

# Inscriptions

in the Byzantine  
and Post-Byzantine History  
and History of Art

Edited by  
**Christos Stavrakos**

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# Inscriptions in the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine History and History of Art

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and Post-Byzantine History and History of Art”  
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DIMITRIOS LIAKOS

UNPUBLISHED BYZANTINE AND POST-BYZANTINE  
INSCRIPTIONS ON MT ATHOS\*

THE STUDY OF THE ATHONITE EPIGRAPHY –  
A BRIEF OVERVIEW

The Byzantine and post-Byzantine inscriptions that are preserved on Mt Athos attracted travelers and scholar monks since the 18<sup>th</sup> until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century; Vasilij Barskij, Porphyrij Uspenskij, Antonin Kapoustin, Gerasimos Smyrnakis and Kosmas Vlachos mentioned some epigraphic material in their valuable essays<sup>1</sup>. At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Byzantinists Heinrich Brockhaus, Petros Papageorgiou and Nikodim

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\* The abbots and the brotherhoods of the Athonite monasteries of Lavra, Vatopedi, Iveron, Koutloumous, Pantokrator, Docheiari and Stavronikita, permitted me to published photographs of the inscriptions; to all above I extend my sincerest thanks. I express my gratitude to Christos Stavrakos (University of Ioannina) for his kind invitation to participate in the Symposium, as well as for his useful comments. I am thankful to Alexes Alexakes (University of Ioannina), Vangeles Maladakes (Ephorate of Antiquities of Chaldikide and Mt Athos), Nikos Mastrochristos (Ephorate of Antiquities of Dodekannese) and Andreas Rhoby (Institute for Byzantine Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences) for their fruitful remarks. Also, I would like to thank Phaidon Chatziantoniou (Architect-Restorer), who generously provided me with photographs of the reused inscribed architectural members from the monastery of Pantokrator (Figs. 1, 4).

<sup>1</sup> VASILII GRIGOROVITS BARSKIJ, Τα ταξίδια του στο Άγιον Όρος 1725–1726, 1744–1745, με την φροντίδα και τα σχόλια του ακαδημαϊκού Παύλου Μυλωνά. Thessalonike 2009 (henceforth: BARSKIJ, Τα ταξίδια του στο Άγιον Όρος); P. USPENSKIJ, Putešestvije v afonskije monastiri I skity, čast'II. Otdelenije vtoroje, 1848 god. Moskva 1880; A. KAPOUSTIN, Zametki Poklonnika Svatoj Gori. Kiev 1861; G. SMYRNAKES, Το Άγιον Όρος. Athens 1903 (Karyes <sup>2</sup>1988, <sup>3</sup>2005) (henceforth: SMYRNAKES, Το Άγιον Όρος); K. VLACHOS, Η χερσόνησος του Αγίου Όρους Άθω. Volos 1903 (Thessalonike <sup>2</sup>2005).

Kontakov attempted the first serious documentation<sup>2</sup>. Admittedly the most important project was undertaken by Gabriel Millet, Jules Pargoire and Louis Petit; in 1904 they published a corpus of 540 inscriptions from 12 monasteries and Protaton<sup>3</sup>. Despite some cases of misreading, the value of this corpus is obvious, if we take into account that some of the included inscriptions do not survive today. From the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until now many scholars presented unpublished material or reconsidered some other<sup>4</sup>. Nevertheless,

<sup>2</sup> H. BROCKHAUS, *Die Kunst in den Athos Klöstern*. Leipzig 1891, <sup>2</sup>1924; P. PAPAGEORGIOU, Αγίου Όρους επιγραφαί. *BZ* 10/2 (1901) 574–580; N. KONTAKOV, *Pamjatniki hristijanskogo iskusstva na Afone*. St. Petersburg 1902.

<sup>3</sup> G. MILLET – J. PARGOIRE – L. PETIT, *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de l’Athos*. Paris 1904, Thessalonike 2004 (henceforth: MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, *Recueil*); also G. MILLET, *Recherches au Mont Athos*. *BCH* 29 (1905) 105–141; for valuable comments on historiographical issues see V. MALADAKES, Οι έρευνες του Gabriel Millet στο Άγιον Όρος μέσα από το αρχείο της Γαλλικής Σχολής Αθηνών, in: *Mount Athos at the years of Liberation, Conference Proceedings*. Thessalonike 2013, 387–393 (henceforth: MALADAKES, Οι έρευνες του Gabriel Millet); IDEM, Louis Petit, Jules Pargoire et l’épigraphie athonite. *Le Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de l’Athos* (1904), in: *The Legacy of French Assumptionists for Byzantine Studies. A Critical Approach*, Symposium held in Bucharest, September 25–27, 2014 (ed. M.-H. BLANCHET – I.-A. TUDORIE). Proceedings to be published in the series of *Archives de l’Orient Chrétien*.

<sup>4</sup> P. MYLONAS, Άγνωστες χρονολογίες κτιρίων στον Άθωνα: 1. Μεγίστη Λαύρα, in: *Πρώτο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης. Νεότερα ευρήματα – νεότερες έρευνες. Πρόγραμμα και περιλήψεις ανακοινώσεων*. Athens 1981, 91–94 (henceforth: MYLONAS, Άγνωστες χρονολογίες); N. MERTZIMEKES, Κυριλικές επιγραφές από την αθωνική μονή Ζωγράφου ως πηγή πληροφόρησης για την οικοδομική της δραστηριότητα (15<sup>ος</sup>–17<sup>ος</sup> αι.), in: *Κύριλλος και Μεθόδιος: Το Βυζάντιο και ο κόσμος των Σλάβων*. Thessalonike 2015, 321–330; D. LIAKOS, Τα λιθανάγλυφα του Αγίου Όρους, I–II, Unpublished PhD. Thessalonike 2000 (henceforth: LIAKOS, Τα λιθανάγλυφα του Αγίου Όρους); G. VELENES, Η γραφή του κρητικού ζωγράφου Θεοφάνη Μπαθά. *Byzantina* 26 (2006) 211–240; E. TSIGARIDAS – Aik. LOVERDOU-TSIGARIDA, Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου. Βυζαντινές εικόνες και επενδύσεις. *Mount Athos* 2006; D. LIAKOS, Μεταβυζαντινά ξυλόγλυπτα στο Άγιον Όρος (1600–1750). *DChAE* 28 (2007) 284, n. 9; A. RHOBY, Zur Rezeption eines byzantinischen Epigramms im Athos-Kloster Vatopaidi, in: *Junge Römer – Neue Griechen. Eine byzantinische Melange aus Wien* (ed. M. POPOVIĆ – J. PREISER-KAPELLER). Wien 2008, 205–209; D. LIAKOS, Από το σκευοφυλάκιο της αγιορειτικής μονής Ιβήρων: πρόδρομες παρατηρήσεις στη μελέτη των έργων μικροτεχνίας. *Το Αρχαιολογικό έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη* 20 (2006) 539–550; IDEM, Ξυλόγλυπτοι σταυροί με επενδύσεις στην αγιορειτική μονή Ιβήρων (16<sup>ος</sup>–17<sup>ος</sup> αι.). *Byzantina* 28 (2008) 331–362; IDEM, Έργα ξυλόγλυπτικής στη μονή Ιβήρων Αγίου Όρους (17<sup>ος</sup> και 18<sup>ος</sup> αιώνας). *DChAE* 30 (2009) 303, n. 10 (henceforth:

since then not even a single systematic project of publishing the epigraphic material from the Athonite foundations has been undertaken<sup>5</sup>. Thus, a considerable number of inscriptions on Athos remain unpublished.

