



# Inscriptions

in the Byzantine  
and Post-Byzantine History  
and History of Art

Edited by  
**Christos Stavrakos**

2016  
Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden  
in Kommission



# Inscriptions in the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine History and History of Art

Proceedings of the International Symposium  
“Inscriptions: Their Contribution to the Byzantine  
and Post-Byzantine History and History of Art”  
(Ioannina, June 26-27, 2015)

Edited by Christos Stavrakos

2016

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden  
in Kommission



Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek  
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen  
Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet  
über <http://dnb.dnb.de> abrufbar.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek  
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche  
Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the internet  
at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

For further information about our publishing program consult our  
website <http://www.harrassowitz-verlag.de>

© Christos Stavrakos, Ioannina 2016

This work, including all of its parts, is protected by copyright.  
Any use beyond the limits of copyright law without the permission  
of the publisher is forbidden and subject to penalty. This applies  
particularly to reproductions, translations, microfilms and storage  
and processing in electronic systems.

Printed on permanent/durable paper.

Formatting and Layout: Michael Stork (Krania - Preveza), [micstork@yahoo.gr](mailto:micstork@yahoo.gr)

Printing and binding: Theodorides Graphic Arts. Garibaldistr. 10,

GR-45221, Ioannina, [e\\_theodo@otenet.gr](mailto:e_theodo@otenet.gr)

Printed in Greece

ISBN 978-3-447-10759-4

## CONTENTS

Editor's Prologue by Christos STAVRAKOS .....	11
List of Abbreviations .....	13
Ida TOTH	
Reflections on a Period of Transformation in Early Byzantine Epigraphic Culture .....	17
Christos STAVRAKOS	
The Profile of Donors in Christian Monuments of Epirus (5 <sup>th</sup> –18 <sup>th</sup> c.)	41
Nektarios ZARRAS	
Identity and Patronage in Byzantium: Epigraphic Evidence and Donor Portraits of Naxos .....	53
Ioannis P. CHOULIARAS	
Painters' Cultural and Professional Status as Revealed by the Monumental Inscriptions of Epirus (16 <sup>th</sup> –17 <sup>th</sup> c.) .....	79
Salvatore COSENTINO	
Boundary Marks and Space Organization in Early Byzantine Epigraphy	95
Stefanos KORDOSIS	
The Depiction of a Khazar selling Caviar in the Monastery of Vlachernae, Arta .....	111
Angeliki KATSIOTI – Georges KIOURTZIAN	
Epigraphia Carpathica .....	137

CONTENTS

Christos TSATSOULIS	
The Use of the Terms θεόσωστος and θεοφύλακτος in the Byzantine Epigraphic and Sigillographic Tradition .....	159
Katerina KONTOPANAGOU	
<i>Κατὰ πάντα ἀπηρτίσθη</i> : Some Comments on the ἀπάρτισις in Donor Inscriptions .....	177
Claudia LUDWIG	
Epirus in the Middle Byzantine Period. A Prosopographical Approach	193
Lidia COTOVANU	
L'épigraphie comme lieu privé d'identification personnelle .....	205
Maria XENAKI	
Les inscriptions byzantines datées du Parthénon (VII <sup>e</sup> –XII <sup>e</sup> siècles)	233
Sophia KALOPISSI-VERTI	
Reconsidering a Byzantine Inscription from Aegina .....	253
Dimitrios LIAKOS	
Unpublished Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Inscriptions on Mt Athos	279
Nikolaos MASTROCHRISTOS	
<i>Ίουστινιανού ἀντωκράτορος, Θεοδοσίου ἐπισκόπου...</i> An unknown Dedicatory Inscription from Rhodes, Greece .....	321
Alexandra-Kyriaki WASSILIOU-SEIBT	
Das doppelt geprägte Siegel von Leon Sguros und Ioannes Branas ...	329
Andreas RHOBY	
<i>Tower, stablished by God, God is protecting you</i> : Inscriptions on Byzantine Fortifications .....	341
Andreas GKOUTZIOUKOSTAS	
Puzzling Inscriptions from the Basilica of Saint Demetrios in Thessaloniki .....	371
Georgios PALLIS	
The “Speaking” Decoration: Inscriptions on Architectural Sculptures of the Middle Byzantine Church .....	389

CONTENTS

Michael GRÜNBART	
Multiplying Inscriptions: The Cultural Context of Byzantine Metal Stamps .....	405
Fanie LYTARI	
Réévaluation des inscriptions dédicatoires dans certaines églises du XVII <sup>ème</sup> siècle dans la région de Kalambaka .....	415





PAINTERS' CULTURAL AND PROFESSIONAL  
STATUS AS REVEALED BY THE MONUMENTAL  
INSCRIPTIONS OF EPIRUS (16<sup>TH</sup>-17<sup>TH</sup> C.)

The whole of Epirus's inscriptions is being studied by the project run by professor Christos Stavrakos and his associates<sup>1</sup>. I have, of course, for many years been gathering the material, especially because it is the basic and most infallible way of identifying artists, regardless of stylistic differences. Numerous questions and interesting results emerged from the assembly of the inscriptions (those inscribed on walls in particular and chiefly donor inscriptions) of Epirus and many other regions<sup>2</sup>. The current paper will be limited firstly only to the wall inscriptions

---

<sup>1</sup> "The history supports the research and economic growth in under-developed regions: the donor and dedicatory inscriptions in the Christian monuments of Epirus (4<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> c.)" (Excellence II/ΑΡΙΣΤΕΙΑ II). I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Dr. Christos Stavrakos for the invitation to participate in the symposium and to Dr. Eugenia Drakopoulou to whose idea is based this research.

