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2012

МАТИЦА СРПСКА
Одељење за ликовне уметности

MATICA SRPSKA
Department of Visual Arts

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Оригинални научни рад / Original scientific paper

The Work of the painter Ioannis Skoutaris from Grammosta, Kastoria in Epirus and Southern Albania (1645–1672/3)*

ABSTRACT: In several churches of Epirus and Southern Albania as well in two icons of 17th c. is written the name or we recognize the art of the painter Ioannis Skoutaris from Grammosta, Kastoria. Ioannis is a recognizable and competent artisan during the second half of the 17th c. working initially with his father and later with two assistants, Dimitrios and Georgios. He continues the work of the great linotopite painters. Ioannis and generally the painters from the village Grammos while adhering to the tradition of the local epirote school they present certain trends in refreshing and enriching their iconography, as opposed to the linotopites.

KEYWORDS: 17th century (1645–1672/73), Epirus and Southern Albania, Painting, Painter Ioannis Skoutaris, Grammos-Grammosta, Kastoria, Church of Holy Apostles in Molyvdoskepastos, Monasteries of the Prophet Elijah in Zitsa-of the Spilaio on the Voidomatis River-of Spilaio in Sarakinishta of Lunxheri-of Agioi Anargyroi in Kleidonia-of Ravenia in Dropoli-of Zoodachos Pigi in Molyvdoskepastos, Icons.

Ioannis Skoutaris is a 17th century painter, whose name is known to us for the first time from the inscription of the church of the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos in Ioannina, which has the year 1645 inscribed¹. He was the son of Dimitrios, a fact found in the founders' inscription of the Holy Apostles. Ioannis appears in his first signed work with his father and we read that he was from the now abandoned village of Grammosta (or Grammos) in the region of Kastoria. In other words, we are dealing with a family workshop, without, naturally, eliminating the existence of one or more assistants, as was the norm in such cases of decoration of large churches.

* The theme was presented at the 30th symposium of the Christian Archaeological Company (Athens, 14–16 of May 2010), with the title “Ο ζωγράφος Ιωάννης Σκούταρης από τη Γράμμοστα (1645–1672/73)”. I would like at this point to thank Professor George Velenis for his significant contribution to the graphological examination of the inscriptions of the painter Ioannis Skoutaris. I must also note that the greater part of Southern Albania, west of the Aous River and south of the Akrokeravnian mountains is the geographical limit of Northern Epirus. See N. G. L. Hammond, “Γεωφυσικοί χαρακτήρες και ιστορική γεωγραφία της Ηπείρου”, *Ηπειρος, 4000 χρόνια ελληνικής ιστορίας και πολιτισμού* (Γεν. Εποπτεία Μ. Β. Σακελλαρίου), Αθήνα 1997, 12 on. All of the photographs are from my personal archive.

¹ Α. Καραμπερίδη, “Ζωγράφοι από τον Γράμμο στην Ήπειρο του 17^{ου} αιώνα, στοιχεία από τις επιγραφές των έργων τους”, Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων, Τομέας Αρχαιολογίας, *Μίλτος Γαρίδης (1926–1996), Αφιέρωμα*, Α', Ιωάννινα 2003, 292–294, 305.

Ioannis Skoutaris is a point of interest in our studies for three basic reasons: First, because he is one of the most prolific painters from Grammos. Second, because he cooperates with two workshops during the 17th century, initially one with his father, as an apprentice, and a second one later as a teacher, and third, because he is one of the few Post-Byzantine painters in Epirus whose surname or nickname, at least, is known.

The presence of Ioannis Skoutaris is mentioned in the inscriptions of two icons and of two other churches in Epirus, besides the Holy Apostles. His art can be detected, without his name being inscribed, in at least four more churches, within Epirus and Southern Albania. The anomaly that occurs is that he only inscribes his surname in the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos and on the icon with Christ as the “Severe Judge”, from the church of Saint Athanasios in Droviani in North Epirus (1657)². He only inscribes his name in the other two churches and the remaining icon. Also, in the inscription of the Holy Apostles, his name follows that of his father’s, while in the other two churches, his is inscribed first and the names of his two assistants, Dimitrios and Georgios, are inscribed after³.

The churches in which Ioannis’s name appears are, besides the Holy Apostles, the catholica of the monasteries of the Prophet Elijah in Zitsa (1657)⁴ and of the Spilaioissa on the Voidomatis River (1672/73)⁵. His name is written in the large icon of Christ the Pantokrator from the templon of the church of the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos (1645/46). Therefore we can pinpoint the artist’s period of activity within a span of 27 or 28 years (1645–1672/73)⁶, a time-span which is considered “normal” for a painter of that era, who quite possibly worked from a young age in his father’s workshop⁷.

