

A Pilgrimage to the Evangelistria of Tinos. The Testimony of the Images

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(Summary)

In 1823, an event occurred that changed the life of the island of Tinos for good to make it the most important site of religious pilgrimage across Greece: an icon of the Annunciation was found, which began to work miracles and was named as the Megalochari of Tinos. The icon's discovery coincided with the Greek revolution against the Ottomans that led to the liberation of the country. The very topic of the icon, the Annunciation, was believed to be a sign of the divine support for the cause of the Greeks. In the future, this fact played a significant role for the icon's popularity and for the rapid formation of a lasting cult.

This study seeks to explore the role of the images in forming and spreading the cult to the miraculous icon of Tinos and in establishment this important place of pilgrimage in the Balkans, as it has not been examined for the time being.

The miraculous icon of the Annunciation of Tinos was discovered rather late and the cult to it was created and formed according to long-established patterns, by using means relevant to the time. The legend about the discovery of the icon and the reconstruction of the church was soon recorded and published. A number of prints featuring views of the architectural complex and the miraculous icon were printed in the period 1827–1860. One of the prints, a copy of which is kept in Sofia, features the story of the icon's discovery. An icon reproducing a print of Tinos (NAM, Sofia) is yet another evidence of the pilgrimage from Bulgarian lands to Tinos. A similar icon is kept at the Church of Zoodochos Pigi in Istanbul. The extant copies of prints and the icons chart the area where the cult to the icon of Tinos spread out.

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