

MUNICIPALITY OF PYLAROS



WALKING TRAIL "AGIA EFIMIA TARKASATA"

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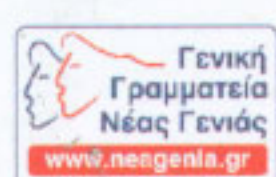
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Tarkasata is one of the villages of Pylaros that was struck by the earthquake in August 1953. After the destruction its residents abandoned it in order to settle in more safe places such as Agia Efimia and Drakopoulata. The village Tarkasata was created in 1800 in order to protect the residents from the pirates. In another opinion, this village was created by the workers of Themata Monastery. Up to 1946 the village was inhabited roughly by 80 residents. Later

came the Italian and German possession, the guerrilla war, the deportation. Certain residents did not return. They remained in new places. The 1953 earthquakes were the main cause of devastation of this village. So, the last, 55-60 residents that had remained in Tarkasata, abandoned it. Today Tarkasata belong to the place of historical memory.



• Point 6 «Elements of identity»

We follow the dirt road, and we pass by the pinfolds. Pinfolds were of great significance for the formation of local animal husbandry and have provided a shelter for the stockbreeder's activities and efforts. As we keep walking, we come across the remains of the old church of the village. The church in the Greek hamlets has always been something like a symbol; an element of their identity. Likewise, God had once found home in these remains, a meeting-point with his believers, where he would collect their prayers and take away their fears (**foto 7**).

• Point 7 «The cross-road»

At this point the hiking route cuts the asphalt road that goes to Themata, the historical monastery of Pylaros.

• Points 8-9 «just before the end»

Having left behind us the cross-road, we now direct towards the end of the route. Ruins of a hut and some more threshing floors are to be found next (**fotos 8,9**). Reaching the ending-point of the trek, I believe is quite obvious to everyone by now, that "what really matters is the journey itself and not the destination". The association with the landscape, the flora and the remains is an excellent opportunity to really meet Pylaros.

• Point 10 «the end»

Our trek ends at the point that meets the flourished trail Drakopoulata-Themata-Agia Dynati. It is possible for the visitor to go left, towards Agia Dynati-Themata, or walk towards Drakopoulata, to the right. These two routes are both described in details in the affined leaflets. Any direction you choose, you can be sure of one thing; "is worth it".

Follow the signs placed along the route, as well as the directions included in the information leaflet. The trail begins from Agia-Eufimia and ends at the old, abandoned village of Tarkasata. An alternative way back is being offered by the existing provincial road network.

• Point 1 «Starting-point of the route»

Approximately 500m away from the central square of Agia Eufimia, following the coastal road of **Voui** Street with direction towards Sami, you reach the local pharmacy. The designated starting-point of the route is just next to the pharmacy.

• Part 1-2 «The steep climb»

The second part of the path is acclivitous throughout the length of the gully but you will find the beauty of the Mediterranean landscape and the view one gets to enjoy during the ascension, quite rewarding (**foto 1**). For the duration of the trek, low scrubby vegetation can be found, which is typical of the area, and also Kermes oak. At the end of that part of the route, there is a cistern (**foto 2**). Cisterns, underground constructions for storing rainwater, were used to supply herdsmen with water, mostly in past times.

• Part 2-3 «The donkey-wallow»

Thereafter, moving aslant leftwards, we follow the second part of the trek that leads to a broad field, known as « the donkey-wallow». From that location, it is possible for the visitor to have a panoramic view of the gulf of Sami and experience a short journey in time as he gets a closer look of Homer's land ¹ (**foto 3**). Then, we pass right across the dirt road, in order to head for Tarkasata.

• Spot 4 «The threshing floor»

On the outskirts of the village there is a well-preserved threshing floor (**foto4**). During the past, threshing floors played an important role in the local economic activity. There, was the place where people would accumulate the crop and with the use of horses that walked in a circle and dragged the proper equipment, they would collect wheat, mainly, but also other kinds of grain, that would later be forwarded to further process and usage. Except for its economic importance, this threshing floor also served the community as a square, where the social events took place. The poet gives the world an ambiguous meaning, introducing Digenis, the folk hero that expresses the epic ideals of our nation, fighting the grim reaper in «marble threshing floors»².

• Point 5 «The village of Tarkasata»

We reached our final destination. The first ruins of stonework and abandoned houses welcome us into the village, proclaiming the great value stone had for that place (**foto 5**). Our forefathers used to make houses, walls, bridges, threshing floors and roads out of stone, that is how they knew all its secrets. The visitor can sense the appeal of the ruins and the avenging power of nature against the works of human spirit, which violently tries to transform nature in a way that serves its goals. Further information about the hamlet are available on the sign-boards along the trail. The narrow alleys of the settlement lead us to the alternative entry of the village (**foto 6**).

² I am Akritas, Death,
I do not pass with the years;
how is it that you touched me,
but did not realize who I was,
on the marble threshing-floor?

I do not perish in Tartarus,
I only rest a little;
I reappear in life,
and resurrect nations!

K.Palamas, Digenis

¹ I am Odysseus, son of Laertes, who [20] am known among men for all manner of wiles,¹ and my fame reaches unto heaven. But I dwell in clear-seen Ithaca, wherein is a mountain, Neriton, covered with waving forests, conspicuous from afar; and round it lie many isles hard by one another, Dulichium, and Same, and wooded Zacynthus. [25] Ithaca itself lies close in to the mainland² the furthest toward the gloom,³ but the others lie apart toward the Dawn and the sun

Odysseia, 9, lines 19-26

