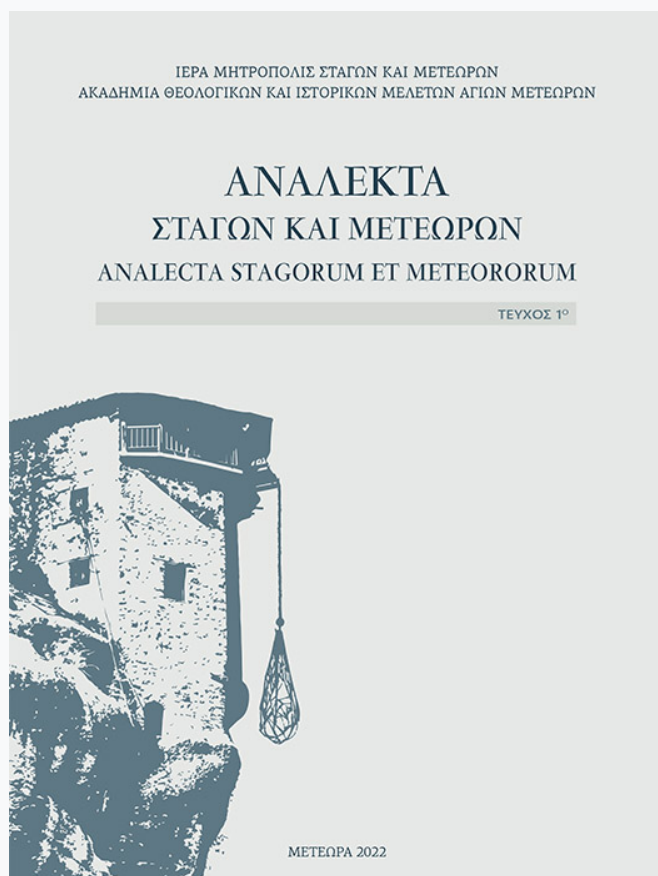


# Analecta Stagorum et Meteororum

Vol 1 (2022)

Analecta Stagorum et Meteororum



## THE ARTISTIC ACTIVITY OF THEOPHANES THE CRETAN IN WESTERN THESSALY AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE “CRETAN SCHOOL” OF PAINTING IN OTTOMAN GREECE

*Konstantinos Vapheides*

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ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΤΑΓΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ  
ΑΚΑΔΗΜΙΑ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΚΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΩΝ ΜΕΛΕΤΩΝ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ

ΑΝΑΛΕΚΤΑ  
ΣΤΑΓΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ  
ANALECTA STAGORUM ET METEORORUM

ΤΕΥΧΟΣ 1<sup>ο</sup>



ΜΕΤΕΩΡΑ 2022



ΑΝΑΛΕΚΤΑ  
ΣΤΑΓΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ



ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΤΑΓΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ  
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**ΑΝΑΛΕΚΤΑ ΣΤΑΓΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ**  
**ANALECTA STAGORUM ET METEORORUM**

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Το παρόν έργο πνευματικής ιδιοκτησίας προστατεύεται από τις διατάξεις της ελληνικής νομοθεσίας (Ν 2121/1993 όπως έχει τροποποιηθεί και ισχύει σήμερα) και από τις διεθνείς συμβάσεις περί πνευματικής ιδιοκτησίας. Απαγορεύεται απολύτως η χωρίς γραπτή άδεια του εκδότη κατά οποιονδήποτε τρόπο ή οποιoδήποτε μέσο (ηλεκτρονικό, μηχανικό ή άλλο) αντιγραφή, φωτοανατύπωση και εν γένει αναπαραγωγή, εκμίσθωση ή δανεισμός, μετάφραση, διασκευή, αναμετάδοση στο κοινό σε οποιαδήποτε μορφή και η εν γένει εκμετάλλευση του συνόλου ή μέρους του έργου.

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΤΑΓΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ  
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ΤΕΥΧΟΣ 1<sup>ο</sup>



ΜΕΤΕΩΡΑ 2022



Εἰς μνήμην Χαραλάμπους Β. Στεργιούλη (†1.9.2021),

Διευθυντὴ συντάξεως τοῦ Περιοδικοῦ





## ΠΡΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΣΕΒΑΣΜΙΩΤΑΤΟΥ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΤΟΥ ΣΤΑΓΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ Κ. ΘΕΟΚΛΗΤΟΥ

*Πᾶσα σοφία παρὰ Κυρίου καὶ μετ' Αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (Σειράχ, Α', 1)*

**Π**λήρεις χαρᾶς καὶ εὐφροσύνης, ὑποδεχόμεθα καὶ προλογίζομεν τὴν ἔκδοσιν τοῦ ἐπιστημονικοῦ Περιοδικοῦ τῆς Μητροπολιτικῆς Ἀκαδημίας Θεολογικῶν καὶ Ἱστορικῶν Μελετῶν Ἁγίων Μετεώρων, τοῦ ὑπὸ τὸν τίτλο «Ἀνάλεκτα Σταγῶν καὶ Μετεώρων – Analecta Stagorum et Meteororum». Τὸ ἐν λόγῳ Περιοδικὸν σκοπεῖ εἰς τὴν μελέτην τῆς Ἱστορίας καὶ τῆς πνευματικῆς παρακαταθήκης τῆς ἀγιοτόκου πολιτείας τῶν Ἁγίων Μετεώρων καὶ τῆς παλαιφάτου ἐπισκοπῆς τῶν Σταγῶν, νῦν δὲ ἱερᾶς Μητροπόλεως Σταγῶν καὶ Μετεώρων. Εἰς τὸ ἐν λόγῳ συλλογικὸν πόνημα ἀναδεικνύεται μετὰ πολλῶν γραπτῶν πηγῶν καὶ ἀρχαιολογικῶν μαρτυριῶν, ἡ πολύχρονος ἱστορία τῆς τοπικῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ὁ πολιτισμικὸς θησαυρὸς τῆς μετεωρικῆς Θηβαΐδος, καὶ ἡ δρᾶσις τῶν μεγάλων ἐκκλησιαστικῶν προσωπικοτήτων τῆς Δ. Θεσσαλίας.

Διὰ τοῦτο εἴμεθα ἐκ τῶν προτέρων πεπεισμένοι ὅτι ἡ ἔκδοσις καὶ ἡ διάδοσις τοῦ Περιοδικοῦ Ἀνάλεκτα Σταγῶν καὶ Μετεώρων θὰ συντελέσῃ οὐχὶ μόνον εἰς τὴν γνῶσιν τῆς ἱστορίας τῆς περιοχῆς τῶν Σταγῶν ἢ τῶν μετεωρικῶν Μοναστηρίων, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὴν περαιτέρω ἀναγνώρισιν τῆς συμβολῆς τῆς τοπικῆς Ἐκκλησίας εἰς τὴν πνευματικὴν ἀνάπτυξιν τοῦ ὀρθοδόξου Ἑλληνισμοῦ ἀπὸ τὰ βυζαντινὰ ἕως τὰ νεότερα χρόνια.

Ἐκφράζομεν τὴν εὐαρέσκεϊαν καὶ εὐχαριστίαν ἡμῶν πρὸς τὰ κοπιάσαντα μέλη τῆς τριμελοῦς συντακτικῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς τοῦ Περιοδικοῦ καὶ πρὸς τὰ ἐλλόγιμα μέλη τῶν ἐπιμέρους ἐπιστημονικῶν Ἐπιτροπῶν, διὰ τὴν ἀξίειπαινον αὐτῶν σπουδὴν καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν. Ὡσαύτως, θερμὰς εὐχαριστίας καὶ εὐγνώμονας προσρήσεις ἐκφράζομεν πρὸς τοὺς συγγραφεῖς τῶν μελετῶν τοῦ πρώτου τεύχους, οἵτινες διὰ τῆς ἐνδελεχοῦς ἐντρυφήσεως αὐτῶν εἰς τὰς πηγὰς, ἀπέδωσαν μὲ ἀντικειμενικότητα καὶ ἐπιστημονικὴν ἀκρίβειαν πάντα ὅσα οὗτοι πραγματεύονται.

Ἡ χάρις τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, διὰ πρεσβειῶν τῆς Ὑπεραγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς Μετεωριτίσσης καὶ πάντων τῶν Ὁσίων τῶν ἐν τοῖς λίθοις τῶν Μετεώρων λαμπάντων, εἴη μετ' αὐτῶν καὶ πάντων ἡμῶν, Ἀμήν.

Ἐγγραφον ἐν τῷ ἐπισκοπείῳ τῶν Σταγῶν, τῇ 25ῃ μηνὸς Ὀκτωβρίου, ἔτους σωτηρίου 2021

*τῷ Σταγῶν καὶ Μετεώρων Θεοκλήτῳ*

## ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ

ΠΡΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΣΕΒΑΣΜΙΩΤΑΤΟΥ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΤΟΥ ΣΤΑΓΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ κ. ΘΕΟΚΛΗΤΟΥ	9
ΠΕΡΙΕΧΟΜΕΝΑ	10
ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ κ. ΒΑΡΘΟΛΟΜΑΙΟΥ	13
ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΣΗΣ ΑΦΡΙΚΗΣ κ. ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟΥ Β΄	15
ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΕΙΑΣ κ. ΙΩΑΝΝΗ Ι΄	17
ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΣΟΛΥΜΩΝ κ. ΘΕΟΦΙΛΟΥ Γ΄	19
ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΜΑΚΑΡΙΩΤΑΤΟΥ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ κ. ΙΕΡΩΝΥΜΟΥ	21
ΧΑΡΑΛΑΜΠΟΣ Β. ΣΤΕΡΓΙΟΥΛΗΣ (1970 - †2021). ΝΕΚΡΟΛΟΓΙΑ	23
<b>Brendan Osswald</b> ΣΥΜΕΩΝ ΟΥΡΕΣΗΣ ΠΑΛΑΙΟΛΟΓΟΣ, ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΑΣ ΤΩΝ ΤΡΙΚΑΛΩΝ	43
<b>Maja Nikolić</b> THESSALY UNDER THE SERBS (1348 - c. 1373)	109
<b>Δημήτριος Κ. Άγορίτσας</b> ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΠΟΙ ΣΤΟΝ ΒΙΟ ΤΩΝ ΟΣΙΩΝ ΝΕΚΤΑΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΨΑΡΑΔΩΝ	147
<b>Elif Bayraktar Tellan</b> THE MONASTERIES OF METEORA DURING THE OTTOMAN PERIOD AND THE PRACTICE OF MONASTIC CONFINEMENT	193

<b>Παρασκευή Χ. Παπαδημητρίου</b> ΒΗΜΟΘΥΡΟ ΣΤΗ ΜΟΝΗ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΟΥ ΑΠΟΔΙΔΟΜΕΝΟ ΣΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΗ ΤΟΝ ΚΡΗΤΑ	225
<b>Konstantinos M. Vapheiates</b> THE ARTISTIC ACTIVITY OF THEOPHANES THE CRETAN IN WESTERN THESSALY AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE "CRETAN SCHOOL" OF PAINTING IN OTTOMAN GREECE	257
<b>Nikolaos Vryzidis</b> RECREATING A SOCIETY'S MATERIAL CULTURE: TEXTILES IN THE TRIKKE CODEX EBE 1471	301
<b>Yuliana Boycheva (with an appendix by Daria Resh)</b> FROM THE ORTHODOX MEGALOPOLIS OF MOSCOVY OF GREAT RUSSIA': RUSSIAN HEIRLOOMS FROM THE MONASTERY OF TATARNA, SIXTEENTH -SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES	359
<b>Ἡλίας Τερπέλης</b> Η ΕΠΙΚΡΙΤΙΚΗ ΣΤΑΣΗ ΕΝΑΝΤΙ ΜΟΣΧΟΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΩΝ ΕΚΔΟΣΕΩΝ ΠΕΡΙ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΚΟΡΥΔΑΛΙΚΗΣ ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΟΓΡΑΦΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΡΗΤΟΡΙΚΗΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΟΝ 18 <sup>ο</sup> ΑΙΩΝΑ	409
ΛΙΣΤΑ EMAIL ΣΥΝΕΡΓΑΤΩΝ ΠΕΡΙΟΔΙΚΟΥ	431

## ΣΥΝΤΑΚΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ

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Βαφειάδης Κωνσταντῖνος,  
Βρυζίδης Νικόλαος,  
Στεργιούλης Χαράλαμπος († 1.9.2021)

## ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΝΙΚΕΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΕΣ

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## ΣΥΝΤΟΜΟΓΡΑΦΙΕΣ ΠΕΡΙΟΔΙΚΩΝ

ΑΑΑ	Ἀρχαιολογικὰ Ἀνάλεκτα ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν
ΑΒΜΕ	Ἀρχεῖον Βυζαντινῶν Μνημείων Ἑλλάδος
ΑΕΘΣΕ	Ἀρχαιολογικὸ Ἔργο Θεσσαλίας καὶ Στερεῆς Ἑλλάδας, Πρακτικὰ Ἐπιστημονικῆς Συνάντησης
ΑΔ	Ἀρχαιολογικὸν Δελτίον
ΑΕ	Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐφημερίς
ΔΧΑΕ	Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας
ΕΕΒΣ	Ἐπετηρὶς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν
ΕΕΘΣΠΘ	Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης
ΕΜΑ	Ἐπετηρὶς Μεσαιωνικοῦ Ἀρχείου Ἀκαδημίας Ἀθηνῶν
ΕΕΦΣΠΑ	Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Φιλοσοφικῆς Σχολῆς τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου Ἀθηνῶν
ἩπειρΧρον:	Ἡπειρωτικὰ Χρονικὰ
ΘεσσΗμ	Θεσσαλικὸ Ἡμερολόγιο
ΘεσσΜελ	Θεσσαλικά Μελετήματα
ΘεσσΧρον	Θεσσαλικά Χρονικά. Δελτίον τῆς ἐν Ἀθήναις Ἱστορικῆς καὶ Λαογραφικῆς Ἐταιρείας τῶν Θεσσαλῶν
ΘΗΕ	Θρησκευτικὴ καὶ Ἠθικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία
ΙΑΙΣΕΕ	Ἱστορικὸν Ἀρχεῖον Ἱερᾶς Συνόδου τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδος
ΙΕΕ	Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἔθνους
ΚαρδΧρον	Καρδιτσιώτικα Χρονικά
ΚρητΧρον	Κρητικὰ Χρονικά
ΝΕ	Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων
Νεολόγου Ἐπιθεώρησις	Νεολόγου Ἑβδομαδιαῖα Ἐπιθεώρησις, Πολιτικὴ, Φιλολογικὴ, Ἐπιστημονικὴ.
ΠΑΑ	Πρακτικὰ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας Ἀθηνῶν
ΠΑΕ	Πρακτικὰ τῆς ἐν Ἀθήναις Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἐταιρείας
ΑnBoll	Analecta Bollandiana
ArtB	The Art Bulletin
AS	Acta Sanctorum

BalkSt	Balkan Studies
BHC	Bulletin de correspondance hellénique
BHG	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca, F. Halkin (ed.), vols. I, II, III, Bruxelles 1957
BHG	Nov. Auct. F. Halkin, Novum Auctarium Bibliothecae hagiographicae graecae, [Subsidia Hagiographica 65], Bruxelles 1984.
BMGS	Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
BNJb	Byzantinische-neugriechische Jahrbücher
ByzForsch	Byzantinische Forschungen
ByzSl	Byzantinoslavica
ByzVindo	Byzantina Vindobonensia
BSGRT	Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
CahArch	Cahiers Archéologiques
CahBalk	Cahiers Balkaniques
CFHB	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
ChHist	Church History
CIÉB	Congrès International d'Études Byzantines
Corsi	Corsi di cultura sull' arte ravennate e bizantina
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, B. G. Niebuhr et al. (eds.), Bonn 1828-1897.
DACL	Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, H. Leclercq, F. Gabrol (eds.), vols I-XV, Paris 1907-1923.
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
EChR	The Eastern Churches Review
ÉO	Échos d'Orient
EOE	Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire (2009)
EtBalk	Études balkaniques
GSND	Glasnik Skopskog naučnog društva
IIRAIK	Izvestija Russkogo Arkheologičeskogo Instituta v Konstantinopole
JEastCS	The Journal of Eastern Christian Studies



JAch	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JÖB	Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik
JÖByzG	Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft
JSav	Journal des Savants
JThS	The Journal of Theological Studies
JWarb	Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes
LA	Liber Annus. Studium Biblicum Franciscanum
LBG	Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität (E. Trapp et alii), Wien 1994 k.e.
LOC	Liturgiarum Orientalium Collectio, E. Renaudot (ed.), vols I, II Parisiis 1716.
MSU	Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens
OKS	Ostkirchliche Studien
OCP	Orientalia Christiana Periodica
OrChr	Oriens Christianus
OrChrAn	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
PBW	Prosopography of the Byzantine World
PG	Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca, J.-P. Migne (ed.), vols. 161, Paris 1857-1866.
RÉB	Revue des Études Byzantines
RÉG	Revue des Études Grecques
RESEE	Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes
RSBN	Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici
SEG	Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum
SemKond	Seminarium Kondakovianum
StP	Studia Patristica
SüdostF	Südost-Forschungen
Synaxarium EC:	H. Delehaye, Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae, e codice sirmondiano nunc berolinensi abiectis synaxariis selectis, Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris, Bruxellis 1902
TM	Travaux et Mémoires
Turcica	Turcica, Reuve d'études turques
VizVrem	Vizantinijskij Vremmenik
WJKg	Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte
ZLU	Zbornik za likovne umetnosti Matice srpske

Zograf	Zograf, Revue d'art médiévale
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik
ZRNM	Zbornik Radova Narodnog Muzeja
ZRVI	Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta
ZSU	Zbornik Srednovekovna umetnost



# THE ARTISTIC ACTIVITY OF THEOPHANES THE CRETAN IN WESTERN THESSALY AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE “CRETAN SCHOOL” OF PAINTING IN OTTOMAN GREECE

**Konstantinos M. Vapheiadēs**

**ABSTRACT:** *One of the leading Cretan artists of the sixteenth century, whose production has not been thoroughly and critically examined yet, was Theophanes Strelitzas. The following article will expand our knowledge of his prolific artistic activity under monastic patronage in West Thessaly, already known from the katholikon of the Monastery of St. Nicholas Anapausas. In the first place, unpublished icons which pertain to Theophanes's artistic idiom will be presented from ecclesiastical collections of the wider region. Based on this evidence, the article will raise questions concerning the emergence of the “Cretan School” of painting in Ottoman Greece. This discussion aims at a critical questioning of the prevailing art historical narrative on the Cretan style's dissemination in Thessaly and continental Greece in general.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Theophanes painter, Cretan School of painting, post-Byzantine icons, Meteora, Thessaly*

**ΛΕΞΕΙΣ-ΚΛΕΙΔΙΑ:** *Θεοφάνης ζωγράφος, Κρητική Σχολή, μεταβυζαντινές εικόνες, Μετέωρα, Θεσσαλία*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The style of painting defined as the “Cretan School” undoubtedly represents one of the most important chapters in the history of post-Byzantine painting<sup>1</sup>. This is mainly because a large number of churches, especially in the monastic communities of Mount Athos and Meteora, are adorned with frescoes and icons executed by painters attributed to this maniera. Mainstream art historical narratives associate the art of Theophanes Strelitzas or Bathas (pre-1527 - †22

<sup>1</sup> For the “Cretan School” of painting in Ottoman Greece see for example Xyngopoulos, *Σχεδίασμα*, 61-190. Chatzidakis, “Contribution”. *Idem*, *Ο κρητικός ζωγράφος Θεοφάνης*. Vokotopoulos, *Η κρητική ζωγραφική*. Triantaphyllopoulos, *Μελέτες. Ιερά Μονή Αγίου Διονυσίου. Οι τοιχογραφίες του καθολικού*. Vapheiadēs, *Περί της εν Άθω «κρητικής» ζωγραφικής*. Lytari, *Ο τοιχογραφικός διάκοσμος*. Tsigaridas, *Θεοφάνης ο Κρής*. Vapheiadēs, *Η τέχνη της δουλείας*.

August 1559) with the emergence and dissemination of the “Cretan School” in Ottoman Greece.

Nonetheless, we still do not possess a complete picture of Theophanes’s work, nor has a detailed study been made of the actual extent of his contribution to the development of post-Byzantine painting in mainland Greece or, by extension, the relationship between his work and that of other sixteenth-century artists. It should be pointed out that the work of these other artists has not received the same scholarly attention as that of Theophanes. Consequently, this has created the misleading impression that Theophanes is the chief exponent of the “Cretan School”. The problem is intensified by the stereotypical views that have come to prevail in this field of research, views that hinder our understanding of the art of this period. These views present Crete as the only artistic centre in the Orthodox world that is worthy of note and the “Cretan School” as the only worthy example of late Constantinopolitan art. They also present Theophanes as a unique phenomenon that is unconnected with the artistic output of Ottoman Greece, even though it is a well-known fact that Theophanes was the scion of an artistic family from the Peloponnese and that not a single work of his has survived on Crete, despite the impressive scale of his output<sup>2</sup>.

Be that as it may, it is undeniable that the work of Theophanes the Cretan represents a landmark in the development of post-Byzantine painting. On the basis of inscriptions or marginal notes, three monumental ensembles were executed by this painter: the painted decoration in the *katholikon* of the Monastery of St. Nicholas Anapausas at Meteora (1527) and the frescoes in the *katholika* of the Monastery of Great Lavra (1535)<sup>3</sup> and the Monastery of Stavroniketa (1546) on Mount Athos<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, it is considered certain that Theophanes also painted the refectories of these two Athonite monasteries<sup>5</sup>, as well as the Chapel of St. John the Baptist and the old portal of Stavroniketa Monastery<sup>6</sup>. In addition

2 Cf. Vapheides, “Τοιχογραφίες στις Καρυές”, 40-41. *Idem*, “Ο ζωγράφος Θεοφάνης ο Κρής και η τέχνη στον Άθω και τα Μετέωρα κατά τον 16<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα”, 148-149. *Idem*, *Η τέχνη της δουλείας*, 67-79.

3 See Millet, *Monuments de l’Athos*, pls. 115-139. Χυngopoulos, *Σχεδίασμα*, 100-103. Chatzidakis, “Recherches”, 317-318. Garidis, *La peinture murale*, 139-140. Vapheides, *Η τέχνη της δουλείας*, 85-86.

4 See Millet, *op. cit.*, pl. 167.3. Χυngopoulos, *op. cit.*, 103. Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, 318. *Idem*, *Ο κρητικός ζωγράφος Θεοφάνης*. Garidis, *op. cit.*, 142-158. Vapheides, *op. cit.*, 97-98.

5 For the refectory of the Great Lavra monastery see Millet, *op. cit.*, pls. 140-152. Χυngopoulos, *op. cit.*, 109. Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, 319-320. Garidis, *op. cit.*, 140-141. Yiannias, *The wall paintings in the trapeza of the Great Lavra*. *Idem*, “Οι αγιογραφίες των τραπεζών του Αγίου Όρους”, 323-362. Tavlakis, *Το εικονογραφικό πρόγραμμα*, 41-74. Vapheides, *Η τέχνη της δουλείας*, 86-90. For the refectory of the Stavroniketa monastery see Millet, *Monuments*, *op. cit.*, pls. 166-167.2. Chatzidakis, *Ο κρητικός ζωγράφος Θεοφάνης*, 59-61. Garidis, *op. cit.*, 140. Yiannias, *op. cit.*, 350. Tavlakis, *op. cit.*, 87-94.

6 See Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, 61-62. Cf. Toutos, Fousteris, *Ευρετήριο*, cat. 14.3. For the murals of the old portal see *ibid.*, no. 14.4.

to these frescoes, about sixty-five icons have been attributed to the painter, according to the catalogue compiled by Efthymios Tsigaridas<sup>7</sup>. It should be noted that these icons, most of which are on Mount Athos, have been attributed to Theophanes on the basis of stylistic criteria as none of them actually bears the artist's signature. Given that the extant output of other well-known and equally productive sixteenth-century "Cretan" painters numbers no more than 10-15 icons, the scale of Theophanes's output is truly impressive.