Besides the aforementioned churches, the illustrative art of Ioannis Skoutaris can be found in four more monuments. In three of these he seems to be painting by himself, possibly with the help of certain assistants, while the fourth features the possible contribution of a second artist. They are, in chronological order: the narthex of the monastery of Spilaio in Sarakinishta of Lunxheri (Albania) (1658/59)⁸, the catholicon of the monastery of the Agioi Anargyroi

² *Εικόνες από τις ορθόδοξες κοινότητες της Αλβανίας*, Συλλογή Εθνικού Μουσείου Μεσαιωνικής Τέχνης Κορυτσάς, Κατάλογος έκθεσης, Α. Τούρτα – Π. Α. Βοκοτόπουλος – Ε. Δρακοπούλου, Θεσσαλονίκη 14 Μαρτίου-12 Ιουνίου 2006, no. 32, fig. on page 105.

³ Καραμπερίδη, 2003, 293 on, fig. 1, 2, 5.

⁴ Καραμπερίδη, 2003, 294–298, fig. 2. Herself. *Η μονή Πατέρων και η ζωγραφική του 17ου αιώνα στην περιοχή της Ζίτσας Ιωαννίνων*, Ιωάννινα 2009, 342 on. Regarding the dating of the decoration, to 1657. See I. Π. Χουλιάρας, *Η εντοιχία θρησκευτικής ζωγραφικής του 16^{ου} και 17^{ου} αιώνα στο Δυτικό Ζαγόρι*, Αθήνα 2009, 43 note 117.

⁵ Καραμπερίδη, 2003, 303–305, fig. 5. Χουλιάρας, 2009, 41–44, fig. 28.

⁶ We must note at this point, that the decoration of the main church and narthex of Saint Athanasios in Mikro Peristeri (Prosgoli), Ioannina, as well as certain icons within the church, have been incorrectly attributed to the artist. See Χουλιάρας, 2009, 411 note 2228. Regarding the above attribution, see Τρ. Α. Σιούλης, “Προσγόλι-Παλιοχώρι-Μικρό Περιστέρι. Οι τοιχογραφίες του ναού Αγ. Αθανασίου και ο αγιογράφος Ιωάννης (1680–1690)”, *Ηπειρωτικά Χρονικά* 34 (2000), 111–112. Ε. Δρακοπούλου, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση (1450–1850)*, 3, Αθήνα 2010, 322–323, with the previous bibliography.

⁷ See. Regarding the period of apprenticeship of painters, the age at which they began, and the stages of their practice Σ. Καλοπίση-Βέρτη, “Οι ζωγράφοι στην ύστερη βυζαντινή κοινωνία. Η μαρτυρία των επιγραφών”, *Το Πορτραίτο του καλλιτέχνη στο Βυζάντιο* (επιμ. Μ. Βασιλάκη), Ηράκλειο 1997, 151–152. Ε. Δεληγιάννη-Δωρή, “Γύρω από το εργαστήρι των Κονταρήδων. Συμβολή στην έρευνα για τη μαθητεία στην τοιχογραφία και τη συγκρότηση των εργαστηρίων των ζωγράφων κατά τη μεταβυζαντινή περίοδο”, *Μοναστήρια Νήσου Ιωαννίνων, Πρακτικά συμποσίου 700 χρόνια 1292–1992*, 29–31 Μαΐου 1992, Ιωάννινα 1999, 103–139, especially 125 on.

⁸ K. Giakoumis, *The Monasteries of Jorgucat and Vanishte in Dropull and of Spelaio in Lunxheri as Monuments and Institutions during the Ottoman Period in Albania (16th–19th Centuries)*, Volume I, II, The University of Birmingham 2002, 225 note 146. Καραμπερίδη, 2009, 346 note 2479. Χουλιάρας, 2009, 408–409, fig. 336, 337.

in Kleidonia (1661)⁹, a section of the decoration (besides the apse, the dome, and the northern section) of the catholicon of the monastery of Ravenia in Dropoli (Albania) (around 1660)¹⁰ and a section of the decoration of the monastery of Zoodochos Pigi in Molyvdoskepastos (7th or 8th decade of the 17th c.)¹¹. With reservations, because of the damage sustained and few presentations, the depictions on the apse in the church of the Dormition of the Virgin in Kleidonia (second half of the 17th c.) could also be considered works of Ioannis's workshop¹².

Until recently, the identification of the Ioannis Skoutaris of the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos as the same Ioannis who illustrated the catholica of the monasteries of the Prophet Elijah in Zitsa and of the Spilaiotissa on the Voidomatis River was risky at best¹³. The recent publication of an icon from Droviani, with Ioannis Skoutaris' signature¹⁴, as well as the icon from the templon of the Holy Apostles, were the missing links in the chain of thought which led to this identification. A significant factor in this identification of Ioannis's works is his handwriting style, which could also be identified utilizing the two icons.

