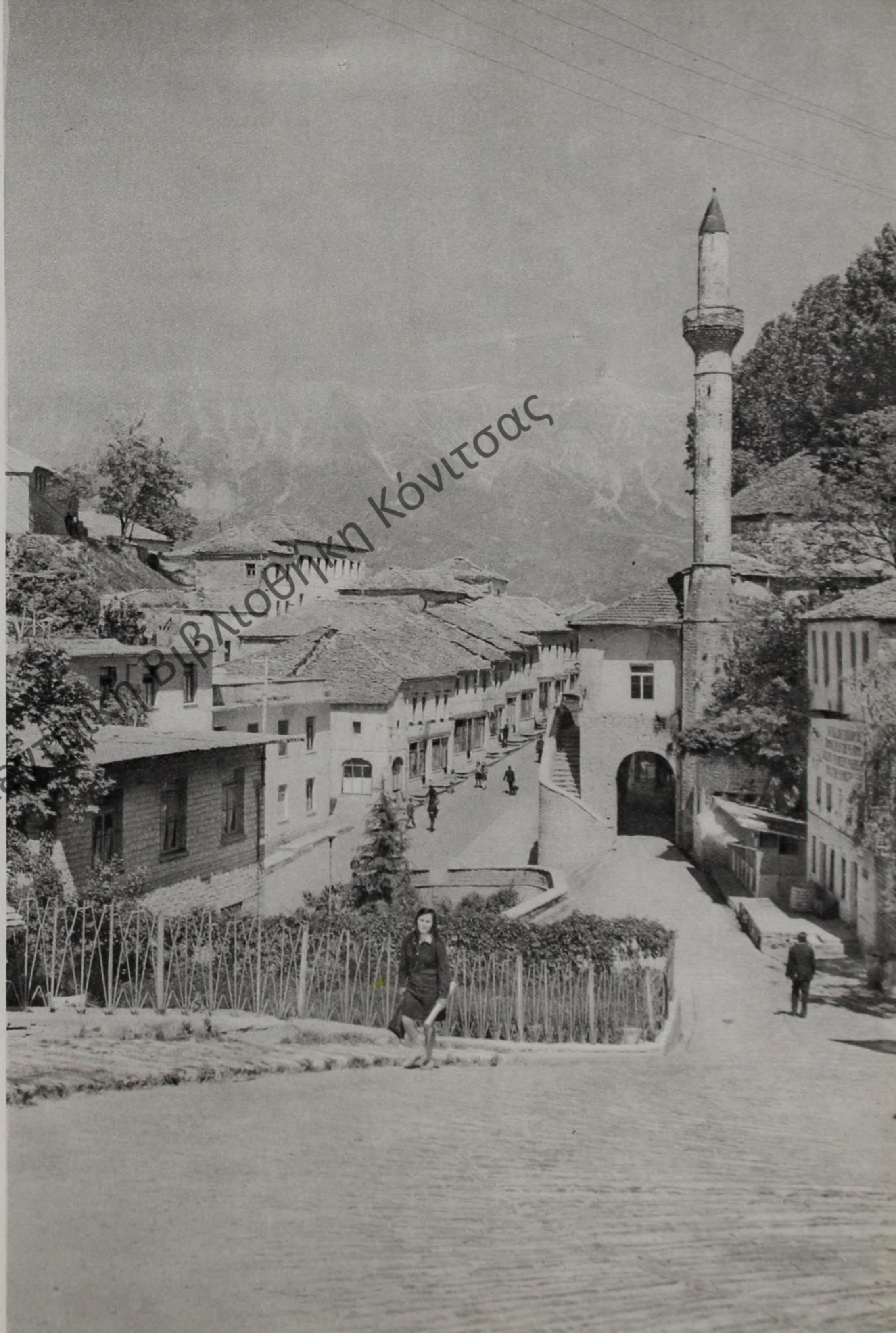


A street in the bazaar.



Επιμέλεια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

The church in the Varosh quarter, built in 1776 and rebuilt in 1833 after it was burned.

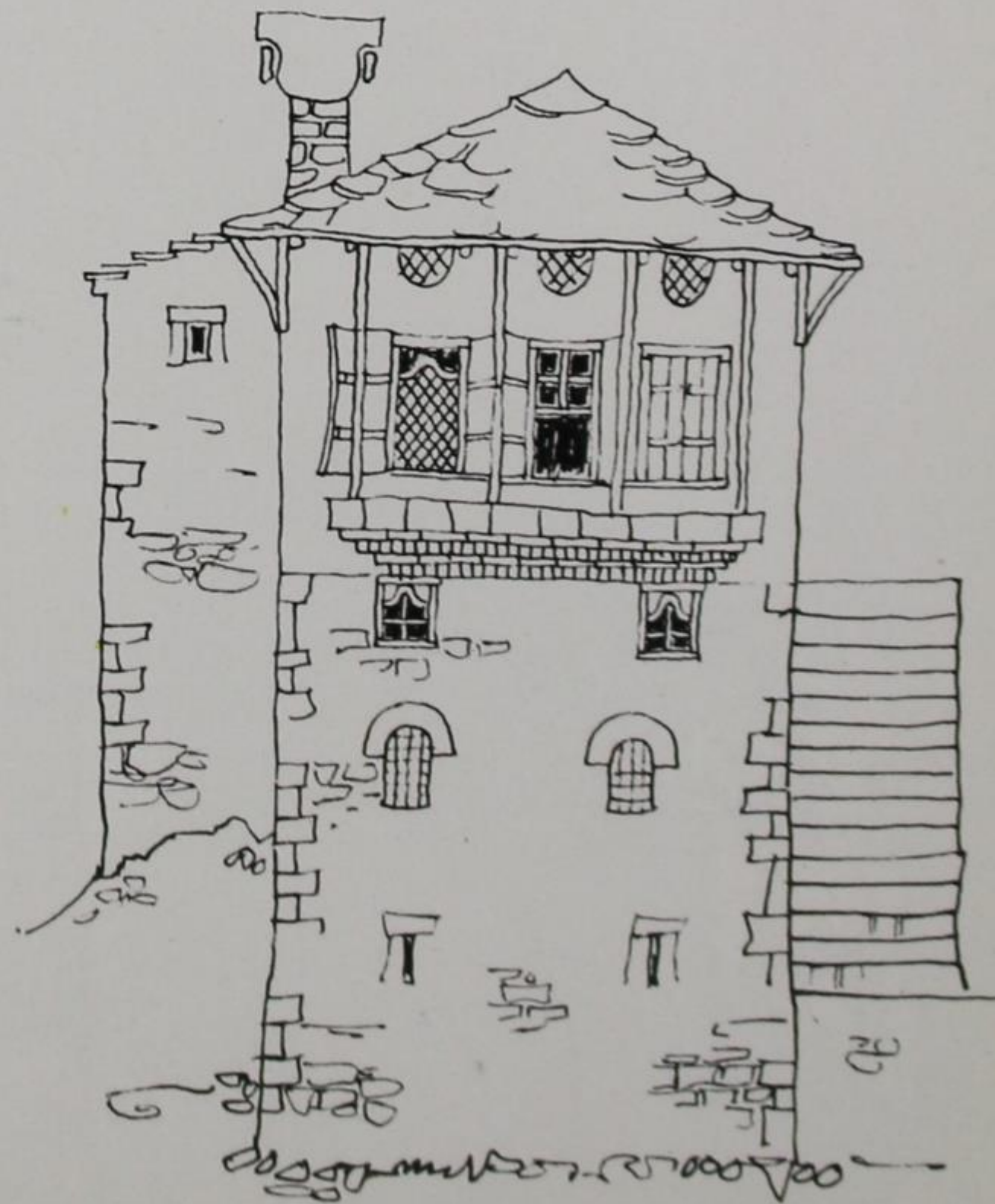


The Bazaar mosque, 1757.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



A three-storied dwelling-house of the perpendicular variant.



Δημόσια  
Ελένη Κόνιτσας



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



The Dunavat quarter, an one-flanked dwelling-house, 1824.

The Palorto quarter, a dwelling-house of the perpendicular variant (after its restoration).



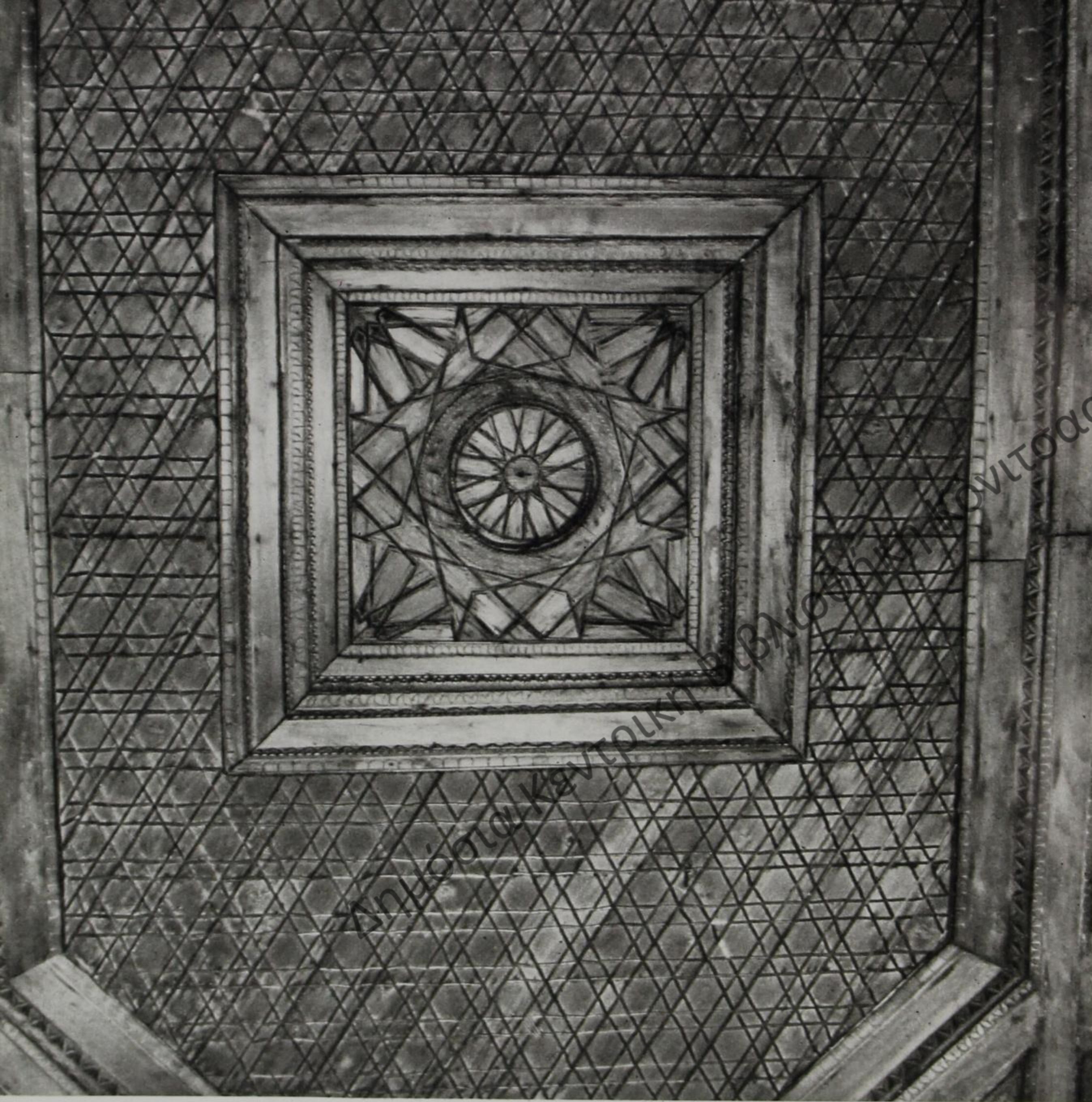


Decorative ceiling of a dwelling-house in the Mechite quarter, 1791.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Αθήνας

A gate of the year 1791.