## II. THE FRESCOES IN THE KATHOLIKON OF THE MONASTERY OF ST. NICHOLAS ANAPAUSAS

The Monastery of St. Nicholas Anapausas was most probably founded in the mid-fourteenth century and then completely renovated in the early sixteenth century, which is when the present *katholikon* was built, according to the dedicatory inscription: + ΑΝΗΓΕΡΘΗ ΕΚ ΒΑΘΡΩΝ Ο ΘΕΙΩΣ Κ(ΑΙ) ΠΑΝΣΕΠΤΩΣ ΝΑΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΑΓΙΗΣ ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΕΙΜΩΝ / ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ. ΠΑΡΑ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΝΙΕΡΟΤΑΤΟΥ ΜΙΤΡΟΠΩΛΙΤΟΥ ΛΑΡΙΣΗΣ ΚΗΡ ΔΙΟΝΙΣΙΟΥ Κ(ΑΙ) ΤΟΥ ΟΣΕΙΩΤΑΤ(ΟΥ) / ΕΝ ΙΕΡΟΜΟΝΑΧΕΙΣ ΚΗΡ ΝΙΚΑΝΩΡΟΣ Κ(ΑΙ) ΕΞΑΡΧΟΥ ΣΤΑΓΩΝ. Κ(ΑΙ) Τ(ΩΝ) ΕΥΡΙΣΚΟΜΕΝΩΝ ΑΔΕΛΦΩΝ ΕΙΣΤΩ/ΡΙΘΗ ΔΕ Κ(ΑΙ) ΔΙΑ ΕΞΟΔΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΥΤΕΛΟΥΣ [Κ]ΥΠΡΙΑΝΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΔΙΑΚΩΝΟΥ / ΕΤ(ΕΙ) ,Ζωλστ' [7036 = 1527] ΜΗΝΙ ΟΚΤΩΒΡΙΟΥ ΙΒ' ΕΝ Ι(ΔΙΚΤΙΩΝΙ) Α / Χείρ Θεοφάνη / Μ(ΟΝΑ)Χ(ΟΥ) ΤΟΥ ΕΝ ΤΗ / ΚΡΙΤΗ ΣΤΡΕΛΗ/ΤΖΑΣ [...]<sup>8</sup>.

According to the inscription, the founders of the *katholikon* of the Monastery of St. Nicholas Anapausas were Dionysios, the Metropolitan of Larissa, known as 'the Merciful' (ca. 1482 - ca. 1489, †1510)<sup>9</sup>, and Nikanor, Exarch of the Diocese of Stagoi (†1521). However, the cost of the painted decoration was undertaken by the hierodeacon Kyprianos, about whom we have no other information. It is very likely that the deacon who is portrayed without a halo and kneeling be-

<sup>7</sup> Tsigaridas, *Θεοφάνης ο Κρής*, 35-40. Four other icons are associated with Theophanes. See Pazaras, "Τρεις εικόνες του κύκλου του Θεοφάνη του Κρητός", 371-390. Vasilakis, *Οι εικόνες του Αρχοντικού Τσαίτσα*, cat. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Translation: This divine and most sacred church of our holy father Nicholas was built by his Excellency the Metropolitan of Larissa Dionysios and the most blessed hieromonk Nikanor, Exarch of Stagoi, and his brotherhood. It was decorated at the expense of the unworthy hierodeacon Kyprianos on 12 October in the first indiction of the year 1527, by the hand of the Cretan monk Theophanes Strelitzas (Chatzidakis, "Recherches", Appendice, cat. 1 on page 344. Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, 34. Velenis, "Η γραφή", 212-213). Also read Vapheides, *Η τέχνη της δουλείας*, 134.

<sup>9</sup> For St. Dionysios, Archbishop of Larissa and monk of Anapausas Monastery, see selectively Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *op. cit.*, 35. Rigo, *La 'Cronaca delle Meteore'*, 39-48.

tween Saints Athanasios and Cyril of Alexandria in the sanctuary of the *katholikon* is Kyprianos's donor portrait<sup>10</sup> (fig. 1).

It should be noted that St. Bessarion 'of the Saviour', the scion of a wealthy priestly family and a leading figure of his day, was transferred to the Diocese of Stagoi in 1521. Later he became Metropolitan of Larissa (1527-1540), with his seat being at Trikala. As is well-known, he was responsible for many charitable works, including, of course, the construction of the Monastery of the Saviour of the Great Gates at Dousiko (1527-1534)<sup>11</sup>. Although the dedicatory inscription in the *katholikon* of the Monastery of St. Nicholas Anapausas does not mention the hierarch's name, it seems that St. Bessarion was behind the idea of inviting Theophanes the Cretan to execute the painted decoration at Meteora and not the hierodeacon Kyprianos<sup>12</sup>.

The frescoes in the *katholikon* of the Monastery of St. Nicholas Anapausas, partially preserved and on the façade of the church, are considered to be Theophanes's first monumental work<sup>13</sup>, although they presuppose previous experience of fresco decoration of churches.

Despite the problems of organising the decoration in a building of such peculiar design, both the iconographic programme of the *katholikon* and the iconography as a whole generally follow the dictates of the Palaiologan period. The iconography of the scene of the Dormition of St. Ephraim<sup>14</sup> - which is modelled on the icons depicting the same subject in Lefkada (mid-fifteenth cent.), at the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (post-1456) and at the Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos (late fifteenth cent.)<sup>15</sup> - as well as the iconography of individual figures, such as the Man of Sorrows - which may be considered to have been modelled on the icons in the Saroglou Collection (late fifteenth cent.), the icons in Patmos (second half of fifteenth cent.), and the icons of Nikolaos Tzafou-

10 Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *op. cit.*, fig. on page 179.

11 For the deeds of St. Bessarion see Sophianos, *Ιστορικά σχόλια*.

12 See Vapheides, "Τέχνη και Εκκλησία στην Θεσσαλία", 10.

13 See Χυngοpoulos, *Σχεδιάσμα*, 96-100. Chatzidakis, "Recherches", 315-317. Garidis, *La peinture murale*, 137-139. Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, 79-99. Tsigaridas, *Θεοφάνης ο Κρής*, 13-32. Vapheides, *Η τέχνη της δουλείας*, 108-110.

14 Martin, "The Death of Ephraim". Χυngοpoulos, *op. cit.*, 180-182. Pallas, "Εικόνα του Αγίου Ευσταθίου", 356-363. Chatzidakis, "Essai sur l'école dite 'Italogreque'", 189-194. Bougrat, "L'église Saint-Jean". Garidis, *op. cit.*, 143-145, no. 647 on page 144. Ioannidaki-Dostoglou, "Παραστάσεις κοιμήσεως οσίων και ασκητών". Acheimastou-Potamianou, "Η Κοίμηση του οσίου Εφραίμ του Σύρου". Tanoulas, "Θηβαΐς' αυτή η πλευρά του Παραδείσου". *Byzantium, Faith and Power*, cat. 80 (K. Ph. Kalafatis).

15 For the first icon see Chatzinikolaou, "Μεσαιωνικά μνημεία Ιονίων Νήσων", 371. Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, 190. *Affresci e icone dalla Grecia*, cat. 86 (N. Tselenti). For the second icon see Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εικόνες του Βυζαντινού Μουσείου Αθηνών*, cat. 31. For the third icon see *Θησαυροί του Αγίου Όρους*, cat. 2.33 (E. N. Tsigaridas).

ris in Vienna (1489-1500)<sup>16</sup> - or the figure of St. Merkourios, which recalls such icons as that of St. George the Dragon Slayer in the Zakynthos Museum (fifteenth cent.)<sup>17</sup>, do not provide much assistance to our efforts to identify Theophanes's artistic background<sup>18</sup>. This is because these late Gothic models have been skilfully adapted in the artist's style<sup>19</sup>. For example, the realistic wrinkles on Christ's forehead and the locks of his hair in Tzafouris's picture are absent in Theophanes's figure at St. Nicholas Anapausas<sup>20</sup>.

From a stylistic point of view, the rendering of Christ's body in the depiction of the Vision of St. Peter of Alexandria and the formation of the folds in the garments of St. James the Persian (fig. 2) and St. Christopher (fig. 3) are also based on late Gothic models<sup>21</sup>. However, such features are few and far between and only of minor significance in Theophanes's work, and in no way alter the painter's Byzantine perception of the rendering of space and the human figure, which is evident above all in the drawing and the composition<sup>22</sup>.

Consequently, Theophanes's painting, in the form it takes in Mount Athos and Thessaly - in this particular case, the Monastery of St. Nicholas Anapau-



Fig. 1. Meteora. St. Nicholas Anapausas Monastery. Deacon Kyprianos the Ktetor (after Sofianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 178)

16 For the first icon see indicatively *Affresci e icone dalla Grecia*, cat. 64 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou). *The World of the Byzantine Museum*, cat. 134. For the second icon see Chatzidakis, *Εικόνες της Πάτμου*, cat. 40. *Affresci e icone dalla Grecia*, cat. 63 (M. Chatzidakis). For the third icon see Kreidl-Papadopoulos, "Die Ikonen des Kunsthistorischen Museums in Wien", 30, fig. 39. Babić, Chatzidakis, "The icons of the Balkan Peninsula", 311-312, figs. on pages 322-323.

17 See Georgopoulou-Verra, "Εικόνες του 15<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα στη Ζάκυνθο", 118-123.

18 Cf. Chatzidaki, "Η επίδραση των έργων του Αγγέλου", 127-128.

19 Similar details occur in the wall paintings of the *katholikon* of the Stavroniketa monastery (Chatzidakis, *Ο κρητικός ζωγράφος Θεοφάνης*, figs. 84, 98, 105, 127). For the issue of western influences see for example Chatzidakis, "Marcantonio Raimondi", 154-159. *Idem*, "Η Κρητική ζωγραφική και η ιταλική χαλκογραφία", 27-46. Garidis, *La peinture murale*, 196-112, Constantoudaki-Kitromilidou, "Ο Θεοφάνης, ο Marcantonio Raimondi, θέματα all' Antica και Grottesche", 271-282. Vapheides, *Η τέχνη της δουλείας*, 329-348.

20 Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, figs. on pages 182, 183.

21 *Ibid.*, figs. on pages 180, 232, 234.

22 Cf. Chatzinikolaou, "Σκέψεις για την 'Κρητική' Αναγέννηση".





Fig. 2. Meteora. St. Nicholas Anapausas Monastery. St. Jacob the Persian (after Sofianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 232)



Fig. 3. Meteora. St. Nicholas Anapausas Monastery. St. Christofer (after Sofianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 234)

sas - does not adopt many elements of the mixed artistic style employed by the Cretan painters. On the contrary, it draws its iconographical and quite a few stylistic features from late Palaiologan painting, features that would have been familiar to Theophanes from works produced in Crete before the Fall of Constantinople (1453), such as the frescoes in the Church of the Virgin Mary at Valamonero, the Church of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary at Sklaverochori, and the Church of the Archangel Michael at Episkopi in the Pediada region, assuming that Theophanes received his basic education on Crete. It is clear, however, that the painter, after having received his basic training in perhaps his father's workshop, matured as an artist in Ottoman Greece, given that no (early) work of his survives in Crete and that all of his output is connected exclusively with the monastic communities of Mount Athos and Meteora<sup>23</sup>.

In addition, we have already noted that the decoration in the *katholikon* of St. Nicholas Anapausas presupposes experience in the art of fresco painting. Although the scale of the church might not have required a great degree of specialisation, it is certain that painting frescoes on its walls would have required an appropriate use of means and materials different to those required in the production of icons<sup>24</sup>. It is therefore reasonable to assume that Theophanes (also) worked as a fresco painter before 1527. Where exactly, it is impossible to say with certainty, although frescoes such as those in the *katholikon* of the Monastery of St. Neophytos in Paphos (after 1503 - before 1544) are stylistically close to those of the *katholikon* of St. Nicholas Anapausas<sup>25</sup>. However, the fact that Theophanes was invited to Meteora, evidently by St. Bessarion II of Larissa, implies that he was well-known from his work in mainland Greece.

This view is indirectly supported by the following finding: Theophanes seems to have collaborated with another painter whose name is not mentioned in the dedicatory inscription. The latter's work is not easy to discern since his artistic idiom is very close to that of Theophanes. Nevertheless, after a careful stylistic study it is possible to attribute some of the Christological themes in the *katho-*

23 The same is true about the painters of the fifteenth century, Xenos Digenis and Nicholas Lampoudis. For the painter Xenos Digenis see Vasilaki-Mavrakaki, "Ο ζωγράφος Ξένος Διγενής", 550-570. Vokotopoulos, "Η χρονολογία των τοιχογραφιών του Ξένου Διγενή στα Απάνω Φλώρια Σελίνου". Gariadis, *op. cit.*, 278-282. Agrevi, *Οι τοιχογραφίες του Ξένου Διγενή στη Μονή Μυρτιάς*. Vokotopoulos, "Ο Ξένος Διγενής στην Ήπειρο". Agrevi, "Παρατηρήσεις". For the painter Nikolaos Lampoudis see *Affresci e icone dalla Grecia*, cat. 70 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou). *Idem*, "Νικολάου του Λαμπούδη Σπαρτιάτου: εικόνα της Παναγίας της Ελεούσας". Piatnitsky, "Two icons of the Virgin Eleousa attributed to Nikolaos Lamboudis".