<sup>2</sup> Several studies have been carried out for the post-Byzantine inscriptions of Epirus, see for example P.I. ROULITSAS, Ἐπιγραφὰὶ καὶ ἐνθυμίσεις ἐκ τῆς Βορείου Ἠπείρου. *EEBS* 5 (1928) 51-99; Chr. SOULIS, Ἐπιγραφὰὶ καὶ ἐνθυμίσεις Ἠπειρωτικαί. *EpChr* 9 (1934) 81-126; TH. POPA, Mbishkrime të kishave në Shqipëri. Tiranë 1998; K.G. GIAKOUMIS, Κριτική έκδοση επιγραφῶν συνεργειῶν ἀπὸ το Λινοτόπι στις περιφέρειες τῆς Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας τῆς Ἀλβανίας. *DChAE* 21 (2000) 249-266; Gr. ΜΑΝΟΥΡΟΥΛΟΣ, Ἐπιγραφικὲς καὶ ἄλλες μαρτυρίες γιὰ τὰ Κατσανοχώρια (1587-1699). *EpChr* 35 (2001) 99-196; IDEM, Ἐπανεξέταση τῶν επιγραφῶν τῶν Καπεσοβιτῶν ζωγράφων. *EpChr* 37 (2003) 299-317; A. ΚΑΡΑΜΠΕΡΙΔΙ, Ζωγράφοι ἀπὸ τὸν Γράμμο στὴν Ἠπειρο τοῦ 17<sup>ου</sup> αἰῶνα, στοιχεῖα ἀπὸ τὶς επιγραφές τῶν ἔργων τοῦς, in: Πανεπιστήμιο Ἰωαννίνων, Τομέας Ἀρχαιολογίας, Μίλτος Γαριδῆς (1926-1996), Ἀφιέρωμα, I. Ioannina 2003, 291-309; G. VELENIS, Ταυτίσεις ζωγράφων με βᾶση τὴ γραφή. *Εγνατία* 11 (2007) 103-112; IDEM, Ἡ γραφή τῶν Κονταρήδων. *Τρικαλινά* 28

of Epirus, secondly to those of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and thirdly to individual cases, those being inscriptions which preserve the artist or artists' names. Stylistic identifications will not concern us, excepting the cases where this is absolutely necessary for the validation of our conclusions. Previous studies have located eight churches of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in North and South Epirus with donor or dedicatory inscriptions, which preserve the name(s) of the artist(s)<sup>3</sup>. However, the inscriptions which preserve the artist's name constitute only the 1/3 of the total number of the dedicatory inscriptions of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. From this body of inscriptions we were able to gather the names of nine artists who worked in North and South Epirus during the 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>4</sup>. These names are found in seven inscriptions and a *parresia* (*diptych*) in a *conch* of a *sanctum* (Pl. 1).

Beginning chronologically, the first artist's name is found in the inscription of the church of Saint Athanasios of Petsa (region of Delvino, Albania) and is Ilias Longovitis, for whom we have no other information and

(2008) 49–78; Th.D. KOSMAS, Επιγραφικές μαρτυρίες στα εκκλησιαστικά μνημεία της Ζίτσας Ιωαννίνων (β' μισό 16<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα – 1911). *EpChr* 44 (2010) 263–412; Chr. STAVRAKOS, The Sixteenth Century Donor Inscriptions in the Monastery of the Dormition of the Virgin (Theotokos Molybdoskepastos). The Legend of the Emperor Constantine IV as Founder of Monasteries in Epirus. Wiesbaden 2013. We do not include in this indicative bibliography monographs or articles on specific post-Byzantine monuments of Epirus.

<sup>3</sup> For these artists see for example, A. TOURTA, Οι ναοί του Αγίου Νικολάου στη Βίτσα και του Αγίου Μηνά στο Μονοδένδρι. Athina 1991, 27–28; E. DRAKOPOULOU, Υπογραφές μεταβυζαντινών ζωγράφων. Ανίχνευση προσωπικών και καλλιτεχνικών μαρτυριών. *DChAE* 22 (2001) 129–134; A. STAVROPOULOU-MAKRI, Les peintures murales de l'église de la Transfiguration à Veltsista (1568) en Épire et l'atelier des peintres Kondaris. Ioannina 2001; I.P. CHOULIARAS, Τοιχογραφημένα μνημεία και ζωγράφοι του 15<sup>ου</sup> και 16<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα στην Ήπειρο και τη Νότια Αλβανία. *Δωδώνη* 36–37 (2007–2008) 295–332; IDEM, Οι τοιχογραφίες του καθολικού της μονής Προφήτη Ηλία στους Γεωργουτσάτες Δρόπολης στη βόρεια Ήπειρο (1585/86) και το έργο του ζωγράφου Νικηφόρου, ενός από τους τελευταίους εκπροσώπους της Κρητικής σχολής. *DChAE* 35 (2014) 183–206; VELENIS, Γραφή Κονταρήδων 49–78.

