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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 proskyn-
etaron in the narthex of the Virgin Acheiropoietos Church in Thessaloniki¹ (fig. 1).

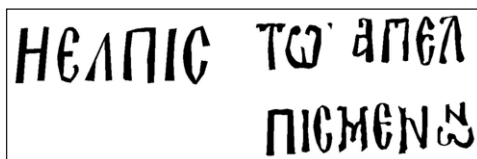
The Virgin is depicted in bust, in front view, in the iconographical type of Hodegetria *dexiokratousa*. She is holding the Infant in her right hand, whereas her left hand is stretched out in deesis in front of her breast. She wears a blue himation and a purple maphorion decorated with gold along the 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 / ΤΩ[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¹ The icon is unpublished.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² M. Vassilaki remarks that the icon, which is unpublished, bears this epithet, see: M. Vassilaki, *Praying for the salvation of the empire?, Images of the Mother of God.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.

Sch. 1. Inscription *Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων*Sch. 1. Натпис *Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων*

From an iconographical point of view⁴, 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)⁵, the mosaic

icon of Virgin from the Sinai Monastery (first quarter of 13th century)⁶, the icon of Virgin Hodegetria from the Benaki Museum in Athens (end of 13th century - beginning of 14th century)⁷, the two sided icon of Virgin Hodegetria from the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (first half of 14th century)⁸, the two-sided icon of Virgin Hodegetria from the Church of St. Nicholas in Arta (14th century)⁹ and the icon of Virgin Hodegetria, the so called Tricherousa, from the Chilandar Monastery (middle of 14th century)¹⁰ (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

⁴ For the iconography of Virgin Hodegetria, see: Belting, *Das illuminierte Buch in der spatbyzantinischen Gesellschaft*, Heidelberg 1970, 72–75; Μ. Αχειμάστου, Αμφιπρόσωπες εικόνες της Ρόδου, *ΑΔ* 21 (1966), 62–83; A. Grabar, L'Hodigitria et l'Éléousa, *ZLU* 10 (1974), 3–14; *Εικόνες Κρητικής Τέχνης. Από τον Χάνδακα ως την Μόσχα και την Αγία Πετρούπολη*, Ηράκλειο 1993, αρ. 29. Χ. Μπαλτογιάννη, *Εικόνες Μήτηρ Θεού*, Αθήνα 1994, 211–237; Χ. Μπαλτογιάννη, Η Παναγία στις φορητές εικόνες, *Μήτηρ Θεού. Απεικονίσεις της Παναγίας στη Βυζαντινή τέχνη*, Αθήνα 2000, 143–145. For the iconography of Virgin Hodegetria Dexiokratousa, see: Α. Τούρτα, Εικόνα δεξιοκρατούσας Παναγίας στη Θεσσαλονίκη, *Ευφρόσυνον. Αφιέρωμα στον Μανόλη Χατζηδάκη*, 2, Αθήνα 1992, 609–613.

⁵ Τούρτα, Εικόνα Δεξιοκρατούσας, 608, sch. 1, pl. ΛΖ'. *Μήτηρ Θεού*, 474–475, fig. 78 (Α. Τούρτα).

⁶ Προσκύνημα στο Σινά. *Θησαυροί από την Ιερά Μονή της Αγίας Αικατερίνης*, Κατάλογος έκθεσης, Αθήνα 20.07–26.09.2004, 69–71, fig. 2. (Ε. C. Ryder). *Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, Κατάλογος Έκθεσης, The Metropolitan Museum of Art 23.03–04.07.2004, New York 2004, 348–349, fig. 207 (Ε. C. Ryder).

⁷ 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.

⁸ Μ. Αχειμάστου–Ποταμιάνου, *Εικόνες του Βυζαντινού Μουσείου Αθηνών*, Αθήνα 1998, 40–41, fig. 9.

⁹ Β. Παπαδοπούλου, Α. Τσιάρα, *Εικόνες της Άρτας*, Άρτα 2008, 70–75, fig. on p. 70.

