A PALEOLOGEAN ICON OF VIRGIN “Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ” FROM THESSALONIKI

An icon of Virgin Hodegetria *dexiokratousa* from the Palaeologean period, with the large dimensions of 121 x 94cm, is perched on a new wooden proskynetarion in the narthex of the Virgin Acheiropoietos Church in Thessaloniki1 (fig. 1).

The Virgin is depicted in bust, in front view, in the iconographical type of Hodegetria *dexiokratousa*. She is holding the Infant in her right hand, whereas her left hand is stretched out in deesis in front of her breast. She wears a blue himation and a purple maphorion decorated with gold along the edges. Christ is represented blessing with the right hand and with a closed red scroll in the left. He is dressed with an ochre hiton with golden embellishment and a red belt tightening his waist (fig. 4). The nimbi of Christ and the Virgin are depicted as two successive engraved lines on the golden background of the icon. To the left and right of the Virgin her epithet2 “Η ΕΛΠΙΣ / ΤΩΝ [Ν] ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ” (The Hope of the Hopeless) is inscribed in red (sch.1).3

The icon is preserved in a rather good condition. In the past it has undergone restoration, whereas newer repainting have been removed and color additions have been made at the spots of missing paint, a bigger one being a recasting of the left pollex of the Virgin, and a smaller one, on her face. A big score left by a pointed instrument passes across the face of the Virgin. Still on the face of the Virgin, but not on that of Christ, some paint seems to have gone lost.

---

1 The icon is unpublished. We would like to thank the Ephor of Byzantine Antiquities of Thessaloniki, Dr E. Marki, for the permission to publish the icon, as well as Prof. Emeritus Euthymios N. Tsigaridas and Ass. Professor Athanassios Semoglou for their precious comments concerning the text. We are also very obliged to Dr Ilian Georgiev (father Avenir) for the English translation of the article.

2 M. Vassilaki remarks that the icon, which is unpublished, bears this epithet, see: M. Vassilaki, *Praying for the salvation of the empire? Images of the Mother of God. Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, Hampshire 2005, 269, note 31. We would like to thank Dr Michalis Kappas for noticing us this article.

3 We are very grateful to the architect Sonia Andonova, who made us the scheme of the inscription.
From an iconographical point of view, the icon of Virgin *dexiokratousa* from the Acheiropoietos Church in Thessaloniki shows similarity with analogous depictions of Virgin *dexiokratousa*, like the icon of Virgin from the Byzantine Museum in Thessaloniki (beginning of 13th century), the mosaic icon of Virgin from the Sinai Monastery (first quarter of 13th century), the two sided icon of Virgin Hodegetria from the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (first half of 14th century), and the icon of Virgin Hodegetria, the so called Tricherousa, from the Chilandar Monastery (middle of 14th century) (fig. 2).

In terms of the general iconographical scheme, the positions and the gestures, as well as several iconographical elements like the folding of the vestments, the icon of the Virgin from the Acheiropoietos Church in Thessaloniki seems iconographically very closely related to the two-sided icon of Virgin

---


5 Τούρτα, Εικόνα Δεξιοκρατούσας, 608, σχ. 1, pl. ΛΖ’. Μήτηρ Θεού, 474–475, fig. 78 (A. Τούρτα).

6 Τούρτα, Εικόνα Δεξιοκρατούσας, 608, σχ. 1, pl. ΛΖ’. Μήτηρ Θεού, 474–475, fig. 78 (A. Τούρτα).

7 Τούρτα, Εικόνα Δεξιοκρατούσας, 608, σχ. 1, pl. ΛΖ’. Μήτηρ Θεού, 474–475, fig. 78 (A. Τούρτα).

8 N. Chatzidakis, A Byzantine icon of the *dexiokratousa* Hodegetria from Crete at the Benaki Museum, Images of the Mother of God. Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium, Hampshire 2005, pl. 23, 352, fig. 27.2.

9 Μ. Αρχαμούστο –Ποταμιάνου, Εικόνες του Βυζαντινού Μοναστηρίου Αθηνών, Αθήνα 1998, 40–41, fig. 9.

10 Β. Παπαδόπουλο, Α. Τσιάρα, Εικόνες της Άρτας, Άρτα 2008, 70–75, fig. 9. 70.