24 See Vapheiadis, *Περί τοιχογραφίας*.

25 See for example Stylianou, J. Stylianou, *Painted Churches of Cyprus*, 369-381. Heliades, "Η συμβολή της Ιεράς Μονής Αγίου Νεοφύτου", 389-415.





Fig. 4. Meteora. St. Nicholas Anapausas Monastery. The Mandylion (after Sofianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 259)



Fig. 5. Meteora. St. Nicholas Anapausas Monastery. The Three Hebrews (after Sofianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 267)



Fig. 6. Meteora. St. Nicholas Anapausas Monastery. The Dormition of St. Ephrem the Syrian. Detail (after Sofianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 292)

*likon*'s nave (fig. 4) and the narthex's Old and New Testament scenes (fig. 5), as well as the Dormition of St. Ephrem (fig. 6) and of St. Nicholas, to a different hand than that of Theophanes. The plasticity and realism of the figures in these frescoes is quite distinctive, bringing forward the hypothesis that the anonymous painter was not a pupil or assistant of Theophanes but a talented artist in his own right, if not superior in certain respects.

Given that no information survives about this painter, the simplest and most reasonable thing to assume is that, like Theophanes, he was working locally during the third decade of the sixteenth century and was summoned to assist with the church's decoration.

Yet the question arises: why did Theophanes choose this particular painter to assist him? Did his patron oblige him to make this choice, or did he select him on account of the good professional reputation he enjoyed locally or because his art was completely compatible with his own? If the latter is the case, does this mean that the anonymous artist had been trained in Crete, or are we dealing with a Thessalian painter who managed to master the "Cretan" techniques by working for monasteries in mainland Greece? Also, why did Theophanes require the assistance of this artist to decorate a small church of no great height like the *katholikon* of St. Nicholas Anapausas? In my opinion, one of the more plausible reasons was the large number of commissions that Theophanes had undertaken during the exact same time. This is borne out by a series of icons in other Thessalian monasteries, which are examined below.

### III. THE MONASTERY OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE SAVIOUR (GREAT METEORON)

In the museum of the Monastery of the Great Meteoron there is on display a medium-sized icon of the Three Hierarchs St. Gregory the Theologian, St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great<sup>26</sup> (fig. 7).

The Three Church Fathers, whose joint commemoration was established in the late eleventh century, are arrayed in a frontal pose against a gold ground. The figure of St. John Chrysostom occupies the centre of the composition, attired in a prelate's golden sakkos and holding a gold cross. This figure is flanked by a depiction of St. Gregory the Theologian on one side and a depiction of St.

<sup>26</sup> For this icon see Chatzidakis, Sophianos, *Το Μεγάλο Μετέωρο*, fig. on page 193. *Επίδα και Πίστη*, cat. 37 (K. Mantzana). Vokotopoulos, "Η εικόνα του Νικολάου Ρίτζου στο Σεράγεβο", 224. Varheides, "Εικόνες 'άδηλων' κρητικών ζωγράφων", 112-115.





Fig. 7. Meteora. Great Meteoron Monastery. The Three Church Fathers  
(Source: Great Meteoron Monastery)

Basil the Great on the other. The latter are attired in prelate's vestments and hold a Gospel Book in their left hand.

The composition is laid out in accordance with a Palaiologan model, which appears in icons of this time, such as the large double-sided icon from Thessaloniki at the Byzantine and Christian Museum (fourteenth century)<sup>27</sup>, the icon in the Monastery of Vatopedi (second half of fourteenth century)<sup>28</sup>, the icon with inventory number 194/72 at the Byzantine Museum in Kastoria (first half of fifteenth century)<sup>29</sup> and the icon from the Church of the Panaghia Chrysaliniotissa in Nicosia (first half of fifteenth century)<sup>30</sup>.

This late Byzantine model was to be adopted by the "Cretan" painters. It should be noted, however, that these painters always lay emphasis on the figure of St. John Chrysostom, placing it in the middle of the group, with a bejewelled benediction cross in his hand and a sakkos adorned with multiple crosses, a familiar practice since the fourteenth century<sup>31</sup>. Other examples of this are the depiction of the Three Hierarchs in the icon by Nikolaos Ritzos, son of Andreas Ritzos (late fifteenth century)<sup>32</sup> and the depiction in the icon at the Zakynthos Museum (late fifteenth century)<sup>33</sup>, which can in fact be considered a model for the icon in the Monastery of the Great Meteoron. However, compared with the icon at the Zakynthos Museum, the icon under examination here displays a freedom in the rendering of form. Its art clearly recalls the style of Theophanes.

More specifically, the drapery is rendered with gentle transitions between light and shade. An interesting detail is the wavy hems of the sticharia - a common feature in Theophanes's work - and the shading of the *omophorion* on the darker side of the body. The modelling of the faces is achieved through the application of relatively small, only slightly graduated lights (commonly called *sarcomata* in Greek painting jargon). Linear white lights (commonly known as *psimithies*) have been discreetly placed on the prominent parts of the volumes. In addition, the expression in the saints' eyes is at once sullen and intense due

27 Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εικόνες του Βυζαντινού Μουσείου*, cat. 9.

28 Tsigaridas, Loberdou-Tsigarida, *Βυζαντινές εικόνες και επενδύσεις*, cat. 33.

29 Tsigaridas, *Εικόνες του Βυζαντινού Μουσείου και ναών της Καστοριάς*, cat. 37.

30 Papageorgiou, *Εικόνες της Κύπρου*, 67, fig. 48. *Παλαιολόγειες αντανακλάσεις στην τέχνη της Κύπρου*, cat. 39 (I. Heliades).

31 For the iconography of the Three Hierarchs see Drandakis, *Εικονογραφία των Τριών Ιεραρχών*. Koutsikou, "Άγνωστη εικόνα των Τριών Ιεραρχών". Acheimastou-Potamianou, "Παναγία Οδηγήτρια και Τρεις Ιεράρχες". Cf. Vokotopoulos, "Η εικόνα του Νικολάου Ριτζού στο Σεράγεβο", 224-225. D'Ambrosi, "The icon of the Three Holy Hierarchs".

32 Vokotopoulos, *op. cit.*, 224-225.

33 Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εικόνες της Ζακύνθου*, cat. 12.

to their large size, the bold upper outlines and the white speck in the corners of the eyes. As is his wont, Theophanes uses successive lines in order to convey the impression of hair, particularly at the edges of the beards and the hair on the head. These features occur both in the icon at the Great Meteoron (fig. 8a) and the frescoes at St. Nicholas Anapausas (fig. 8b).

The connection between the icon under examination here and Theophanes's other works is also shown by the inscriptions. One example of this is the phrase *O AΓ(ΙΟΣ)*, where the *Γ* lies above the *O* and *Α*, and another is the letter-combination *XP*, which occurs both in the icon at the Great Meteoron and the figure of St. John Chrysostom at St. Nicholas Anapausas<sup>34</sup>, albeit with the addition of an *M* beneath the *X*. Also, the *Ω*, with its sharp angles, the diphthong combination *EI* and the contraction of *ΓP* are letter types and abbreviations often found in Theophanes's inscriptions<sup>35</sup>.

According to the above, therefore, the icon in the Great Meteoron Monastery presents characteristics which match Theophanes in terms of technique, artistic idiom and script.

We know that Theophanes worked at Meteora, most likely between 1525 and 1533. It is also worth mentioning that in October 1543 the nephew of St. Bessarion, Neophytos II (of Larissa)<sup>36</sup>, as Bishop of Stagoi, stayed for a while in Karyes on Mount Athos with Patriarch Jeremiah I. While he was there, Jeremiah ratified a letter by the Synaxis which settled a dispute in favour of the Monastery of the Great Lavra. The letter was signed by a number of prelates, including Neophytos<sup>37</sup>. Since during the period 1543-1544 Neophytos was staying in Karyes, where Theophanes's cell and workshop were situated, it is possible that he came into contact with the artist and perhaps commissioned a few icons. Given that Neophytos's activities, both as Bishop of Stagoi and Metropolitan of Larissa (though he resided in Trikala), are associated with the Great Meteoron, it is an attractive idea to propose that the icon of the Three Hierarchs represents a votive offering by Neophytos, possibly to the monastery's *konaki* in Trikala, which was dedicated to the Three Hierarchs (founded in 1388)<sup>38</sup>. In this case, it should be dated between 1543 and 1552, when the Great Meteoron Monastery was being renovated.

34 Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 171.

35 For Theophanes' writing see Velenis, "Η γραφή", 211-240.

36 For Neophytos, Archbishop of Larissa see Sophianos, "Οι Νεόφυτοι Λαρίσης", 86-124. For the bishop Neophytos as a donor see *idem*, *Ιστορικά σχόλια*, 16-24. Vapheïades, *Η τέχνη της δουλείας*, 186-191 *et passim*. *Idem*, "Τέχνη και Εκκλησία", 10-12.

37 See for example Stroubakis, *Ιερεμίας Α΄, πατριάρχης Κωνσταντινουπόλεως*, 90-91.

38 See Vapheïades, *Η μονή του Αγίου και Μεγάλου Μετεώρου*, 77-78.





Fig. 8a. Meteora. Great Meteoron Monastery. The three Church Fathers. Detail (Source: Great Meteoron Monastery)



Fig. 8b. Meteora. St. Nicholas Anapausas Monastery. St. John of Klimax. Detail (after Sofianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 315)

It should be noted that in the museum and sacristy of the Great Meteoron survives a set of ten epistyle icons. These icons probably adorned the templon of the monastery's old *katholikon*, just before its replacement between 1544 and 1552, when the new was erected<sup>39</sup>. The style of these icons matches that of Theophanes and, therefore, the style of the painter who executed the icon of the Three Patriarchs.

Indeed, if we compare, for example, the icon of the Crucifixion of Christ (fig. 9a)<sup>40</sup> with the icon on the same subject in the Monastery of Stavroniketa (fig. 9b), we observe that, apart from the identical iconography (except for the figure

<sup>39</sup> See Sophianos, "Τα ξυλόγλυπτα τέμπλα των μετεωρικών μονών", 173-182. Varpeiades, "Το τέμπλο του νέου καθολικού της Ι. Μ. Μεγάλου Μετεώρου", 19.

<sup>40</sup> It is worth mentioning that the Crucifixion icon is based upon the similar wall painting in the *katholikon* of the St. Nicholas Anapausas monastery (Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 216).





Fig. 9a. Meteora. Great Meteoron Monastery. Crucifixion of Christ  
(Source: Great Meteoron Monastery)





Fig. 9b. Mount Athos. Stavronikita Monastery. Crucifixion of Christ  
(after Tsigaridas, *Θεοφάνης ο Κρής*, fig. 165)





Fig. 10a. Meteora. Great Meteoron Monastery.  
Icon of the Ascension of Christ. Detail (Source: Great Meteoron Monastery)

of John) and script, the two icons are also alike in terms of style and technique. Details such as the use of two colours in the garments, the way in which the blood flows from Christ's wounds, the rendering of Adam's head, the chrysography, and the double lines in the haloes bear this out. Even so, the two icons differ in other respects as well: e.g., the degree of freedom and care which is demonstrated in the rendering of form. The icon from the Monastery of Stavroniketa shows a certain roughness (and rapidity) in the elaboration of the outlines and *sarcomata*. In contrast, in the icon from the Great Meteoron the outlines and *sarcomata* display care, delicacy and realism in their execution.

So, what is happening here? Are we dealing with the same painter, one who has produced two slightly different works because of time constraints or some other reason, or two different artists with exactly the same idiom? Yet, if the latter is the case, how is that possible? For it is a well-known fact that imitation is possible only up to a certain point. It should be noted that the faces in the epistyle icons from the Great Meteoron seem identical to those of the small figures in the narthex of the *katholikon* of St. Nicholas Anapausas, given that the painter of the narthex, like Theophanes in the naos, employed the techniques of portable icon painting in order to execute his frescoes. For example, the figure of St. Peter the Apostle in the icon of the Ascension of Christ (fig. 10a, 10b) is identical in all respects to the corresponding figure in the scene of the Second Coming at St. Nicholas Anapausas (fig. 10c)<sup>41</sup>. In my opinion, this implies that the painter of the epistyle icons at the Great Meteoron may have worked at St. Nicholas Anapausas together with Theophanes. In other words, he could well be the artist who painted the Testament scenes in the narthex and was mentioned earlier.