<sup>4</sup> For the names of the artists in these inscriptions, see the emblematic works of M. CHATZIDAKIS, Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση (1450–1830), 1. Athina 1987, 164, 216, 286; M. CHATZIDAKIS – E. DRAKOPOULOU, Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση (1450–1830), 2. Athina 1997, 76–79, 102–104, 159, 192, 231, 235; E. DRAKOPOULOU, Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση (1450–1830), 3. Athina 2010, 156, 208–209, 282, 323. See also, CHOULIARAS, Τοιχογραφημένα μνημεία 314–315.

who decorated the church in 1524/5<sup>5</sup>. Then, in 1536/7, we have Efstathios of Iakovos, protonotarios of Arta at the Molyvdoskepasti monastery<sup>6</sup>. In 1558 the monk Ananias is mentioned in the sanctuary of the church of Paregoritissa in Arta<sup>7</sup>. The brothers Georgios Kontaris, priest and ecclesiarch of Thebes, and Frangos decorated the church of Saint Nikolaos of Krapsi in 1563 (Fig. 1), while in 1568 the “insignificant” and “sinful” Frangos Kontaris put his signature on the frescoes of the church of the Transfiguration in Veltsista (today Klimatia)<sup>8</sup>. The monk Nikiphoros decorated in 1585/6 the sanctuary and the nave of the catholicon from the monastery of the Prophet Ilias in Georgoutsates of Dropolis (Albania) (Fig. 2)<sup>9</sup>. The artists from Linotopi signed their first work in Epirus in 1599 at the Makryalexis monastery<sup>10</sup>. Finally, at the 9<sup>th</sup> decade of the century the artist Ioannis inscribed his name in a conch of the sanctum of the church of Saint Nikolaos in Kalyvia of Elafotopos (Fig. 3)<sup>11</sup>. The artists from the 16<sup>th</sup> century worked alone, with the exception of the brothers Kontari and the two artists at the Makryaleksi monastery, who aren't essentially confined to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century the numbers skyrocket and about 35 donor or dedicatory wall inscriptions, almost the half of the total, preserve the artist's name. Also of interest during the 17<sup>th</sup> century is the number of artists mentioned in each one of these inscriptions, for example four artists are mentioned in one inscription, three in other three, two artists are mentioned in 15 churches and only one in other 16 inscriptions (Pl. 2)<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> POPA, Mbishkrime 294, Nr. 804; CHOULIARAS, Τοιχογραφημένα μνημεία 302, 306.

<sup>6</sup> STAVRAKOS, Donor Inscriptions 144–151.

<sup>7</sup> V.N. PAPAΔOΠOYΛOY – A. L. TSIARA, Εικόνες της Άρτας. Η εκκλησιαστική ζωγραφική στην περιοχή της Άρτας κατά τους βυζαντινούς και μεταβυζαντινούς χρόνους. Arta 2008, 87–89.

<sup>8</sup> STAVPOYΛOY-MAKPI, Veltsista 23–27, 137–153.

<sup>9</sup> CHOULIARAS, Μονή Προφήτη Ηλία 183–184.

<sup>10</sup> TOURTA, Βίτσα 27–28.

<sup>11</sup> I.P. CHOULIARAS, Η εντοίχια θρησκευτική ζωγραφική του 16<sup>ου</sup> και 17<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα στο Δυτικό Ζαγόρι. Athina 2009, 22–24.

<sup>12</sup> For a complete catalogue of the painters of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Epirus, see A. KARAMPERIDI, Η μονή Πατέρων και η ζωγραφική του 16<sup>ου</sup> και 17<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα στην περιοχή της Ζίτσας Ιωαννίνων. Ioannina 2009, 392–395.

We can see that during this century the number of commissions of more artists change when compared to the previous century. It is of equal importance to examine the identities of the artists mentioned in the inscriptions (Pl. 2). They are Michail from Linotopi (Kastoria region) in nine inscriptions, his son Constantinos in four. Ioannis Skoutaris from Grammosta or Grammos (Kastoria region) in three inscriptions, in one of these with his father Dimitrios, who is also writing his name, around 1640, in the narthex of the monastery of Topoliani in Polylofos (Fig. 4). The brothers Dimitrios and Georgios from Grammosta together in six inscriptions, three of them with the previous Ioannis Skoutaris. Michail and Konstantinos from Grammosta as well in one inscription, Michalis from Zerma in two inscriptions, three painters with the name Nikolaos from Linotopi in other four inscriptions. Dimitrios and Theodoros, of unknown origin, in two inscriptions, in one of them with Kostas (Fig. 5).

Alivizios Fokas from Kefalonia is mentioned in three, of which only one survives today, in which Onoufrios Afksentiou from Cyprus is also mentioned. One more Michail from Tenisko (probably Aetomilitsa of Konitsa) is signing in one inscription (Fig. 6). Georgios from Linotopi, Ioannis and Efstathios (Fig. 7) are mentioned in three inscriptions, respectively and Athanasios, Nikodimos, Ananias and Daniil all together in one inscription. Finally, Nikolaos with his son (without name) are mentioned in one inscription. We see that 29 artists are known from the wall inscriptions of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Within the vast majority of the inscriptions, however, we can see that artists from two regions have a monopoly on the art of Epirus. They are the artists from Linotopi and Grammos, and in fact they come from workshops run by only two families, one from each village. Their names are mentioned in approximately 22 of the 35 inscriptions. Therefore we can understand the dominance of these two workshops. If we also include Michalis from Zerma, which is a village neighboring the others, then the number is 24, more than 2/3 of the total.