A decorative ceiling, the second half of the  
18th century.



A decorative ceiling, the second half of the 18th century.

A depot in the form of a well, the Old Bazaar quarter.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

A two-flanked dwelling-house and *kame-  
rie*, the Tekke quarter.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



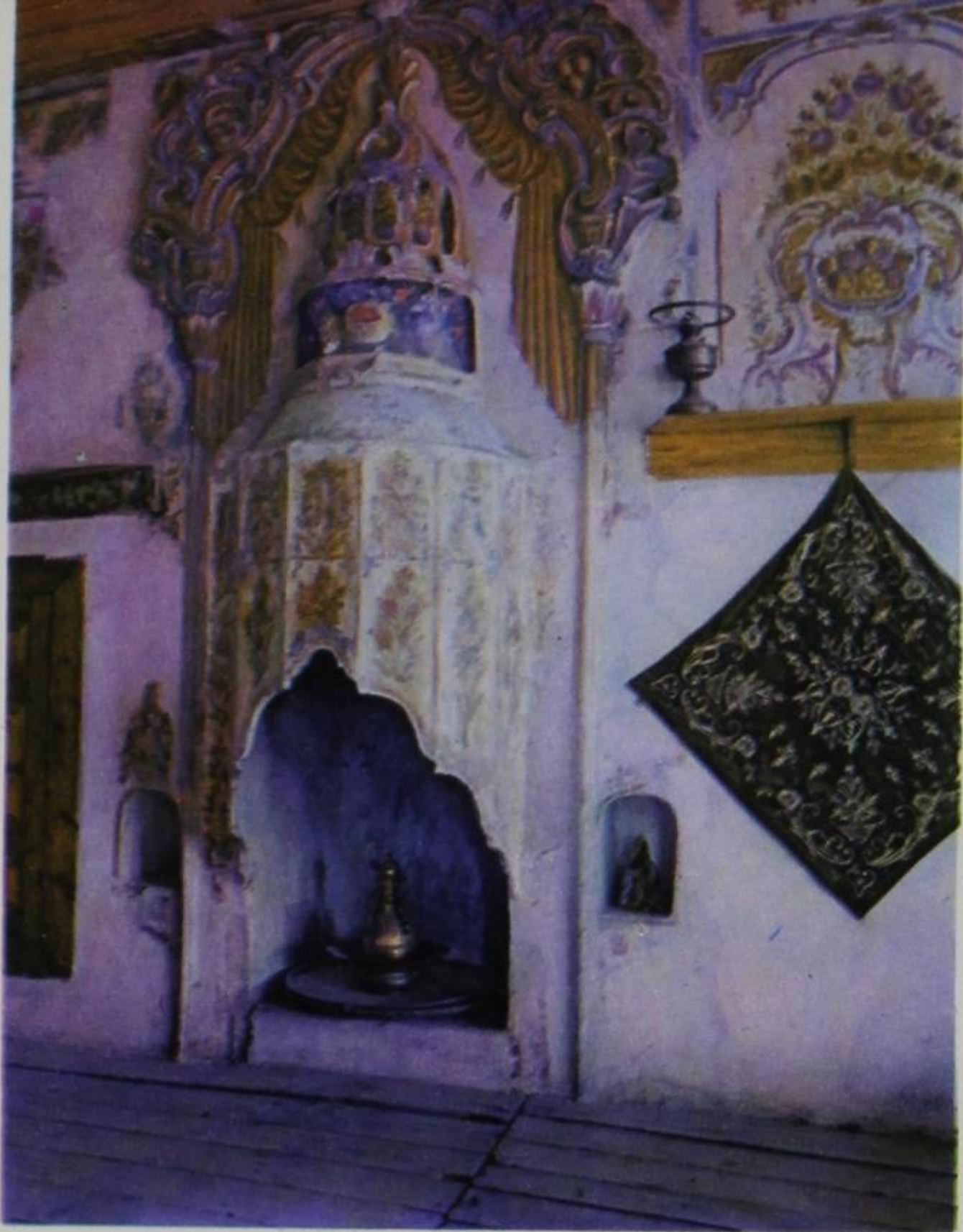


The Palorto quarter. A typical two-flanked dwelling-house and *kamerie*, the beginning of the 19th century.

The Palorto quarter. View of the Eastern outer gate (after its restoration).



Main view of the Palorto quarter (after its restoration).



The Palorto quarter. The decorative fireplace of the guest room.



The Palorto quarter. Mural painting in the drawing-room.



The Palorto quarter. The decorative ceiling of the corner of the drawing-room.



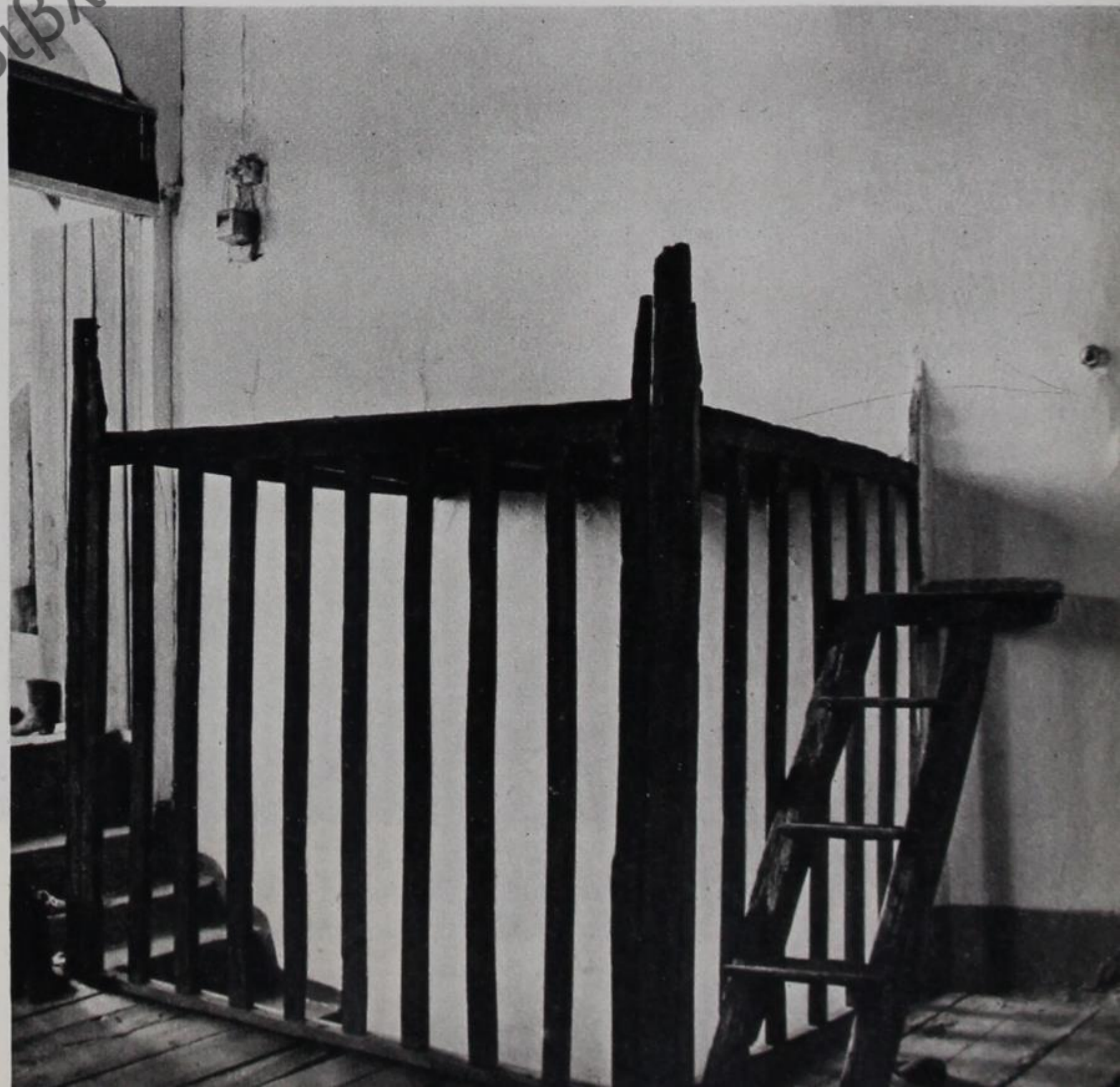


The Manalat quarter. A dwelling-house with closed *kamerie*, 1825.



The Manalat quarter. The inner doors leading to the veranda.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



The Manalat quarter. Tahtaposh over the cage of the staircase.



A partial view of two dwelling-houses in the Dunavat quarter.



A dwelling-house in the Varosh quarter,  
1821.



A dwelling-house in Varosh quarter. A view  
of the entrance hall.



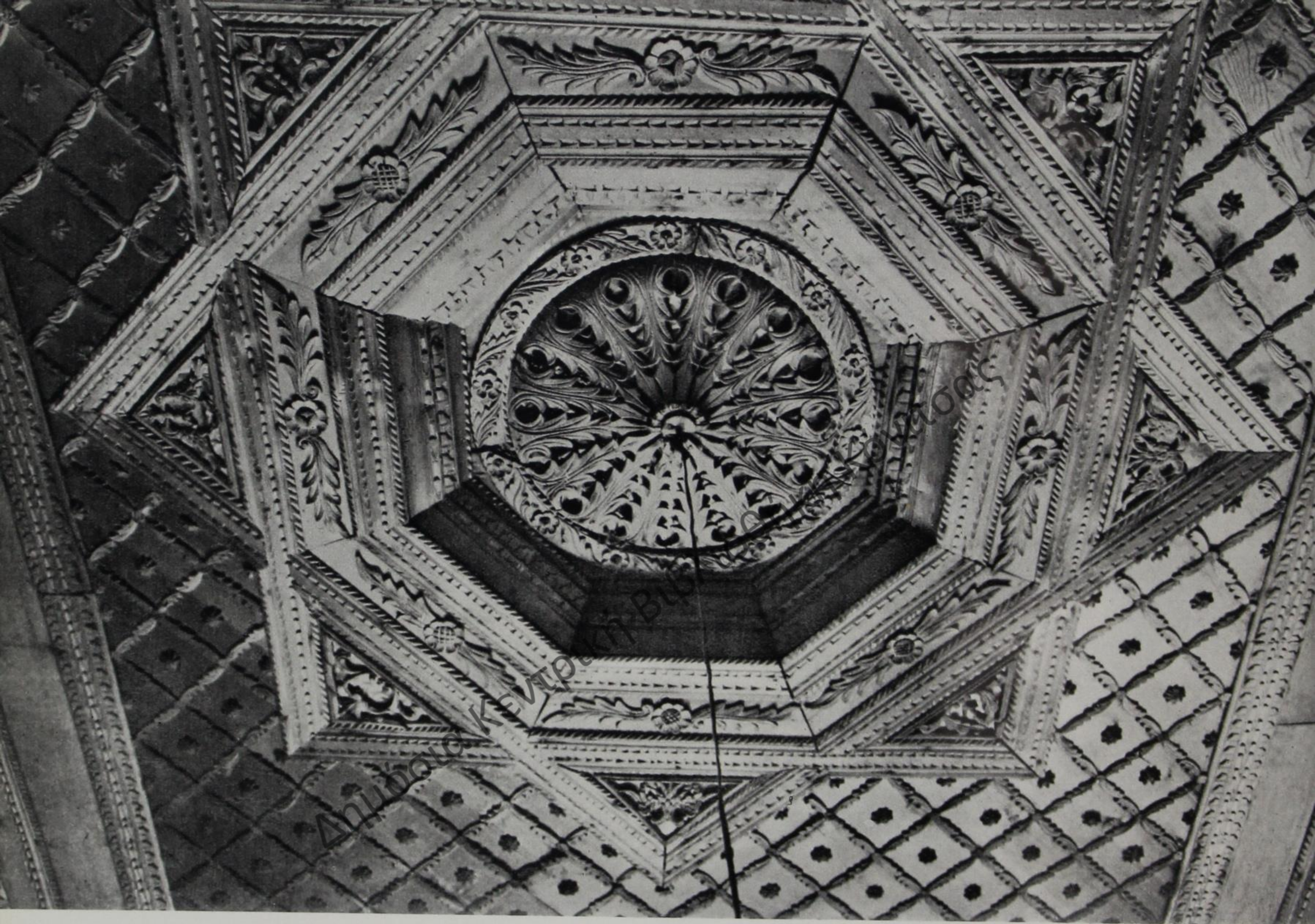
The Palorto quarter. A dwelling-house with closed *kamerie*, 1827.