This paper focuses on a group of unpublished inscriptions from the monasteries of Lavra, Vatopedi, Iveron, Pantokrator, Xeropotamou, Docheiari and Stavronikita, the St Panteleimon's *skete* (dependency of Koutloumous), the *kathisma* of St Eustathios (the so-called Mylopotamos, dependency of Lavra) and

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ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Έργα ξυλογλυπτικής στη μονή Ιβήρων); N. TOUTOS – G. FOUSTERIS, Ευρετήριο της μνημειακής ζωγραφικής του Αγίου Όρους, 10<sup>ος</sup>–17<sup>ος</sup> αι. Athens 2010; E. TSIGARIDAS (ed.) Εικόνες Ιεράς Μονής Καρακάλλου. Mount Athos 2011; D. ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Η δωροδοσία στις μονές του Αγίου Όρους τον 15<sup>ο</sup> και 16<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα. Το τεκμήριο της μεταλλοτεχνίας, in: Το Άγιον Όρος στον 15<sup>ο</sup> και 16<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα. Πρακτικά Συνεδρίου. Thessalonike 2012, 316–322 (henceforth: ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Η δωροδοσία); A. RHOBY, Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst. Nebst Addenda zu Band 1 “Byzantinische Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken” (= *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung* 2) (ed. W. HÖRANDNER – A. RHOBY – A. PAUL) (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften 474 = *Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung* 35). Wien 2010, 86–94, 198–212; IDEM, Byzantinische Epigramme auf Stein. Nebst Addenda zu den Bänden 1 und 2 (= *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung* 3) (ed. W. HÖRANDNER – A. RHOBY – A. PAUL) (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften 474 = *Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung* 35). Wien 2014, 180–189, 826–828 (henceforth: RHOBY, Byzantinische Epigramme auf Stein); D. ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Λόγια πρόσωπα και λόγιο περιβάλλον στο Άγιον Όρος (14<sup>ος</sup>–18<sup>ος</sup> αι.): η δυναμική τους στην τέχνη, in: Mount Athos and Scholarship. Conference Proceedings. Thessalonike 2014, 261–262 (henceforth: ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Λόγια πρόσωπα και λόγιο περιβάλλον); IDEM, Η τέχνη στο Άγιον Όρος κατά τον 17<sup>ο</sup> και 18<sup>ο</sup> αι.: παραγγελιοδότες και δημιουργοί, in: Το Άγιον Όρος στον 17<sup>ο</sup> και 18<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα: από τους μεταβυζαντινούς στους νεότερους χρόνους. Διεθνές Συνέδριο. Thessalonike, 9–11 October 2015 (forthcoming in Proceedings) (henceforth: ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Η τέχνη στο Άγιον Όρος κατά τον 17<sup>ο</sup> και 18<sup>ο</sup> αι.); IDEM, Η συλλογή των παναγιαρίων της μονής Βατοπεδίου (14<sup>ος</sup>–19<sup>ος</sup> αι.), in: Α΄ [Η΄] Συνάντηση Ελλήνων Βυζαντινολόγων, Athens, 16–18 December 2015 (henceforth: ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Η συλλογή των παναγιαρίων); IDEM, Διαδρομές έργων τέχνης, αρχιτεκτονικών μελών και γλυπτών από τα μετόχια στις αθωνικές μονές κατά τη βυζαντινή και μετά την Άλωση περίοδο. Η μαρτυρία των πηγών και των αντικειμένων, in: Mount Athos: Spreading the Light in the Orthodox word: the *Metochia*. Thessalonike 2015, 447, 449–451 (henceforth: ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Διαδρομές έργων τέχνης); IDEM, Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Athonite Dedicatory Inscriptions in Archaeological and Historical Context, in: XIV Art Readings 2016. Texts – Inscriptions – Images (Sofia, 8–9 April 2016) (forthcoming in Proceedings) (henceforth: ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Athonite Dedicatory Inscriptions).

<sup>5</sup> MALADAKES, Οι έρευνες του Gabriel Millet.

from three cells, the St Anna, Trochala and Sts Forty Martyrs, dependencies of Lavra, Vatopedi and Iveron respectively; furthermore, some *corrigenda* to known or partially published material from Lavra, Vatopedi, Pantokrator, Stavronikita, but also the St Panteleimon's *skete*, St Eystathios' *kathisma* and cell of St John Baptist (dependency of Docheiari), will be proposed.

The group of the (at least to me) unknown early Christian and Byzantine inscriptions is small. As far as the post-Byzantine ones are concerned, which is the majority, I will discuss some examples dated between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The inscriptions either are incised on architectural members or are painted on frescoes. Very few are in their initial position. Most of them were removed from their buildings at an uncertain time and now they are kept in the sacristies or libraries. Moreover, many others were reused as *spolia* in other constructions.

#### AN EARLY CHRISTIAN INSCRIPTION

The earlier example comes from the monastery of Pantokrator. During the restoration works in the katholikon<sup>6</sup> a part of marble cornice was revealed as a *spolium* in a bench built in the south side of the church (Fig. 1). The invocation ΩCON ΚΕ ΤΟΝ ([Σ]ῶσον Κ(ύρι)ε τὸν [δοῦλον σου ---]) is incised on the front face. The majuscule inscription can be dated in the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century on the grounds of palaeographical data<sup>7</sup>.

Apparently this fragment can be added in the catalogue of the early Christian architectural members survived on Athos, a matter that raises discussions among the researchers; two general assumptions have been expressed and could be summarized as following:

According to the first one, their provenance should be sought in the pre-existed early Christian settlements on Athos. However, I note that only one

<sup>6</sup> The restoration works were held during the years 2003–2006. On the building history of the katholikon and the report for the restoration works see Ph. CHATZIANTONIOU, Νέα στοιχεία για την οικοδομική ιστορία του καθολικού της μονής Παντοκράτορος Αγίου Όρους. ΖΡVI 44 (2007) 587–600 (henceforth: CHATZIANTONIOU, Νέα στοιχεία).

<sup>7</sup> See for example D. FEISSEL, Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de Macédoine du III<sup>e</sup> au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle. Paris 1983 nos. 2, 3 (pl. I), no 24 (pl. V).

early Christian building, a basilica, was partially excavated in Vatopedi and it still remains unpublished<sup>8</sup>. Moreover the written sources (Prokopios, Synek-demos of Hierokles) about this matter are silent.

Concerning the second case, it has been supported that some of the early Christian architectural members were removed from the monastic dependencies (*metochia*) that existed out of the Athonite peninsula<sup>9</sup>. Indeed, some spoils (*spolia*) in several monasteries, such as a milliarium kept at Iveron (375–392 AD) and a fragment of a sarcophagus (mid-4<sup>th</sup> century) reused as a lintel of a window in the north side of the seaside tower of St Paul's monastery, came from *metochia*, as it is attested by their inscriptions<sup>10</sup>.

However, the origin of the cornice in Pantokrator remains uncertain, since the inscription offers no further evidence. On the other hand, this fragment enriches the catalogue of the inscribed architectural members reused as *spolia* in Athonite buildings<sup>11</sup>.

## THE BYZANTINE INSCRIPTIONS

Few inscriptions are dated in the middle and the late Byzantine periods, which are actually poor in epigraphic material on Athos<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> For a very short mention see I. PAPAGGELOS – St. PALIOMPEES, Προχριστιανικές αρχαιότητες στον Αθω. *Το Αρχαιολογικό έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη* 16 (2002) 394, 403; I. PAPAGGELOS, Τα πήλινα αγιοπότηρα της Μονής Βατοπεδίου, in: *Το Άγιον Όρος στον 15<sup>ο</sup> και 16<sup>ο</sup> αιώνα*. Thessalonike 2012, 367, 372 (fig. 1), 373 (sch. 1).

<sup>9</sup> LIAKOS, Διαδρομές έργων τέχνης 448.

<sup>10</sup> LIAKOS, Διαδρομές έργων τέχνης 448–452.

<sup>11</sup> The ancient practice of reusing *spolia* is well documented in Athonite buildings; I refer as example the early Christian marble inscription impacted next to the north entrance to the nave of the katholikon at Iveron monastery, MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 230; also see D. LIAKOS, The Byzantine Bell-Tower in Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos (1427). The Sculpted Decoration and its Significance. *JÖB* 65 (2015) 157–158, n. 28 and 31.