11 The dimensions of the icon are 110 x 90cm. The icon without the revetment is published in Β. Παπαδόπουλο, Α. Τσιάρα, Εικόνες της Άρτας, Άρτα 2008, 70–75, fig. 9. 70.
Hodegetria Triherousa from the Chilandar Monastery (middle of 14th century)\(^{11}\), and the two icons probably have a common prototype (fig. 1 -2).

Regarding the Ἐλπίς τῶν Ἀπελπισμένων epithet of the Virgin, we should note that, although cited in the Herminie of Dionysius of Fourna\(^{12}\), it is not habitual\(^{13}\). According to prof. K. Kalokýris\(^{14}\) this epithet is most likely inspired by the Grand Canon of Paraklises, a part of which reads: “...αὔξηθην ἀνάμνησις καὶ ἔλπις ἀπελπισμένων” (power...)

\(^{11}\) L. Mirković, Ικόνα Βοστρόδομου Τροφεύματος, 233-235. С. Петковић, Хиландар, fig. 54 και fig.13 (with revetment). С. Петковић, Ικόνες Μοναστηρά Χίλλανταρ, 79-80.

\(^{12}\) Διονύσιος του εκ Θεοφύλακτος, Ερμηνεία της Φωτιακής Τέχνης, εν Περιοδόκει 1909, 281.

\(^{13}\) More spread, but also not very common are the epithets of Virgin “Ελπίς τῶν Ἀπελπισμένων” (The Hope of the Christians), see: the icon of Virgin Glykofilousa in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (15th century), (see: X. Ματαλογιάννη, Εικόνες Μήτηρ Θεοῦ, Αθήνα 1994, 117-118, fig. 28, pl. 52), the icon of Virgin Glykophilousa from the Church of Saint Menas in Chora of the Naxos island (end of 16th century), (see: Ματαλογιάννη, Εικόνες Μήτηρ Θεοῦ, 141 -142, pl. 68), the icon of Virgin of Pathos from the Church of Saint George in Katavati in Sithos island (17th century), (see: Θ. Αλιπράνη, Θεσσαλονίκης, 51), the icon of Virgin Brefokaroussa (first decade of 18th century), a work of Andreas Karandinos, (see: Βυζαντινό Μουσείο. Τα νέα αποκάλυψητα (1986 -1996), Αθήνα 1997, 110 -111, εικ. 34 (X. Ματαλογιάννη). Very rare are the epithet „Τῶν αμαρτολῶν ἡ Ἐλπίς”, (Of the Sinners the Hope) on an icon of Virgin Hodegetria with a miracle from the Byzantine and Christian Museum of Athens (second half of 17th century) (see: M. Αρχιμάστο-Ποταμιάνον, Εικόνες του Βυζαντινού Μουσείου Αθήνας, Αθήνα 1998, 248 -249, fig. 80), as well as the name “ἡ Ἐλπίς” (The Hope) alone, on an icon of Virgin Hodegetria (see: X. Ματαλογιάννη, Εικόνες Συλλογή Δημητρίου Οικονομοποιίων, Αθήνα 1985, pl. 175, fig. 283). An icon of Virgin of Pathos from the Oikonomopoulou Collection (18th century) does not preserve the entire inscription of her epithet, though the existing part reads: „Ἡ ἘΛΠΙΣ Τ[ΩΝ] / ...,” (see: Ματαλογιάννη, Εικόνες Οικονομοποιίων, pl. 124, fig. 136).

\(^{14}\) Κ. Καλοκύρης, Ἡ Θεοτόκος εἰς τὴν εἰκονογραφίαν, Θεσσαλονίκη 1972, 37.
Ekaterini Kousoula, Alexandra Trifonova

of the helpless and hope of the hopeless), whereas according to M. Vassilaki\textsuperscript{15} it is inspired from a prayer to the Virgin for supplication, read at the Great and Small Apodeipnon “η τῶν απελπισμένων μόνη ἔλπις, καὶ τῶν πολεμημένων βοήθεια”.