After this necessary statistical examination, we can easily draw certain useful conclusions. The 16<sup>th</sup> century leads us to the conclusion that, during this time we have a workshop active in the area around Ioannina, whose artists created an established situation not likely to have been challenged by

other artists. This workshop is known as a school of painting, the school of Thebes or Northwestern Greece<sup>13</sup>. The remaining artists were active in the peripheral monuments, mostly in Northern Epirus in the early or late 16<sup>th</sup> century, where a situation that differed from that of South Epirus was established; this situation has only recently been depicted completely<sup>14</sup>. An important detail to note is the fact that many of the artists of the 16<sup>th</sup> century declare their home region (Pl. 1).

The 17<sup>th</sup> century, however, leads us to much more interesting conclusions. The monumental art of this period is monopolized in Epirus by two large workshops, according to the inscriptions<sup>15</sup>. One essentially succeeds the

---

<sup>13</sup> M. Chatzidakis first noted the existence of this school of painting and used this term for the painters from Thebes, M. CHATZIDAKIS, Ο ζωγράφος Φράγγος Κονταρής. *DChAE* 5 (1969) 299–301. For concentrated literature about this school, see for example, CHOULIARAS, Τοιχογραφημένα μνημεία 298–299.

<sup>14</sup> K. GIAKOUMIS, The Monasteries of Jorgucat and Vanishte in Dropull and of Spelαιο in Lunxheri as Monuments and Institutions during the Ottoman Period in Albania (16<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> Centuries), I–II. The University of Birmingham 2002 (Unpubl. PhD Thesis), 205–206; Chr. MERANTZAS – I. KOSTI, Η ζωγραφική του Αγίου Αθανασίου (1584) στην Κάτω Μερόπη Πωγωνίου. *Δωδώνη* 33 (2004) 77–170; CHOULIARAS, Τοιχογραφημένα μνημεία 295–332; IDEM, *Δυτικό Ζαγόρι* 47–136; IDEM, Ένα άγνωστο συνεργείο ζωγράφων των αρχών του 16<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα στην Ήπειρο. *DChAE* 32 (2011) 115–128; IDEM, Μονή Προφήτη Ηλία, 183–206; IDEM, Η μεταβυζαντινή μνημειακή ζωγραφική στο λεκανοπέδιο των Ιωαννίνων (16<sup>ος</sup>–17<sup>ος</sup> αι.), in: Πρακτικά Α΄ Πανεπιστημιακού Συνεδρίου «Ιστορία – Λογισύνη: Η Ήπειρος και τα Ιωάννινα από το 1430 έως το 1913», Ιωάννινα, Πέμπτη 28 Φεβρουαρίου – Κυριακή 3 Μαρτίου 2013, II. (ed. G. PAPAGEORGIOU – K.Th. PETSIOS) Ioannina 2015, 1137–1152; KARAMPERIDI, Η μονή Πατέρων 329–335; I.K. TSIOURIS, Ο τοιχογραφικός διάκοσμος του καθολικού της Μονής Γηρομερίου Θεσπρωτίας (1577–1590). Συμβολή στη μελέτη της εντοχίας θρησκευτικής ζωγραφικής του 16<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα στην Ήπειρο. Athina 2011; K. ΚΟΝΤΟΠΑΝΑΓΟΥ, Provincial Art in Epirus and Macedonia in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century: Influences, Interactions, Origins, Models. The Undocumented Church of Theriakisi. *BZ* 106 (2) (2013) 745–760; M. ΑΧΕΙΜΑΣΤΟΥ-ΡΟΤΑΜΙΑΝΟΥ, Άγιος Γεώργιος στην Κάτω Λαψίστα των Ιωαννίνων. Παρατηρήσεις στις τοιχογραφίες του έτους 1508. *Αφιέρωμα στον Ακαδημαϊκό Παναγιώτη Α. Βοκοτόπουλο* (ed. V. KATSAROS – A. TOURTA). Athina 2015, 481–490.

<sup>15</sup> For these two workshops see the unpublished PhD Thesis of Theocharis Tsampouras, but with some mistakes in the identification of some painters: Th. TSAMPOURAS, Τα καλλιτεχνικά εργαστήρια από την περιοχή του Γράμμου κατά το 16<sup>ο</sup> και 17<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα. Ζωγράφοι από το Λινότοπι, τη Γράμμοστα, τη Ζέρμα και το Μπουρμπουτσικό I–II. Thessa-

other, according to the heretofore known inscriptions and without taking into account the works which are attributed to the aforementioned workshops. This information gives us four facts. First, these two workshops are almost exclusively responsible for the job of hagiography, as their works essentially follow each other, and if we consider the works being attributed, we can understand that this is a mostly exclusive occupation<sup>16</sup>. Second, these are family workshops from two corresponding villages, of father-son or uncle-nephew and numerous other family member natures<sup>17</sup>. Third, the inscription of the artist's place of origin is essentially became the rule as these two workshops dictated<sup>18</sup>. Fourth, from the moment these two workshops are established, after 1622, and until the end of their representatives' activity, before 1680, very few names of artists who do not belong to these workshops appear. The following one, Michalis from Zerma, which is a village neighboring Linotopi and Grammos, however his name appears after 1660<sup>19</sup>.