The Palorto quarter. Mural paintings on the front wall of the guest room.



The Palorto quarter. Mural paintings in the outer wall in front of the *kamerie*,



The Palorto quarter. The ceiling rosette of the guest room.





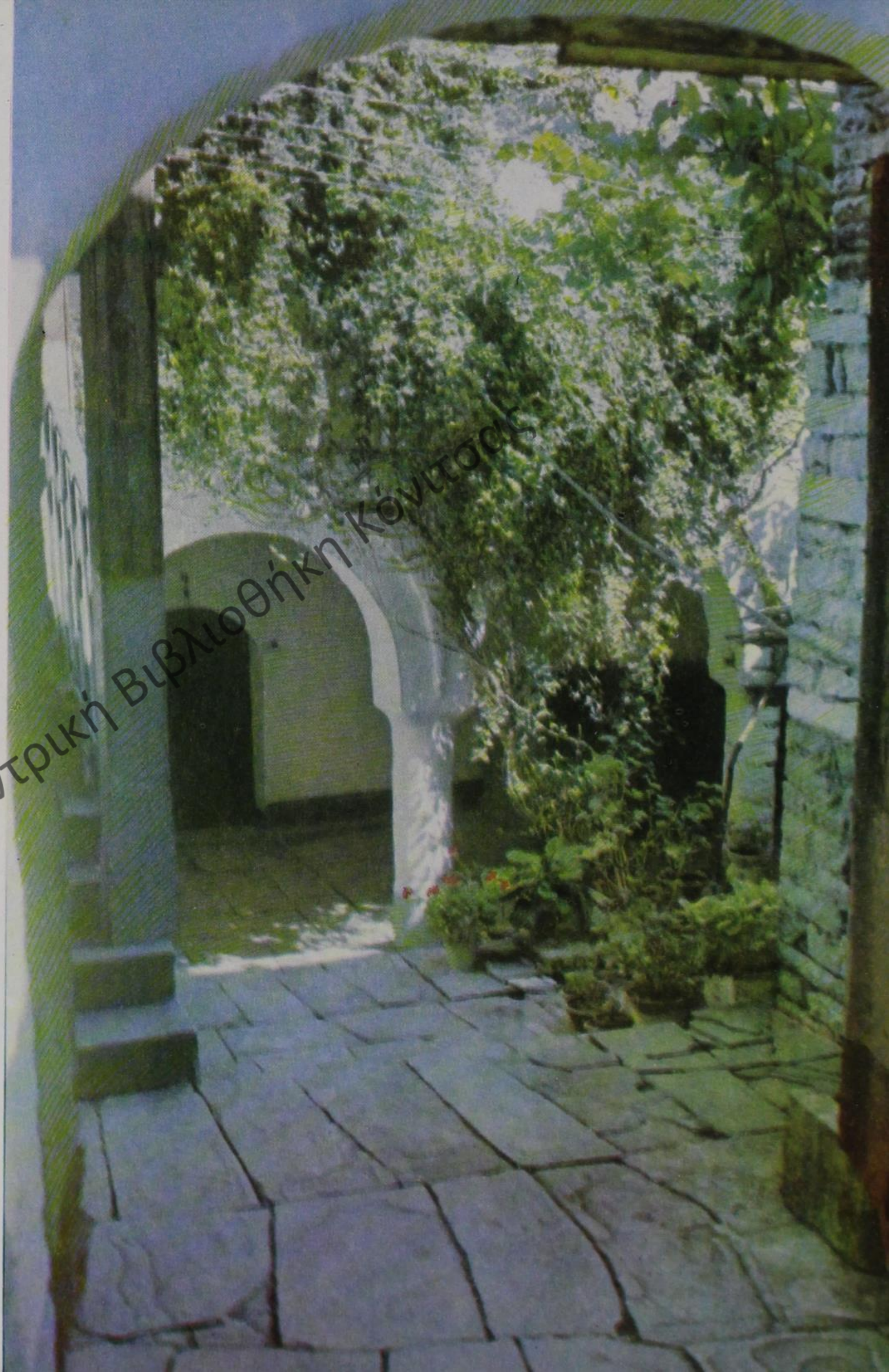
The Palorto quarter. A view of the guest room.

The Palorto quarter. The walled-in cupboard.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

The yard of a dwelling-house in the Old Bazaar quarter.





Ελληνική Βιβλιοθήκη

ie Dunavat quarter. An one-flanked dwell-  
g-house, the beginning of the 19th cen-  
ry.



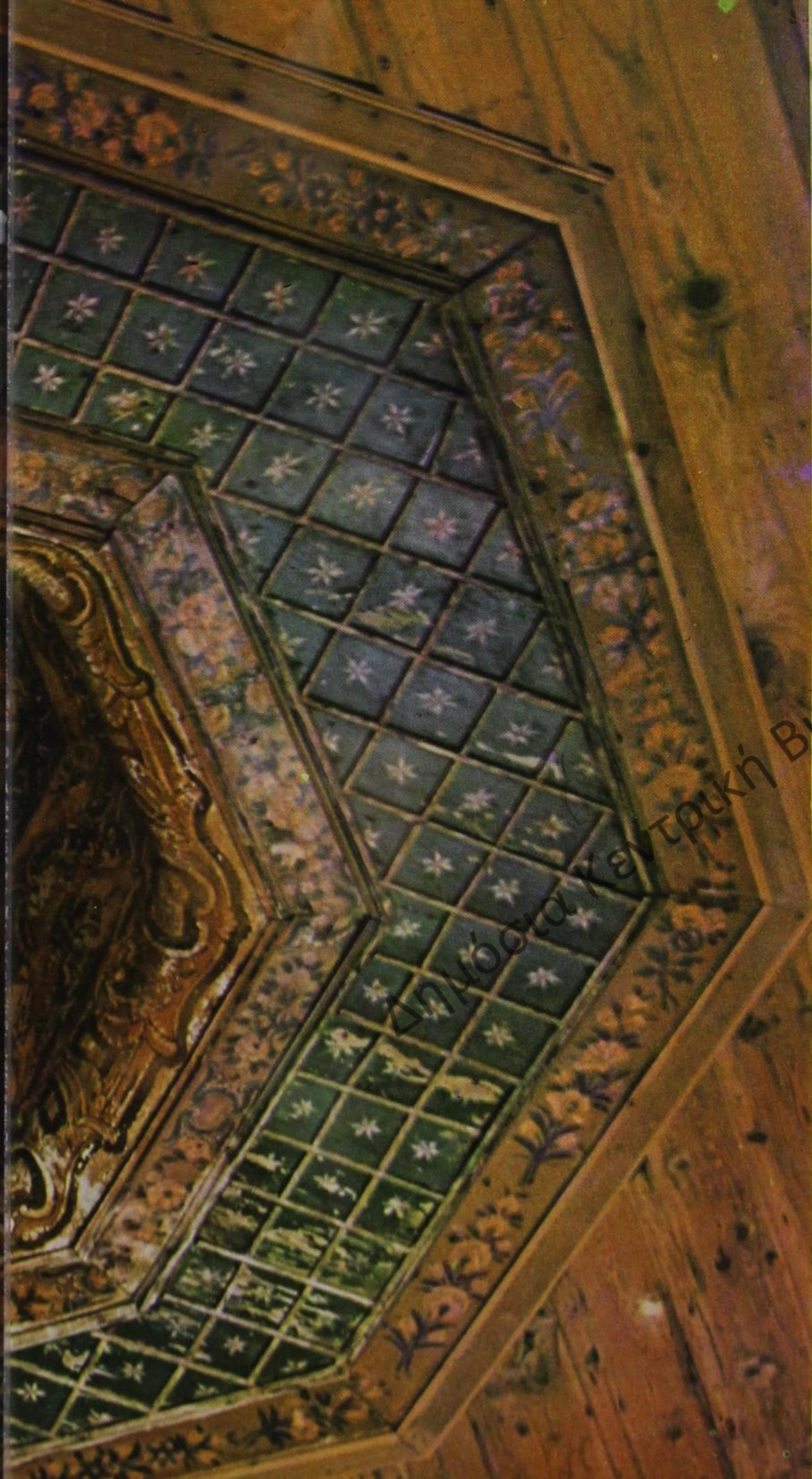
Δημόσια Κέντρο Βιβλίων

The Dunavat quarter. A wood-carved  
walled-in cupboard.



Η ΒΙΒΛΙΟΘΗΚΗ ΚΟΝΤΟΛΑΣ

Αίθρο



Εθνικό Κέντρο Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

The Dunavat quarter. The ceiling rosette of the guest room.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας





Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

The Dunavat quarter. Mural paintings in the guest room.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κονίτσας



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη

The Palorio quarter. A view of the frontal part of the divan.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας





Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

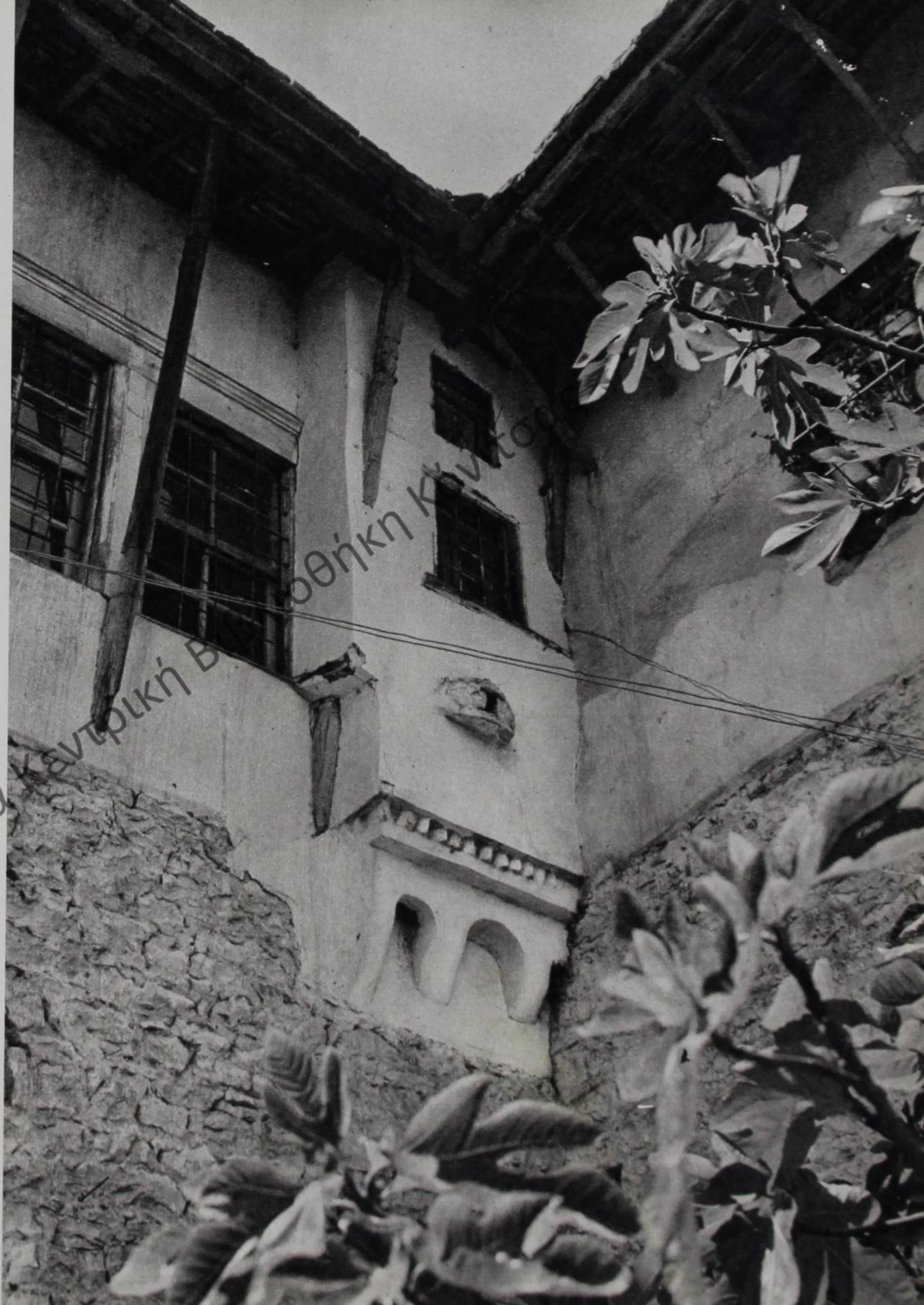
The Palorto quarter. A view of the sub-divan.