¹⁰ The dimensions of the icon are 110 x 90cm. The icon without the revetment is published in Л. Мирковић, Икона Богородице Троеручице, *Иконографске студије*, Нови Сад 1974, 233–235. С. Петковић, *Хиландар*, Београд 1999, fig. 54, and with the revetment as fig. 13 in the same source. For another photograph of the icon with the revetment, see С. Петковић, *Иконе Манастира Хиландара*, 79–80.

Fig.1. Virgin Hodegetria *dexiokratousa* „η Ελπίς των απελπισμένων“, Church of Virgin Acheiropoietos, Thessaloniki

Сл. 1. Богородица Одигитрија *dexiokratousa* „η Ελπίς των απελπισμένων“, Црква Богородице Афиропоиетос, Солун

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 *Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων* epithet of the Virgin, we should note that, although cited in the Herminie of Dionysius of Fournas¹², it is not habitual¹³. According to prof. K. Kalokyris¹⁴ this epithet is most likely inspired by the Grand Canon of Paraklises, a part of which reads: „...ἀβοήθητων δόναμις και ἐλπίς ἀπηλπισμένων“ (power



¹¹ Л. Мирковић, *Икона Богородице Троеручице*, 233-235. С. Петковић, *Хиландар*, fig. 54 και fig.13 (with revetment). С. Петковић, *Иконе Манастира Хиландара*, 79-80.

¹² Διονύσιος του εκ Φουρνά, *Ερμηνεία της ζωγραφικής τέχνης*, εν Πετρούπολει 1909, 281.

¹³ More spread, but also not very common are the epithets of Virgin „*Ελπίς των Χριστιανών*“ (*The Hope of the Christians*), see: the icon of Virgin Madre di Consolazione from the Church of Saint Catherine in Chora of the Patmos island (c. 1500), (M. Χατζηδάκης, *Εικόνες της Πάτμου*, Αθήνα 1995, pl. 105, fig. 42), the icon of Virgin in the door of the Iviron Monastery at Mount Athos (1577/1591), (see: A. Xyngopoulos, *Portraits inédits de deux voivodes Vlaques, Actes du XIV^e Congrès International des Etudes Byzantines*, Bucharest 6 -12.09.1971, II, Bucarest 1975, fig. 1), the wall painting of the Church of Dormition of Virgin (1712) in Moscopole of Albania, (see: R. Rousseva, *Iconographic Characteristics of the Churches in Moschopolis and Vithkuqi*, *Μακεδονικά* 35 (2005 -2006), 175), and „*Πάντων Ελπίς*“ (*Of Everyone Hope*), see: the icon of Virgin Glykofiloussa in the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens (15th century), (see: X. Μπαλτογιάννη, *Εικόνες Μήτηρ Θεού*, Αθήνα 1994, 117-118, fig. 28, pl. 52), the icon of Virgin Glykophiloussa from the Church of Saint Menas in Chora of the Naxos island (end of 16th century), (see: Μπαλτογιάννη, *Εικόνες Μήτηρ Θεού*, 141 -142, pl. 68), the icon of Virgin of Pathos from the Church of Saint George in Katavati in Sifnos island (17th century), (see: Θ. Αλιπράντης, *Θησαυροί της Σίφνου*, Αθήνα 1979, 51), the icon of Virgin Brefokaroussa (first decade of 18th century), a work of Andreas Karandinos, (see: *Βυζαντινό Μουσείο. Τα νέα αποκτήματα (1986 -1996)*, Αθήνα 1997, 110 -111, εκ. 34 (X. Μπαλτογιάννη). Very rare are the epithet „*Των αμαρτωλών η Ελπίς*“, (*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. Αχειμάστον-Ποταμιάνου, *Εικόνες του Βυζαντινού Μουσείου Αθηνών*, Αθήνα 1998, 248 -249, fig. 80), as well as the name „*η Ελπίς*“ (*The Hope*) alone, on an icon of Virgin Hodegetria (see: X. Μπαλτογιάννη, *Εικόνες. Συλλογή Δημητρίου Οικονομοπούλου*, 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: „*Η ΕΛΠΙΣ Τ[ΩΝ] /*“, (see: Μπαλτογιάννη, *Εικόνες Οικονομοπούλου*, pl. 124, fig. 136).