The Ελπίς τῶν Απελπισμένων epithet of the Virgin is encountered very rarely in monuments dedicated to her\textsuperscript{16}, and is in fact only known from two monuments: the Ελπίς τῶν Απελπισμένων Church of the Virgin in\textsuperscript{17} Kum Kapi in Constantinople (beginning of 15th century), on the place of which the Church of Virgin Ελπίς (Panayia Elpida Kilisesi, 1895)\textsuperscript{18} stands nowadays, and from the Ελπίς τῶν Απελπισμένων Monastery of the Virgin, nowadays Monastery of Virgin Pepelentisas near the Kounina village in Peloponnesus, Greece\textsuperscript{19}.

On depictions of the Virgin this epithet appears for the first time on a lead seal of the mystic Nicholas Fragkopoulos (end of

\textsuperscript{15} Vassilaki, Praying for the salvation, 269, note 30.

\textsuperscript{16} A similar epithet is attributed to a Monastery in Constantinople, dedicated to Virgin Βεβάιας Ἑλπίς (Vevaia Elpis), which was founded between 1328 and 1344 by Theodora Palaiologina Synadene. The location of this monastery is uncertain, see: I. Spatharakis, The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts, Leiden 1976, 202-203. E. Koubena, A Survey of Aristocratic Women Founders of Monasteries in Constantinople between the Eleventh and the Fifteenth Centuries, Les Femmes et le Monachisme Byzantin (Women and Byzantine Monasticism), Actes du Symposium d’Athènes, 28-29 mars 1988, 31.


\textsuperscript{18} Ελληνικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος ΚΗ’ (1899 -1902), 129, 138. Ελθικά Φιλανθρωπικά καταστήματα εν Κωνσταντινούπολι. Ημερολόγιον του έτους 1906, εν Κωνσταντινούπολι, 1905, 204.

\textsuperscript{19} There are two different versions concerning the founders of the Monastery. According to one version the Monastery of Virgin Ελπίς τῶν Απελπισμένων was founded by the sister of hosios Leontios, whereas according to another version it was founded by Elena Palaiologina, daughter of the despot of Achaias, Thomas Palaiologina (see: http://www.im-ka.gr/Pages/Mones/8eotokouPepelinitshs.htm).
12th century). Later, the epithet Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων occurs on Paleologan icons of the Virgin, among which the earliest known ones are that of Virgin Paraklises from the cathedral of Freising, near Munich in Germany (1235/1261, repainting and revetment end of 14th century)21 and the icon of Virgin Glykophiloousa from the Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos (end of 14th - beginning of 15th century)22. During the Post-Byzantine period the epithet is more frequent and we encounter it five times on icons from the 15th and the 16th

---

---
Ekaterini Kousoula, Alexandra Trifonova

Fig. 4. Christ, Icon of Virgin Hodegetria dexiokratousa „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ των απελπισμένων”, Church of Virgin Acheiropoietos, Thessaloniki (detail)

Сл. 4. Христос, икона Богородице Одигитрије dexiokratousa „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ των απελπισμένων”, црква Богородице Афиропонетос, Солун (детаљ)

century, and another five times on icons from the 17th and the 18th century. On Post–Byzantine icons this epithet appears on an icon of Virgin of Pathos from Sarajevo in Bosnia (15th century)23, on an icon of Virgin Hodegetria from the Simonos Petras Monastery on Mount Athos (end of 15th century)24, on an icon of Virgin Hodegetria from the Myrtias Monastery in Aitolokarnania (1491)25, on an icon of Virgin Hodegetria from the Church of Virgin in Hvar in Croatia (15th–16th century)26, on an icon of Virgin Glykophilousa from the Church of Virgin Doбриć in Split of Croatia (end of 15th–beginning of 16th century)27, on an icon of Virgin Eleousa from the Arkadios Monastery in Crete (1650;28, on an icon of enthroned Virgin Brefokratousa, a work of the painter

---

23 The dimensions of the icon are 66 x 56 cm, see: L. Mirković, Starine stare crkve u Sarajevu, Spomenik 65 (1936), 4, pl. VI, fig. 2. The inscription reads „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ / ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ”, see: Mirković, Starine, 4.

24 The epithet of the icon is „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ” see: Σύμμωσις, Άγιον Όρος, Αθήνα 1991, 188, fig. 106 (Σ. Κίσσας). Κ -Ε. Πλακιωνάκης. Άγιον Όρος ο πρωτοχόνος της Ορθοδοξίας, Θεσσαλονίκη 2003, 132, fig. 134.