The despotic icon in the templon of the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos has dimensions of 1.05x0.65 meters (fig. 1–3). It has sustained extensive damage and is covered in soot. The icon can be found placed in its original position, to the right of the sanctuary door. It consists of a central theme, depicting Christ enthroned (fig. 1, 2), while around him we can see the symbols of the evangelists. At the top, on either side of his head, we see the Angel (Matthew) on the left and the Eagle (John) on the right. At the bottom, on the left side of his feet we see the Lion (Mark) and on the right the Bull (Luke). On the raised side sections, on either side of the central depiction, there is a series of small icons with the twelve apostles, six on each side. The first one, depicted on the top left, is the apostle Peter and beneath him follow in this order the apostles Matthew, Mark, Andrew, Jacob, and Thomas. On the corresponding right side, the apostle Paul is depicted first and the apostles John, Luke, Simon, Bartholomew, and Philip follow. Christ holds in his left hand an open book with an inscription written with large lettering, which begins with a red letter and continues with black letters on a gold background: ΔΕΥΤΕ ΟΙ / ΕΥΛΟΓΗ/ΜΕΝΟΙ ΤΟΥ / Π(ΑΤ)Ρ(Ο)Σ ΜΟΥ / ΚΑΗΡΟ-ΝΟΜΗΣΑ/ΤΕ ΤΗΝ Η/ΤΟΙΜΑΣΜΕ/ΝΗΝ ΥΜΙΝ / ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙ(ΑΝ) (Matthew 25:34). The symbols of the evangelists Matthew and John each hold an open codex, as well as the four evangelists which can be found in the apostles' zone, however these have small lettering. The rest of the apostles are depicted with closed scrolls. The inscriptions are relatively readable in the

⁹ Χουλιάρης, 2009, 385 on.

¹⁰ Giakoumis, 2002, 225. Καραμπερίδη, 2009, 346 note 2479. Χουλιάρης, 2009, 409–410, fig. 338–341. Generally for the monastery, see Γ. Κ. Γιακουμής, *Η Ιερά Μονή Ραβενίων Δρόπολης*, Αθήνα 1995.

¹¹ Ioannis's art can mainly be discerned on the west wall of the church, where, unfortunately, the presentations are not preserved intact. In the dome and in the Sanctuary, the style of the frescoes is different, an explanation for which could be the presence of another artist, which could be identified as Ioannis's co-worker Georgios, but the non-publication of the monument does not allow this identification without reservations, see Καραμπερίδη, 2009, 346 note 2479. Χουλιάρης, 2009, 410, fig. 342. For the church in general, see Β. Ν. Παπαδοπούλου – Α. Καραμπερίδη, *Βυζαντινά και Μεταβυζαντινά Μνημεία Μολυβδοσκεπάστου*, Ιωάννινα 2006, 41–43.

¹² Χουλιάρης, 2009, 410–411, fig. 343–345.

¹³ Α. Καραμπερίδη, without knowing about the existence of the icon in the templon of the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos, supports the theory that the Ioannis of the Holy Apostles is not in fact the same Ioannis who paints in Zitsa and Spilaiotissa. See Καραμπερίδη, 2003, 291 on, in particular 306. Herself, 2009, 342 on, in particular 350–352 and note no. 2807.

¹⁴ See above note 2.



Fig. 1. Christ enthroned Icon of Holy Apostles of Molydoskepastos



Fig. 2. Christ enthroned Icon of Holy Apostles of Molydoskepastos detail



Fig. 3. Christ enthroned Icon of Holy Apostles of Molydoskepastos detail

books of the three evangelists, but not in the case of John, where the inscription is almost completely destroyed. In Mark's codex, we can more readily discern the left folio, where we read: *βλεπε/τε μη / πλανη/θητε-(...)* (possibly Luke 21:8), in that of Luke: *ο ουρανός / κ(αι) η / γη παρ/ελεύ-σον/ται οί δε λό/γοι μου* (Luke 21:33) and finally in Matthew: *οὐ μη / παρέλ/θω η / γενεά / αὐτη-[ε]ως αν / [πάντα ταύ]τα γέ/[νη]ται* (Matthew 24:34) (fig. 3). The inscription on the book which is held by the symbol of the evangelist Matthew has not been preserved adequately, but in the case of the symbol of the evangelist John, we can discern the beginning of his gospel divided between the two folia: *EN AP/XH HN / O ΛΟΓΟΣ / Κ(ΑΙ) Ο-ΛΟΓΟΣ / ΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ / ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ*. The painter's inscription, with red lettering on a dark background "*χειρ Ιωάννη*", can be found on the bottom right hand side of the icon, between the legs of the throne. On the lower raised fringe of the icon, the donor inscription is written with red lettering on a

gold background: *ΑΕΗΣΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΔΟΥΛΟΝ ΤΟΥ Θ(ΕΟ)Υ ΧΡΕΙΣΤΟΦΩΡΟΥ ΗΕΡΟΜΩΝΑΧΟΥ ΕΝ ΕΤΗ ΑΧΜÇ ΔΙΚ[Ε]ΒΡΙΟΥ .. Α ..* According to this inscription, the icon was donated by the monk Christoforos during the year 1645/6.

At this point we must make a minor note, with regards to the date written on the icon. The date from the birth of Christ is read as 1646. However, thanks to recent studies, we now know of the peculiarity exhibited by the painters from Grammos in the use of chronological systems from the birth of Christ and the Beginning of the world during the months of September through December. As such, we cannot rule out the possibility of the icon, as it was completed during December of the year ΑΧΜÇ from the birth of Christ, not corresponding to the year 1646, but to the year 1645, which would be in tune with the system from the beginning of the world, in which the year begins in September¹⁵.