These four facts lead us to three corresponding hypotheses. First, there might possibly have been a certain succession in some regions, where those artists from Linotopi ceased to work and the Grammostians continued, especially after 1655<sup>20</sup>. Second, both workshops worked in conditions of professional competition not allowing the activity of other artists in their regions or not allowing the inscription of other artists' names on churches where they may have worked as assistants or they were not family members<sup>21</sup>. Third, the inclusion of their names must have been imposed on the

---

Ioniki 2013, with the previous bibliography. See also M. KIEL, *Ottoman Architecture in Albania (1385–1912)*. Istanbul 1990, 252.

<sup>16</sup> TOURTA, Βίτσα 230.

<sup>17</sup> TOURTA, Βίτσα 227–229; I.P. HOULIARAS, The Work of the Painter Ioannis Skoutaris from Grammosta, Kastoria in Epirus and Southern Albania (1645–1672/73). *Zbornik Matica Srpska za Likovne Umetnosti* 40 (2012) 71–73.

<sup>18</sup> HOULIARAS, Ioannis Skoutaris 74.

<sup>19</sup> HOULIARAS, Ioannis Skoutaris 67–69; TSAMPOURAS, Τα καλλιτεχνικά εργαστήρια I, 109 and passim.

<sup>20</sup> KARAMPERIDI, Η μονή Πατέρων 362; HOULIARAS, Ioannis Skoutaris 67–69.

<sup>21</sup> I.P. CHOULIARAS, Οι φάσεις διακόσμησης και οι ζωγράφοι του ναού της Κοίμησης Θεοτόκου στον Ελαφότοπο. Νεότερες παρατηρήσεις. *Ηπειρωτικό Ημερολόγιο* 29 (2010) 372; TSAMPOURAS, Τα καλλιτεχνικά εργαστήρια I, 10.

donors, as they were at the forefront in the field of painting, the best artists of the age<sup>22</sup>. These hypotheses are confirmed as fact if we consider that for a period of more than 50 years (between 1622 and 1680) there is a monopoly on the art of Epirus. To sum up, we must point out that after the end of these workshops' activity the names of the artists multiply, as we have seven artists after 1680, while until their eventual domination we have another seven (actually till 1622)<sup>23</sup>. These numbers succinctly express what we have already mentioned. It isn't possible in a period of roughly 40 years to have inscriptions with the names of 14 artists of different origin and during another roughly 60 years not to have almost any others besides Linotopites and Grammostians. From the 29 painters of the 17<sup>th</sup> century only seven don't mention their place of origin or their origin is completely unknown and these are the painters Dimitrios, Theodoros and Kostas in the first two decades of the century, the three of the four painters of the monastery of Voutsia (1680) and Ioannis the painter of Saint Athanasios in Mikro Peristeri (1680) (Pl. 2).

The next most prodigious workshop is that of Saint Athanasios in Kleidonia (1617), which signs the frescoes of two churches<sup>24</sup> and then we have the "isolated" Alivizios Fokas from Kefalonia, who collaborates with another foreign artist as well, Onoufrios from Cyprus, in one church<sup>25</sup>. The production of both workshops, always according to inscriptional evidence, ends in 1622. It is of course of importance to examine the reasons why these two workshops were established in certain regions, Alivisios Fokas's in

---

<sup>22</sup> About the role of the donors and of the painters in the decoration of the churches, see for example M. PANAYOTIDI, *The Question of the Role of the Donor and of the Painter. A Rudimentary Approach*. *DChAE* 17 (1993–1994) 143–156; IDEM, *Το πρόβλημα του ρόλου του χορηγού και του βαθμού ανεξαρτησίας του ζωγράφου στην καλλιτεχνική δημιουργία. Δύο παραδείγματα του 12<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα*, in: *Το πορτραίτο του καλλιτέχνη στο Βυζάντιο*, 1 (ed. M. VASILAKI). Irakleio 1997, 77–105.

<sup>23</sup> CHATZIDAKIS, Έλληνες ζωγράφοι 155, 164, 257, 265–267 (3, 7, 8), 287, 303, 328–329 (33). CHATZIDAKIS – DRAKOPOULOU, Έλληνες ζωγράφοι 139, 193 (9), 234, 239 (28), 258, 450; DRAKOPOULOU, Έλληνες ζωγράφοι 144, 156, 244 (8), 251 (7), 282 (5); KARAMPERIDI, Η μονή Πατέρων 392–395.

<sup>24</sup> CHOULIARAS, *Δυτικό Ζαγόρι* 32–35, fig. 17, 18.

<sup>25</sup> POPA, *Mbishkrime* 229–230, Nr. 547.