25 The dimensions of the icon, which is considered to be a work of the painter Xenos Digenis, are 80 x 66cm and the inscription reads: „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ”, see Α. Παλλιώτης, Βυζαντινή Αιώνιοκρατική, Αθήνα 1985, 151, εικ. 157.

26 The inscription is „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ / ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ”, see: Izložba nekoliko restauriranih umjetina u restavatorskoj radionici Regionalnog Zavoda za zaštitu spomenika kulture u Splitu, Hvar 1979, fig. 2 (D. Domančić).

27 The dimensions of the icon are 102 x 72cm and the inscription is: „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ”, see: Сл. 4. Христос, икона Богородице Одигитрије dexiokratousa „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ των απελπισμένων”, црква Богородице Афиропонетос, Солун (детаљ)

28 The inscription is “Η ΕΛΠΙΣ (ΤΩΝ) ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ”, see: Г. Пасарелла, Вοζантини Крити, Αθήνα 2005, 178, fig. 204.

29 The dimensions of the icon are 1, 17 x 85cm, it bears a silver revetment and the epithet “Η ΕΛΠΙΣ / ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ” engraved on the revetment. According to Ν. Κονδακοβ, the revetment was originally attached to some other icon from Thessaloniki,
Konsatínos ieromonk from the Museum of Medieval Art in Korçe (1710)30, on an despotic icon of Virgin Hodegetria from the Monastery of Prophet Helias in Zaholi near Corinth (18th century)31, on an icon of Virgin Brefokratoussa from the Church of Saint Andreas in Roditsa of Fthiotida in Central Greece (18th century)32, as well on an icon of Virgin in Sami at Cephalonia island (18th century)33 and others34.

In mural painting the only known example of this rare epithet occurs in the Virgin of the apse of the St. Nicholas Church of the nun Eupraxia in Kastoria (1485/6)35.

To conclude the above, we reiterate that the depiction of the Virgin Ελπίς των Ἀπελπισμένων is met for the first time in the 12th century. During the Paleologean period the depictions with this name are three, whereas during the post-Byzantine period this epithet is more frequent, as the depictions are over ten.

We should also note, that the Ελπίς των Ἀπελπισμένων epithet of the Virgin occurs five times on icons belonging to the iconographical type of Virgin Hodegetria, two times of Virgin Glykophilousa and one time of Virgin Paralikes, Virgin Eleousa, Virgin of Thessaloniki, Virgin Deomene and Virgin Brefokratousa enthroned. Therefore, it is clear that the Ελπίς των Ἀπελπισμένων epithet of the Virgin should not be associated with any particular iconographical type, but rather, could be explained by the preferences of the painter or of the person who commissioned the icon.

and namely, to one of greater dimensions, see: N. Kondakov, Makedonija. Arheologiĉeskoje putojestvie, Sankt Peterburg 1909, 137, fig. 80. N. Kondakov also published a slightly different version of the same inscription: “Η / ΕΛΠΙΣ / ΤΩΝ / ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ”, see: Kondakov, Makedonija, 137.

30 The dimensions of the icon are 84 × 53.5 cm. It originates from the St. Peter and Paul Monastery in Vithquki in Albania, and bears the inscription “Η ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ / ΕΛΠΙΣ”, see: Εκκοίνος από τις Ορθοδόξες Κοινότητες της Αλβανίας, Exhibition Catalogue, Thessaloniki 14.03.2006 -12.06.2006, 124-126, fig. 41 (Ε. Δρακοπούλου).

31 The icon bears the epipheth, “Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΙΝΛΙΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ(Ν)”, see: Α. Σάμης-γλόου, Άγγελος τριάδη του ύψοναθσίου Αθανασίου ιεροδιάκονου του Κριτής, Από τη Μεταβολιστή Τέχνη στη Σύγχρονη 18ος-20ος αιώνας, Θεσσαλονίκη 1998, 352, fig. 9.

32 The epithet of the icon of the Virgin is „ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ“, see: Εκκοιναιακα εκμέμενα της Φθιώτιδος, Exhibition Catalogue, Λαμία 1998, fig. 21.