The comparison of the frescoes with the icons Ioannis paints confirms his singular style, his similar choices in each detail and his iconographical consistency. Ioannis's art in the icon from the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos presents some basic characteristics, which can be seen in all of his works and some of which improve over time. A defining characteristic is Ioannis's passion for designing the folds of garments, the bright parallel lines in the joints and the sculpting of figures, which in his art is gentle but monolithic. These characteristics improve considerably in the icon from Droviani and even more in the monastery of Spilaiotissa. Certain technical details, such as the use of colors, the utilization of space, and the layout of the details, remain unchanged. The basic characteristics of Ioannis's style, which can be found in all his works, are the human-centric compositions (fig. 7, 8, 10, 13), the bold outlines (fig. 2, 4, 5), the sculpting uniformity of the naked body sections (fig. 4, 6, 12), the singular ears which often connect to the forehead (fig. 2, 4, 5, 9, 12), the penetrating eyes (fig. 6, 7, 11, 13) and usually small mouths (fig. 2, 4)¹⁶. Important stylistic elements include the nose that is slightly bulbous towards the center (fig. 2, 5, 12), the wider right nostril compared to the left one (fig. 2, 12), the red dash of paint which denotes the upper lip, the essentially unchanged shadows beneath the nose, the lower lip and the chin, the identical design of the ears, the similar depiction of facial hair, the robust necks with a crooked line at their base and the olive-green shading on the sides of the face, which becomes brown-green in the icons (fig. 1, 5, 12). In all of his works, he also designs the tip of the nose identically, and draws the almond-shaped eyes with two black dashes of paint protruding on either side, round brown irises, and bold pupils in the center. The forehead is normally triangular, with a bold outline which separates the hair from the face, the hair does not differentiate as a uniform mass, and the facial hair is depicted with cruder lines in his earlier works (fig. 2, 4). The folds are designed more simply in the older works, with more linearity and far steeper in comparison with the far more flowing ptychology of garments seen in the Droviani icon (fig. 5, 7). Another point of interest is the design of the hands which is more gentle in later works. The crude design of the, most often right, leg with the bold line which becomes a groove vertically and the similar

¹⁵ Regarding the particularities of the chronological systems, in particular in Epirus, see. Γ. Βελένης, "Χρονολογικά συστήματα σε επιγραφές και χειρόγραφα Βυζαντινών και Μεταβυζαντινών χρόνων", *Πρακτικά του ΣΤ' Διεθνούς Συμποσίου Ελληνικής Παλαιογραφίας*, Δράμα, 21–27 Σεπτεμβρίου 2003 (Επιμ. Β. Ατσαλός – Ν. Τσιρώνη), Β', Αθήνα 2008, 659–679.

¹⁶ Regarding these characteristics, see Χουλιάρης, 2009, 403 on.



Fig. 4. Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos
St Dadas detail



Fig. 4. Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos
St Dadas detail

way in which the ptychology of Christ's chiton is depicted exactly above his bare feet in both icons, but also more simply in certain walled presentations (fig. 1, 9, 10), are also points of interest. As it concerns the colour options of Ioannis we must notice the common use of the red in many balances for the garments and especially for the chiton of Christ.

The identification of Ioannis on an artistic level is unquestionable, regarding the churches where his name is inscribed. The significant differences which can be found between the first monument, the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos (fig. 4), and the other two, the monastery of the Prophet Elijah (fig. 5, 6) and the monastery of Spilaiotissa (fig. 7, 8), can be explained by the dominant presence of Ioannis's father Dimitrios, in the greater part of the art in the Holy Apostles¹⁷. Ioannis's art is also prominent in the two icons he designs. In the first icon, of the church of the Holy Apostles, as we can see, he does not write his surname, however the decoration of the church in November of 1645 by Dimitrios and Ioannis Skoutaris and the dating of the icon, which is dated to December of 1645 or 1646, in conjunction with the appearance of Ioannis's style in it and its inclusion in the templon do not allow any conjectures that the Ioannis who drew the icon is anyone other than Ioannis Skoutaris.

Skoutaris's art, even though it presents obvious progress in the Spilaiotissa monastery, does not differentiate from the previous churches and icons, and of course presents almost no differentiation in the choice of lettering. We can see that Ioannis's art in the Spilaiotissa monastery achieves a certain nobility and fullness, a clear sign that he is maturing as a painter, but with certain elements that remain unchanged, as we can see for ourselves in the piercing gazes, the way the ears are depicted and the figures in profile.