<sup>12</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil nos. 46, 115, 158, 231, 333; also MAMALOUKOS, Το καθολικό της μονής Βατοπεδίου. Ιστορία και αρχιτεκτονική. Athens 2001, 266–267 (henceforth: MAMALOUKOS, Το καθολικό). As it was recently confirmed the inscription with the signature of the so-called painter Manouel Panselenos (according to MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil

The ruins of the church of the Trochala's cell, namely the old small monastery (*monydrion*) of Trochala (or Trogala) survive not far away from Vatopedi; the small monastery is mentioned in several Athonite documents from the late 10<sup>th</sup> until the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century<sup>13</sup>. Apparently, the church of the cell was the katholikon of the old monastery. At an unknown time, when the monastery had fallen into the state of a cell, it was attached to Vatopedi.

Two parts of a lintel from a door frame, which can be dated in the late 10<sup>th</sup>–beginnings of the 11<sup>th</sup> century<sup>14</sup>, were collected some years ago from the church's ruins (Fig. 2). On the upper undecorated band on the front face it is incised the invocation:

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no. 5, who repeat older information given by P. Uspenskij) has never existed in Protaton; an important finding came into light in 2015 during the conservation works which were held by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chalkidike and Mt Athos in the wall paintings of Protaton: it is the partially survived name Etytchios (ΕΥΤΥΧΙΟΣ) in the figure of St Mercurios, see Πρωτάτο II. Η συντήρηση των τοιχογραφιών, τ. Β'. Thessalonike 2015, 40–41, fig. 20 (henceforth: Πρωτάτο II). It is notable that the – non surviving today – three first letters of the name Michael (ΜΙΧ) are read in the photograph of St Eystathios given by G. MILLET, *Monuments de l'Athos I. Les Peintures*. Paris 1927, pl. 52.2; see Πρωτάτο II, fig. 21. As it is reasonable documented they are the signatures of the famous late Byzantine painters Michael and Etytchios Astrapas, Πρωτάτο II 40. The assumption that these painters were related with Protaton has been supported by P. MILJKOVIĆ-PEPEC, *Deloto na zografite Mihailo I Eutihij*. Skopje 1967; on the recent aspects about the frescoes in Protaton (before the epigraphic finding) see A. VASILAKERES, *Οι τοιχογραφίες του Πρωτάτου και το πρόσωπο του αυτοκράτορα*. *DChAE* 34 (2013) 117–128 (with the former bibliography); K. VAFELADES, *Υστερη Βυζαντινή Ζωγραφική. Χώρος και μορφή στην τέχνη της Κωνσταντινουπόλεως 1150–1450*. Athens 2015, 171–172; also, A. PAPADOPOULOS, *Signatures of Byzantine Painters in Macedonia: Deciphering the Astrapades Code*, in: *Artista anónimo, artista con firma. Identidad, estatus y rol del artista medieval*, UAB (ed. M. CASTINEIRAS). Barcelona 2016 (forthcoming).

<sup>13</sup> A. PAPAZOTOS, *Recherches topographiques au Mont Athos. Geographie historique du monde Méditerranéen*. Paris 1988, 157; the church was shortly commended by MAMALOUKOS, *Το καθολικό* 286.

<sup>14</sup> On similar examples see A. GRABAR, *Sculptures Byzantines du Moyen Age II (XI<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle)*. Paris 1979, pl. XXc, LXVa, b, LXVIa, LXVIIb (henceforth: GRABAR, *Sculptures Byzantines*); L. BOURAS, *Ο γλυπτός διάκοσμος του ναού της Παναγίας στο μοναστήρι του Οσίου Λουκά*. Athens 1980, 109–110 and figs. 180–181; Th. PAZARAS, *Τα βυζαντινά γλυπτά του καθολικού της μονής Βατοπεδίου*. Thessalonike 2001, 50–51 (figs. 59–63).

Ξ ΒΟΗΘΗ ΤΟΝ ΔΟΥΛΟΝ ΣΟΥ ΝΗΚΟΛΑ Ο ΦΔ ΚΕ ΗΓΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ ΤΗΣ  
[+Κύρι]ε βοήθη τον δούλον σου Νηκολα[ον] [μοναχ]ο ταχα κε ηγουμενος της [---]

The letters are uncial with interposition of minuscule<sup>15</sup>; the inscription appears to be of the same dating with the door frame, on the grounds of paleographical evidence. The monastery's name is not preserved. However, the fact that the inscribed parts of the lintel were found in the ruins of the Trochala's church confirms their origin. Therefore, it seems that in the inscription it is mentioned the unknown from other sources abbot Nikolaos of the old monastery of Trochala. Apparently, Nikolaos was the patron of the church, which was probably constructed just before the year 996, when we have the first reference of the monastery of Trochala in the written sources<sup>16</sup>.

A fragment of an inscribed sculpted marble slab is kept in the sacristy of Vatopedi (Fig. 3). The dedicatory inscription ΕΞΟ|ΥΔ | ΚΔ Ν Θ (ετος | ΥΔ | κδ [i]ν[δικτιῶνος] θ) on the lower undecorated band is already known<sup>17</sup>. The relief decoration in the upper part is fragmentally preserved (two hands holding a vertical element). About its origin a hypothesis has never been expressed. I presume that in the slab the Saints Constantine and Helen holding the Holy Cross were depicted<sup>18</sup>. It is noticeable that in the modern period probably – unclear

<sup>15</sup> On the co-existence of minuscule and majuscule in middle Byzantine inscriptions, see A. ANASTASIADOU, Η χορηγία στις ανατολικές επαρχίες της Βυζαντινής Αυτοκρατορίας: αφιερωματικές και κτητορικές επιγραφές ναών της Μ. Ασίας (4<sup>ος</sup>–15<sup>ος</sup> αι.), Unpublished PhD. Thessalonike 2005, 45 (henceforth: ANASTASIADOU, Η χορηγία); I. TOTH, Epigraphic Traditions in Eleventh-Century Byzantium. General Considerations, in: *Inscriptions in Byzantium and Beyond. Methods – Projects – Case Studies* (ed. A. RHOBY). Wien 2015, 220 (henceforth: TOTH, Epigraphic Traditions); A. RHOBY, Inscriptions and Manuscripts in Byzantium: A Fruitful Symbiosis?, in: *Scriptura Epigraphia e Scrittura Libraria: Fra Oriente e Occidente* (ed. M. MANIACI – P. ORSINI). Casino 2015, 29–31. On the case of the majuscule mixed to the minuscule in the late Byzantine examples see indicatively T. PAPAMASTORAKES, Reflections of Constantinople: The Iconographic Program of the South Portico of the Hodegetria Church, Mystras, in: *Viewing the Morea. Land and People in the Late Medieval Peloponnese* (ed. S. GERSTEL). Washington DC 2013, 394.

<sup>16</sup> *Actes de Lavra I*, éd. P. LEMERLE – A. GUILLOU – N. SVORONOS (*Archives de l'Athos* 5). Paris 1970, no. 12, l. 29.

<sup>17</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 148, with a slight difference in the transcription.

<sup>18</sup> As it seems, probably only the busts of the holy figures or – at least – their hands with the cross were carved in the slab.



when – the inscription was transcribed with a pencil on the hand of one figure. As it seems, this fragment belonged to a sculpted slab with a careless dedicatory inscription from a church of the Saints Constantine and Helen (1416). Indeed, the existence of a chapel dedicated to the Sts Constantine and Helen in Vatopedi is mentioned in the sources since the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards<sup>19</sup>; moreover, according to the monastic tradition, the chapel with other older buildings was demolished in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Based on the above mentioned, we could assume that the preserved part of slab derives from the pre-existed chapel in the monastery, attested only in the written sources.

In the katholikon of Pantokrator, in the framework of the aforementioned restoration works, it was revealed a *spolium*, a fragment of a cornice, in the bench of the south side (Fig. 4). On the front face it is preserved the fragmentary inscription:

[---] ΚΡΆΤΟΡΙ [---]

[---] [Παντο]κράτορι [---] or [---] [αὐτο]κράτορι [---]

This architectural member should be dated in the late Byzantine period on the grounds of paleographical data<sup>20</sup>. Its provenance appears to be unclear. However, it is possible that it comes from an earlier structure of the monastery, founded around the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century (probably just before the year 1357)<sup>21</sup>.