Northern Epirus and Dimitrios's in the rich, during that period, region of Zagori and the of equal importance village of Veltsista<sup>26</sup>. The activity of the painters Onoufrios Afksentiou from Cyprus and Alivisios Fokas is easily explainable because the two artists in Northern Epirus unquestionably continued the work of the 16<sup>th</sup> century teacher Onoufrios and his son Nikolaos<sup>27</sup>. For this reason perhaps, they insist on, or consider self-evident the inclusion of their names, in the manner of most travelling Cretan artists<sup>28</sup>. However, the dominance of Dimitrios's workshop in rich regions and the inscription of the workshops' artists' names are not so easily explainable, in addition because their activity is not directly related either with the Linotopites or with the Grammostians. Their Epirote origins can be inferred from the existence of their names in inscriptions found only in Epirus and from the attribution to them of churches only within Epirus. Even though it is not related to the subject of the present paper, I would like to point out that until now the artwork in its entirety or in fragments from at least six churches of Epirus is attributed to Dimitrios's workshop<sup>29</sup>. The only explanation we can give is that this is one of the first professionally organized

---

<sup>26</sup> About the prosperous period which witnessed Veltsista since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, see STAVROPOULOU-MAKRI, Veltsista 17–20; Gr. MANOPOULOS, Η Βελτσίστα στα 1564 και οι ναοί της. *EpChr* 39 (2005) 455–468.

<sup>27</sup> About Onoufrios and his son, see D. DHAMO, A propos des certaines oeuvres jusqu'ici inconnues de Nicolas, peintre Albanais du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle. *Monumentet* 2 (1971) 63–71; H. NALLBANI, Données nouvelles sur l'activité du peintre Onufri recueillies pendant les travaux de restauration. *Monumentet* 13 (1977) 85–93; B. BABIĆ, Les fresques du peintre Onufrius sur les murs des églises de la Région de Prilep. *Zbornik za Likovne Umetnosti* 16 (1980) 271–279; M. GARIDIS, La peinture murale dans le monde Orthodoxe après la chute de Byzance (1450–1600) et dans les pays sous domination étrangère. Athènes 1989, 199–213. About the work of Onoufrios from Cyprus, see I. VITALIOTIS, Περί του ζωγράφου Ονουφρίου του Κύπριου. 33<sup>ο</sup> Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής Τέχνης, Πρόγραμμα και περιλήψεις ανακοινώσεων. Athina 2013, 35–36.

<sup>28</sup> M. VASILAKI, Από τον “ανώνυμο” Βυζαντινό καλλιτέχνη στον “επώνυμο” Κρητικό ζωγράφο του 15<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα, in: Το πορτραίτο του καλλιτέχνη στο Βυζάντιο, 1 (ed. M. VASILAKI). Irakleio 1997, 161–209.

<sup>29</sup> CHOULIARAS, Δυτικό Ζαγόρι 240–242; IDEM, Οι τοιχογραφίες του ναού της Γέννησης της Θεοτόκου στην Κορίτιανη. Συμβολή στη μελέτη της μνημειακής ζωγραφικής του α΄ μισού του 17<sup>ου</sup> αι. στα Κατσανοχώρια. Ioannina 2015, 90–91.

artists' workshops, not of course with the modern meaning of the term, and for this reason they wished to declare their presence and work. Naturally their problem was their poor grammatical and general knowledge and this problem is obviously visible in their inscriptions<sup>30</sup>. Of particular importance is the inscription of the monastery of Voutsia (1680), where four artists are mentioned. The first one, Athanasios, seems to be a recognizable person during that period, since maybe is the same person, Athanasios from Greveniti of Zagori, who has recommended Eugenios Giannoulis to the bishop Nikon of Russia in 1662 as the *ιεράς ζωγραφίας ικανὸν ἐπιστήμονα*<sup>31</sup>. It seems that at the last decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century some painters became identifiable and reputable persons.

Regarding the education in general of the artists we must highlight that for the most part the artists of the 16<sup>th</sup> century appear to be well versed in the Greek language, of grammar and syntax. This might be a result of their position and status, apart from that of the artist. Of the nine (9) artists from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, one is of noble descent, one is not only a priest but an ecclesiarch (Fig. 1) and two others are monks (Fig. 2). If we do not include the two Linotopites, who are included in the early attempts of the Linotopites to dominate the art of Epirus, we quickly understand that almost all the artists of the 16<sup>th</sup> century were not exclusively artists, but acted as such in a supplementary capacity, within the frame of their priestly or monastic duties<sup>32</sup>. Ilias Longovitis, for whom we have no information regarding place of origin and who expresses himself in a more naive way, seems to be more organized and conscious of his position but he works in a limited geographical range. His spelling has more mistakes compared to other 16<sup>th</sup> century artists of Epirus, but there are no glaring mistakes in the inscription where he is mentioned. The Kontaris brothers and Ioannis, representatives of the regional school, also appear to be organized. They seem to largely make a living off of hagiography, as they are, of course, the chief

<sup>30</sup> CHOULIARAS, Δυτικό Ζαγόρι 32–35, fig. 17, 18.

<sup>31</sup> CHATZIDAKIS, Έλληνες ζωγράφοι 155; DRAKOPOULOU, Υπογραφές ζωγράφων 132.

<sup>32</sup> Like in the paleologan period, see for example S. KALOPISSI-VERTI, Οι ζωγράφοι στην ύστερη βυζαντινή κοινωνία. Η μαρτυρία των επιγραφών, in: Το πορτραίτο του καλλιτέχνη στο Βυζάντιο, 1 (ed. M. VASILAKI). Irakleio 1997, 146–147.

representatives of the famous school of Thebes and travel all over Greeceplying their secondary trade. Ananias and Nikiphoros, being monks, possibly offer their works as a part of their duties, without the possibility of a small payment being excluded.