The Dunavat quarter. An one-flanked dwelling-house, built in 1831, rebuilt in 1865 and 1873.



Δημόσια Κ

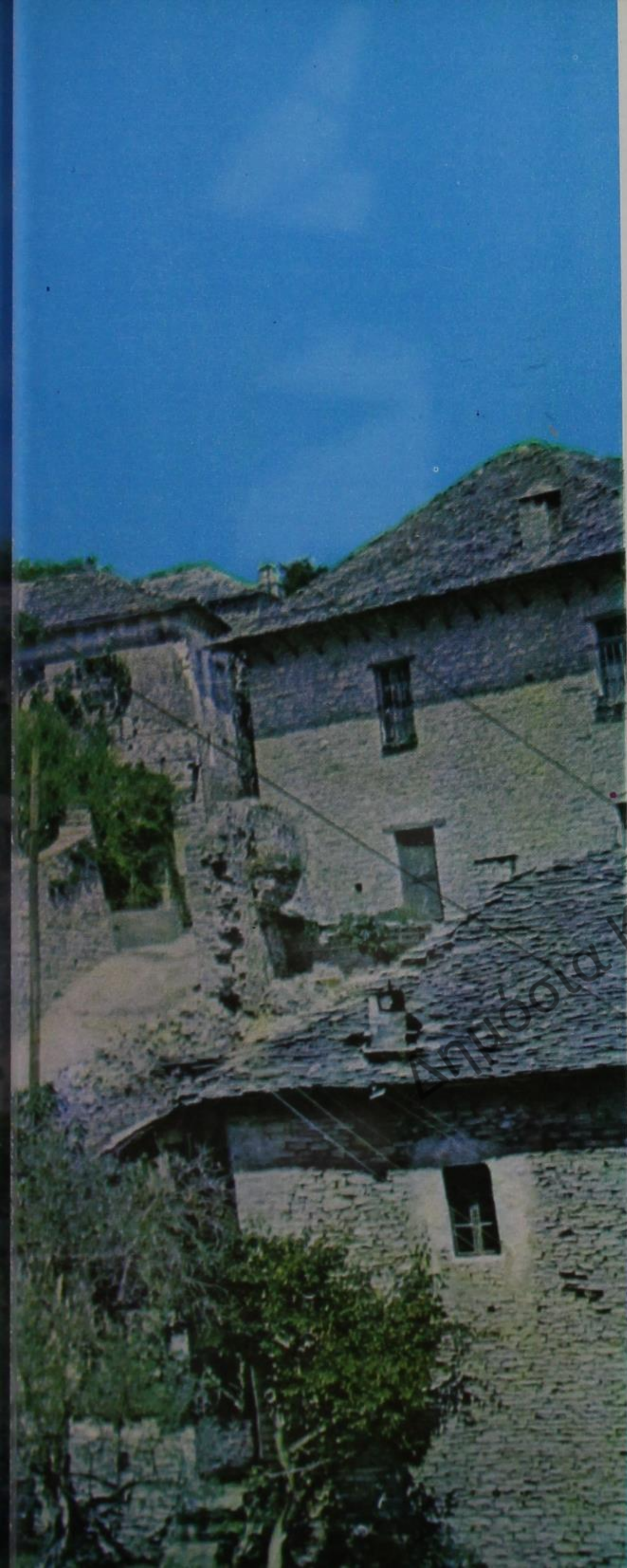
The Dunavat quarter A view of the sink of the divan.



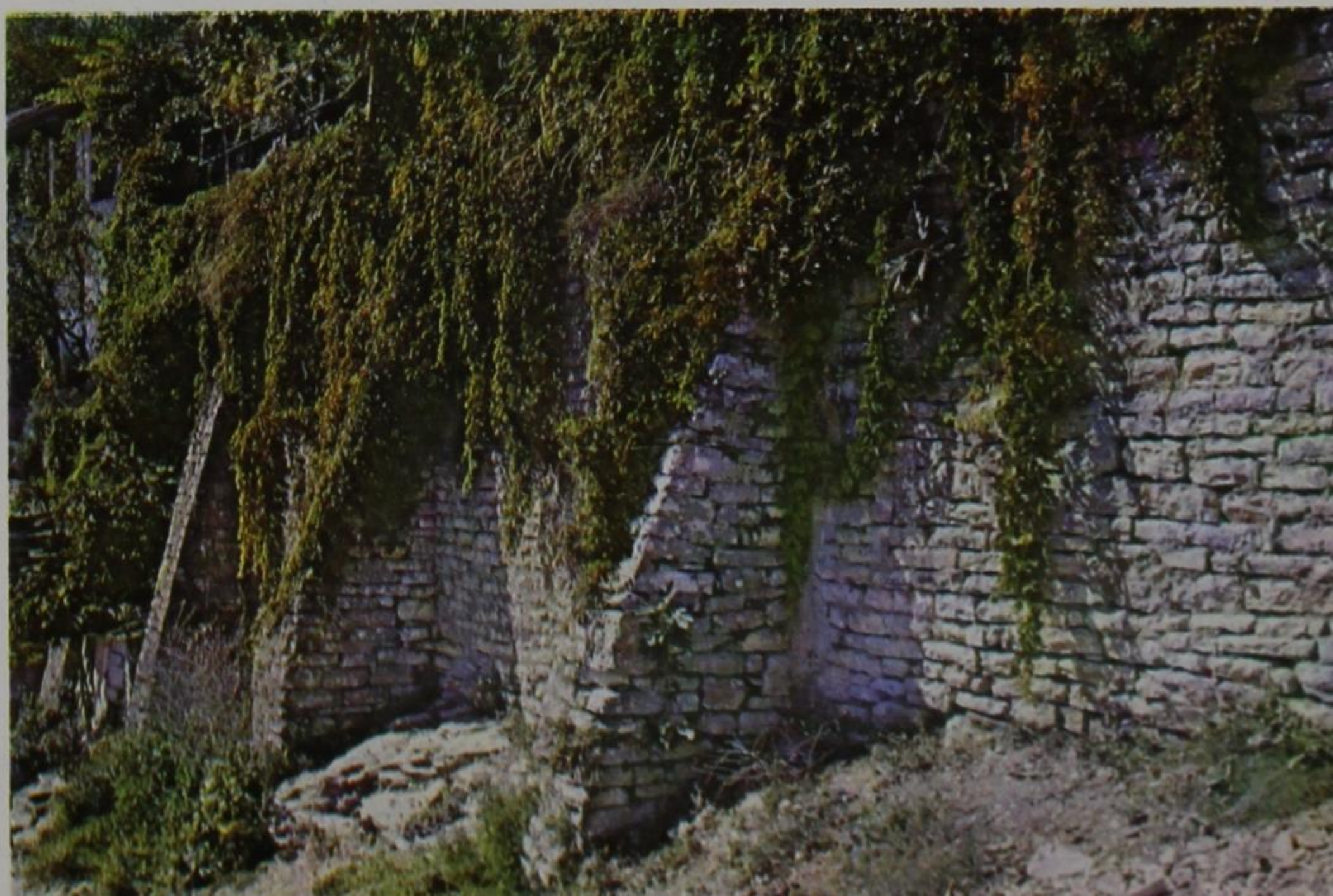


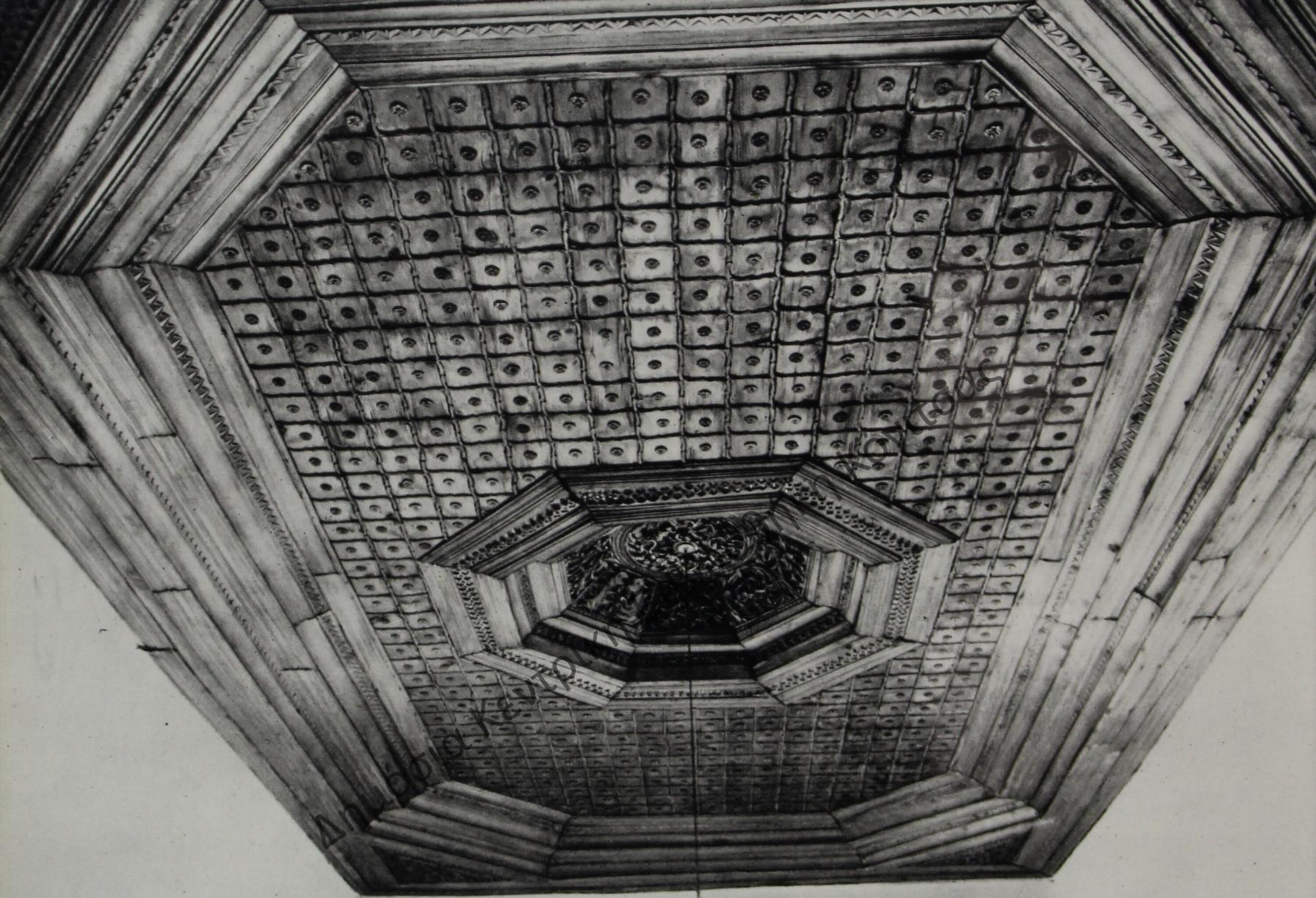


The Tekke quarter. An one-flanked dwelling-house, the beginning of the 19th century.