At Iveron monastery during the restoration works in the west wing, a part of a marble slab with a very fragmentary inscription (Fig. 5) was revealed<sup>22</sup>:

ϸΑ | ΚἘ

[--- εὐσεβέστατο]ς αὐ[θέντης (?) ---] | [---] Κ(ύρι)ε [---]

<sup>19</sup> The old chapel of the Sts Constantine and Helen is mentioned in the (unpublished) Vatopedi-nus codex no. 690, 77v.

<sup>20</sup> See for instance C. ASDRACHA, *Inscriptions protobyzantines et Byzantines de la Thrace Orientale et de l'Île d'Imbros (III<sup>e</sup>–XV<sup>e</sup> siècles)*. Présentation et commentaire historique. Athènes 2003, 231 (no. 9), 233 (no. 10) (henceforth: ASDRACHA, *Inscriptions protobyzantines et Byzantines*).

<sup>21</sup> *Actes du Pantokrator*, éd. V. KRAVARI (*Archives de l'Athos* 17). Paris 1991, 7–15.

<sup>22</sup> The inscription was found in 2008.

The inscription could be dated in the Palaeologan era on the basis of paleographical evidence<sup>23</sup>. However, the initial position of the inscription is unknown.

The next Byzantine inscription discussed here comes from a fresco revealed in the katholikon of Lavra during the recent restoration works in the roof<sup>24</sup>. A short part of a painting area was revealed in the height of the western cross arm of the nave. As it seems, these frescoes are the only ones surviving from a wider mural decoration in the eastern wall of the *katechoumena* (with the chapel of Five Martyrs, the cell of St Athanasios the Athonite and the library), existing above the initial Byzantine *lite* of the katholikon, as we know from the written sources<sup>25</sup>. The old Byzantine *lite* was demolished in 1814 and a new more spacious *lite* was built<sup>26</sup>. In the surviving paintings it is depicted a band of floral ornament and a restricted part of an unidentified scene accompanied by the inscription (Fig. 6):

ΟΝ ΤΡΩΘΕΝΤ ΚΝ ΣΦΡΚΙ ΕΘΕΛΟΝCΙΩC ΚΑΛΛΗΓ|  
Ο ΔΘΛΙΟC ΠΡΟCΠΙΠΙC ΜΕΤΑ ΦΟΒΟΝ ΚΑΔΙ ΗΝΗ |  
CΘΗΤΙ ΗΟΝ ΚΕ ΩC Ο ΛΗΤΗC |  
ΚΡΑΓΓΑΖC:-

<sup>23</sup> See ASDRACHA, *Inscriptiones protobyzantines* 265 (no. 34) and pl. 113b.

<sup>24</sup> The frescoes' remains, the inscription discussed here and four crypts were revealed (in the year 2014) in the framework of the restoration works. The conservation works of the frescoes was undertaken by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chalkidike and Mt Athos. It is remarkable that in the crypts a large number of (unpublished) post-Byzantine icons were found; the icons should be stored in the crypts after the year 1814, when the *katechoumena* were demolished.

<sup>25</sup> I. KOMNENOU, Προσκυνητάριον του Αγίου Όρους του Άθω. Venetia 1745, 5–6; BARSKIJ, Τα ταξίδια του στο Άγιον Όρος 225.

<sup>26</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, *Recueil* no. 335. On the building history of the katholikon see P. MYLONAS, Η αρχική μορφή του καθολικού της Μεγίστης Λαύρας, *Archaeologia* 1 (1981) 52–63; IDEM, Le plan initial du catholicon de la Grande-Lavra au Mont Athos et la genèse de type du catholicon athonite, *CahArch* 32 (1984) 89–112; Th. STEPPAN, Die Athos-Lavra und der trikonchale Kuppelnaos in der byzantinischen Architektur. München 1995; MAMALOUKOS, Το καθολικό 281–283; S. VOYADJIS, The initial phase of the katholikon of the Greatest Lavra Monastery, Mount Athos through evidence of its phiale, in: *Proceedings of the 22<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia 2011. III: Abstracts of free communications*. Sofia 2011, 113; IDEM, The Katholikon of the Greatest Lavra Monastery in Athos Revisited, in: *23<sup>rd</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Belgrade, 22–27 August 2016*.

[T]ον στ[αυ]ρωθέντ[α] Κ(ύριο)ν σαρκι εθελουσίως  
 [ό] Καλληστο[ς] | ο αθλιος προσπίπτει μετα φόβου  
 καὶ μνη | σθητί μου Κ(ύρι)ε ως ό ληστής | κραυγαζει:-

All these belong to the same painting layer that should be dated in the Palaeologan era on the grounds of stylistic elements<sup>27</sup>. The paleographical evidence confirms this dating<sup>28</sup>. The surviving metrical inscription (three fifteen-syllable verses)<sup>29</sup>, which is an invocation of a Kallistos, probably a monk, bears no date. By the adjective *άθλιος* it is underlined his reverence. However who was that Kallistos? A certain answer cannot be given currently. Nevertheless I would dare to express a rather bold hypothesis based on the written sources. In the texts it is mentioned a hieromonk Kallistos who was connected with the monastery in the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. He was abbot of the – non-existing today – monastery of Saint Onouphrios in the years 1389, 1394 and 1395<sup>30</sup>. In 1395 after his withdrawn from Saint Onouphrios he constructed a cell near Karyes, which he endowed to Lavra, as it is mentioned in his testament (1395)<sup>31</sup>. Furthermore, he purchased two *adelfata*<sup>32</sup>, for as long as he was in life. Also, he

<sup>27</sup> Similar floral ornaments are depicted in Palaeologan churches, such as Protaton (c. 1300), St Niketas (Cucer, 1322 or 1323, M. MARKOVIC, Saint Niketas near Skopje. A foundation of king Miloutin [in Serbian with English summary]. Beograd 2015, fig. 20), St Paraskevi (Monodentri, Epirus, 1414; on the donors' portraits and the dedicatory inscription in St Paraskevi see M. ACHEIMASTOU-POTAMIANOU, Η κτητορική παράσταση της μονής της Αγίας Παρασκευής στο Μονοδέντρι της Ηπείρου [1414]. *DChAE* 24 [2003] 231–242) etc.

<sup>28</sup> For example see A. WEYL CARR – S. KALOPISSI-VERTI, Inventory of palaeographic forms in the thirteenth and fourteenth century murals, in: Asinou across time. Studies in the architecture and murals of the Panagia Phorbiotissa, Cyprus (ed. A. WEYL CARR – A. NIKOLAIDÈS). Washington DC 2012, 372–375.

<sup>29</sup> On the fifteen-syllable verse M.J. JEFFREYS, The Nature and Origin of Political Verse. *DOP* 28 (1974) 143–195; also A. RHOBY, Epigrams, Epigraphy and Sigillography in: *Ἡπειρόνδε* 74.

<sup>30</sup> Actes de Chilandar V, éd. L. PETIT – B. KORABLEV (*Archives de l'Athos* 5). Amsterdam 1975, no. 159; Actes de Dionysiou, éd. N. OIKONOMIDÈS (*Archives de l'Athos* 4). Paris 1968, no. 7; V. MOŠIN-SOVRE, Supplementa ad acta graeca Chilandarii. Ljubljana 1948, no. 10.

<sup>31</sup> Actes de Lavra III, éd. P. LEMERLE – A. GUILLOU – N. SVORONOS – D. PAPACHRYSSANTHOU (*Archives de l'Athos* 10). Paris 1979, no. 154.

<sup>32</sup> On the institution of *adelfata* see M. ŽIVOJINOVIĆ, Adelfati u Vizantiji I srednjovekovnoj Srbiji. *ZRVI* (1968) 241–270; EADEM, Monaški adelfati na Svetoj Gori, *Zbor. Filoz. Fak.* 12/1 (1974)

possessed a cell in Lavra. His strong relations with the abbot of Lavra Euthymios and the *Protos* of Athos, as attested in his testament, but also his wealth, could possibly allow him to be a donor of a mural in the katholikon in the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. If this assumption is correct the presented inscription should be accompany the donor's portrait<sup>33</sup>. Once again I would like to note that the proposed here identification is the only hypothesis I can think on the basis of the available data.