The connection between the epistyle icons and the painter who collaborated with Theophanes is reinforced by the fact that the artistic idiom displayed in these icons is identical to that in the icon of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary preserved in the Monastery of Varlaam.

#### IV. THE MONASTERY OF ALL SAINTS (VARLAAM)

In the museum of the Monastery of All Saints at Meteora, known as the Monastery of Varlaam, there is on display an icon of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary (fig. 11), which up until 1979 formed one of the two sides of a double-sided

41 *Ibid.*, fig. on page 286.





Fig. 10b. Meteora. Great Meteoron Monastery. Icon of the Ascension of Christ. Detail (Source: Great Meteoron Monastery)



Fig. 10c. Meteora. St. Nicholas Anapausas Monastery. The Second Coming. Detail (after Sofianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, fig. on page 286)



Fig. 11. Meteora. Varlaam Monastery. Dormition of the Virgin (Source: Varlaam Monastery)

icon with the Crucifixion of Christ on the other side (second half of fourteenth century)<sup>42</sup>. This icon bears neither a date nor an inscription. On the basis of the artistic idiom, Myrtali Acheimastou-Potamianou attributes it to the painter Neophytos, Theophanes's son<sup>43</sup>. According to Efthymios Tsigaridas<sup>44</sup>, however, the icon was painted by Theophanes the Cretan in 1527, on the basis of comparisons with the similar fresco in the *katholikon* of St. Nicholas Anapausas.

However, careful examination of the icon reveals that it was executed by the painter of the epistyle icons at the Great Meteoron, a group of icons of which E. Tsigaridas had not taken notice when he wrote his article about the icon at the Monastery of Varlaam.

If we compare the icon in the Monastery of Varlaam with the icon on the same subject in the Great Meteoron (fig. 12), we find that they are both based on exactly the same Palaiologan model, both as a whole and in terms of the detail. Of course, in the icon in the Great Meteoron there are no apostles borne on clouds or angels in Christ's mandorla. This, however, is due to the small size of the icon. It should also be noted that the stylistic idiom of the icon in the Monastery of Varlaam is exactly the same as that of the epistyle icons at the Great Meteoron. In addition, we also find that the same technical process for forming the underlayer and the gold ground has been followed in both the icon from the Monastery of Varlaam and the icons from the Great Meteoron.

Consequently, the icon at the Monastery of Varlaam should be attributed to the painter of the epistyle icons at the Great Meteoron. Yet, as I have supported, this artist was the one who collaborated with Theophanes in executing the frescoes of the *katholikon* of St. Nicholas Anapausas. This painter appears to have continued working at the Great Meteoron after Theophanes had left. However, it should be noted that an icon of St. John Chrysostom, kept at the Athonite Monastery of Gregoriou<sup>45</sup>, displays exactly the same artistic qualities as the icon at the Monastery of Varlaam, judging by the similarity of the figure of St. John Chrysostom to the figure of an apostle in the top right-hand section of the icon of the Dormition. If the icon of St. John Chrysostom in the Monastery of Gregoriou was in fact painted by the same artist that painted the icon at the

42 For this icon see Soteriou, "Βυζαντινά μνημεία Θεσσαλίας", 313-314. Acheimastou-Potamianou, "Βυζαντινό Μουσείο", 13, pls. 9α, 10α. Tsigaridas, "Άγνωστο έργο του Θεοφάνη του Κρητός", 357-363. Trifonova, "L'icône de la Crucifixion".

43 Acheimastou-Potamianou, *op. cit.*, 13.

44 Tsigaridas, *op. cit.*, 357-363.

45 *Idem*, "Άγνωστες εικόνες και τοιχογραφίες", 112, fig. 18. *Idem*, *Θεοφάνης ο Κρής*, 38, figs. 173, 174.





Fig. 12. Meteora. Great Meteoron Monastery. Dormition of the Virgin  
(Source: Great Meteoron Monastery)

Monastery of Varlaam, then it appears that this artist may have worked with Theophanes in Mount Athos as well.

In the Monastery of Varlaam is the single-nave Chapel of the Three Hierarchs (1627). The chapel's carved wooden templon is adorned with four despotic icons: one of Christ Pantokrator, one of the Virgin Mary, one of St. John the Baptist and, as expected, one of the Three Hierarchs<sup>46</sup>. The latter icon<sup>47</sup> is signed: ΧΕΙΡ ΙΩ(ANNOY) [Τ]ΟΥ Ι(Ε)ΡΕΩΣ [ΕΚ:] Σ[ΤΑΓΩΝ:] ('by the hand of the priest John of Stagoi'). John is the painter who executed the chapel's frescoes in 1627<sup>48</sup>.

However, the icons of Christ and the Virgin Mary do not belong to the group painted by the priest John. They probably come from the icon-screen of the chapel's earlier architectural phase (1517/18) and were, therefore, executed by a painter in the mid-sixteenth century<sup>49</sup>. It should be noted that the *anthivola* (preliminary drawings) for these two figures that the artist had at his disposal do not correspond to the size of the supporting wooden structure. This is why the figures of Christ and the Virgin Mary look as if they have been 'compressed' into a narrow space, since they have been cut off at the knees without good reason. Judging by the dimensions of the icon of Christ, it can be reasonably assumed that the *anthivolon* for this icon was none other than that used for the same depiction on a despotic icon at the Monastery of Gregoriou, which we will comment on later.

Jesus Christ (fig. 13) is depicted on a sumptuous throne, the backrest of which bears projections in the form of anthemia. Christ is garbed in a red chiton with gold striations and a deep blue himation. Against his breast he holds an open codex with the text which usually accompanies this iconographical type: ΔΕΥΤΕ ΠΡΟΣ / ΜΕ ΠΑΝΤΕ(Σ) / ΟΙ ΚΟΠΙΩΝ/ΤΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΕ/ΦΟΡΤΗΣΜΕ/ΝΟΙ ΚΑΓΩ / ΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΩ / ΥΜΑΣ. ΑΡΑ/ΤΕ ΤΟΝ ΖΥ/ΓΟΝ ΜΟΥ Ε/Φ' ΥΜΑΣ Καί / ΜΑΘΕ[ΤΕ] Α[Π'] ΕΜΟΥ (Matthew 11: 28-29: 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me'). The Lord's right hand is raised in a gesture of blessing, with the ring finger and little finger touching the thumb. The halo, which is bounded by a double line, contains a cross with the phrase ὁ ὢν (inscription: Ἰ(ΗΣΟΥ)Σ Χ(ΡΙΣΤΟ)Σ Ὁ ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡ).

46 Sabanikou, "Φορητές εικόνες του 17<sup>ου</sup> αι. του 'Ιερέα Ιωάννη", 341-353.

47 It is worth noting that in this icon a visual allegory is painted below the feet of the Three Hierarchs: a pillar of fire for St. Basil, a river for St. John Chrysostom, and an open well for St. Gregory the Theologian. These symbolic images, inspired by the Service of the Three Great Hierarchs, are connected with the following inscriptions: Ο ΣΤΥΛΙΟΣ ΠΥΡΟΣ (St. Basil), Ο ΠΟΤΑΜ(ΟΣ) ΤΗΣ Σ[Ι]ΟΦ[Ι]ΙΑΣ (St. John Chrysostom), [ΤΟ Β]ΛΑΘΟΣ ΤΗΣ Θ[Ε]ΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ (St. Gregory the Theologian).

48 Sabanikou, Ο ζωγραφικός διάκοσμος του παρεκκλησίου των Τριών Ιεραρχών.

49 Varpeiades, "Εικόνες 'άδηλων' κρητικών ζωγράφων", 118-122.



The Enthroned Christ on the templon of the chapel in the Monastery of Varlaam follows the type already established in the post-iconoclastic period, which represents an artistic testimony to the Word Incarnate<sup>50</sup>. The iconographical correspondence between this icon and numerous other depictions of the same subject dating from Byzantine and post-Byzantine times is to be expected. It should be noted, however, that the model that the painter of this icon had in mind was similar to that used by Angelos in his icon of the Enthroned Christ Pantokrator in the Zakynthos Museum (second quarter of the fifteenth century)<sup>51</sup>, and even closer to the model used for the icon by Andreas Ritzos in the Monastery of Toplou (second half of the fifteenth century)<sup>52</sup>. The iconographical similarity between the latter icon and that in the Monastery of Varlaam is striking, even though in Ritzos's icon Christ's himation is rendered with decorative gold lines. Also, of interest is the iconographical and stylistic connection between the icon under examination here and the icon by the painter Jeremiah in Kastoria, who, according to Tsigaridas, was a pupil of Tzortzes<sup>53</sup>. Finally, the icon of Christ in the Monastery of Varlaam also displays an exact iconographical correspondence with the icon on the same subject in the Monastery of Gregoriou (1535-1546), a work that has been convincingly attributed to Theophanes<sup>54</sup>.

The figure of the Virgin Mary on the templon of the Chapel of the Three Hierarchs follows the enthroned Virgin of the Passion type, although it is accompanied by the metaphorical epithet *Η ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΧΑΡΑ* (fig. 14). The Virgin Mary, who is wearing a cherry-red maphorion with a golden hem and three decorative stars, is seated on a backless throne. With her gaze turned towards the viewer, she holds Christ Emmanuel with both hands. However, her right hand, on which Christ rests both of his hands, is open as in the Hodegetria type. The infant Christ is portrayed in profile, with his head turned upwards and to the viewer's right, towards the half-length angel bearing the symbols of the Passion. While both of his hands, as has been mentioned, hold his mother's hand, his legs are

50 See Chatzidakis, Walters, "An encaustic icon of Christ". Timken-Matthews, *The Pantokrator*. Pallas, "Ο Χριστός ως η Θεία Σοφία", 140-141. Kitzinger, "The Pantokrator Bust", 161-163. Papamastorakis, *Ο διάκοσμος του τρούλου*, 61-79. Kitzinger, "The Pantokrator bust: Two medieval interpretations". Aspra-Vardavaki, "Ο Χριστός Παντοκράτωρ". Cormack, "Rediscovering the Christ Pantocrator at Daphni". 51 Acheimastou-Potamianou, *Εικόνες της Ζακύνθου*, cat. 4. *Χειρ Αγγέλου*, cat. 47 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou).

52 *Εικόνες της Κρητικής τέχνης*, cat. 140 (M. Borboudakis). Vapheides, *Περί της εν Αθω 'κρητικής' ζωγραφικής*, 122-123 *et passim*.

53 Tsigaridas, *Εικόνες του Βυζαντινού Μουσείου και ναών της Καστοριάς*, cat. 109.

54 *Idem*, "Άγνωστες εικόνες και τοιχογραφίες", 111-112, fig. 15. *Idem*, *Θεοφάνης ο Κρής*, 38, fig. 171.



Fig. 13. Meteora. Varlaam Monastery. Christ Pantocrator (Source: Varlaam Monastery)



Fig. 14. Meteora. Varlaam Monastery. Theotokos «The Panton Chara» (Source: Varlaam Monastery)

crossed, with one of the feet revealing its sole as an allusion to the passage in Genesis 3: 15. To the right of Christ survives the epigram: Ο ΤΟ ΧΑΙΡΕ ΠΡΙΝ / ΤΗ ΠΑΝΑΓΝΩ ΜΗΝΥΣ(ΑΣ) / ΤΑ ΣΥΜΒΟΛΑ ΝΥΝ / ΤΟΥ ΠΑΘΟΥ(Σ) ΠΡΟΔΕΙΚΝΗ(ΕΙ) / Χ(ΡΙΣΤΟ)Σ ΔΕ ΘΝΗΤΗΝ / ΣΑΡΚΑ ΕΝΔΕ/ΔΥΜΕΝΟΣ / ΠΟΤΜΟΝ / ΔΕΔΙ[ΚΩΣ Δ]ΕΙ/ΛΙ/Α / ΤΑΥ/ΤΑ / ΒΛΕ/ΠΩΝ ('He who previously declared "hail!" to the All-Pure One now shows the symbols of the Passion, and Christ, clothed in mortal flesh, cowers on seeing them').