The Linotopites and later the Grammostian artists appear to change the established order at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and make hagiography their exclusive occupation, as they do not sign as priests or as monks; moreover most of the painters of the 17<sup>th</sup> century do not mention other status (Pl. 2). The conscientious work demands that they be correct in all its facets, including that of the correct use of Greek and its grammar. This professional conscience is transferred from the Linotopites to their Grammostian counterparts. Contrary to this, the solitary artists of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, particularly from the first few decades, are not known for their sound grammatical knowledge. Characteristic examples include Dimitrios, Theodoros and Kostas, whose inscriptions, apart from their poor spelling, are also difficult to understand (Fig. 5)<sup>33</sup>.

In this way, that which begins as the different education and occupation of hagiographers during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in other words the good knowledge of Greek and its depiction in inscriptions, becomes a necessary prerequisite for the “professional” artists of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Perhaps this parameter is also a reason for the dominance of the “professional” Linotopites and Grammostians in Epirus for over 50 years.

---

<sup>33</sup> CHOULIARAS, Δυτικό Ζαγόρι 32–35, fig. 17, 18.

PLATES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE 1: *Painters of the 16<sup>th</sup> century*

<i>Painters</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Churches</i>	<i>Date</i>
1. Ilias Longovitis		St. Athanasios, Petsa of Delvino	1524/5
2. Efstathios of Iakovos, protonotarios of Arta	Arta	Mon. of Molyvdoskepastos	1536/7
3. Ananias, monk	Arta (?)	Paregoritissa, Arta	1558
4. Georgios Kontaris, priest & ecclesiarch	Thebes	St. Nikolaos, Krapsi	1563
5. Frangos Kontaris	Thebes	1. St. Nikolaos, Krapsi 2. Mon. of Transfiguration, Veltsista	1563 1568
6. Nikiphoros, monk		Monastery of Prophet Ilias, Georgoutsates	1585/6
7. Ioannis	Thebes (?)	St. Nikolaos, Kalyvia of Elafotopos	1580–90
8. Nikolaos	Linotopi	Monastery of Makryaleksi, Lavdani	1599
9. Michail	Linotopi	Monastery of Makryaleksi, Lavdani	1599

PLATE 2: *Painters of the 17<sup>th</sup> century*

<i>Painters</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Churches</i>	<i>Date</i>
1. Michail 1	Grammos	Monastery Panagias of Divrovouni	1603
2. Konstantinos 1	Grammos	Monastery Panagias of Divrovouni	1603
3. Michail 2	Linotopi	1. Panagia, Zervati of Dropolis 2. Koimisis, Elafotopos 3. Monastery of Proph. Ilias, Georgoutsates 4. Mon. of Evangelismos, Vanishta 5. St. Nikolaos, Vitsa 6. St. Minas, Monodendri 7. Mon. of Transfiguration, Tsatishta 8. St. Nikolaos, Sarakinishta 9. Monastery of Spilaion, Sarakinishta	1605/6  1616 1617  1617  1618 1619 1626  1629/30  1634
4. Nikolaos 1	Linotopi	Panagia, Zervati of Dropolis	1605/6
5. Alivizios Fokas	Kefalonia	1. Panagia, Sarakinishta 2. St. Minas, Victor and Vikentios, Tranosishta of Lunxeri 3. Koimisis, Vrachogorantzi	1613 1617  1622
6. Dimitrios 1		1. St. Athanasios, Kleidonia 2. Panagia, Veltsista (Klimatia)	1617  1618
7. Theodoros		1. St. Athanasios, Kleidonia 2. Panagia, Veltsista (Klimatia)	1617 1618
8. Kostas		St. Athanasios, Kleidonia	1617

PAINTERS' CULTURAL AND PROFESSIONAL STATUS

9. Konstantinos 2	Linotopi	1. St. Minas, Monodendri 2. St. Nikolaos, Sarakinishta 3. Taxiarches, Zitsa 4. Monastery of Proph. Ilias, Stegopoli	1619 1629/30 1649 1653
10. Michail 3	Tenisko	St. Georgios, Vrosyna	1620
11. Dimitrios 2	Tenisko	St. Georgios, Vrosyna	1620
12. Onoufrios Afksentiou	Cyprus	Koimisis, Vrachogorantzi	1622
13. Nikolos	Linotopi	St. Nikolaos, Sarakinishta	1629/30
14. Nikolaos 2	Linotopi	1. St. Nikolaos, Meliani of Premeti 2. Monastery of Zerma	1632 1656
15. Dimitrios 3	Grammos	1. Monastery of Topoliani 2. Sts. Apostoloi, Molyvdoskepastos	ca. 1640 1645
16. Ioannis Skoutaris	Grammos	1. Sts. Apostoloi, Molyvdoskepastos 2. Mon. of Proph. Ilias, Zitsa 3. Mon. of Spilaiotissa, Aristi	1645 1657 1672/3
17. Nikolaos 3	Linotopi	Monastery of Proph. Ilias, Stegopoli	1653
18. Georgios 1	Linotopi	Monastery of Zerma	1656
19. Dimitrios 4	Grammos	1. Mon. of Proph. Ilias, Zitsa 2. Koimisis, Elliniko 3. Monastery of Mingouli 4. Monastery of Proph. Ilias, Stegopoli 5. St. Ioannis, Polylofos 6. Mon. of Spilaiotissa, Aristi	1657 1661 1666 1671 1672 1672/3
20. Georgios 2	Grammos	1. Mon. of Proph. Ilias, Zitsa 2. Koimisis, Elliniko 3. Monastery of Mingouli 4. Monastery of Proph. Ilias, Stegopoli	1657 1661 1666 1671