Another kind of inscription comes from the Pantokrator monastery. On the lintel of the door frame of the Dormition's chapel annexed to the katholikon (on the north part) it is incised<sup>34</sup> (Fig. 7):

+ Δ ΙΩ Μ

+ Δ[οῦλος] Χ[ριστοῦ] Ἰω[άννης] μα[ῖστω]ρ or μαρ[μαράριος]

The inscription is executed with abbreviations. Apparently this is the signature of the marble mason, who created the door frame in the end of the 13<sup>th</sup>–beginnings of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, on the basis of the stylistic elements of the sculpture<sup>35</sup>. It is noticeable that on Athos one other known Byzantine inscription referring to a marble mason comes from the cornice above the central door frame in the *lite* of the katholikon in Vatopedi<sup>36</sup>.

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291–303; I. KONIDARES, Νομική θεώρηση των μοναστηριακών τυπικών. Athens 1984, 223–230; ODB I (1991) 19 (P. Magdalino).

<sup>33</sup> On this topic see S. KALOPISSI-VERTI, Dedicatory Inscriptions and Donors Portraits in Thirteenth-Century Churches of Greece. Wien 1992, 27–28.

<sup>34</sup> Also S. PASCHALIDES, Ιερά Μονή Παντοκράτορος. Προσκυνηματικός οδηγός. Mt Athos 2005, 87.

<sup>35</sup> As similar example see GRABAR, Sculptures Byzantines, pl. CXXXVIII a–c; Th. PAZARAS, Ανάγλυφες σαρκοφάγοι και επιτύμβιες πλάκες της μέσης και ύστερης βυζαντινής περιόδου στην Ελλάδα. Athens 1988, pl. 54. Therefore, as it seems the chapel of the Dormition is older than the katholikon; the same opinion was also expressed by CHATZIANTONIOU, Νέα στοιχεία 588.

<sup>36</sup> Th. PAZARAS, Τα βυζαντινά γλυπτά του καθολικού της μονής Βατοπεδίου. Thessalonike 2001, 55–57 (henceforth: PAZARAS, Τα βυζαντινά γλυπτά). Generally on the topic of the builders and masons in Byzantium see R. OUSTERHOUT, Master Builders of Byzantium. University of Pennsylvania 2008; Ch. BOURAS, Μνείες οικοδόμων, μαστόρων και κατασκευαστών στο μέσο και το ύστερο Βυζάντιο. DChAE 31 (2010) 11–16; also ANASTASIADOU, Η χορηγία 195–205.

The last presented here item is of great interest; it is the very fragmentary written inscription revealed by the excavation works which were carried out in the chapel of St Nikolaos annexed to the south side of the Vatopedi katholikon<sup>37</sup>:

[---] ΜΟ [.] ΙΑΝ ΑϞΘ [---] | [---] ΠΝ [..] ΤΟΥ [---]  
[---] ΜΟ [.] ΙΑΝ αὐτοῦ [---] | [---] ΠΝ [..] ΤΟΥ [---]

The excavation data remain still unpublished; however, the inscription could be connected to the older Byzantine painting layer of the chapel (11<sup>th</sup> century?)<sup>38</sup>.

### THE POST-BYZANTINE INSCRIPTIONS

The overwhelming majority of the surviving monumental inscriptions on Athos are dated from the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Naturally, most of them are Greek; however Cyrillic ones do also exist<sup>39</sup>, since many donors and patrons in this period come from orthodox countries of the Balkans, Dunabian Principalities and Russia<sup>40</sup>. Inscriptions in other languages, such as Latin<sup>41</sup>, Ot-

<sup>37</sup> The excavation was carried out in 2004 by the (former) 10<sup>th</sup> Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities (today Ephorate of Antiquities of Chalkidike and Mt Athos) (supervisor: I. Papangelos).

<sup>38</sup> On the chapel of St Nikolaos see MAMALOUKOS, Το καθολικό 92–96, 127–128, 162–168; PAZARAS, Τα βυζαντινά γλυπτά 89–99.

<sup>39</sup> Indicatively see MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil nos. 78, 161, 484; LIAKOS, Η δωροδοσία 319–320; IDEM, Recent information about the building history in the St Paul's monastery, Mt Athos. The contribution of a small scale excavation, in: Niš and Byzantium XIII (ed. M. RAKOCIJA). Niš 2015, 275 (fig. 5); IDEM, Η μεταλλοτεχνία τον 16<sup>ο</sup> αι.: άγνωστα έργα στο Άγιον Όρος, in: Τριακοστό Δεύτερο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης. Πρόγραμμα και περιλήψεις εισηγήσεων και ανακοινώσεων. Athens 2012, 60–61; IDEM, Η συλλογή των παναγιαρίων; IDEM, Athonite Dedicatory Inscriptions; MERTZIMEKES, Κυριλλικές επιγραφές 321–330.

<sup>40</sup> On the relations between Athos and other Christian countries indicatively see G. TSIORAN, Σχέσεις των Ρουμανικών Χωρών μετά του Αθω και δη των μονών Κουτλουμουσίου, Λαύρας, Δοχειαρίου και Αγίου Παντελεΐμονος ή των Ρώσων. Athens 1938; P. NASTUREL, Le Mont Athos et les Roumains. Rome 1986; IDEM, Melanges roumano-athonites (I). *Anuarul Institutului de istorie "A.D. Xenopol"* XXVII (1990) 20–21; B. FONKICH, Chudotvornye relikvii hristanskogo vostoka v Moskve v seredine XVII v. Ikona Iverskoy Bogomateri. Moscow 2004; B. BOJOVIĆ,

toman<sup>42</sup> or Karamanli Turkish (*karamanledika*)<sup>43</sup> are also found in some cases. It is noticeable that from the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, namely from the period of insecurity after the fall of Byzantium, very few dedicatory inscriptions survive. The inactivity in constructing new buildings in this period<sup>44</sup> on Athos could satisfactorily explain this lack.

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Hilandar et les Pays Roumains (XV<sup>e</sup>–XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles). Des actes des princes roumains des archives de Chilandar (Mont-Athos). Paris 2008; R. PÄUN, La Valachie et le monastère de Chilandar au Mont Athos. Nouveaux temoignages (XV<sup>e</sup>–XVI<sup>e</sup> siècles). *Medieval and Early Modern Studies for Central and Eastern Europe* 2 (2010) 137–179; V. TCHENTSOVA, Ikona Iverskoy Bogomateri. Ocherki istorii otnosheniy Grecheskoy tserkvi s Rossiyei v seredine XVII v. po dokumentam RGADA. Moscow 2010, 172–176; C. PAVLIKIANOV, The Bulgarians on Mount Athos, Mount Athos: Microcosm of the Christian East. Oxford 2011; K. CHRYSOCHOIDES, Ἀθῶς καὶ Ῥωσία (15<sup>ος</sup>–18<sup>ος</sup> αἰῶνας). Ἰδεολογήματα καὶ πραγματικότητες (Μία προσέγγιση) in: Ῥωσία καὶ Μεσόγειος. Πρακτικά Α΄ Διεθνούς Συμποσίου, τ. Α΄. Athens 2011, 267–282; G. DURAND, Le phénomène de dédicace des couvents des Pays Roumains aux Lieux Saints de l'Orthodoxie, in: Proceedings of the 22<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia 22–27 August 2011, III, Abstracts of free communications. Sofia 2011, 378–379; L. COTOVANU, Des Principautés danubiennes au Mont-Athos. Retour vers une patrie élargie (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVII<sup>e</sup> siècles, in: Το Ἅγιον Ὄρος στον 15<sup>ο</sup> καὶ 17<sup>ο</sup> αἰῶνα. Thessalonike 2012, 165–179; G. DURAND, Une consequence inattendue de la politique militaire et fiscale du sultan Selim II: De l'origine de la dédicace aux autorités athonites des couvents de Valachie et de Moldavie. *Turcica* 44 (2012–2013) 167–199; L. COTOVANU, Aux débuts de la dédicace des lieux de culte “roumains” envers les Lieux Saints de l'Orthodoxie: entreprise publique ou privée? (seconde moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle), in: Mount Athos: spreading the light in the Orthodox word: the *Metochia*. Thessalonike 2015, 249–273.