¹⁴ Κ. Καλοκύρης, *Η Θεοτόκος εις την εικονογραφίαν*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1972, 37.



Fig. 2. Virgin Hodegetria "Triherousa",
Chilandar Monastery (middle 14th century)

Сл. 2. Богородица Одигитрија "Трихеруса",
манастир Хиландар (средњи XIV век)

of the helpless and hope of the hopeless), whereas according to M. Vassilaki¹⁵ it is inspired from a prayer to the Virgin for supplication, read at the Great and Small Apodeipnon „η των απελπισμένων μόνη ελπίς, και των πολεμουμένων βοήθεια“.

The *Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων* epithet of the Virgin is encountered very rarely in monuments dedicated to her¹⁶, and is in fact only known from two monuments: the *Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων* Church of the Virgin in Kum Kapi in Constantinople (beginning of 15th century)¹⁷, on the place of which the Church of Virgin *Ελπίδας* (Panayia Elpida Kilisesi, 1895)¹⁸ stands nowadays, and from the *Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων* Monastery of the Virgin, nowadays Monastery of Virgin Pepelentisas near the Kounina village in Peloponnesus, Greece¹⁹.

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

¹⁵ Vassilaki, *Praying for the salvation*, 269, note 30.

¹⁶ A similar epithet is attributed to a Monastery in Constantinople, dedicated to Virgin *Βεβαίας Έλπις* (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.

¹⁷ S. Petrides, Eglises Greques de Constantinople en 1652, *Echos d'Orient* 4 (1901), 46. R. Janin, *La Geographie Ecclesiastique de l'empire Byzantin, I. Le siege de Constantinople et le Patriarchat Oecumenique, III. Les Eglises et les Monastères*, Paris 1969, 177. M. Μαυρίδης, *Βυζαντινοί ναοί στην Πόλη*, Αθήνα 1986, 121.

¹⁸ *Ελληνικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος ΚΗ'* (1899 -1902), 129, 138. *Εθνικά Φιλανθρωπικά καταστήματα εν Κωνσταντινούπολει. Ημερολόγιον του έτους 1906, εν Κωνσταντινούπολει* 1905, 204.

¹⁹ There are two different versions concerning the founders of the Monastery. According to one version the Monastery of Virgin *Ελπίς των 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 Achaia, Thomas Palaiologos (see: <http://www.im-ka.gr/Pages/Mones/8eotokouPepelinitshs.htm>).

Fig.3. Virgin *Ελπίς των απελπισμένων*,
Church of Virgin Acheiropoiitos, Thessalonik
i(detail)

Сл. 3. Богородица *Ελπίς των απελπισμένων*,
црква Богородице Афиροпоиетос,
Солун(детал)



12th century)²⁰. Later, the epithet *Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων* occurs on Paleologean 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 Glykophilousa 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

²⁰ The inscription on the lead seal is the following one: „ΜΗΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΥ/ Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΙΠΣΜΕΝΩΝ/ ΣΚΕΠΟΙΣ ΜΕ ΤΟΝ ΣΟΝ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΝ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΕ ΤΟΝ ΦΡΑΓ-ΓΟΠΩΛΟΝ ΜΥΣΤΙΚΟΝ ΣΟΝ ΟΙΚΕΤΗΝ“, see: Н. П. Лихачев, *Историческое значение итапо-греческой иконописи. Изображения Богородицы*, Ст. Петербург 1911, 102. V. Laurent, *Les bulles métriques dans la sigillographie byzantine*, Athens 1932, no. 351. V. Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin*, II, *L'administration centrale*, Paris 1981, 57, no. 126. П. Вокотопулос, *Εικόνες Κέρκυρας*, Αθήνα 1990, 37, footnote 20.