The iconographical theme of the Virgin of the Passion is known from the late Middle Byzantine period, an example being the representation in the *katholikon* of the Monastery of the Panaghia tou Arakos on Cyprus (1191/2), which depicts the Virgin Mary standing before a throne with full-length angels presenting the Arma Christi. During the Palaiologan period this iconographical type would

enjoy only a limited distribution, with other instances of it occurring in the frescoes at the Monastery of Latomou in Thessaloniki (fourteenth century)<sup>55</sup> and at the church of St. Stefan at Konče (a metochion of Chilandar Monastery) (1366-1371)<sup>56</sup> and also, in an icon at the Sinai Monastery (c. 1400)<sup>57</sup>. This theme, however, would undergo further development and eventually become standardised in the first half of the fifteenth century, most likely by the painter Andreas Ritzos<sup>58</sup>. This artist was to paint at least three icons on this theme. In his signed icons at the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence and that at the Galleria Nazionale in Parma<sup>59</sup>, the Virgin Mary is depicted half-length with the infant Christ in her arms. Christ, holding his mother's right hand with both of his own, turns towards the two half-length angels bearing the symbols of the Passion. The depiction is accompanied by an iambic epigram in Latin.

Numerous icons of "Cretan" inspiration would adopt the fifteenth-century model. To the second half of the same century dates an icon in the Puskin Museum<sup>60</sup>, as well as an icon at the Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos, which bears the inscription Παναγία Ἀμόλυντος and the usual epigram<sup>61</sup>. From the same period dates an icon in a private collection in Athens<sup>62</sup> and, finally, the celebrated icon in the Kanellopoulos Museum<sup>63</sup>, in which two small angels are portrayed holding musical instruments on either side of the Virgin Mary. To the sixteenth century dates an icon from Crete in the Hermitage Museum<sup>64</sup>. This icon associates with the type standardised by Andreas Ritzos, although the epigram is written in Greek. Finally, it should be noted that the same theme, together with the corresponding

55 Tsigaridas, *Οι τοιχογραφίες της μονής Λατόμου Θεσσαλονίκης*, pl. 3.

56 See for example Miljković, "La Vie de saint Sava de Serbie par Domentijan", 335-338, fig. 7.

57 Soteriou, "Παναγία του Πάθους", 29-42, fig. 1.

58 See Soteriou, *op. cit.* Drandakis, "Η ρεθύμνια εικόν Παναγία του Πάθους". Χυγγοπούλος, *Σχεδιάσμα*, 74-75, 187-190. Pallas, *Die Passion und Bestattung Christi in Byzanz*, 174-175. Kalokyris, *Η Θεοτόκος εις την εικονογραφίαν*, 78-80. Tatić Djurić, "Iconographie de la Vierge de la Passion". *Idem*, "Bogorodica Strasma u Žiči", 150-162. Milliner, *The Virgin of the Passion*. Trifonova, "Άγνωστη εικόνα κρητικής τέχνης", 267-272.

59 For the first icon see Χυγγοπούλος, *Σχεδιάσμα*, 187-188. Cattapan, "I pittori Andrea e Nicola Rizo da Candia", 266-267. Chatzidakis, "Les débuts de l'école crétoise", 181-182. Chatzidaki, *Από τον Χάνδακα στη Βενετία*, cat. 6. For the second icon see Cattapan, *op. cit.*, 267, fig. 2. Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, 180-181. Chatzidaki, *op. cit.*, cat. 7.

60 Agroskina *et al.*, *Το Κάλλος της Μορφής*, cat. 4.

61 Chatzidakis, *Εικόνες της Πάτμου*, cat. 16.

62 Chatzidaki, *Εικόνες κρητικής σχολής*, cat. 43. *Affresci e icone dalla Grecia*, cat. 72 (N. Chatzidaki).

63 *Affresci e icone dalla Grecia*, cat. 76 (M. Acheimastou-Potamianou). Skampavias, Chatzidaki, *Μουσείο Κανελοπούλου*, cat. 141.

64 *Εκόνες της Κρητικής τέχνης*, cat. 7 (J. Piatnitsky).

*anthivolon*, is repeated by Theophanes in the despotic icons of the Monastery of the Great Lavra (c. 1535) and the Monastery of Stavroniketa (c. 1546)<sup>65</sup>.

From a technical and stylistic point of view, the two despotic icons in the Chapel of the Three Hierarchs at the Monastery of Varlaam are undoubtedly connected with the idiom of Theophanes the Cretan, as it appears in a number of his works, including the despotic icons in the Great Lavra, Pantokrator and Iveron monasteries on Mount Athos, which date to between 1535 and 1546<sup>66</sup>.

To be more specific, in the icons at the Monastery of Varlaam we find all the characteristics of Theophanes's art, even Christ's sullen searching gaze with the raised eyebrows, the "metallic" sheen of the *sarcomata* on top of a transparent underpainting, the artist's characteristic gold brushstrokes that do not obliterate the underlying bodies, and his naturalistic treatment of minor elements. What is more, we also find the same type of lettering, both in the names of the holy figures and the inscriptions, as well as in the text on the codex held by Christ.

The same stylistic features appear in a partially damaged icon from the collection of the Monastery of Varlaam. The icon's central theme is a Deesis (*Τρίμωρο*), which is accompanied by two other scenes.

Christ is depicted frontally and in full-length. His outstretched hands make a blessing gesture. Christ is flanked by the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist, who turn to Him with their hands in supplication. In the icon's upper part is the scene of the *Hetoimasia tou Thronou*, with two angels bearing the Arma Christi. Under the central scene, the Three Hierarchs, St. Gregory the Theologian, St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great are depicted in bust receiving Christ's blessing.

The painter's Palaiologan models (e.g., the ca. 1400 Deesis icon in the Monastery of Virgin Hodegetria in Crete)<sup>67</sup>, is obvious, as is the eschatological meaning of the overall iconographic program. However, the presence of the Three Hierarchs, stylistically connected with those of the Great Meteoron icon, should be associated with their role during the Second Coming, as the Church Fathers who crystallized Christ's teachings.

Consequently, an attribution of the two despotic icons in the Three Hierarchs Chapel of the Monastery of Varlaam and Deesis icon to Theophanes seems entirely plausible. Of course, the absence of signatures on these icons may cast some doubt on such a hypothesis. Yet, one should bear in mind that the same applies for all Theophanes's portable icons.

<sup>65</sup> Tsigaridas, *Θεοφάνης ο Κρής*, 37, 38, figs. 125, 157.

<sup>66</sup> For these icons see *ibid.*, 35-40.

<sup>67</sup> *Εικόνες της κρητικής τέχνης*, cat. 116 (M. Borboudakis).

## V. THE MONASTERY OF THE TRANSFIGURATION (ROUSSANO)

In the Roussano Monastery at Meteora, whose *katholikon* is dedicated to the Transfiguration of Christ the Saviour, is a large icon of Christ Enthroned in the iconographical type of the King of Kings and Great High Priest<sup>68</sup>.

This icon was recently studied and published by Alexandros Anagnostopoulos in two similar articles. The first was published in a volume in memory of the late Metropolitan of Stagoi and Meteora, Seraphim, in 2016<sup>69</sup>, while the second was published in the *Deltion of the Christian Archaeological Society* in 2018<sup>70</sup>. In his first study Mr. Anagnostopoulos attributes the icon to a pupil of Theophanes and dates it to between 1570 and 1575. In the second study the same researcher attributes it, this time unreservedly, to Theophanes and dates it to 1527.

The attribution of the icon in the Roussano Monastery to Theophanes the Cretan finds the present author in complete agreement. Both the stylistic data and the script do indeed clearly suggest the hand of Theophanes.

However, it is not necessary to accept the dating to 1527, the year when the mural decoration of the *katholikon* of St. Nicholas Anapausas was completed. This is because this assumption suggests that Theophanes's work in north-west Thessaly should be restricted to a narrow time-frame without good reason. There is no evidence that Theophanes left Stagoi in 1527, nor is it certain that he stopped working for the monasteries in that region after his arrival in Mount Athos. In our opinion, Theophanes's connection with Thessaly persisted even after 1535. It should be recalled that after Theophanes's death, his son Neophytos was to work in Stagoi and Trikala and not on Mount Athos.

## VI. THE MONASTERY OF THE SAVIOUR OF THE GREAT GATES (DOUSIKO)

Two icons (cabinet doors?) in the Monastery of the Saviour (Dousiko) at Pyli near Trikala depict the full-length figures of St. Theophanes Graptos (inscription: [Ο ΑΓΙΟΣ ΘΕ]ΟΦΑΝΗΣ) Ο [ΓΡΑΠΤΟΣ]) and St. Timothy, Archbishop of Procon-

68 See for example Lidov, "Obraz 'Khrista-arkhiyereya'". *Idem*, "L'image du Christ-Prélat", 245-250. *Idem*, "Christ as Priest in Byzantine church decoration", 158-170. Papamastorakis, "Η μορφή του Χριστού-Μεγάλου Αρχιερέα". Lidov, "Byzantine church decoration and the Great Schism of 1054". Popova, "The representation of Christ as the Great Archpriest and King". Vapheïades, "Sacerdotium and Regnum", 79-83.

69 Anagnostopoulos, "Άγνωστη φορητή εικόνα του Χριστού Μεγάλου Αρχιερέα από την ιερά μονή Ρουσάνου Μετεώρων".

70 *Idem*, "Εικόνα του Χριστού Μεγάλου Αρχιερέα στη μονή Ρουσάνου Μετεώρων".



nesus (inscription: Ο ΑΓ[ΙΟΣ] ΤΙΜΟΘΕΟΣ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΤΗ(Σ) ΑΓΙΩΤΑΤΗ[Σ] ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣ[ΚΟ]ΠΗ(Σ) ΠΡΟΙΚΟ[ΝΝΗ]ΣΟΥ Ο ΘΑΥΜΑ[ΤΟΥΡΓΟΣ])<sup>71</sup> (figs. 15, 16).

The reason for this choice is not clear. In other words, we do not know why these two saints appear in these icons, or whether their portrayal is connected with the wishes of a particular ecclesiastical figure. The lengthy inscription under the feet of St. Timothy, which might have provided us with such information, has unfortunately mostly worn away.

St. Theophanes Graptos (c. 778 – 11 October 845) is garbed in monastic attire and holds out a scroll with the well-known *anathema* of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy: ΕΙ/ΤΙΣ ΟΥ ΠΡΟΣΚΥ/ΝΕΙ ΤΟΝ Κ(ΥΡΙΟ)Ν ΗΜ(ΩΝ) / Ι(ΗΣΟΥ)Ν Χ(ΡΙΣΤΟ)Ν ΕΝ ΕΙΚΟ/ΝΙ ΣΑΡΚΙ ΠΕΡΙΓΡΑ/ΠΤΟΝ, ΗΤΩ Α/ΝΑΘΕΜΑ ('If anyone does not worship our Lord Jesus Christ depicted in the icons according to his humanity, let him be anathema')<sup>72</sup>. St. Timothy (518-565?) is dressed in a *sticharion* with red vertical stripes, an *epitrachelion* and *epigonation* adorned with precious stones and tassels, a *polystavrion phelonion* and a cross-adorned *omophorion*. His left forearm supports a closed Gospel Book while his right hand is held in a gesture of blessing. The facial features of the two saints are virtually identical and differ only in respect of the termination of the beard<sup>73</sup>.

The figure of St. Theophanes, like that of St. Timothy of Proconnesus, occurs in Middle Byzantine painting. Two examples of this, in the case of St. Theophanes, are the depiction in the Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi in North Macedonia (1164), a foundation of Alexios Angelos Komnenos, grandson of the Emperor Alexios I<sup>74</sup>, and that in the *katholikon* of the Monastery of the Virgin Euergetis at Studenica (1208/09)<sup>75</sup>. The figure of St. Theophanes also occurs in Palaiologan painting, as may be seen in the *katholikon* of the Chora Monastery (1316-1321)<sup>76</sup> and in the *katholikon* of the Monastery of Pantokrator on Mount Athos (pre-1357 - 1387), founded by the *megas stratopedarchis* Alexios (†1368/9) and the *megas primicerius* and *protosebastus* John<sup>77</sup>.

71 *Ελπίδα και Πίστη*, cats. 42, 43 (E. Tsimpida). Vapheidiades, "Εικόνες 'άδηλων' κρητικών ζωγράφων", 107-112.

72 For the Synodikon see *Το Συνοδικόν της Ορθοδοξίας*. Cf. *Τριώδιον κατανυκτικόν*, 148. For the dictum mentioned see also *Ερμηνεία των ζωγράφων*, 106-107.

73 No essay exists in connection with the iconography of the two saints. For St. Theophanes see indicatively Kaster, "Theophan Graptus der Hymnenschreiber". Babić, "Les moines-poètes", 212-213. Cf. Tsigaridas, *Οι τοιχογραφίες του παρεκκλησίου του Αγίου Γεωργίου*, 129.