<sup>41</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 144a.

<sup>42</sup> I refer two examples, at least known to me: a fragmented inscription kept in Chilandar monastery (unpublished), as well as the inscription at the fountain (1788) next to Protaton, in which the Greek text is known (MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 42), while the Ottoman is unpublished.

<sup>43</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 423. Generally, on the inscriptions in Karamanli Turkish language see E. BALTA – M. KAPPLER (eds.), Cries and Whispers in Karamanlidika Books, Proceedings of the First International Conference on Karamanlidika Studies. Wiesbaden 2010; also M. XENAKI, Corpus des Graffites en Cappadoce: Introduction, in: Inscriptions in Byzantium and Beyond. Methods – Projects – Case Studies (ed. A. PHOBY). Wien 2015, 161 and n. 33.

<sup>44</sup> Pl. THEOCHARIDES, Renewal of Building Stock (Construction on Mount Athos in the 15<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries) in: Mount Athos in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Spiritual Life – History – Art. Thessalonike 2011, 115.

Most of the presented here inscriptions are incised in marble or stone and they were removed from their buildings. Only two inscriptions come from a fresco and they are preserved in situ. Some of them are accompanied by apotropaic cryptograms or acrolexa<sup>45</sup>.

Apparently, the dedicatory inscriptions predominate on Athos. I could name the following types on the basis of the level of the given information:

In a very plain type it is mentioned only the date of the construction or the name of the patron only without any indication of the date. On the first case, a typical example comes from Vatopedi (1622). In the sacristy it is kept a part of marble slab (Fig. 8) in which it was incised the common cryptograms  $\overline{\Phi\chi\phi\pi}$  [ $\Phi(\acute{\omega}\varsigma)$   $X(\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon)$   $\Phi(\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\iota)$   $\Pi(\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota)$ ]<sup>46</sup> and  $\text{IC XC NIK}\Delta$  [ $\text{I}(\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon)\varsigma$   $X(\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron)\varsigma$   $\text{N}\acute{\iota}\kappa\tilde{\alpha}$ ]<sup>47</sup>, but also the year and the month of the construction of an unknown building:

+ ΕΤΟΝϚ  $\overline{\Xi\overline{\rho}\overline{\lambda}\overline{\alpha}}$  | ΜΙΝΙ ΩΚΤÓ | ΒΡΥΩΣ

† Ετους ζρλα | μινι Ωκτό | βρυως

<sup>45</sup> On the use and the meaning of the apotropaic cryptograms see G. BABIĆ, Les croix à cryptogrammes, peintes dans les églises Serbes des XIII<sup>e</sup> et XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles, in: *Melanges Ivan Dujcev – Byzance et les Slaves*. Paris 1979, 1–13 (henceforth: BABIĆ, Les croix); G. CHATZOULI, Αμφίγραπτη εικόνα του Αγίου Νικολάου από την Πτελέα Καστοριάς. *Byzantina* 18 (1995–1996) 391–394; C. WALTER, IC XC NI KA. The apotropaic function of the victorious cross. *REB* 55 (1997) 193–220 (henceforth: WALTER, The apotropaic function); E. MOUTAFOV, Cryptograms and Bilingualism in Paleologian Art. *Patrimonium* 3 (2010) 251–261 (in Bulgarian with English summary) (henceforth: MOUTAFOV, Cryptograms and Bilingualism); A. RHOBY, Secret Messages? Byzantine Greek Tetragrams and Their Display. *Art-Hist Papers* 1 (2013): <http://09.edel.univ-poitiers.fr/art-hist/index.php?id=72> (henceforth: RHOBY, Secret Messages?); E. MOUTAFOV, Typology and Semantics of Cryptograms and Acrolexa in the Orthodox East in the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Period. *Incijal. Časopis za srednjovekovne studije – Initial. A Review of Medieval Studies* 1 (2013) 49–75; IDEM, Cross and Cryptograms on Molos Watermill (BU0076), in: *Landscape and Interaction: The Troodos Archaeological and Environmental Survey Project, Cyprus, I* (ed. M. GIVEN – A.B. KNAPP – J. NOLLER et al.). Glasgow 2013, 219–222.

<sup>46</sup> K. ZISIOU, Επιγραφαι Χριστιανικών χρόνων της Ελλάδος. *Byzantis* 1 (1909) 132; C. MANGO – E.J.W. HAWKINS, The Hermitage of St. Neophytos and its wall paintings. *DOP* 20 (1966) 163; BABIĆ, Les croix 8.

<sup>47</sup> RHOBY, Secret Messages?; BABIĆ, Les croix 3, 5, 9; WALTER, The apotropaic function 210; MOUTAFOV, Cryptograms and Bilingualism 144–146.



The provenance of the inscription is unclear; however the possibility to come from an earlier (non-existing today) building in the monastery could not be excluded. The other case is evidenced by the dedicatory inscription (Fig. 9) incised in a reused marble slab impacted in the south side of the tower of the St Eystathios' *kathisma* (old *monydrion*), the so-called Mylopotamos, dependency of Lavra:

† Ο ΤΟΡΝΟΒΟΥ | ΘΕΟΦΙΛΟΣ | Ο ΞΒΤΝΟC  
† Ο Τορνόβου | Θεόφιλος | Ο ΞΒΤΝΟC (?)

The execution of the inscription is careless and the third line is unreadable. The referred patron is the hieromonk Theophilos and Archbishop of Tyrnovo later, who financed the reconstruction of the building complex of the *kathisma* of St Eystathios after the 1527 or 1528<sup>48</sup>.

In the most common type, apart from the chronology, the abbots and the patrons are also mentioned<sup>49</sup>.

An inscription on fresco (1535) derives from the old larder (with oil *pithoi*) annexed to the refectory of Lavra (Fig. 10). In the south wall above the conch, in which the Theotokos Brephokratousa and the Sts John Baptist and Athanasios the Athonite are depicted, is written<sup>50</sup>:

† ΕΓΓΗΝΤΟ ΤΟΝΤΟ ΤΟ ΘΕΑΡΕΣΟΝ ΕΡΓΟΝ |  
ΑΙΑ ΠΡΟ<sup>ν</sup> ΘΙΑC ΚΑΙ CΥΝΑΡΟΜΗC ΚΥΡΘ |  
ΑΙΟΝΝΟΙΟΝ ΘΥ ΟΙΚΟΑΟΜΘ Κ ΑΠΟΘΗΚΑΥ |  
ΕΞΟC ῬΜΑ ΜΗΝΙ ΝΟΕΜΒΡΙ ΚΒ

<sup>48</sup> On the history of the St Eystathios' *kathisma* see SMYRNAKES, Το Άγιον Όρος 420–421 (he mentions the incorrect name Theophylaktos in the inscription); K. CHRYSOCHOIDES, Ο πύργος του Μυλοποτάμου της Μεγίστης Λαύρας, in: Οι Πύργοι του Αγίου Όρους. Thessalonike 2002, 40–42.

<sup>49</sup> See indicatively the dedicatory inscriptions (1631 and 1635) from the church of the cell of St George at Provata, dependency of Lavra, SMYRNAKES, Το Άγιον Όρος 417.

<sup>50</sup> The inscription was transcribed by MYLONAS, Άγνωστες χρονολογίες 92–93 with a slight difference; also see Pl. THEOCHARIDES – S. MAMALOUKOS, Παρατηρήσεις στην οικοδομική ιστορία και την αρχιτεκτονική του κτηριακού συγκροτήματος της τράπεζας της Μεγίστης Λαύρας. *DChAE* 32 (2011) 36–37.

Εγεν[ε]το τουτο το θεαρεστον εργον |  
 δια προμυθιας και συνδρομης κυρου |  
 Διονυσίου του οικοδόμου κ(αὶ) ἀποθήκαρυ[ου] |  
 ἔτος ζμδ μηνὶ Νοεμβρι[ω] κβ

It is noteworthy that in this inscription the dual capacity of the monk-patron Dionysios (both storekeeper and builder) is underlined; simultaneously, Dionysios, as I know, is the earlier mentioned monk-builder on post-Byzantine Athos; another monk mason (μαῖστωρ Νικηφόρος) is referred in the dedicatory inscription of the north wing in Vatopedi (1644)<sup>51</sup>.