²¹ The dimensions of the icon are 27,8 x 21,5 x 1,5cm and the inscription which bears the revetment reads: *Η ΕΛΠΙΣ/ ΤΩΝ/ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ*, see: Μ. Καλλιγιάς, *Φορητή εικόνα εν Freising*, *AE* (1937), 501-506; Ch. Walters, *Beobachtungen am Freisinger Lukasbild*, *Kunstchronik* 17 (1964), 85 -91; A. Grabar, *Les revêtements en or et en argent des icônes byzantines du moyen age*, Venice 1975, 41-43, fig. 16. *Η Παλαιολόγεια ζωγραφική στη Θεσσαλονίκη*, Δήμος Θεσσαλονίκης (unspecified year), fig. 1.; D. Buckton, *Η Παναγία στα σμάλτα, Μήτηρ Θεού. Απεικονίσεις της Παναγίας στη Βυζαντινή τέχνη*, 176, pl. 113.; K. Loverdou- Tsigarida, Thessalonique, centre de production d'objets d'arts au XIV^e siècle, *DOP* 57 (2003), fig. 9. *Byzantium*, 247, fig. 8.6. (J. Durand). Vassilaki, *Praying for the salvation*, 271, pl. 17, fig.22.1 and without the revetment fig. 22.1. According to M. Vassilaki, the revetment dates to the late 14th century, see: Vassilaki, *Praying for the salvation*, 265.

²² The dimensions of the icon are 25,5 x 22cm and the inscription is: „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ/ ΤΩΝ/ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ/ ΜΕΝΩΝ“, For the icon see: Ιεροσολύμων Τιμόθεου, *Αι επωνυμίες*, 156.; Grabar, *Les revêtements*, 60-62, fig. 32b.; Προηγ. Θεόφιλος Βατοπαιδινός, *Χρονικόν περί της Ιεράς και Σεβασμίας Μεγίστης Μονής Βατοπαιδίου Αγίου Όρους*, *Μακεδονικά* 12 (1972), 103, fig. 17.; Г. Бабић, *Επιτετι Богородице коју дете грли*, *Зборник за Ликовне Уметности* 21, (Нови Сад 1985), 268 -269, where the icon is dated c. 1330.; *Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου. Παράδοση-Ιστορία-Τέχνη*, τόμ. Β', Άγιον Όρος 1996, 663, fig. 436, 437 (Κ. Λοβέρδου- Τσιγαρίδα).; Ε. Τσιγαρίδας, *Βυζαντινές εικόνες, Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου. Βυζαντινές εικόνες και επενδύσεις, Άγιον Όρος 2006*, 191, 194, fig. 45.; Κ. Λοβέρδου- Τσιγαρίδα, *Βυζαντινές αργυρεπισχρύσεις επενδύσεις εικόνων, Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου. Βυζαντινές εικόνες και επενδύσεις, Άγιον Όρος 2006*, 357, fig. 312, 314.



Fig. 4. Christ, Icon of Virgin Hodegetria *dexiokratousa* „η Ελπίς των απελπισμένων“, Church of Virgin Acheiropoietos, Thessaloniki (detail)

Сл. 4. Христос, икона Богородице Одигитрије *dexiokratousa* „η Ελπίς των απελπισμένων“, црква Богородице Афиропоиетос, Солун (деталј)

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 Dobrić 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 Virgin Hodegetria from the Church of Virgin Panagouda in Thessaloniki (17th-18th century)²⁹, 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 ΑΠΗΛΙΠΗΣΜΕΝΩΝ“, see: Mirković, *Starine*, 4.

²⁴ The epithet of the icon is „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ / ΤΩΝ ΑΠΗΛΙΠΗΣΜΕΝΩΝ“ see: Σιμωνοπέτρα, Άγιον Όρος, Αθήνα 1991, 188, fig. 106 (Σ. Κίσσας). Κ -Ε. Πλακογιαννάκης, *Άγιον Όρος ο προμαχόνας της Ορθοδοξίας*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2003², 132, fig. 13^a.

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 ΑΠΗΛΙΠΗΣΜΕΝΩΝ“, see Α. Παλιούρας, *Βυζαντινή Αιτωλοακαρνανία*, Αθήνα 1985, 151, εικ. 157.