The Tekke quarter. The buttressed surrounding wall.

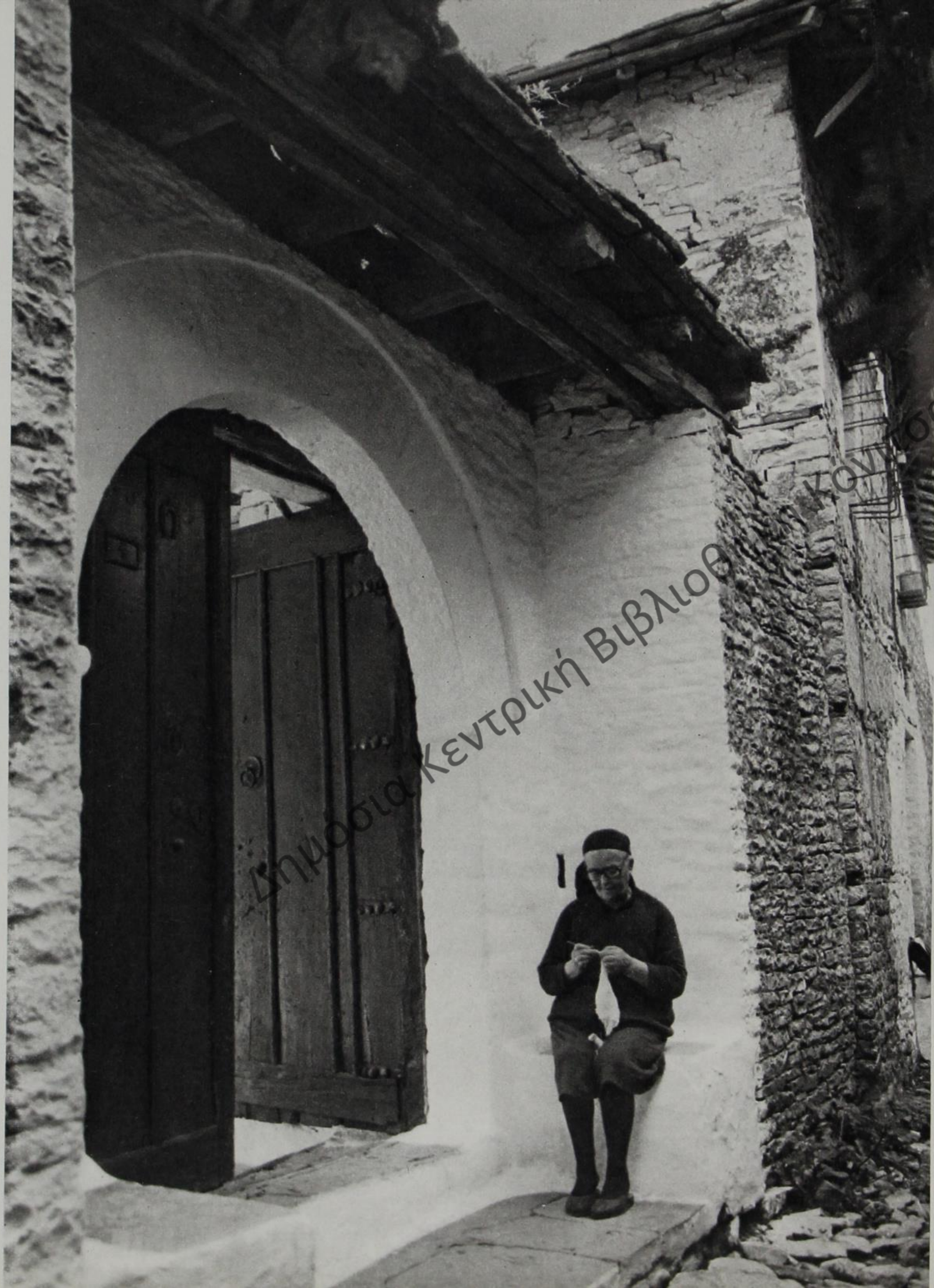




The decorative ceiling of the guest room, the beginning of the 19th century.

A ceiling rosette, the beginning of the 19th century.





Outer door in the Mechite quarter.



The Palorto quarter. A two-flanked dwelling-house, 1823.

The Palorto quarter.  
Partial view of the ve-  
randa.





The Palorto quarter. View of a door.







The Palorto quarter. The *musandër-dhipato* complex in the drawing room.

The Palorto quarter. The ceilings of the guest room.



Outer door in the Old Bazaar quarter.



The Dunavat quarter. An one-flanked dwelling-house, reconstructed in 1838.



The Dunavat quarter. Window of the divan.

The Dunavat quarter. The guest room.



Δημοτική Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



The Dunavat quarter. A wall-  
ed-in cupboard.

The headwater from the de-  
pot.





Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κωνσταντίας

A detail of the *musandër-dhipato* complex.

The Dunavat quarter. The *musandër-dhipato* complex, in the guest room.



The coffee-stone grinder in a Gjirokastra dwelling-house.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κοιτσάς



Partial view of an one-flanked dwelling-house in the Dunavat quarter, 1872.



The characteristic chimney  
of Gjirokastra.



Εθνική Κόνιτσα

A cellar window.

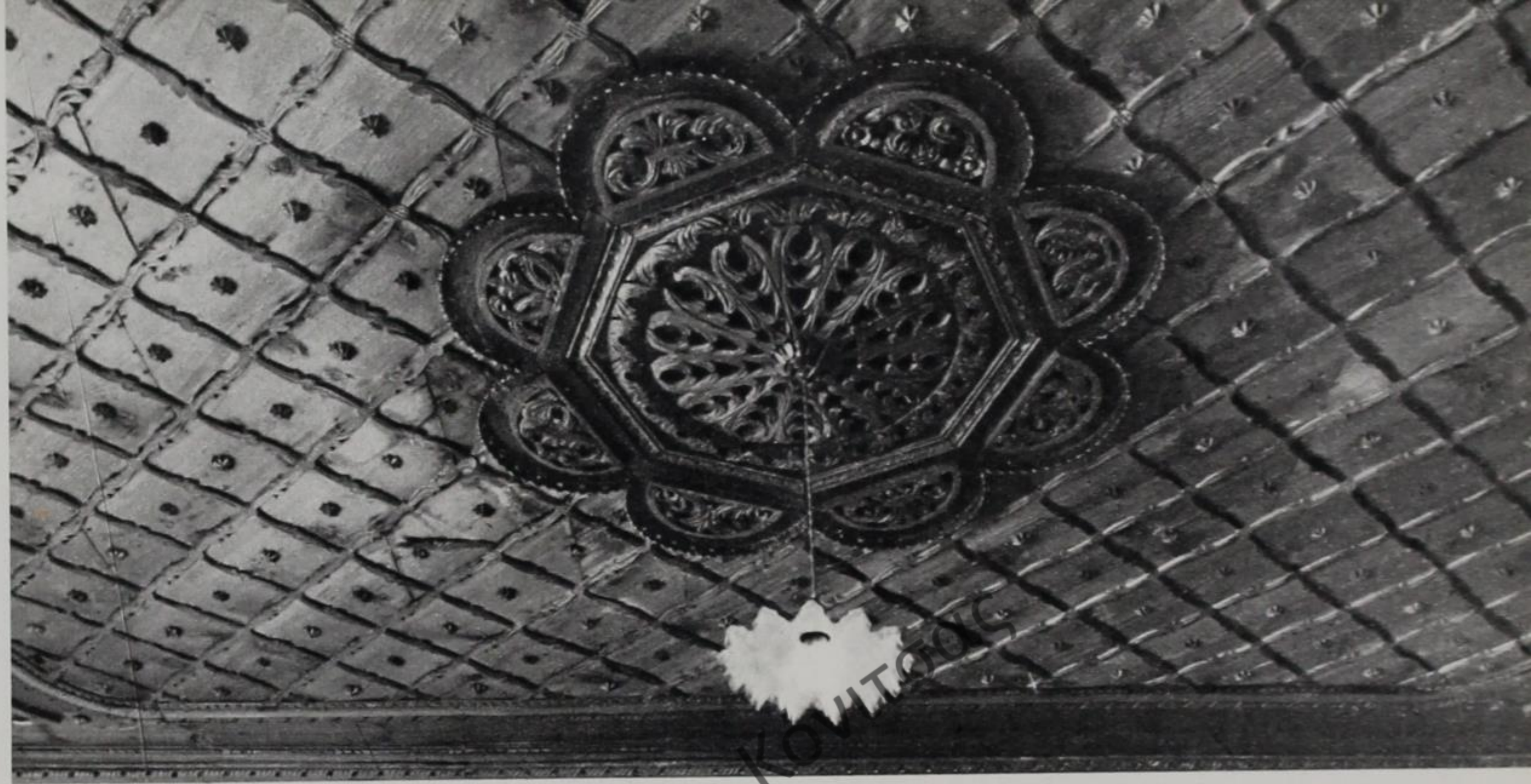


The headwater from the depot in the form  
of a well.

The Palorio quarter. An one-flanked dwelling-house, 1879.

A view of a chimney (fire-place).





The Palorto quarter. The ceiling of the drawing-room.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη ΚΟΝΙΤΣΟΥ



A walled-in cupboard.

A dwelling-house for two brothers in the Tekke quarter, 1881.

Vaulted gate.







The Mechite quarter. View of a room, year 1891-1892.



A knocker.



A lock.



An inner door secured by an horizontal bolt.



gas



A couple of chimneys.





Outer door, the Cfaka quarter.



A view of a garden in the suburb of the  
Dunavat quarter.



Δημόσια



A door of the second yard.

Outer door, the Cfaka quarter.





A headwater from the depot,  
in the form of a well.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη  
Πόντισσας



Outer door, the Cfaka quarter.