In Stavronikita, above the main entrance in the south wing is impacted the dedicatory inscription (Fig. 11) of the Patriarch Ieremias I (1546)<sup>52</sup>:

† ἸΕΡΕΜῆς ὁ ἁΓΙΩΤΤΟς ΟἰΚΟΜΕΝΟς ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟς · Ὡς |  
 ΚΤΙΩΡΟς ΤΗΣ ἹΕΡᾶς ΜΟΝΗΣ ἩΜῶν ὅ ἐν ἁΓίῳ ΠΑΤΕΡΝῶν |  
 ΕΤΕ 218δ' + 1546 Δ. Ὡς ΣΑΥΡΝΙΚΗΤΑ·

Ἰερεμίου τοῦ ἁγιωτ[ά]του κ(αὶ) οἰκουμεν[ι]κου πατ[α]ριάρχου κ(αὶ) |  
 κτίτωρὸς τῆς ἱερᾶς μονῆς ἡμῶν τοῦ ἐν ἁγί[οις] πατ(α)ρ(ὸ)ς Νικ[ο]λάου |  
 ετος ζνδ' † (ι)ν(δικτιῶν)ος δ. κ(αὶ) τοῦ Σταυρ[ο]νικήτα

As far as I am aware, this is the only inscription referring to a Patriarch as a patron of an Athonite monastery. The inscription mentions the total reconstruction of the monastery under the patronage of Ieremias I (1522–1546). His contribution in the reestablishment and the development of the monastery (1540–1546) is attested by the documents<sup>53</sup>.

In the sacristy of Vatopedi it is kept a marble capital (Fig. 12) partially broken, dated in 6<sup>th</sup> century<sup>54</sup>, formerly impacted in the older bakery, a building

<sup>51</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 128.

<sup>52</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 214, as well as SMYRNAKES, Το Ἅγιον Ὄρος 615, read only a part of the inscription.

<sup>53</sup> N. CHARKIOLAKES, Παράδοση και εξέλιξη στην αρχιτεκτονική της Ιερᾶς Μονῆς Σταυρονικήτα. Mount Athos 1999, 22 (henceforth: CHARKIOLAKES, Παράδοση και εξέλιξη).

<sup>54</sup> On similar examples see V. VEMI, Les capitaux ioniques a imposte de Crece a l'epoque paleochre-

which does not exist today. On the one side it is incised the abbreviation  $\text{†}$  [B(α)τ(οπεδίου)] and the dedicatory inscription in six lines:

ΗΘΜΕΝΕΥΟΝΘC |  
 ΟΙΚΤΡΘ ΜΑΞΙΗΘ |  
 Ο ΦΘΡΝΟ ΘΘ ΟC |  
 ΝΟΝ ΕΠΝΕ ΕΚ |  
 ΑΡΡΘ Κ Θ ,S |  
 ΝΗ ΑΥΓΘC

Ηγουμενευοντος |  
 οικτροῦ Μαξίμου |  
 ο φύρνο[ς] ουτο[ς] ος |  
 [μό]νον ἔγινε ἐκ |  
 [β]άρου κ[α]τ[ὰ] το ζ[ρ--] |  
 [μη]νὴ Αυγουστ[ω --]

The name of the abbot Maximos is mentioned whereas the name of the patron lacks; presumably, it was the same person. The date of the construction of the building partially survives. According to the written sources the hieromonk Maximos was abbot between the years 1563 and 1568<sup>55</sup>; thus, the construction of the bakery must be dated in this period. The use of the common adjective οικτρός<sup>56</sup> should be interpreted as indication of reverence. Also, in the abbacy of Maximos the inlaid wooden doors in the main entrance to the nave of the

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tienne. Paris 1989, pl. 9, fig. 23, pl. 11, figs. 32a, b.

<sup>55</sup> PROEGOUMENOU THEOPHILOU VATOPEDINOY, Χρονικόν περί της ιεράς και σεβασμίας Μεγίστης Μονῆς Βατοπαιδίου Αγίου Όρους, *Makedonika* 12 (1972) 115.

<sup>56</sup> Indicatively see MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 389; Ch. STAVRAKOS, The Sixteenth Century Donor Inscriptions in the Monastery of the Dormition of the Virgin (Theotokos Molybdoskepastos). The Legend of the Emperor Constantine IV as Founder of Monasteries in Epirus. Ioannina 2013, 151. On examples in Byzantine period see A. RHOBY, Byzantinische Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken (= *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung* 1) (ed. W. HÖRANDNER – A. RHOBY – A. PAUL) (*Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften* 374 = *Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung* 15). Wien 2009, 273, 274, 409; TOTH, Epigraphic Traditions 219.

katholikon was created, according to the dedicatory inscription<sup>57</sup>, a part of which is cryptographic<sup>58</sup>:

∴ Ε ∴ |  
 ΤΕΛΕΙΩΘ̃ Η Π̃ |  
 ΡΘϞΑ ΠΛ̃ · Ε̃ |  
 Ν ΕΤΕΙ ,ΖΘ̃ Ε̃ · |  
 Η̃ ΟΥ̃ Μ̃ ΝΕ̃ Ν̃ |  
 ΤΟϞ ΟΙΚΤΡ̃ Θ̃ ΗΑ |  
 ΖΙΜ̃ ∴ ΟΘ̃ Χ̃ |  
 Θ̃ Ε̃ Ν̃ Ψ̃ Ζ̃ Λ̃ Χ̃ |  
 Ψ̃ Λ̃ Θ̃ Ε̃ Χ̃ ζ̃ Θ̃ |  
 Π̃ Θ̃ Ϟ̃ Ϟ̃ Θ̃ Ω̃

Ετελειώθη | ή παροῦσα πύλη · ε̃ | ν̃ ἔτει ,ζοε̃' · ήγουμενευον | τοϞ  
 οἰκτροῦ Μα | ξίμου ∴ Λαυρεντίου τὸ ἔργον κ(αὶ) Ἰωάσαφ.

Another inscription is also incised in the back side of an older architectural member, as it seems; it is a part of a marble panel probably from an altarscreen<sup>59</sup>, incorporated as *spolium* in a terrace close to the cell of St Anna in Karyes, dependency of Lavra. The dedicatory inscription (Fig. 13) concerns the construction of the chapel of the St Anna's cell in 1615:

ΗΓΕΡΘΗ Ο ΠΑΝΣΕΠΤΟΣ ΝΑ |  
 ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΑΝΗΣ · ΔΙΑ̃ CUN |  
 ΡΟΜΗ̃ Ϟ̃ Ε̃ Ζ̃ Ο̃ Δ̃ Ϟ̃ Κ̃ Υ̃ Ρ̃ Θ̃ Γ̃ Β̃ Η̃ Λ̃ |  
 Γ̃ Α̃ Λ̃ Α̃ Κ̃ Τ̃ Ι̃ Ο̃ Ν̃ Ο̃ Ϟ̃ Α̃ Κ̃ Α̃ Κ̃ Ι̃ Ϟ̃ ∴ |  
 ΕΤΘϞ Ζ̃ Ρ̃ Κ̃ Γ̃' ∴ Μ̃ Α̃

<sup>57</sup> The inscription was incompletely published by SMYRNAKES, Το Άγιον Όρος 434 and MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 56. Also see MAMALOUKOS, Το καθολικό 246, with a slight differentiation.

<sup>58</sup> Cryptographic notes are found on manuscripts; indicative examples see in: H. STEVENSON, Codices manuscripti Palatini graeci. Roma 1885, 4–5; J. BICK, Die kryptographische Subscriptio in cod. Vindob. Phil. gr. 231. Wiener Studies 36 (1914) 332–337; G. GARITTE, Le cryptogramme du Paris gr. 531. Scriptorium V (1951) 299–300.

<sup>59</sup> I noticed the inscription 20 years ago.

