

SUMMARY

Angeliki Strati, *The wall paintings of the Archontaria of the Holy Monastery of Timios Prodromos in Serres.*

In the monastic compound of the Holy Monastery of Timios Prodromos in Serrees, on its S.W. side is built the Archontaria or Synodic, a building for the reception of guests and pilgrims of the monastery.

In its interior there are wallpaintings which date from 1795 according to an inscription on the door lintel, which consisted of many verses and today is destroyed. The inscription mentioned the name of the painter Nedelkos, of the prior Theoklitos and of the sponsors who were «τζερατζήδες», that is tailors. The wall paintings run through on the four sides of the room on the upper part, under the wooden ceiling. The representations imaginary landscapes, gardens architecturally arranged, famous cities like Constantinople, Vienna, Rome and possibly Budapest represented in perspective, are linked with chalcographic models of that period. The remaining partitions are decorated with representations of nature morte such as vases, dishes with fruit, fruit-bowls, trees with birds, decorative garlands.

The construction and interior of the room as well as the secular character of the wall paintings present an absolute correspondence with the reception areas —the so called *ondas*— of the mansions of Macedonia, Epirus and Thessaly. Those representations are noted for a singular mixture of artistic styles baroque, rococo and many post-Byzantine elements. It also corresponds to some extent to the so called «neo-hellenic baroque» which as a style conquers the large commercial centres of Northern Greece. This kind of secular painting, spread throughout the Balkans and Asia Minor, for the decoration of houses is nothing rare in the monastic buildings, eating areas and archontarias.

The wall paintings of the Archontaria of the Monastery of Timios Prodromos in Serres are an impressive example of this secular painting of the 18C, unique for a monastic building in the area of E. Macedonia.