Street in the Dunava quarter.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

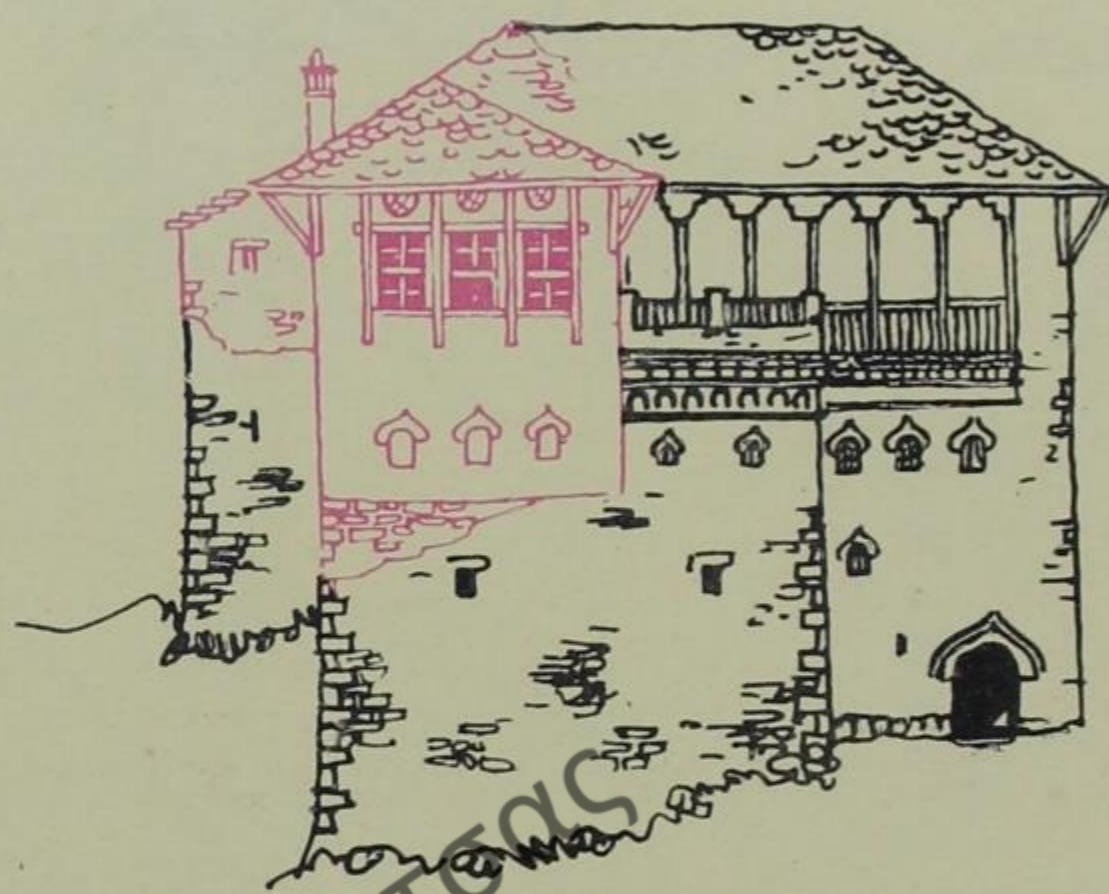


Surrounding yard wall.



The Dunavat quarter. A dwelling-house with the form of a bow-window in the ground floor, year 1889.





Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

Restoration








Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

QYTETI MUZE I  
*Gjirokastrës*

PLANI I ZONIFIKIMIT TE QENDRES HISTORIK

SHK. 1 : 5 0 0

*Legjenda*

-  ZONA MUZE E QENDRES HISTORIKE
-  ZONA E MBROJTJES E QENDRES HISTORIKE
-  ZONA E LIRI
-  ZONA E MBROJTUR NUK LEJOHET NDERTIMI
-  ZONA E ZHVILLIMIT TE QYTETIT
-  IDEM - QE MER PARAS PAMJEN E QENDRES HISTORIKE
-  ZONA E GJELBER

The zoning plan of the Gjirokastra museum city.



«The Bazaar Pass» (after its restoration).

«The Bazaar Pass» (during its restoration).





Δημοτικό Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

A dwelling-house of the year 1822 in the Palatio quarter (before its restoration).



A dwelling-house of the year 1822 in the Palatio quarter (after its restoration).



Δημόσια Κέντρο Βιβλιοθήκη Κονίτσας



A dwelling-house in the Tekke quarter  
(during its restoration).

A dwelling-house in the Tekke quarter (before its restoration).



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας





A dwelling-house in the Dunavat quarter,  
1879 (after its restoration).

Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

A dwelling-house in the Dunavat quarter,  
1879 (before its restoration).



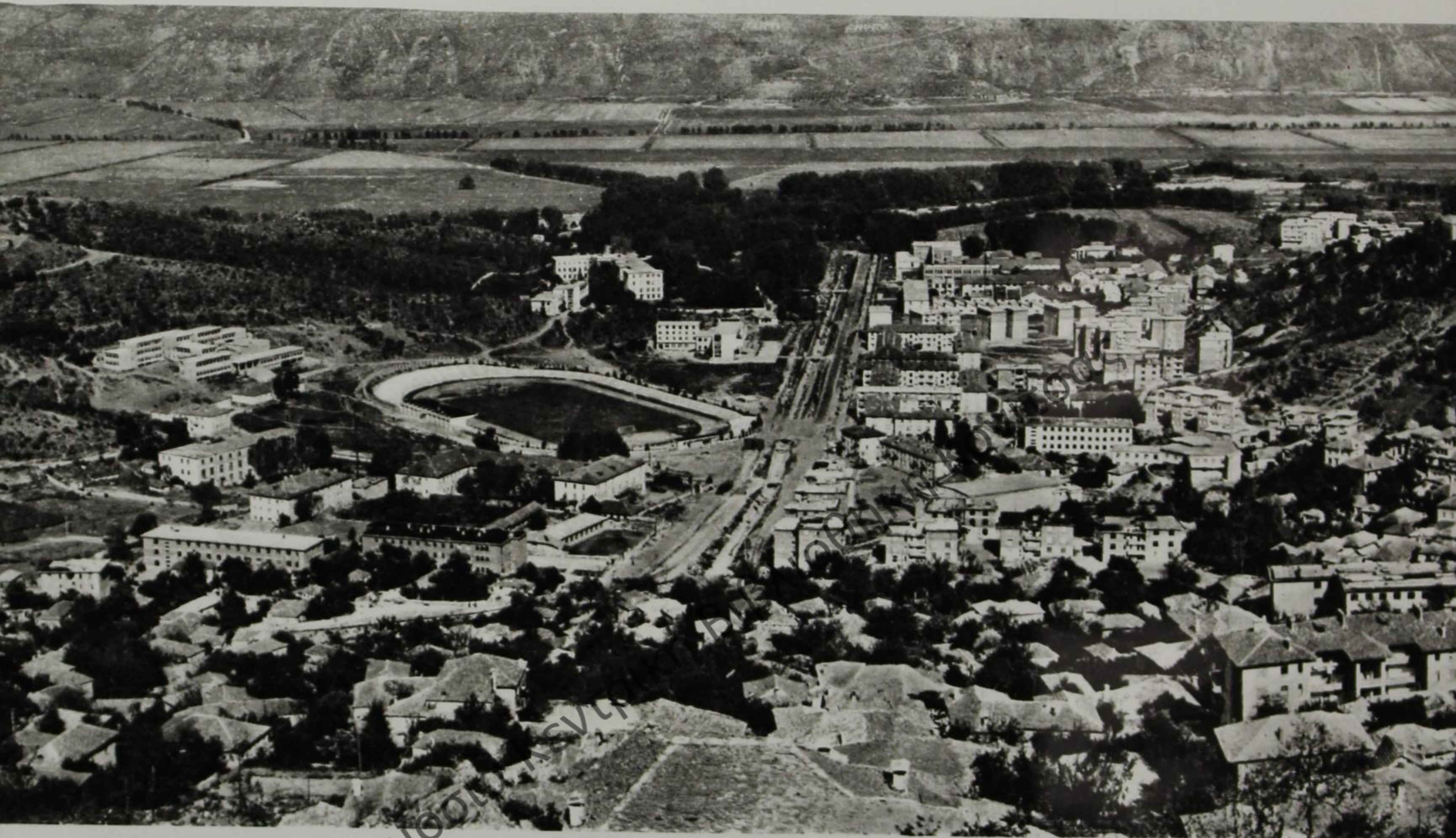




A dwelling-house in the Tekke quarter  
(after its restoration).



A dwelling-house in the Tekke quarter (before its restoration).



Δημοσιεύσει



A general view of the city.



The Higher Pedagogical Institute.



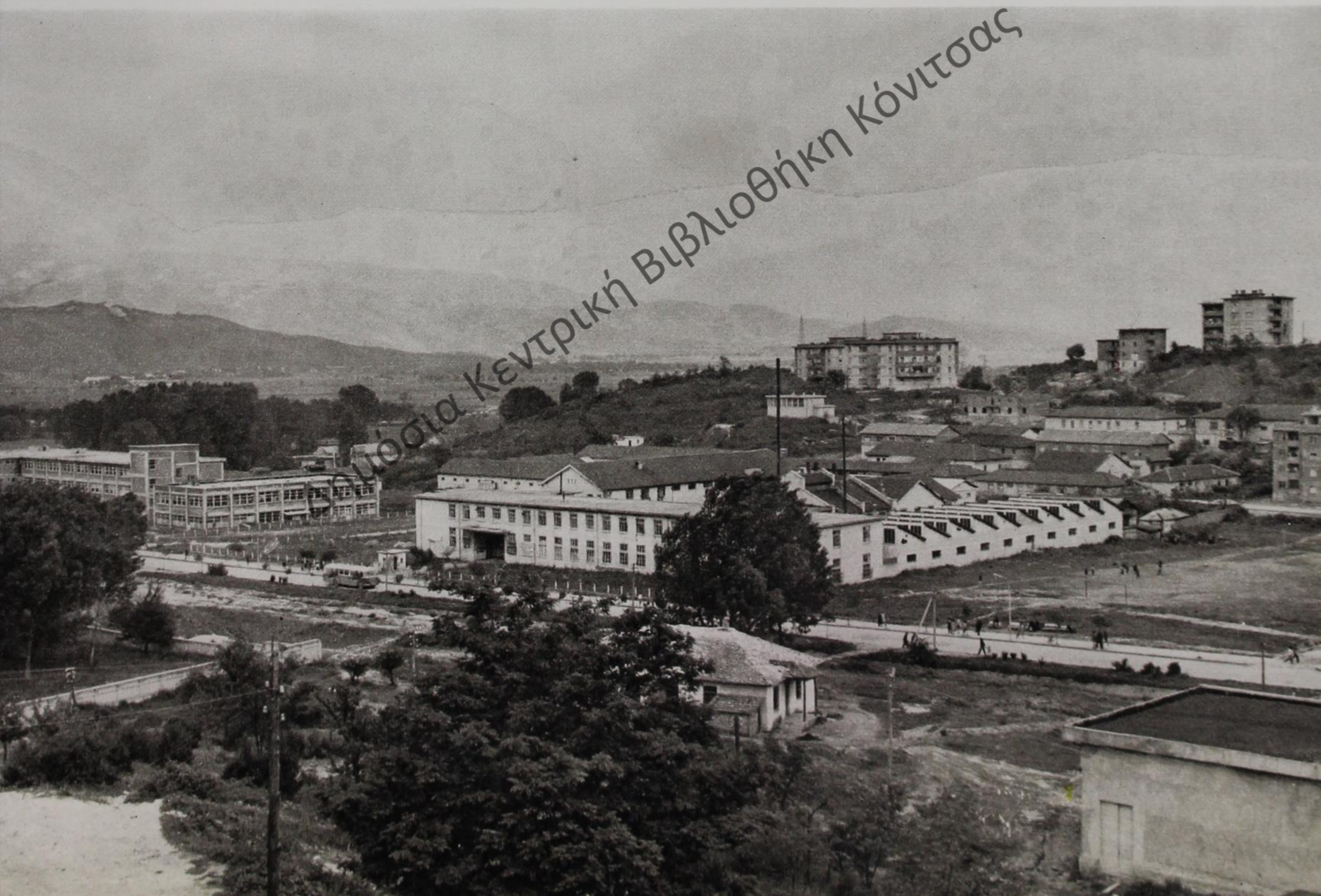
The Higher Pedagogical Institute. Students practising in the physics laboratory.



New constructions in the free zone of the museum city.



A view of the metal-products plant.





The «A. Z. Çajupi» tourist Hotel.



New constructions in the free zone.