74 See Bardžieva-Trajkovska, *St. Panteleimon at Nerezi*, fig. 41, 43.

75 Babić, "Les moines-poètes", 212, figs. 10, 12, 14.

76 Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, vol. I, 221-222, vol. III, pl. 227.

77 Tsigaridas, "Nouveaux elements", 77. *Idem*, *Τοιχογραφίες της περιόδου των Παλαιολόγων*, 57.



Fig. 15. Pyli Trikalon. Soteris Megalon Pylon (Dousikon) Monastery. St. Theophanes the Graptos (after *Ελπίδα και Πίστη*, (Exhibition catalogue), cat. 42 on page 55)



Fig. 16. Pyli Trikalon. Soteris Megalon Pylon (Dousikon) Monastery. St. Timotheos of Prokonnisos (after *Ελπίδα και Πίστη*, (Exhibition catalogue), cat. 43 on page 56)

In the post-Byzantine period St. Theophanes Graptos was often depicted in monasteries, for example in the narthex of the Chapel of St. George at St. Paul's Monastery (1552-1555)<sup>78</sup>, in the *lite* of the *katholikon* of the Monastery of Dionysiou (1547)<sup>79</sup> and in the old refectory of the same monastery (1553-1569). The saint also appears in the monumental ensembles painted by Theophanes the Cretan. In the *katholikon* of St. Nicholas Anapausas (1527) St. Theophanes is depicted in the same iconographical type, with the same colours in the garments, although in this case he raises his right hand in a gesture of blessing, while the maxim on the scroll differs from that in the icon under examination here (*Οὐδὲν ἄλλο βλέπει τὸν μοναχόν...*)<sup>80</sup>. The saint is also depicted in the *katholikon* and refectory of the Monastery of Great Lavra (1535)<sup>81</sup>, though not in the Monastery of Stavroniketa (1546/7). Nevertheless, an unidentified figure of a saint in the refectory of the same monastery<sup>82</sup> could perhaps be identified as St. Theophanes Graptos. Finally, it is worth noting that St. Theophanes is portrayed in the *lite* of the *katholikon* of the Dousiko Monastery, in the same iconographical type but with a closed scroll<sup>83</sup>.

St. Theophanes and St. Timothy of Proconnesus are portrayed full-length and frontally on a green ground, which bears linear graduations to create an impression of depth. Similar linear shading occurs in St. Timothy's Gospel Book, as well as in his *epigonation* and *epitrachelion* in order to render the folds in the vestments. This device, though not unknown in the work of other sixteenth-century artists, occurs mainly in the work of Theophanes, such as in the *katholikon* of the Monastery of St. Nicholas Anapausas<sup>84</sup>. Another example of Theophanes's artistic perception is the naturalistic rendering of the precious stones and the tassels on St. Timothy's *epigonation* and *epitrachelion*. The rendering of the drapey, with the austere two-tone shadows of the folds and the use of successive linear lights to graduate the light on the large surfaces are indicative of Theophanes's early style. As for the rendering of the faces, the virtually indiscernible outlines, the smooth tensionless modelling, and the utilisation of chiaroscuro, with the creation of shading in the hair, suggests the painting of Nikolaos Rit-

78 Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Παύλου*, 129, figs. 140, 144.

79 *Ιερά Μονή Αγίου Διονυσίου. Οι τοιχογραφίες του καθολικού*, figs. 421, 446.

80 Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *Ιερά μονή Αγίου Νικολάου Αναπαυσά*, 90, figs. on pages 306, 307.

81 Millet, *Monuments de l'Athos*, pl. 130.3.

82 Cf. Toutos, Fousteris, *Ευρετήριο*, cat. 14.2.

83 Unpublished representation.

84 Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *op. cit.*, figs. on pages 174, 178, 302.



zos (fl. 1482-1503, d. before 1507), son of Andreas Ritzos<sup>85</sup>, and, to an even greater degree, the art of Theophanes.

Finally, it is worth noting the examples of script. The type of lettering in the two icons in the Dousiko Monastery is characteristic of the painter Theophanes<sup>86</sup>. For example, the ending ΗΣ, with the ζ forming a coiling continuation of the horizontal arm of the Η, occurs in the frescoes of St. Nicholas Anapausas<sup>87</sup> and the Dodecaorton icons in the Monastery of Iveron<sup>88</sup>.

In spite of all this, the art of the two icons from the Monastery of the Saviour of the Great Gates gives the impression of being somewhat formal, compared with other icons painted by Theophanes. For example, the ruffled drapery that usually appears in his other works is absent, as well as the characteristic “metallic” sheen of the *sarcomata*. However, these two stylistic features also occur in ensembles that date later than St. Nicholas Anapausas. On the other hand, if we reject the attribution of these two icons to the Cretan painter, we are still confronted with the following facts: a) the painter of the icons in question worked in north-west Thessaly, like Theophanes; b) he worked during the same period as Theophanes; c) he adopted exactly the same technique, style and script. Consequently, we are dealing with a painter of the first few decades of the sixteenth century whose mature and fully developed art is in no way inferior to that of Theophanes.

In any event, the two icons from the Monastery of the Saviour of the Great Gates present an interpretative dilemma whose two contrasting propositions are in any case beneficial to our understanding of post-Byzantine art in Ottoman Greece. For if we ultimately ascribe the icons to Theophanes, this not only strengthens the relationship of patronage between the painter and the founder Bessarion but also provides evidence of the fact that Theophanes had had some kind of previous work experience in north-west Thessaly before St. Nicholas Anapausas. If, on the other hand, we reject the connection between the icons in the Dousiko Monastery and Theophanes, then this weakens the established view that the “Cretan” idiom was introduced into the regions under Ottoman

85 For Nicholas Ritzos see Xyngopoulos, *Σχεδιάσμα*, 163. Cattapan, “I pittori Andrea e Nicola Rizo”, 279. Chatzidakis, “Les débuts”, 182-183. Chatzidakis, Drakopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση*, 333-334. Vokotopoulos, “Η εικόνα του Νικολάου Ρίτζου στο Σεράγεβο”, 207-225. Vapheïades, *Περί της εν Άθω ‘κρητικής’ ζωγραφικής*, 143-223 *et passim*.

86 See Velenis, “Η γραφή”, 211-240.

87 Sophianos, Tsigaridas, *op. cit.*, 236, pl. 5.

88 For the icons of Iveron monastery see Tsigaridas, “Άγνωστο επιστόλιο του Θεοφάνη του Κρητός”. *Idem*, “Νέα στοιχεία”, 371-374. *Θησαυροί του Αγίου Όρους*, cats. 2.40-2.43. (E. N. Tsigaridas). *Idem*, *Θεοφάνης ο Κρής*, 35, 37.

rule by Theophanes alone. This is because the art of these two icons provides evidence of the activity in Thessaly of another “Cretan” painter most likely of local origin.

Once again, the question that is of such key importance in this study arises: did this painter also learn his art in Crete? Given that the importation of icons from Crete to mainland Greece was by no means unknown, and given the traditional form of learning in art apprenticeships (copying), why would the painter in question have had to migrate, and, for that matter, to a region under Ottoman rule? It is true that during the sixteenth century the need for icons and frescoes in mainland Greece increased. However, why should we accept that the artists who hastened to work in mainland Greece all came from Crete, ignoring the fact that many of them were very probably monks from the Meteora and Mount Athos? After all, was it really impossible for a talented artist to be trained and to reach great heights of artistic expression outside Crete?

The artistic output of Thessaly gives a negative answer. It indirectly suggests that the emergence and flourishing of “Cretan” painting in Ottoman Greece was probably the result of local artistic developments, within the framework of the clearly high aesthetic requirements of the prelates and abbots in the region. This, moreover, is borne out by the painting of Theophanes and his gifted colleagues, which clearly satisfied very different needs to those of the westernised society of the Regno di Candia.



Η ΚΑΛΛΙΤΕΧΝΙΚΗ ΔΡΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΤΗΤΑ  
ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΦΑΝΗ ΤΟΥ ΚΡΗΤΙΚΟΥ ΣΤΗΝ  
Δ. ΘΕΣΣΑΛΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΟΙ ΑΠΑΡΧΕΣ ΤΗΣ «ΚΡΗΤΙΚΗΣ»  
ΖΩΓΡΑΦΙΚΗΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΟΘΩΜΑΝΙΚΗ ΕΛΛΑΔΑ

**Κωνσταντῖνος Μ. Βαφειάδης**

Ἡ ἔρευνα ἔχει ἀπὸ καιρὸ συνδέσει τὴν τέχνη τοῦ Θεοφάνη Στρελίτζα Μπαθά μὲ τὴν ἐμφάνιση καὶ ἀνθισπ τῆς «Κρητικῆς Σχολῆς» στὴ νότια Βαλκανικὴ. Ἐντούτοις, τὸ ἔργο τοῦ Θεοφάνη δὲν εἶναι γνωστὸ στὸ σύνολό του, οὔτε μελετημένο ὡς πρὸς τὶς πραγματικὲς διαστάσεις τῆς συμβολῆς του στὴν ἐξέλιξη τῆς μεταβυζαντινῆς ζωγραφικῆς στὴν ἡπειρωτικὴ Ἑλλάδα καί, κατ' ἐπέκταση, ὡς πρὸς τὴ σχέση του μὲ τὸ ἔργο ἄλλων καλλιτεχνῶν τοῦ 16<sup>ου</sup> αἰῶνος. Ἐπισημαίνεται ὅτι τὸ ἔργο τῶν τελευταίων δὲν ἔχει τύχει ἀντίστοιχης μὲ τοῦ Θεοφάνη προσοχῆς καὶ ἔρευνας. Κατὰ συνέπεια, μένει κανεὶς μὲ τὴν ἀπατηλὴ ἐντύπωση ὅτι ἡ «Κρητικὴ Σχολὴ» ἐκπροσωπεῖται κυρίως ἀπὸ τὸν Θεοφάνη. Τὸ πρόβλημα ἐντείνεται ἀπὸ καθιερωμένα στὴν ἔρευνα στερεότυπα, τὰ ὁποῖα δυσχεραίνουν τὴν κατανόηση τῆς τέχνης τῆς περιόδου. Τοῦτο διότι ἐμφανίζουν τὴν Κρήτη ὡς τὸ μοναδικὸ καλλιτεχνικὸ κέντρο τοῦ ὀρθόδοξου κόσμου, τὴν δὲ «Κρητικὴ Σχολὴ» ὡς τὴ μόνη ἄξια ἐκπρόσωπο τῆς ὑστερης τέχνης τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως. Σὺν τούτοις, ἐμφανίζουν τὸν Θεοφάνη ὡς *ἄπαξ*, ἕνα φαινόμενο ἀσύνδετο μὲ τὴν καλλιτεχνικὴ παραγωγὴ στὴ Βαλκανικὴ τοῦ 15<sup>ου</sup> καὶ πρώιμου 16<sup>ου</sup> αἰῶνος, μολοντί εἶναι γνωστὸ ὅτι ὁ Θεοφάνης εἶναι γόνος καλλιτεχνικῆς οἰκογένειας τῆς Πελοποννήσου, καὶ ὅτι οὐδένα ἔργο του σώζεται στὴν Κρήτη, παρὰ τὴν ἐντυπωσιακὴ σὲ ὄγκο παραγωγὴ του.

Τρία καθολικὰ μονῶν εἶναι ἱστορημένα ἀπὸ τὸν Θεοφάνη: ὁ γραπτὸς διάκοσμος τοῦ καθολικοῦ τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου Ἀναπαυσᾶ (1527) στὰ Μετέωρα, αὐτὸς τοῦ καθολικοῦ τῆς μονῆς Μεγίστης Λαύρας (1535) καὶ τῆς μονῆς Σταυρονικήτα στὸ Ἅγιον Ὄρος (1546). Πρὸς τούτοις, θεωρεῖται βέβαιο ὅτι ὁ Θεοφάνης ἱστορεῖ τὴν τράπεζα τῶν δύο ἀνωτέρω ἀθωνικῶν μονῶν, καθὼς ἐπίσης τὸ παρεκκλήσιο τοῦ Ἁγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Προδρόμου καὶ τὸν παλαιὸ πύλωνά τῆς μονῆς Σταυρονικήτα. Στὸν Θεοφάνη ἀποδίδονται ἐπίσης περὶ τὶς ἐξήντα πέντε εἰκόνες. Ἐπισημαίνεται ὅτι οἱ εἰκόνες αὐτές, ἡ πλειονότητα τῶν ὁποίων εὐρίσκεται στὸ Ἅγιον Ὄρος, ἀποδίδονται μὲ τεχνοτροπικὰ κριτήρια, ἐφόσον οὐδεμία εἰκόνα φέρει τὴν ὑπογραφήν τοῦ καλλιτέχνη.