		5. St. Ioannis, Polylofos 6. Mon. of Spilaiotissa, Aristi	1672 1672/3
21. Michalis	Zerma	1. Monastery of Kamena, Delvino 2. Monastery of Kakomia, Nivitsa	1661 1672
22. Ioannis		St. Athanasios, Mikro Peristeri	1680
23. Athanasios priest 24. Nikodimos monk 25. Ananias monk 26. Daniil deacon	Greveniti?	Monastery of Voutsia	1680
27. Efstathios, priest	Sklivani?	St. Georgios, Sklivani	1683
28. Nikolaos 4, priest & 29. his son	Arta	Monastery of Seltsou	1697



FIGURE 1: *Krapsi of Ioannina. St. Nikolaos.*  
*The dedicatory inscription of the narthex (detail)*



FIGURE 2: *Georgoutsates of Dropolis. Monastery of Prophet Ilias.*  
*The dedicatory inscription with the name of Nikiphoros (detail)*



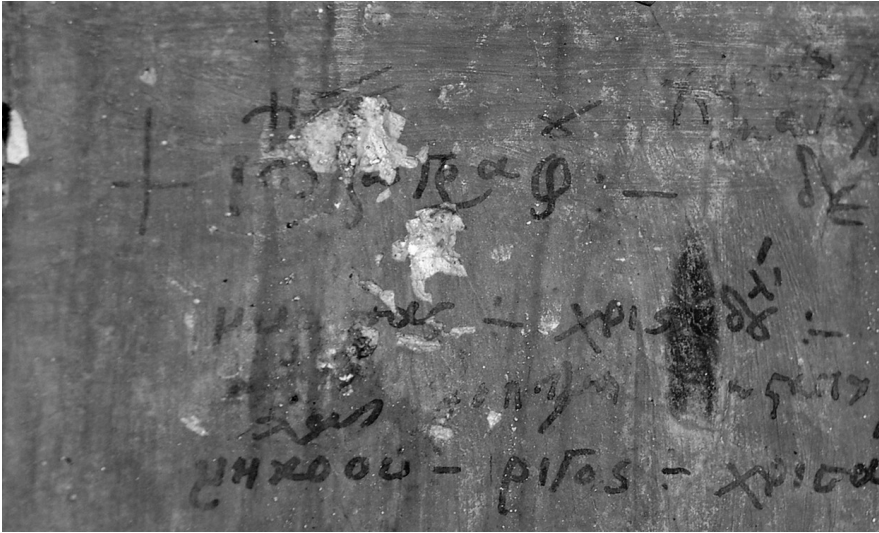


FIGURE 3: Kalyvia of Elafotopos. St. Nikolaos.  
*The diptych in a conch of the sanctuary with the name of Ioannis*



FIGURE 4: Polylofos of Ioannina. Monastery of Topoliani.  
*The signature of the painter Dimitrios in the narthex*

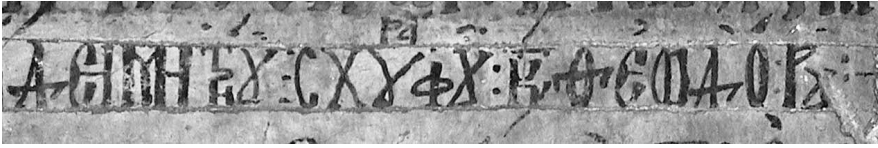


FIGURE 5: Veltsista (Klimatia) of Ioannina. Panagia. The dedicatory inscription with the names of the painters Dimitrios and Theodoros (detail)

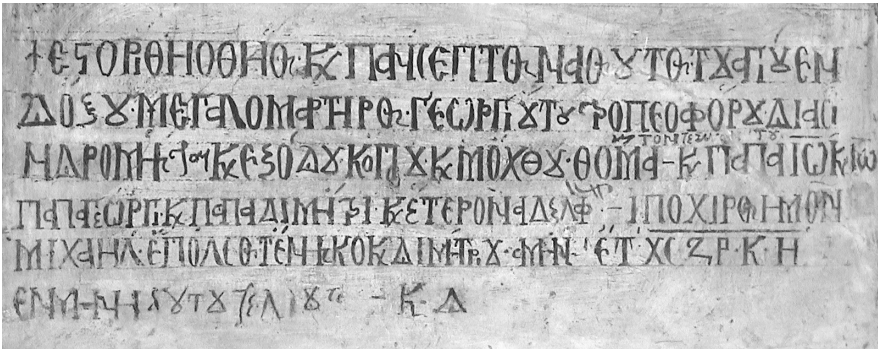


FIGURE 6: Vrosyna of Ioannina. St. Georgios. The dedicatory inscription



FIGURE 7: Sklivani of Ioannina. St. Georgios. Inscription with the date (1683) and the name of the painter, the priest Efstathios