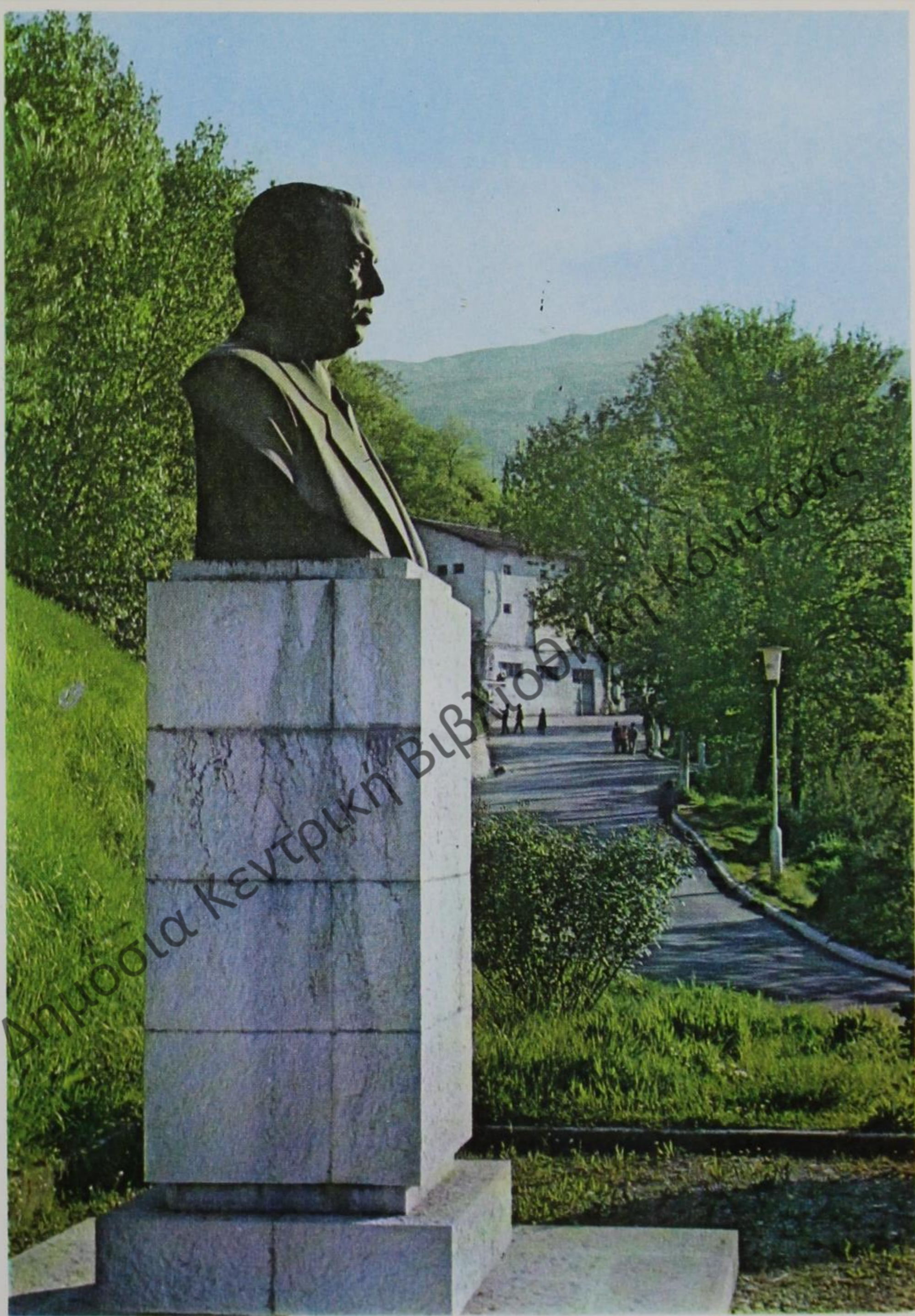
-Subi Bakiri- Stadium.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόντσας



Historical monuments

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



**The bust of Comrade Enver Hoxha at the entrance to the city.**





The dwelling-house of the Topulli brothers,  
turned into an historic museum (after its  
restoration).



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

The entrance to the dwelling-house of the  
Topulli brothers.





The dwelling-house of the Topulli brothers,  
the *musandër-dhipato* complex of the guest  
room.



The dwelling-house of the Topulli brothers.  
A view of the divan.



The monument to Çerçiz Topulli, fighter of the Renaissance.



The building where the Albanian League of Prizren was convened on June 22, 1880.

The obelisk dedicated to the pioneers of Albanian education, school and language.



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

PIONIERE TE  
TE GJUHES SHOIBE  
DE NE VITETE  
EMETATE ROBERISE  
MBAJTEN GJALLE  
DASHURINE PER  
LIRI  
ARSIN  
KULTURE

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



A partial view of the obelisk.



The folklore group of the Gjirokastra old men.





The "Drita" political club founded on November 5, 1908, and the "Lirija" school, May 19, 1908.

The "Lirija" school, turned into a museum.





The «Drita» political club, turned into a museum.



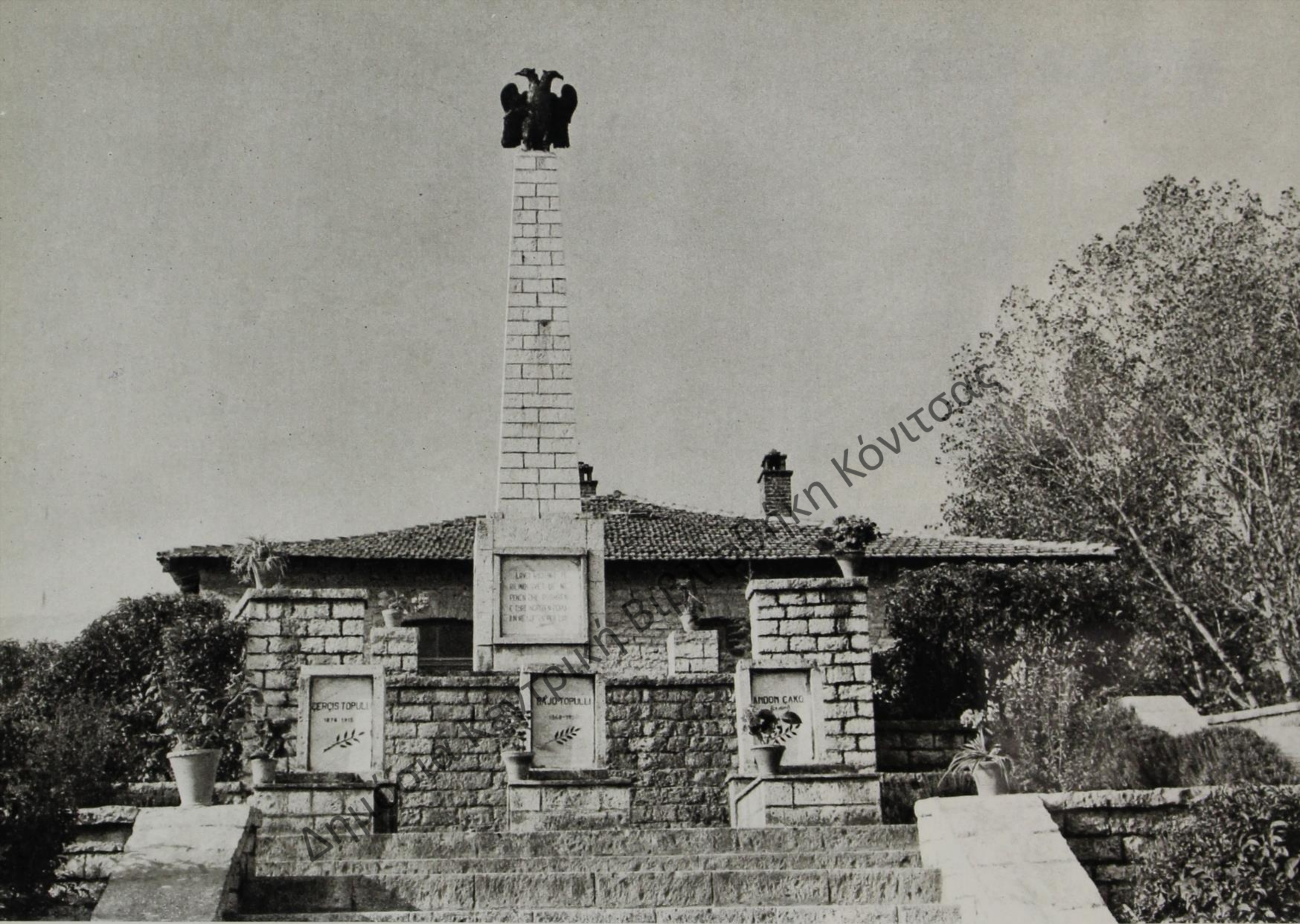
The former seat of the «Kundra Bastiljes» society, March 26, 1921, and the «Shpresa» moccasin-makers club, transformed into museums.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

The balcony of the «Shpresa» moccasin-makers club from where Avni Rustemi addressed the Gjirokastra people in January 1921.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας





The graves of the patriots and fighters of the Renaissance Bajo Topulli, Çerçiz Topulli and Andon Z. Çajupi.



The museum room of the people's teacher  
Thoma Papapano.



The National Liberation War Museum of the former Gjirokastra Region.



Εθνική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

Δημόσια



The National Liberation War Museum of the former Gjirokastra Region, (during visits).

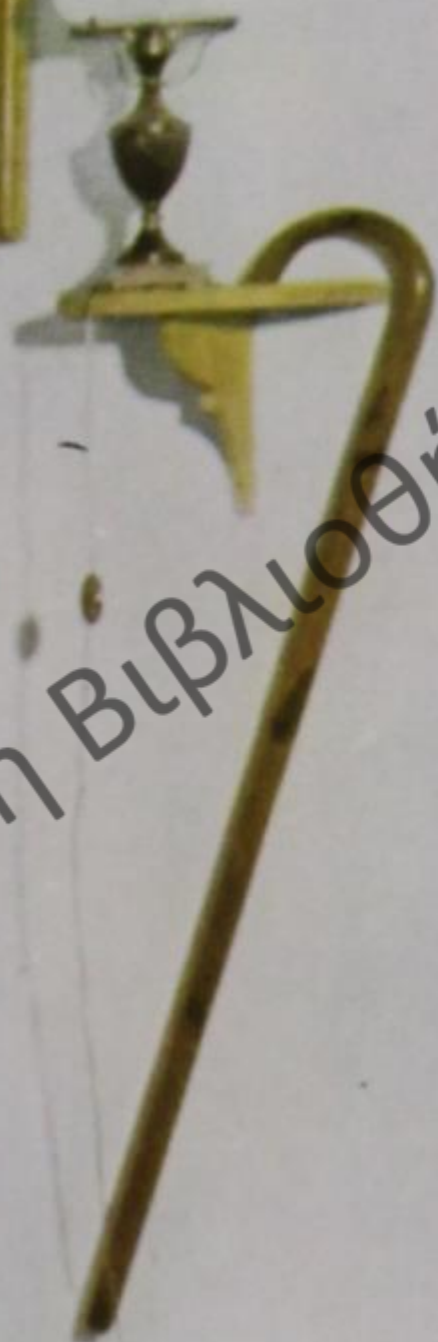




One of the halls of the National Liberation War Museum of the former Gjirokastra Region, (during visits).