Ὁ γραπτὸς διάκοσμος τοῦ καθολικοῦ τῆς μονῆς Ἁγίου Νικολάου Ἀναπαυσᾶ συνιστᾶ μνημεῖο κλειδί γιὰ τὴν κατανόηση τῆς τέχνης τοῦ Θεοφάνη, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἀπαρχῶν τῆς «κρητικῆς» ζωγραφικῆς στὴν ὀθωμανικὴ Ἑλλάδα. Ἡ ζωγραφικὴ

τοῦ Θεοφάνη, ὅπως αὐτὴ ἐκδηλώνεται στὸν Ἀναπαυσᾶ, δὲν υἰοθετεῖ πολλὰ ἀπὸ τὴν «μικτοῦ» ὕφους τέχνη τῶν Κρητικῶν. Ἀντιθέτως, ἀντλεῖ τὰ εἰκονογραφικὰ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἱκανὰ στιλιστικὰ στοιχεῖα ἀπὸ τὴ ζωγραφικὴ τῶν ὄψιμων παλαιολόγειων χρόνων, οἰκεία στὸν Θεοφάνη διὰ μέσου τῆς πρὸ τῆς Ἀλώσεως (1453) εἰκαστικῆς παραγωγῆς στὴ Μεγαλόνησο, ἐφόσον ὑποθέτουμε ὅτι αὐτὸς ἔλαβε τὴν βασικὴ του ἐκπαίδευση στὴν Κρήτη. Εἶναι ὅμως προφανές ὅτι ὁ καλλιτέχνης, στοιχειωδῶς καταρτισμένος στὸ ἐργαστήριό ἴσως τοῦ πατέρα του, ὠριμάζει καλλιτεχνικὰ στὴν ὀθωμανικὴ Ἑλλάδα, δεδομένου ὅτι οὐδὲν (πρῶιμο) ἔργο του σώζεται στὸ νησι καὶ ὅτι τὸ σύνολο τῆς παραγωγῆς του συνδέεται ἀποκλειστικὰ μὲ τὶς μοναστικὲς κοινότητες τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους καὶ τῶν Μετεώρων.

Σὺν τούτοις, ὁ διάκοσμος τοῦ καθολικοῦ τῆς μονῆς Ἁγίου Νικολάου Ἀναπαυσᾶ προϋποθέτει ἐμπειρία στὴν τέχνη τῆς τοιχογραφίας. Ἐπομένως, εἶναι λογικὸ νὰ ὑποστηρίξει κανεὶς ὅτι ὁ Θεοφάνης ἐργάζεται (καὶ) ὡς τοιχογράφος πρὸ τοῦ 1527. Ποὺ ἀκριβῶς, δὲν γνωρίζουμε. Ὡστόσο, ἡ πρόσκλησή του στὰ Μετέωρα, προφανῶς ἀπὸ τὸν ἅγιο Βησσαρίωνα Β΄ Λαρίσης, ὑποδηλώνει ὅτι ὁ καλλιτέχνης ἦταν γνωστὸς στὸν ἱεράρχη ἀπὸ κάποιο ἔργο του στὴν ἠπειρωτικὴ Ἑλλάδα, καὶ πάντως ὄχι ἀπὸ κάποια ἐργασία του στὴν Κρήτη.

Στὸ ἐξεταζόμενο σύνολο ὁ Θεοφάνης συνεργάζεται μὲ ἕναν ἀκόμη χαρισματικὸ ζωγράφο, τὸ εἰκαστικὸ ἰδίωμα τοῦ ὁποῖου ταυτίζεται μὲ τὸ δικό του. Εἶναι πολὺ πιθανὸ ὅτι ὁ «ἀνώνυμος» δημιουργὸς ἐργαζόταν στὴ Θεσσαλία πρὶν τὸ 1527 καὶ ὅτι ὁ Θεοφάνης ζήτησε τὴ βοήθειά του, προκειμένου νὰ ἱστορήσουν μαζὶ τὸ καθολικὸ τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Ἁγίου Νικολάου Ἀναπαυσᾶ. Στὸν ἄδηλο τοῦτο ζωγράφο ἀποδίδουμε εἰκόνες ἐπιστυλίου τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Μ. Μετεώρου καθὼς καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα τῆς Κοιμήσεως τῆς Θεοτόκου τῆς μονῆς Βαρλαάμ.

Στὴ μονὴ τοῦ Μ. Μετεώρου σώζεται εἰκόνα τῶν Τριῶν Ἱεραρχῶν, τῆς ὁποίας ἡ τέχνη εὐρίσκεται σὲ ἀπόλυτη συμφωνία μὲ τὴν τεχνικὴ, τὸ ἰδίωμα καὶ τὴ γραφὴ τοῦ Θεοφάνη. Ὑποθέτουμε δὲ ὅτι ἡ εἰκόνα τῶν Τριῶν Ἱεραρχῶν ἀποτελεῖ ἀνάθημα τοῦ Νεοφύτου Β΄ Λαρίσης πρὸς τὸ κονάκι τῆς μονῆς στὰ Τρίκαλα, τὸ ἀφιερωμένο στοὺς Τρεῖς Ἱεράρχες (ἴδρυση 1388). Στὸν Θεοφάνη ἀποδίδουμε ἐπίσης δύο δεσποτικὲς εἰκόνες τοῦ παρεκκλησίου τῶν Τριῶν Ἱεραρχῶν στὴ μονὴ Βαρλαάμ. Στὶς εἰκόνες αὐτὲς ἀπαντοῦν ὅλα τὰ γνωρίσματα τῆς τέχνης τοῦ Κρητικοῦ καλλιτέχνη, ἀπαντᾷ ἐπίσης ὁ ἴδιος τύπος γραμμάτων, τόσον στὰ ἀγιώνυμα καὶ τὶς ἐπιγραφὰς ὅσον καὶ στὸ κείμενο τοῦ κώδικα τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Δύο ἀκόμη εἰκόνες, σωζόμενες στὸ καθολικὸ τῆς μονῆς τοῦ Σωτῆρος Μεγάλων Πυλῶν (Δουσίκου),μποροῦν νὰ ἀποδοθοῦν στὸν χρωστήρα τοῦ Θεοφάνη. Τοῦτο μαρτυρεῖ σαφῶς ἡ τεχνοτροπία καὶ ἡ τεχνικὴ. Ἀνεξάρτητα ὅμως ἀπὸ αὐτό, οἱ δύο εἰκόνες τῆς μονῆς Δουσίκου προσάγουν ἕνα ἐρμηνευτικὸ δίλημμα, τοῦ ὁποῖου οἱ δύο ἀντιθετικὲς προτάσεις ἔχουν οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως θετικὴ ἀξία γιὰ τὴν κατανόηση τῆς μεταβυζαντινῆς τέχνης στὴν ὀθωμανικὴ Ἑλλάδα. Διότι ἐὰν

ἐντέλει ἀποδώσουμε τὶς εἰκόνες στὸν Θεοφάνη, τότε ἐνισχύεται ἀφενὸς ἡ σχέση πατρωνίας ἀνάμεσα στὸν ζωγράφο καὶ τὸν κτίτορα ἅγιο Βησσαρίωνα καὶ ἀφετέρου, αἰτιολογεῖται ἡ ὑπόθεση τῆς «προϋπηρεσίας» του στὴ ΒΔ. Θεσσαλία, πρὶν τὶς τοιχογραφίες τῆς μονῆς Ἀναπαυσᾶ. Ἐὰν ἀπὸ τὴν ἄλλη πλευρὰ ἀρνηθοῦμε τὴν σχέση τῶν εἰκόνων τῆς μονῆς Δουσίου μὲ τὸν Θεοφάνη, τότε ἀποδυναμώνεται ἡ καθιερωμένη στὴν ἔρευνα ἄποψη, περὶ εἰσαγωγῆς τοῦ «Κρητικοῦ» ἰδιώματος στὶς τουρκοκρατούμενες περιοχὲς ἀποκλειστικὰ καὶ μόνον ἀπὸ αὐτόν. Τοῦτο διότι ἡ τέχνη τῶν δύο εἰκόνων τεκμηριώνει τὴν δρᾶση στὴ Θεσσαλία ἕτερου «κρητικοῦ» ζωγράφου, μὲ γηγενή, πιθανότατα, καταγωγή.

Τίθεται ὁμως τὸ ἐρώτημα: σπούδασε καὶ αὐτὸς τὴν τέχνη του στὴν Κρήτη; Δεδομένου ὅτι ἡ εἰσαγωγή εἰκόνων ἀπὸ τὴν Κρήτη στὴν ἠπειρωτικὴ Ἑλλάδα διόλου ἄγνωστη ἦταν, γιὰ ποιὸ λόγο ἔπρεπε ὁ ζωγράφος τῶν εἰκόνων τῆς μονῆς Δουσίου νὰ μεταναστεύσει, καὶ μάλιστα σὲ περιοχὴ ὑπὸ ὀθωμανικὴ κυριαρχία; Εἶναι ἀλήθεια ὅτι, κατὰ τὸν 16<sup>ο</sup> αἰῶνα, ἡ ἀνάγκη γιὰ εἰκόνες καὶ τοιχογραφίες διογκώνεται στὶς ἐν λόγω περιοχὲς. Γιατί ὁμως πρέπει νὰ δεχθοῦμε ὅτι οἱ καλλιτέχνες ποὺ ἔσπευσαν γιὰ ἐργασία στὴν ἠπειρωτικὴ χώρα ἦλθαν ὅλοι ἀπὸ τὴν Κρήτη, ἀγνοώντας μάλιστα τὸ γεγονός ὅτι πολλοὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἦταν, κατὰ πᾶσα πιθανότητα, μοναχοὶ μετεωριῖτες καὶ ἀγιορεῖτες; Ἐντέλει ἦταν ὄντως ἀδύνατον γιὰ ἕναν ταλαντοῦχο καλλιτέχνη νὰ ἐκπαιδευθεῖ καὶ νὰ φθάσει σὲ ὑψηλὰ μέτρα εἰκαστικῆς ἐκφράσεως ἐκτὸς Κρήτης;

Ἡ καλλιτεχνικὴ παραγωγή στὴ μεταβυζαντινὴ Θεσσαλία δίδει ἀρνητικὴ ἀπάντησι. Προτείνει δὲ ὅτι ἡ ἐμφάνισι καὶ ἡ ἀκμὴ τῆς «Κρητικῆς» ζωγραφικῆς στὴν ὀθωμανικὴ Ἑλλάδα φαίνεται εἶναι νὰ ἀποτελέσῃ γηγενῶν εἰκαστικῶν ζυμώσεων, ἐντὸς τῶν ὁρίων τῶν ἀποδεδειγμένα ὑψηλῶν ἀπαιτήσεων τῶν ἱεραρχῶν καὶ ἡγουμένων τῆς ἐποχῆς. Τοῦτο, ἄλλωστε, τεκμηριώνει ἡ ζωγραφικὴ τοῦ Θεοφάνη καὶ τῶν χαρισματικῶν συναδέλφων του, ἡ ὁποία ἔκδηλα ἀνταποκρίνεται σὲ ἀνάγκες πολὺ διαφορετικὲς ἀπὸ αὐτὲς τῆς ἐκδυτικισμένης κοινωνίας τοῦ Regni di Candia.



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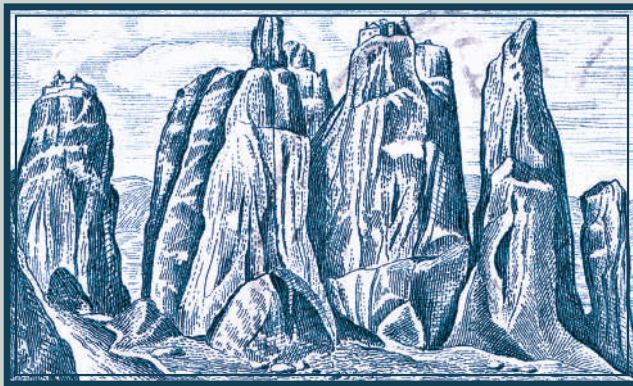
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