33 The epithet of the Virgin is „η μονή Ελπίς των απελπισμένων“, see: Γ. Αντζουλά-του, Προβληματισμοί για την ιστορική εικώνα, Η μονή ελπίς των απελπισμένων, στη Σάμη Κεφαλονιάς, Πρακτικά του Ε’ Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Αρχαετόλων – Λεβάνθου 17-21.05.1986, 57-65.

34 A similar inscription, „η ελπίς των απελπισμένων“, is borne by an icon of Virgin from the Saint Nicholas Monastery in Rachiti in Egypt (see: Ιερουσαλημ Τιμόθεου, Α τεσσαραγκή της Παναγίας, Νέα Σιόν ΜΖ’ (1952), 155), and by an icon of Virgin of the chapel of Dormition of Virgin in Philadelphia of Asia Minor (see: Ιερουσαλημ Τιμόθεου, Α εκκοιναιακα, 155).

35 The epithet of the Virgin is „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ / ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝΑΝ)“, see: Σ. Πελεκανίδης, Καστορία, Θεσσαλονίκη 1955, pl. 181, and Α. Τριφούνα, Οι τοιχογραφιές του ναού του Αγίου Νικολάου της μονής Ευσεβίας (1485/6) στην Καστορία, Unpublished M.A. thesis at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Θεσσαλονίκη 2005, fig. 5.
From prosopographical point of view, the physiognomic type of the Virgin (fig.3) with a small egg-shaped face, a narrow forehead, eyebrows designed with two lines reaching the edge of the eyes, expressive almond-shaped eyes, a tiny long nose and a small mouth with stiff fleshy red lips, is similar to works of the first half of 14th century like the face of the Virgin from the two-sided icon of Annunciation from the Ochrid Art Gallery (beginning of 14th century)\(^{36}\), the icon of Virgin Brefokratousa from the Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki (first quarter of 14th century)\(^{37}\), the icon of Virgin Eleousa from the Chilandar Monastery at Mount Athos (first 20 years of 14th century)\(^{38}\), and the two-sided icon of Virgin Hodegetria Triherousa from Chilandar Monastery (middle 14th century)\(^{39}\) (fig.2).

Also the physiognomic type of Christ (fig.5), with a small head, a big high forehead, a short nose and a short neck, follows prosopographically the Palaeologean tradition and works from the first half of the 14th century, like Christ on the icon of whole-body Virgin Brefokratousa from the Vatopedi Monastery (beginning of 14th century)\(^{40}\) and on the two-sided icons of Virgin Peribleptos from the Virgin Peribleptos Church in Ochrid (14th century)\(^{41}\).

Fig.5. Christ, Icon of Virgin Hodegetria dextokratousa "η Ελπίς των απελπισμένων", Church of Virgin Acheiropoietos, Thessaloniki (detail)

36 Βοκοτόπουλος, Βυζαντινές Εικόνες, fig.76.; Κ. Βαλανίδης, Ικονοτροπία στη Μακεδονία/Icons of Macedonia, Skopje 1995, 76 -79, fig. 75, 192-193, fig. 17; Byzantium, fig. 99 reverse.

37 Βοκοτόπουλος, Βυζαντινές Εικόνες, fig. 100.; Βυζαντινοί θησαυροί της Θεσσαλονίκης, Το ταξίδι της επιστημονικής, Exhibition Catalogue, (no date and place of publication), 32, fig. 19.

38 С. Петковић, Икона Манастира Хиландара, 75, fig.75; Вокотопулос, Βυζαντινες Εικόνες, 120, fig. 99; Θησαυροί του Αγίου Όρους, 81, fig. 2.16 (Ε. Ν. Τσιγαρίδας).

39 Л. Мирковић, Икона Богородици Троеручице, 233-235. Петковић, Chilandar, fig. 54; С. Петковић, Икона Манастира Хиландара, 79-80.

40 Ε. Τσιγαρίδας, Κ. Λοβέρδου –Τσιγαρίδα, Ιερά Μητρόπολη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου. Βυζαντινές εικόνες και επενδύσεις, Άγιον Όρος 2006, 107 -111, fig. 74-75.

41 V. Djurić, Icônes de Yougoslavie, Belgrade 1961, 87, pl. X, fig. 8. (black and white
Particularly close, on physiognomic and artistic level, is the relation with the two-sided icon of Virgin Triherousa from the Chilandar Monastery (middle 14th century)\textsuperscript{42} (fig.2).