Ioannis appears essentially after the end of artistic activity from the two prolific linotopite painters, Michael and his son Constantinos¹⁸. The significant activity of these two painters and their possible high rewards perhaps pushed the painters from Grammos into a similar trajectory during the second half of the 17th century. Ioannis in particular, for a small time period, was a contemporary of Constantinos, as well as with the last known painters of the 17th c. from Linotopi¹⁹, but during this period, he only appears in the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos. This fact once again reveals the linotopites' dominance in the art of Epi-

¹⁷ Ioannis's presence indeed can be found in a few faces of the main church and in certain compositions, which we cannot, however, depict safely, if a thorough cleansing of the frescoes is not carried out first. Also, the founder's inscription of the monument does not correspond to Ioannis's writing style, however its writer is quite possibly Dimitrios, who adds his son's name to end of the inscription, seemingly to enforce the writing of his name in it. See Καραμπερίδη, 2003, 294, fig. 1.

¹⁸ The work of these two painters and, to a lesser extent, their helper Theologis has been meticulously studied in recent years in important articles and monographs, see for example Α. Τούρτα, *Οι ναοί του Αγίου Νικολάου στη Βίτσα και του Αγίου Μηνά στο Μονοδένδρι*, Αθήνα 1991. Herself, "Εικόνες ζωγράφων από το Λινοτόπι (16^{ος}-17^{ος} αιώνας). Νέα στοιχεία και διαπιστώσεις για τη δραστηριότητά τους", *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας* 22 (ΔΧΑΕ) (2001), 341-355. Κ. Γ. Γιακουμής, "Κριτική έκδοση επιγραφών συνεργείων από το Λινοτόπι στις περιφέρειες της ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας της Αλβανίας", *ΔΧΑΕ* 21 (2000), 249-266. Μ. Π. Σκαβάρα, "Οι Λινοτοπίτες Μιχαήλ και Κωνσταντίνος στη Ν. Αλβανία ως συνεχιστές της ζωγραφικής παράδοσης της σχολής της ΒΔ Ελλάδας", *Ηπειρωτικά Χρονικά* 38 (2004), 455-491. Herself, *Το έργο των Λινοτοπιτών ζωγράφων Μιχαήλ και Κωνσταντίνου στην Επισκοπή Δρυϊνουπόλεως Βορείου Ηπείρου. Συμβολή στη μελέτη της μνημειακής ζωγραφικής του 17ου αιώνα*, Ιωάννινα 2011. Α. Στρατή, *Η ζωγραφική στην Ιερά Μονή Τιμίου Προδρόμου Σερρών 14^{ος}-19^{ος} αι.*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2007, 81 οπ. Α. Καραμπερίδη, "Εικόνα Κοίμησης της Θεοτόκου από τη μονή Βελλάς, έργο του ζωγράφου Κωνσταντίνου από το Λινοτόπι", *Ηπειρωτικά Χρονικά* 42 (2008), 75-94. Herself, 2009. Χουλιάρης, 2009, 285 οπ. Himself, "Οι φάσεις διακόσμησης και οι ζωγράφοι του ναού της Κοίμησης Θεοτόκου στον Ελαφότοπο. Νεότερες παρατηρήσεις", *Ηπειρωτικό Ημερολόγιο* 29 (2010), 363-387.

¹⁹ For these painters, see for example Τούρτα, 1991, 34-45. Γιακουμής, 2000, 261-263.



Fig. 5. Monastery of Prophet Elijah in Zitsa Deisis detail



Fig. 6. Monastery of Prophet Elijah in Zitsa Divine Liturgy detail

rus while they are at the apex of their activity, but also reveals the nonexistence of a successive situation, which the painters from Grammos, in particular Ioannis and the brothers Dimitrios and Georgios manage to utilize, to create their own tradition, mainly from 1657 and afterwards. Of course, this tradition formed by the painters from Grammos was already present in the central Balkans from the 16th c.²⁰, but the dominant position held by the linotopite painters overshadowed it for a large period of time²¹. The painters from Grammos appear as a type of succession, when the family workshops of Linotopi essentially cease functioning during the second half of the 17th c. This event is depicted in the continuation of the work of the linotopites by Ioannis and the brothers Dimitrios and Georgios²². In fact, this continuation is visible in churches which the linotopites Michael and Constantinos had partly decorated which were completed by the grammostans Ioannis, Dimitrios, and Georgios. Examples include the monasteries of Spilaion in Sarakinishta (fig. 9)²³, of Ravenia in Dropoli (fig. 10, 11)²⁴ and of the Prophet Elijah in Stegopoli²⁵, all in Southern Albania.

Ioannis and his co-workers continue the tradition of the school of Northwestern Greece and create conservative depictions with anti-classical figures. It is characteristic, however, that their iconographical inspirations and their art present certain differentiations in comparison with their linotopite comrades. The grammostan painters, while adhering to the tradition of the local school, also include classical elements in comparison with the linotopites with regards to space and the human figure, and follow sometimes, with their templates, the so-called Cretan school, an element absent from the works of the linotopite painters²⁶. Generally speaking, even though the painters from Grammos remain dedicated to the local, Epirote traditions, they present certain trends in refreshing and enriching their iconography, as opposed to the linotopites, who prove to be more conservative in the depiction of their themes.