²⁶ The inscription is „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ / ΑΠΗΛΙΠΗΣΜΕΝΩΝ“, see: *Izložba nekoliko restauriranih umjetnina u restauratorskoj 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 epithet is: „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΗΛΙΠΗΣΜΕΝΩΝ“, see: C. Fisković, *Tri ikone u Splitu*, *ZLU* 11 (1975), 247, fig. 9, 10 (with revetment), 11 (before restoration), 12 (after restoration); Βοκοτόπουλος, *Εικόνες Κέρκυρας*, 37, footnote 20.

²⁸ The inscription is „Η ΕΛΠΙΣ (ΤΩΝ) ΑΠΗΛΙΠΗΣΜΕΝΩΝ“, see: Γ. Πασαρέλι, *Βυζαντινή Κρήτη*, 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 ΑΠΗΛΙΠΗΣΜΕΝΩΝ“ engraved on the revetment. According to N. Kondakov, the revetment was originally attached to some other icon from Thessaloniki,

Konsatninos ieromonk from the Museum of Medieval Art in Korce (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 Απελπισμένων* 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 Απελπισμένων* 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 Paraklises, Virgin Eleousa, Virgin of Pathos, Virgin Deomene and Virgin Brefokratoussa enthroned. Therefore, it is clear that the *Ελπίς των Απελπισμένων* 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. Arheologičeskoe putešestvie*, Sankt Peterburg 1909, 137, fig. 80. N. Kondakov also published a slightly different version of the same inscription: “H / ΕΛΠΙΣ / ΤΩΝ / ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ”, see: Kondakov, *Makedonija*, 137.

³⁰ The dimensions of the icon are 84 x 53,5 cm. It originates from the St. Peter and Paul Monastery in Vithquki in Albania, and bears the inscription “H ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ / ΕΛΠΙΣ”, see: *Εικόνες από τις Ορθόδοξες Κοινότητες της Αλβανίας*, Exhibition Catalogue, Thessaloniki 14.03.2006 -12.06.2006, 124-126, fig. 41 (Ε. Δρακοπούλου).

³¹ The icon bears the epithet “H ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΗΛ/ΠΙΣΜΕΝΩ(N)”, see: Α. Σέμογλου, Άγνωστο τρίπτυχο του ζωγράφου Αθανασίου ιεροδιάκονου του Κρητός, *Από τη Μεταβυζαντινή Τέχνη στη Σύγχρονη 18^{ος} -20^{ος} αιώνας*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1998, 352, fig. 9.

³² The epithet of the icon of the Virgin is “ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛ/ΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ”, see: *Εκκλησιαστικά κειμήλια της Φθιώτιδος*, Exhibition Catalogue, Λαμία 1998, fig. 21.

³³ The epithet of the Virgin is “η μόνη Ελπίς των απελπισμένων”, see: Γ. Αντζουλάτου, Προβληματισμοί για την ιστορική εικόνα, Η μόνη ελπίς των απελπισμένων, στη Σάμη Κεφαλονιάς, *Πρακτικά του Ε΄ Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Αργοστόλοι – Αηζούρι 17 -21.05.1986*, 57-65.

³⁴ A similar inscription, “η ελπίς των απηλπισμένων”, is borne by an icon of Virgin from the Saint Nicholas Monastery in Rachiti in Egypt (see: Ιεροσολύμων Τιμόθεου, Αι επωνυμίες της Παναγίας, *Νέα Σιών* ΜΖ΄ (1952), 155), and by an icon of Virgin of the chapel of Dormition of Virgin in Philadelphia of Asia Minor (see: Ιεροσολύμων Τιμόθεου, *Αι επωνυμίες*, 155).

³⁵ The epithet of the Virgin is “H ΕΛΠΙΣ Τ(ΩΝ) / ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝ(ΩΝ)”, see: Σ. Πελεκανίδης, *Καστοριά*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1955, pl. 181, and Α. Trifonova, *Οι τοιχογραφίες του ναού του Αγίου Νικολάου της μοναχής Ευπραξίας (1485/6) στην Καστοριά*, Unpublished M.A. thesis at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Θεσσαλονίκη 2005, fig. 5.