Concerning the technique, we can say little about the face of the Virgin, since the state of preservation of the paint on her face is rather bad, due to a loss of the upper layers of paint on all the face, except of the area of the nose and the mouth. However, the face of Christ, being preserved in a very good condition, can give us an idea of what the face of the Virgin initially looked like. The painter uses dark olive-green proplasme which gradates gently with flesh and wheaten flesh, warmed with red blots on the cheeks and nostrils. In red he represents the mouth of the figures and marks the end of the nose. White lights are installed on the forehead, below the eyes, on both lips and on the neck. This technique of gentle passage from the proplasme to the flesh of the face, with blots of light in some areas, refers to manners of Paleologean painting, mainly of the first half of the 14th century, and can be seen in Christ from the icon of Virgin Hodegetria of the Chilandar Monastery (first 20 years of 14th century)\textsuperscript{43} and on the two-sided icons of Virgin Hodegetria from the Church of Presentation of the Virgin in Niohori at Rodhos (third quarter of 14th century)\textsuperscript{44}, of Virgin Glykophiloousa from the Ecclesiastical Museum of Thessaloniki (mid. 14th century)\textsuperscript{45}, on Virgin Triherousa of the Chilandar Monastery (mid. 14th century)\textsuperscript{46}. However, the same technique of modeling of the face can be seen and on an icon of Virgin Hodegetria from the Aghios Pavlos Monastery on Mount Athos (end of 14th century)\textsuperscript{47}, which undoubtedly follows the tradition of the Thessalonikean workshops from the first half of 14th century.

On the iconographical level the icon of the Virgin from the Acheiropoietos Church in Thessaloniki is closely related to the two-sided icon of Virgin image); Балабанов, Иконите во Македонија, 103 -105; M. Georgievski, Icon Gallery–Ohrid, Ohrid 1999, 48-49, fig. 16.

\textsuperscript{42} Л. Мирковић, Икона Богородице Троеручице, 233 -235. Петковић, Chilandar, fig. 54. С. Петковић, Иконе Манастира Хиландара, 79-80.

\textsuperscript{43} С. Петковић, Иконе Манастира Хиландара, 75.

\textsuperscript{44} Μήτηρ Θεού, 418 -420, fig. 66 (A. Катопοτή).

\textsuperscript{45} Α. Σέμογλου, Η συλλογή εικόνων του Εκκλησιαστικού Μουσείου της Ιεράς Μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης: Μια πολύτιμη μαρτυρία για την παλαιολόγια και μεταβυζαντινή θρησκευτική ζωή της Θεσσαλονίκης, Το Εκκλησιαστικό Μουσείο της Ιεράς Μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης, Θεσσαλονίκη 2007, 65-66, fig. 1.

\textsuperscript{46} Λ. Μυρκούπη, Ικόνα Βοσκοδομίας Ξοδευτικού, 233 -235. Σ. Πετκόπουλος, Chilandar, fig. 54. Σ. Πετκόπουλος, Ικόνες Μοναστηρίων Άγιος Παύλος, Άγιον Όρος 1998, 32-33, fig. 11 (E. Tsigaridas). We would like to thank Dr Michalis Kappas for noticing us this icon.
Ekaterini Kousoula, Alexandra Trifonova

Triherousa from the Chilandar Monastery, and the two icons probably have a common prototype. On the physiognomical level our icon is related to works from the first half of the 14th century from Thessaloniki workshops. Further, judging from the face of Christ, also on the technical level, a relation with Thessalonikean works and with the two-sided icon of Virgin Triherousa appears (fig. 1-2).

Undoubtedly, the comparison between the face of Christ on the two icons is most revelatory. Although the icon of Triherousa has not been restored, as it is miraculous, the close artistic relation between the two faces is evident.

Based on the above considerations, we are of the opinion that the icon of Virgin *dexiokratousa* from the Acheiropoietos Church in Thessaloniki, which bears the rare epithet η Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων, can be ranged among the chef d’œuvres of the Paleologean period. The icon is probably a work of a workshop from Thessaloniki and we suggest that it should be dated to the second quarter of the 14th century.48

---

48 According to M. Vassilaki the icon dates to the 14th century, see: Vassilaki, Praying for the salvation, 269.