²⁰ Many painters are descended from the same village, with the earliest being, according to evidence gathered until today Ioannis, son of Theodoros, and Nikolaos, who paint in the region of Skopia during the first half of the 16th c. See for example M. Mašnić, “Jean le zographe et son activité artistique. Connaissances antérieures et actuelles”, *Problemi na Izkustvoto* 2 (1997), 10–17, 63. Himself, “Sur quelques œuvres attribuées récemment à Jean Zographe de Gramosta”, *Niš and Byzantium, 8th Symposium (Niš, 3–5 June 2009), The Collection of Scientific Works VIII* (ed. M. Rakocija), Niš 2010, 355–364. J. Spahi, “The Great Feasts Scenes in the Monastery of Toplica”, *Patrimonium.mk* 7–8 (2010), 331–350. Δρακοπούλου, 2010, 322–323, with the previous bibliography. At the beginning of the 17th c. the artists Michael and Constantinos from Grammosta appear at the monastery of Divrovounion in Albania (1604), see. Th. Popa, “Considérations générales sur la peinture post-byzantine en Albanie”, *Actes du 1er Congrès International des Etudes Balkaniques et Sudesit Européennes*, II, Sofia 1966 (1970), 778. M. Χατζηδάκης – Ε. Δρακοπούλου, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση (1450–1830)*, 2, Αθήνα 1997, 132, 192. Θ. Τσάμπουρας, “Οι τοιχογραφίες του καθολικού της μονής Κοιμήσεως της Θεοτόκου στο Διβροβούνι της Βορείου Ηπείρου και οι νέες προτεραιότητες της μνημειακής ζωγραφικής του 17ου αιώνα”, *31ο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής αρχαιολογίας και τέχνης (Συμπόσιο ΧΑΕ)* (2011), 80–81.

²¹ Already from the end of the 16th c. the linotopite painters appear dominantly in the art of northern and western Greece, see for example. Τούρτα, 1991, 23–28. Himself, “Το έργο δυο ζωγράφων της Μακεδονίας στη μονή Φωτμού Αιτωλίας”, *Πρακτικά Α' Αρχαιολογικού και Ιστορικού Συνεδρίου Αιτωλοακαρνανίας*, Αγρίνιο 21–23 Οκτωβρίου 1988, Αγρίνιο 1991, 379–385. Himself, “The Painters from Linotopi (Greece) and the Serbian Church”, *Zbornik Matice Srpska za Likovne Umetnosti (ZMSLU)* 27–28 (1991–1992), 319–325.

²² Καραμπερίδη, 2009, 362.

²³ Th. Popa, *Mbishkrime të kishave në Shqipëri*, Tiranë 1998, 234 no. 559, 236 no. 564. Giakoumis, 2002, 225. Καραμπερίδη, 2009, 346 note 2479. Χουλιάρης, 2009, 408–409. Σκαβάρια, 2011, 278 on.

²⁴ Giakoumis, 2002, 225–226. Καραμπερίδη, 2009, 311 note 2272, 316, 346 note 2479. Χουλιάρης, 2009, 409–410.

²⁵ Popa, 1998, 230 no. 550. Καραμπερίδη, 2003, 301–302. Χουλιάρης, 2009, 466. Σκαβάρια, 2011, 51, 329 on.

²⁶ Χουλιάρης, 2009, 404–406, 466.



Fig. 7. Monastery of Spilaiotissa Incredulity of Thomas detail



Fig. 8. Monastery of Spilaiotissa the Entry into Jerusalem detail



Fig. 9. Monastery of Spilaion in Sarakinishta the Burning Bush



Fig. 9. Monastery of Spilaion in Sarakinishta the Receiving of the Law detail

The identification of Ioannis, who illustrates the monasteries of the Prophet Elijah in Zitsa and the Spilaiotissa as Ioannis Skoutaris, solves the problem of the workshops from the village of Grammos during the second half of the 17th c., as it is made clear that Ioannis, who is a student of his father in the Holy Apostles of Molyvdoskepastos, is clearly a teacher a decade later. This revelation is attributed mainly to the writing of his name before those of all the other painters in Zitsa and the Spilaiotissa, a practice which is usually adhered to the inscriptions of Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches written by the teacher and master²⁷. Ioannis himself becomes master of the workshop, which consists of himself and the brothers Dimitrios and Georgios. Of course, Ioannis's father was also named Dimitrios. This coincidence leads us to the next step, which is the attempt to connect Ioannis Skoutaris with familial bonds to the members of his second workshop.

In the monastery of the Transfiguration of Drenovo in Lunxheri (or monastery of Migouli) in Albania (1666)²⁸, P. Poulitsas and Th. Popa mention a seven-lined inscription in the conch of the prothesis which includes the following: *Μνήσθητι Κ(ύρι)ε / των γονέων τον ειστο/ριογράφων την εκλη/σήαν ταύτην / Μανουήλ και Ζογας / χηρ Δημητρίου / Γεωργίου. Ιω(άννου)*²⁹. Today, this inscription cannot be clearly seen, however, if the older reading is correct, it creates problems regarding Ioannis's familial ties with the brothers Dimitrios and Georgios. According to the inscriptional tradition and the importance of the word historiographer, the historiographers of the temple are its painters³⁰. It is also known that many painters write their names in the conch of the prothesis in the form of votive inscriptions³¹. In the founders' inscription, in this particular church, mention is made of Dimitrios and Georgios as the painters. However, Ioannis's name is not present³². Besides the word "historiographers", another small detail presents a problem: After Georgios's name follows a colon (:) and after this the name Ioannis. We do not, of course, know if this name was included in the original inscription or if it was added later.

