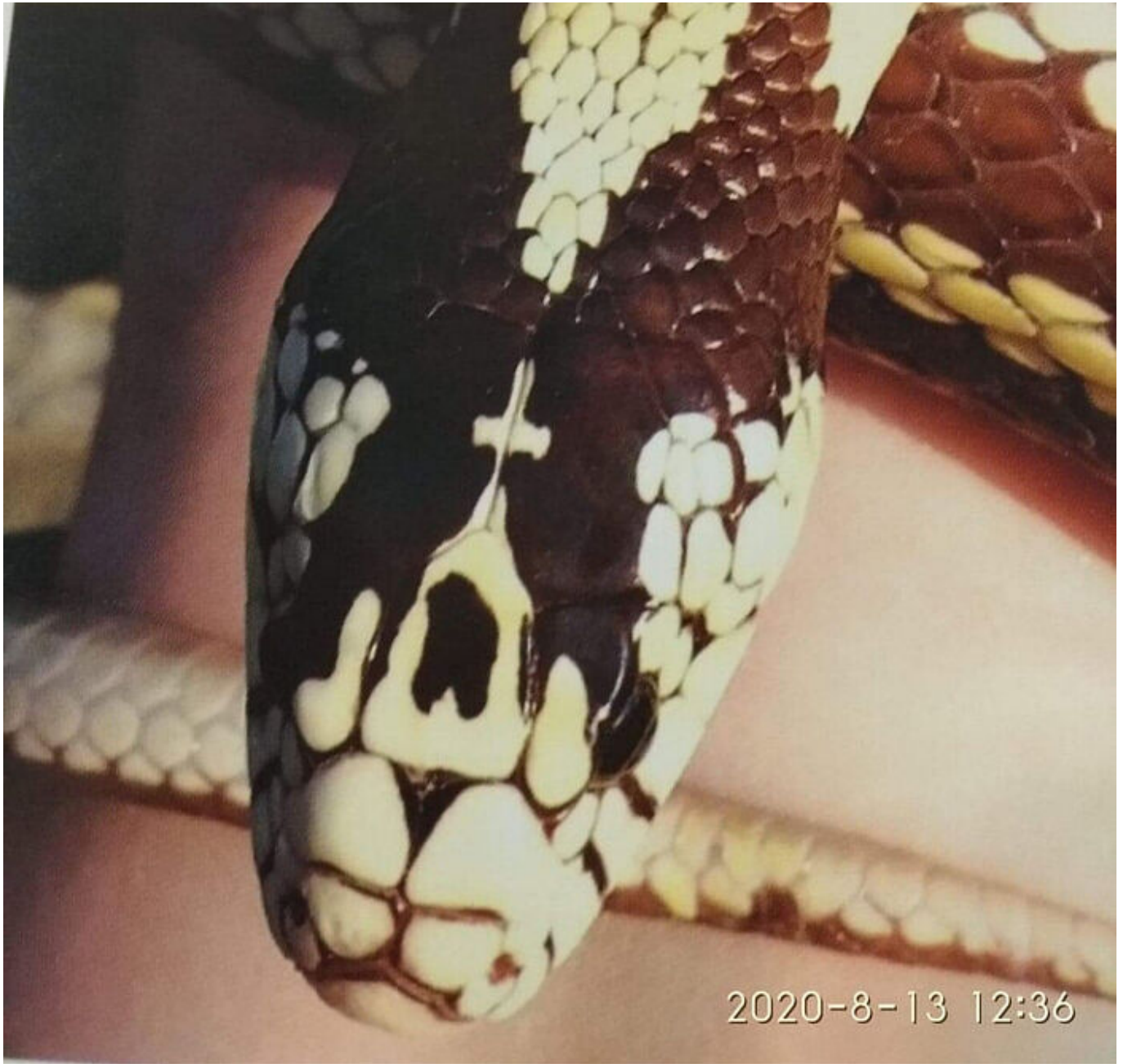


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## **SNAKES OF THE PANAGIA AGAIN APPEAR IN GREEK VILLAGE**



Every year, around the new calendar feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord on August 6, mysterious snakes appear in the villages of Markopoulo and Agrinia on the western Greek island of Kefalonia, where there are chapels dedicated to the Dormition of the Theotokos, remaining until the feast on August 15.

Normally, hundreds and thousands of faithful pilgrims flock to the villages to behold the “Snakes of the Panagia” that seem to appear from out of nowhere and disappear again after the feast of the Dormition. The black and white snakes have the Sign of the Cross on their velvety heads, and their tongues are in the shape of a cross.

The local faithful testify that the snakes are warm-blooded, which is unknown anywhere else or any other time in the world. The snakes crawl throughout the churches and especially around the icons of the Theotokos.

Many have testified that when they touched the snakes, they were healed of incurable diseases.

This year, about 10 snakes appeared, which the locals take as a sign that the islands will be blessed, reports the [Orthodoxia News Agency](#).

The photo above, published by Mystagogy, is perhaps the first to clearly show the Cross on the heads of the snakes. The photo was taken at the chapel of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Markopoulo on August 13.

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The Church of the Dormition in Markopoluo is built on the ruins of an old monastery. In the early 18th century, the nuns of the former convent were attacked by pirates. They prayed fervently to the Theotokos for protection, and when the pirates entered the convent they were terrified by the sight of snakes darting towards them and they fled.

The snakes have appeared every year since then, except for two years: 1940, the year Greece was brought into the Second World War, and 1953, the year of a devastating earthquake on Kefalonia. Thus, it is believed to be ominous if the snakes do not appear.

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