

Alke Kyriakidou-Nestoros, *Tà 'Υφαντὰ τῆς Μακεδονίας καὶ τῆς Θράκης* [Textiles of Macedonia and Thrace]. National Organization of Hellenic Handicrafts, Athens 1965. Pp. 124+37 plates of which 26 in color, +56 designs and 1 map. (English summary in pages 120-124).

The "Textiles of Macedonia and Thrace" a Doctorate thesis by Mrs Alke Kyriakidou-Nestoros at the University of Thessaloniki, is an unusually good book of its kind. It deals especially with home-weaving, that important part of women's activities in folk life and art. Mrs Alke Kyriakidou-Nestoros limits her subject from the middle of the 17th century to the end of the 19th in the area of Macedonia and Thrace, that is from Mesembria on the Black Sea to Philippopolis, Meleniko, Monastir, to the North with Grevena, Chalkidiki, Thasos, Kallipolis to the South, during the Ottoman rule. The Northern part of this area is now out of the Greek borderline but the Greek people living there being transplanted on the actual Greek soil under tragic circumstances continued their traditional ways of living and working. The map in the book is very revealing.

It is well known that at this period, especially after the treaty of Kainardji at 1774 the Turks had accorded certain privileges to their Christian subjects and, as a consequence, life became easier and trade, iconography, wood carving, interior decoration of the houses had flourished. More so, textile trade became very important, because raw material could be drawn on the spot and the weaving tradition was always alive limited some times, as it might be, for the household needs.

The author presents her topic in a very scholarly and vivid way. She connects her subject with folk life as a whole and points to the symbolic significance of the work—spinning and weaving—in modern Greek beliefs and superstitions. Some modern terms used in the weaving process are often borrowed from rural and domestic life and show how folk people consider the loom as a living element in the house, having apotropaic qualities on occasions such as birth, marriage etc. Tales, sayings and songs illustrating the various stages of the work add to the broad research the author has done.

Mrs Alke Kyriakidou-Nestoros gives a detailed account of the technique and the various kinds of textiles hand-woven in the home. The glossary also is important. It shows an extremely rich number of terms. Some still in use, are traced back to the classical times having survived through the Byzantine period and come down to us almost unchanged.

In dealing with the decoration, patterns and color the author stresses the importance of form, rhythm and symmetry that rule the artistic creations of folk people. The traditional material from which the women draw their patterns and colors is always enriched by the personal creation so that we have infinite variations of the same theme. Even though the technique obliges the weaver to geometrical designs, certain patterns are given names such as: sun, fish, apple etc.

The book consists of two parts. Part A is divided in the following chapters: Time and Place Limits of the Study; Textiles, Fibres and Yarns; Spinning of the Thread; Loom and Fabric Formation; Industry of Hand-Woven Textiles; Continuation of Hand-Weaving Tradition. The second Part covers the: Fundamental Elements of Textile Decoration; Technique of Textile Decoration; Decorative Patterns and Color.

All in all it is an inspiring book and a very welcome contribution to the limited literature on this subject.

The book is beautifully produced by the National Organization of Hellenic Handicrafts. This Organization established about eight years ago in Athens with branches in some other cities of Greece, is interested in promoting folk art; this is done by guiding craftsmen to manufacture good items for sale in and out of Greece, and second by useful publications for the general public and for craftsmen as well.

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Makriyannis. *The Memoirs of General Makriyannis 1797-1864*. Edited and Translated by H.A. Lidderdale. Foreword by C.M. Woodhouse. London, Oxford University Press, 1966. Pages XXI + 234.

The memoirs of General Makriyannis are worthy of a fame all their own. First of all, they are, as are all memoirs, a first class historical source since their author took part personally in the revolution of 1821 and in the battles which he describes, and was also a protagonist in the most significant historical events from the time of the liberation up to the dethronement of the first King Othon in 1862. However, this is not all. When the war was over Makriyannis sat down and taught himself to read and write (he was until that time almost completely illiterate) expressly because he felt the undeniable compulsion to relate the important events that he had seen with his own eyes, and not to leave them unrecorded. His work is spontaneous and completely demotic not only as re-