If this inscription did not exist, things would be quite simple and we could claim with relative safety that Ioannis was the father of the brothers Dimitrios and Georgios, and Dimitrios, as the eldest, took his grandfather's name. Also for certain, after the identification of Ioannis as Ioannis Skoutaris, we can rule out the possibility that Ioannis was the brother of Dimitrios and Georgios, because the parents of the two brothers are mentioned as Manuel and Zoga.

The close familial ties of Ioannis with the brothers Dimitrios and Georgios must be considered obvious however, as we know of their common birthplace, the oftentimes familial nature of the workshops³³, and most importantly, the common name Dimitrios for the father of Ioannis and the brother of Georgios. One of the most possible familial relationships of the aforementioned individuals is that of the first cousin. Dimitrios, son of Manuel and Zoga,

²⁷ Δεληγιάννη-Δωρή, 1999, 133–134.

²⁸ Popa, 1998, 236–237 no. 567. Καραμπερίδη, 2003, 300–301. Ι. Π. Χουλαράς, "Ο ζωγραφικός διάκοσμος της μονής Μεταμόρφωσης Δρενόβου Λιούντζης στη Βόρεια Ήπειρο (1666)", *27^ο Συμπόσιο ΧΑΕ* (2007), 129–130.

²⁹ Π. Η. Πουλίτσας, "Επιγραφαι και ενθυμίσεις εκ της Βορείου Ηπείρου", *Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών* 5 (1928), 83. Popa, 1998, 288–289 no. 787. Popa, in the 6th row, reads "κηρ" instead of "χηρ".

³⁰ S. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions and Donor Portraits in Thirteenth Century Churches of Greece*, Wien 1992, 68–69. Ε. Δρακοπούλου, "Υπογραφές μεταβυζαντινών ζωγράφων. Ανίχνευση προσωπικών και καλλιτεχνικών μαρτυριών", *ΔΧΑΕ* 22 (2001), 134.

³¹ Πουλίτσας, 1928, 83. Π. Βοκοτόπουλος, "Επιγραφικά Σύμμεικτα από την Αλβανία", *Φηγός, Τιμητικός τόμος για τον καθηγητή Σωτήρη Δάκκαρη*, Ιωάννινα 1994, 394, fig. 2 on page 399. Popa, 1998, no. 7, 14, 93, 94.

³² See above note 28.

³³ See for example Καλοπίση-Βέρτη, 1997, 149–150.



Fig. 10. Monastery of Ravenia in Dropoli Albania Incredulity of Thomas



Fig. 11. Monastery of Ravenia in Dropoli Albania the Martyrdom of St John the Baptist



Fig. 12. Monastery of Agioi Anargyroi Kleidonia Pantokrator

possibly was named after his uncle, and father of Ioannis Skoutaris. The use of the uncle's name for one of the boys in families of brothers is not a rare occurrence in our tradition, especially when there is more than one boy in a family. Another possibility is that of the brothers Dimitrios and Georgios having another brother, who was also named Ioannis. Perhaps this is the reason that the name Ioannis is recorded in the conch of the prothesis in the monastery of Migouli, even though, as we mentioned before, we cannot be certain about the date that the name was written. In diagram 1 we can see the possible family tree of the painters Ioannis, Dimitrios and Georgios.

Finally, with regards to the writing of the name or the surname, we must note that this practice is rare, although it is not absent from Byzantine and post-Byzantine art³⁴. Surnames generally denote profession, a certain property, or ancestry; the writing of Ioannis's surname could possibly correspond to one of that. The word "Skouteris" denotes the sheep-herder's first mate or the master of the sheep farm³⁵.

Also, "Skoutarios" or Skouterios" was an official in the byzantine royal court³⁶. Also, Skoutari with emphasis either on the "u" or the "a" is a common name for locations in the southern Balkans³⁷. Ioannis's non-inclusion of his surname mainly after 1657 must be attributed mostly to the fact that he does not illustrate alone on any of the churches, on which we knew until now that he illustrated and inscribed his name. This fact proves the inscription of his surname that same year, 1657, on an icon and the absence of it in the monastery of the Prophet Elijah in Zitsa, where he illustrates accompanied by the brothers Dimitrios and Georgios. Finally, the surname "Skoutaris" is well known in Kastoria, where since the 18th c. at least one of the large aristocratic families of the city bore the name. In fact, the family's manor house is still preserved³⁸.