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

Сл. 5. Христос, икона Богородице Одигитрије dextokratousa "η Ελπίς των απελπισμένων", црква Богородице Афиροпоиетос, Солун (детал)

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.

³⁶ Βοκοτόπουλος, *Βυζαντινές Εικόνες*, fig.76.; К. Балабанов, *Иконите во Македонија/Icons of Makedonia*, 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 επιστροφής*, Exhibition Catalogue, (no date and place of publication), 32, fig. 19.

³⁸ С. Петковић, *Иконе Манастира Хиландара*, 75, fig.75; Βοκοτόπουλος, *Βυζαντινές Εικόνες*, 120, fig. 99; *Θησαυροί του Αγίου Όρους*, 81, fig. 2.16 (Ε. Ν. Τσιγαρίδας).

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

⁴⁰ Ε. Τσιγαρίδας, Κ. Λοβέρδου -Τσιγαρίδα, *Ιερά Μεγίστη 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)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 proplasma 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 proplasma 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)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)⁴⁴, of Virgin Glykophilousa from the Ecclesiastical Museum of Thessaloniki (mid. 14th century)⁴⁵, on Virgin Triherousa of the Chilandar Monastery (mid. 14th century)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)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, *Икони во Македонија*, 103 -105; M. Georgievski, *Icon Gallery—Ohrid*, Ohrid 1999, 48-49, fig. 16.

⁴² Л. Мирковић, *Икона Богородице Троеручице*, 233 -235. Petković, *Chilandar*, fig. 54. С. Петковић, *Иконе Манастира Хиландара*, 79-80.

⁴³ С. Петковић, *Иконе Манастира Хиландара*, 75.

⁴⁴ *Μήτηρ Θεού*, 418 -420, fig. 66 (Α. Κατσιώτη).

⁴⁵ Α. Σέμογλου, *Η συλλογή εικόνων του Εκκλησιαστικού Μουσείου της Ιεράς Μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης: Μια πολύτιμη μαρτυρία για την παλαιολόγεια και μεταβυζαντινή θρησκευτική τέχνη της Θεσσαλονίκης*, *Το Εκκλησιαστικό Μουσείο της Ιεράς Μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2007, 65-66, fig. 1.

⁴⁶ Л. Мирковић, *Икона Богородице Троеручице*, 233 -235. С. Petković, *Chilandar*, fig. 54. С. Петковић, *Иконе Манастира Хиландара*, 79-80.

⁴⁷ Μ. Βασιλάκη, Γ. Ταβλάκης, Ε. Τσιγαρίδας, *Εικόνες Ιεράς Μονής Αγίου Παύλου*, Άγιον Όρος 1998, 32-33, fig. 11 (Ε. Tsigaridas). We would like to thank Dr Michalis Kappas for noticing us this icon.

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'oeuvres 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 century⁴⁸.

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ПАЛЕОЛОШКА ИКОНА БОГОРОДИЦЕ “*Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙΣΜΕΝΩΝ*” ИЗ СОЛУНА

Рад представља палеолошку икону Богородице Одигитрије из Солуна, са ретким епитетом: Нада безнадежних (обезнађених). Ова икона, на основу својих стилских карактеристика, може датирати другу четвртину XIV века (1315-30), и при-писује се радионици из Солуна. Изгледа да се инспирација за епитет “*η ελπίς των απελπισμένων*” налази у Параклисовом Великом канонику и у великом и малом аподипну. Овај Богородичин епитет први пут се појављује крајем XII века и протеже се најпре на XV и XVI век, све до XVIII века. Најчешће се налази на преносивим иконама Балканског региона (до сада је откривено 10 оваквих икона), насупротив само једном примеру на фрескама. Уопште, приказ Богородице која носи овај редак епитет стриктно се не односи ни на један од њених иконографских типова: већина познатих икона јесу Одигитрија, али такође мо-жемо наћи и Гликофилуса, Параклисис, Елеуса, ту Патос, Платитера и на престолу са дететом).

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