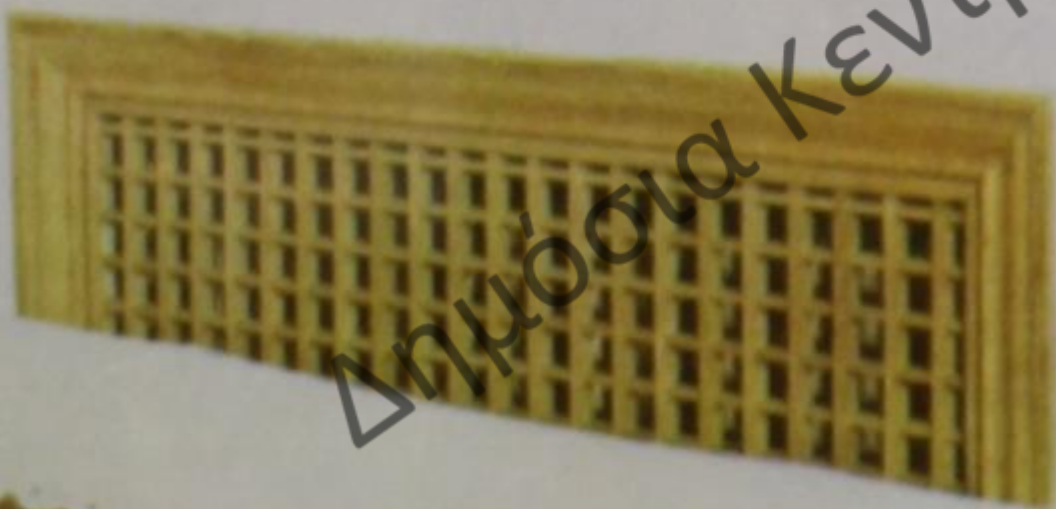
Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

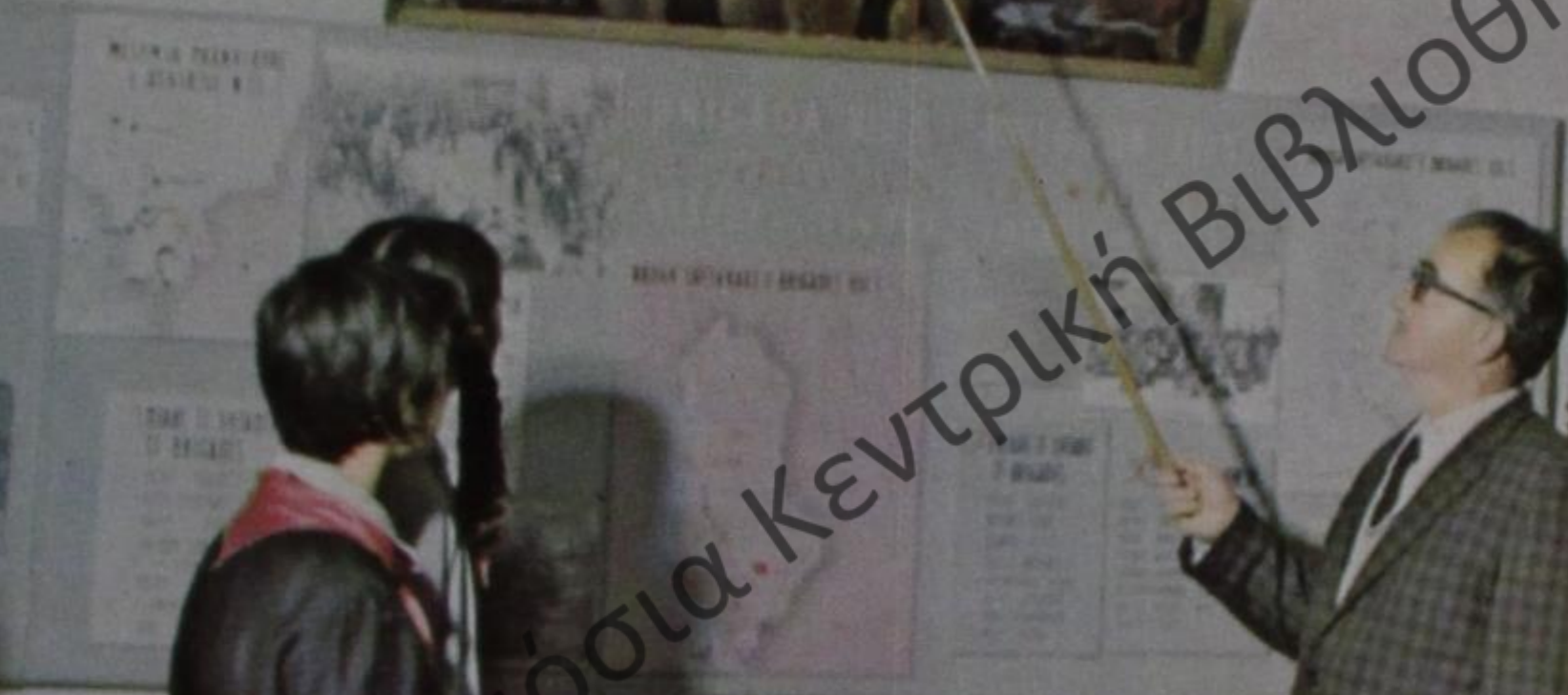
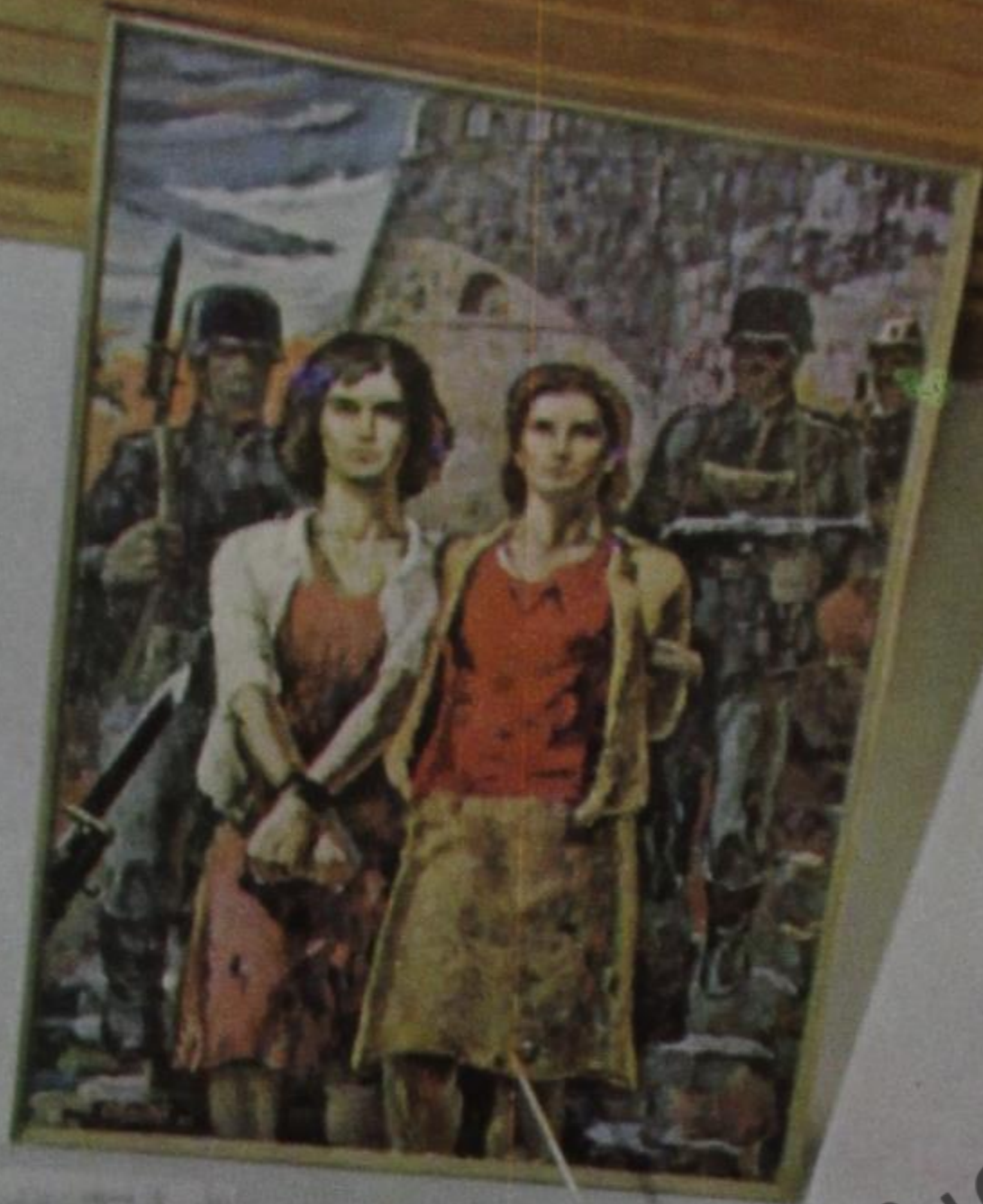




The room where Comrade Enver Hoxha, the great leader of the Party and the Albanian people, was born.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας





Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

One of the halls of the National Liberation War Museum of the former Gjirokastra Region, (during visits).



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κομπότσας



ΜΕ 6 ΜΑΡΣ 1942

ΜΧΕΝΕΣΤΙΠΗ  
ΜΕΣΟΥΣΙΤ

Ε ΓΥΜΝΑΖΙΤ

ΠΙΠΕΡΙΚΩΣΗΝ

ΜΕΤΟΝΚΑΙΤ  
Ε ΦΑΣΙΖΜΙΤ

Δημοσία Κ  
Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

◀ The memorial dedicated to the clash of the pupils and teachers of the higher school with the fascist forces.



The memorial dedicated to the resistance against the na-zi-fascist occupiers.





Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

The bust  
of the heroines  
Bule Naipi  
and Persefoni Kokēdhima.



The central hall of the National Museum of Arms in the city castle.

**POPULLI  
SHQIPTAR  
E KA ÇARE  
RRUGEN E  
HISTORISE  
ME SHPATE  
NE DORE.**

**ENVER**



A view from the entrance to the National  
Museum of Arms.



Windows with Medieval weapons.



One of the halls of the National Museum of Arms, (during visits).



The hall with the arms used during the National Liberation War.



Paying homages to the martyrs' graves on May 5, the day of the martyrs of the National Liberation War.

Fresh flowers on the martyrs' graves.







Commemorating events of the National Liberation War.



The memorial dedicated to the martyrs of the Hazmurat quarter who fell during the National Liberation War.



The memorial dedicated to the martyrs of the Dunavat quarter who fell during the National Liberation War.

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

The memorial dedicated to the martyrs of the Palorto quarter who fell during the National Liberation War.





The memorial dedicated to the martyrs of the Varosh quarter, who fell during the National Liberation War.



ΛΑΪΚΟ ΔΕΣΜΩΡΩΝ ΤΕ ΛΥΤΕΣ ΝΟΙ  
ΤΕ ΛΑΪΚΕΣ ΜΑΝΕΛΑΤ.

ΜΟΥΣΑΦΕΡ ΑΒΡΑΜ	ΕΜΒΛΗ	ΜΑΡΤΙ
ΕΛΙΑΣ ΧΑΜΑΝ	ΣΑΗ	ΣΙΕΝ
ΖΗΝΕΛ ΒΑΛΕΝ	ΚΑΡ	ΜΑΝ
ΣΙΜΩΝ ΒΑΛΕΝ	ΜΑΡΤΙ	ΚΑΡ
ΜΑΡ ΒΑΒ	ΚΟΥ	ΣΑΡ
ΓΑΛΛ ΑΒΡΑΜ	ΥΕΛ	ΚΟΥ
ΙΩΣΗΦ ΛΕΝ	ΑΝ	ΟΛΛ
ΖΕΦ ΒΑΒ	ΣΑΛ	ΟΛΛ
ΜΕΛ ΒΑΒ	ΜΑΝ	ΟΛΛ

The memorial dedicated to the martyrs of the Manalat quarter who fell during the National Liberation War.



A bird's eye view of the museum city.



INSTITUTION OF THE MONUMENTS OF CULTURE

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

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Ε 24

Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας

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Tirazhi 5000 kopie      Format 78x109/12      Stash: 2204-72

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KOMBINATI POLIGRAFIK – Shtypshkronja e Re  
Tiranë, 1978



Δημόσια Κεντρική Βιβλιοθήκη Κόνιτσας



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