Fig. 13. Monastery of Agioi Anargyroi Kleidonia the Betrayal detail



³⁴ The anonymity of the Byzantine artist is replaced during the early post-Byzantine years by the named painters, advocates mostly of the Cretan school of art, a habit which stretches beginning from the 16th c to the whole of Greece and into all of the trends, however the inscription of the surname remains rare, see generally Καλοπίση-Βέρτη, 1997, 121 on. Μ. Βασιλάκη, "Από τον "ανώνυμο" Βυζαντινό καλλιτέχνη στον "επόνυμο" Κρητικό ζωγράφο του 15^{ου} αιώνα", *Το πορτραίτο του καλλιτέχνη στο Βυζάντιο* (επιμ. Μ. Βασιλάκη), Ηράκλειο 1997, 161 on.

³⁵ Γ. Μπαμπινιώτης, *Ετοιμολογικό λεξικό της Νέας Ελληνικής Γλώσσας*, Αθήνα 2009.

³⁶ See K. E. Πλακογιαννάκης, *Τιμητικοί τίτλοι και ενεργά αξιώματα στο Βυζάντιο*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2001, 281. It is descended from the word σκουτάριον or σκούτον, which means shield or Escutcheon. See E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods (from B.C. 146 to A.D. 1100)*, London 1914, 997-998. A. P. Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, New York-Oxford 1991, vol. 3, 1913.

³⁷ For example we mention that Skoutari is a common name for the city of Skodra in Albania as well as for a suburb of Constantinople on the asian side (the ancient Chrysoupolis).

³⁸ Γ. Α. Μέγας, "Το αρχοντικό Σκούταρη της Καστοριάς", *Γέρας, Αντ. Κεραμοπούλλου*, Αθήνα 1953, 503-509.

As a result, we can conclude that Ioannis combines all the elements which identify a painter of his era: A singular style, characteristic handwriting, organized and steady professional team, family unity and a conscientious choice of ways of expression. He differentiates from his contemporaries however in his choice to highlight his surname and home region, mainly in his earlier works, thus showing us that he is no ordinary painter, but a recognizable and competent artisan during the second half of the 17th c. By placing emphasis on his surname and home region, he wants to highlight the fact that he continues a great tradition of his particular home and that he has a name, which is a characteristic of his work and serves to differentiate him from the other painters. We could not imagine this painter, who continues the work of the great linotopite painters, who almost always signed their work and proudly declared their home region, differently. This fact reveals the indisputable domination of the painters from Grammos in the art of Epirus during the second half of the 17th c.

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РАД СЛИКАРА ЈОАНИСА СКУТАРИСА ИЗ ГРАМОСТЕ,
КАСТОРИЈА У ЕПИРУ И ЈУЖНОЈ АЛБАНИЈИ (1645–1672/3)

Резиме

Јоанис Скутарис је сликар из XVII века о коме смо први пут чули из натписа из 1645. а који се налази у Цркви Светих апостола у Моливдоскепастосу у Јањини. Рођен је у данас напуштеном селу у Грамости у области Касторија. Јоанис је сарађивао са две радионице током XVII века, прво са својим оцем код кога је радио као шегрт, а потом са два асистента, Димитриосом и Георгиосом. Он је један од ретких поствизантијских сликара из Епира коме знамо презиме, или макар надимак. Осим у Цркви Светих апостола, Јоанисово име се јавља и у цркви манастира пророка Илије у Зици (1657) и манастиру Спिलाиотиса на реци Воидоматис (1672/73). Његово име је такође написано на два иконама, једној на олтарској прегради Цркве Светих апостола у Моливдоскепастосу (1645/46) и другој из Цркве Светог Атанасија у Дровианију у јужној Албанији (1657). Још четири уметничка дела су рад Јоаниса Скутариса. Изгледа да је он сам насликао три, можда уз помоћ неких сарадника, док четврто дело садржи допринос још једног уметника. Хронолошки поређано, то су следећа дела: приправа манастира Спилаио у Саракинисти у Лунхери (Албанија) (1658/59), црква манастира Агиои Анаргурои у Клеидонији (1661), део украса на цркви манастира Равенија у Дрополију (Албанија) (око 1600) и део украса у манастиру Мајке Божије у Моливдоскепастосу (седма или осма деценија XVII века). Јоанис је комбиновао све елементе који су карактеристични за сликара његовог доба: јединствен стил, карактеристичан рукопис, организован и устаљен професионални тим, породично јединство и савестан избор начина изражавања. Ипак, он се од својих савременика разликовао по томе што је желео да истакне своје презиме и родни крај, углавном у својим ранијим делима, тако нам показујући да није обичан сликар, него препознатљив и стручан мајстор који је живео у другој половини XVII века. Наглашавајући своје презиме и родни крај, он је желео да истакне чињеницу да наставља велику традицију своје породице и да има име, што је обележило његов рад и разликовало га од осталих сликара. Не бисмо ни могли да другачије замислимо овог сликара који је наставио рад великих линотопитских сликара и који се скоро увек потписивао и поносно истицао свој родни крај. Ова чињеница истиче непобитну доминацију сликара из Грамоса у уметности Епира током друге половине XVII века.