[Ἀν]ηγέρθη ὁ πάνσεπτος να | [ὸς] της Ἀγίας Ἄννης · διὰ συν | [δ]ρομῆς κ(αὶ)  
ἐξόδου κυροῦ Γαβ[ρι]ήλ | [Γ]αλακτίονος · κ(αὶ) Ακάκίου ∴ | ἔτους ζρκγ' ∴  
Μαρτ[ίου] [--] .

In the text are mentioned only the unknown from other sources patrons Gavriel, Galaktion and Akakios, without further information.

The next example comes from a fresco: a painted inscription partially visible under the later painting layers in the north wall of the *lite* in the katholikon of Stavronikita<sup>60</sup>. The old Byzantine katholikon of the monastery was entirely reconstructed between 1540 and 1545. The *lite* was built anew in 1628, as it is confirmed by the written sources and the known inscription in the exterior north wall<sup>61</sup>. From the older *lite* only the eastern wall, painted by the famous Theophanes<sup>62</sup>, survives. In the north, south and west wall three painting layers are visible. The later layer is dated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The previous is dated in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, as evidenced by the fragmentary preserved inscription<sup>63</sup>:

ΙϞ ΧϞ ΝΙΚΑ |  
ἈΝΙΓΕΡΘΗ ΕΚ ΒΑΘΡΩ |  
ΚΚΑΝΙΣΟΡΙΘΗ · Ο ΠΑΘ' ἌΡΤΥΞ |  
ΔΙΑ ΣΥΝΔΡΟΜΗΣ Κ ΕΞΟΔΩ |  
Θ ΠΑΝΟCΙΩΤΑΘ ΓΡΟΗΘΜ' ΝΘ |  
ΚΚ ΣΚΕΟΦΥΛΑΞ ΚΥΡΘ ΧΡΙCΑΝ |  
Θ

Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς Χ(ριστὸ)ς Νικᾶ |  
Ἀνιγέρθη ἐκ βάθρων | κ(αὶ) ἀνιστορίθη · ὁ παρὸν ἄρτυξ | διὰ συνδρομῆς κ(αὶ)  
ἐξόδου | τοῦ πανοσιωτατοῦ προηγούμενου | κ(αὶ) σκευοφύλαξ κυροῦ Χρισάν |  
θ[ου---].

<sup>60</sup> The part of the presented here inscription came into the light by the conservation works of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chalkidike and Mt Athos in 2006.

<sup>61</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 201.

<sup>62</sup> M. CHATZIDAKIS, Ο Κρητικός ζωγράφος Θεοφάνης. Οι τοιχογραφίες της Ι.Μ. Σταυρονικήτα. Mount Athos 1997, 55–59.

<sup>63</sup> The inscription has been published by MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 202, with a slight omission; CHARKIOLAKES, Παράδοση και εξέλιξη 42, published a sketch of it.

The partially visible inscription discussed here (Fig. 14A, B, C) belongs to the older frescoes. It is written meticulously with some abbreviations and ligatures:

ΕΤΟΣ 2 |  
+ |  
ΝΑΡ |  
ΗΙΘ Ι |  
ΤΡ<sup>Ϟ</sup> ΗΜΩΝ |  
ΡΩΝ ΗC ΛΝΚ |  
ΗΗC ΚΚ ΕΠΗΛC |  
ΠΡΟΗΓΟΝΜΕΝC ΚΝΘ ΜΑΖΙΜC · ΑΙΑ ΑΕ ΕΘΑΟΝ Κ ΑΗΠΑΝΗC Θ |  
ΤΙΗΙΩΑΤC ΨΑΧΟΝΤΟC ΚΥΡΟΥ ΑΝΔΘΝΙΚ CΥΡΧΤΖΗ |  
ΕΝ Χ Ρ Θ Ο Α Η ΙΡΜΑΧ

Ἔτος ζ-----] |  
†----- ὁ παρὼν] |  
νάρ[θηξ-----Ἱερε] |  
μίου [ο]ι[κουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου-----τοῦ πα] |  
τρὸς ἡμῶν-----μαρτύ] |  
ρων τῆς Λυκ[ίας-----συνδρο] |  
μῆς κ(αὶ) ἐπιμελει[ας-----]  
προηγούμενου κυροῦ Μαξίμου · διά δε ἐξόδου κ(αὶ) δαπάνης τοῦ |  
τιμιωτάτου ἄρχοντος κυροῦ Ἀνδρόνικου Σουρχτζῆ |  
Ἐν Χρ(ιστῷ) Θ(ε)όδ(ου)λ(ος) ἰ[ε]ρ[ο]μ[όν]αχ[ος]

The lower lines are almost missing. In the text it is firstly mentioned the founder of Stavronikita, the Ecumenical Patriarch Ieremias I (1540–1546). As it is common the former abbot Maximos and the patron ἀρχων Ανδρόνικος Σουρπητζής follow. The word ἀρχων<sup>64</sup> apparently refers to a wealthy person of the higher social class; the term is also found in the written texts and inscriptions characterizing the persons of high rank in social hierarchy<sup>65</sup>. The patron Ανδρόνικος

<sup>64</sup> *ODB* I (1991) 160 (A. Kazhdan).

<sup>65</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil nos. 72, 391; A. GIANNAKOPOULOS, Αρχείο της Ιεράς Μονής

Σουρχτζής is unknown from other sources. On the other hand the former abbot Maximos is mentioned in the written texts in the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>66</sup>. If we take into account the Maximos' reference in the literacy sources, but also the certain date of the lite's reconstruction in 1628<sup>67</sup>, the inscription apparently must be associated with the first painting layer in the reconstructed *lite* (south, north and west walls), around the year 1628. Besides, in the first line only the first letter of the chronology (ζ) is partly visible. In the lower line the abbreviation of the name Θεόδουλος ιερομόναχος is faintly read; could he be the painter<sup>68</sup>?

A marble slab with the inscription referring to the construction of cells and the chapel of Saints Constantine and Helen in 1699 is kept in the library of Iveron (Fig. 15). The chapel exists in the north wing of the monastery, which was reconstructed in the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Apparently, the referred cells should have been built next to the chapel. Apotropaic cryptograms are incised in the upper part of the slab on both sides of a cross:  $\overline{\text{C}}\overline{\text{S}}\overline{\text{A}}\overline{\text{P}}$  {[Ο ἐν τῷ] Σ(ταυρῷ) Στ(αυρωθεὶς) Δ(όξα) Π(ατρὸς) [ἐστὶ]}<sup>69</sup>,  $\overline{\Theta}\overline{\Theta}\overline{\Theta}\overline{\Theta}$  [Θ(εοῦ) Θ(έα) Θ(εῖον) Θ(αῦμα)]<sup>70</sup>,  $\overline{\text{T}}\overline{\text{K}}\overline{\text{P}}\overline{\text{T}}$  [Τ(όπος) Κ(ρανίου) Π(αράδεισος) Γ(έγονε)]<sup>71</sup>, IC XC NIKΑ [Ι(ησοῦ)ς Χ(ριστὸ)ς Νικᾷ]<sup>72</sup>. The dedicatory inscription is incised in six lines with uncial letters:

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Σταυρονικήτα. Επιτομές εγγράφων, 1533–1800. *Athonika Symmekta* 8 (2001) 71 (no. 19), 90–92 (no. 31), 99–102 (nos. 40, 41) (henceforth: GIANNAKOPOULOS, Αρχεὶο της Ιερὰς Μονῆς Σταυρονικήτα).

<sup>66</sup> A. GIANNAKOPOULOS, Αρχεὶο της Ιερὰς Μονῆς Σταυρονικήτα 72 (no. 19).

<sup>67</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 201.

<sup>68</sup> On the activity of the monk-painters on post-Byzantine Athos see indicatively P. VOKOTOPOULOS, Μνημειακὴ ζωγραφικὴ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους, 11<sup>ος</sup>–19<sup>ος</sup> αἰῶνας, in: Θησαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους. Κατάλογος Ἐκθέσεως. Thessalonike <sup>2</sup>1997, 37–38; E. TSIGARIDAS, Φορητὲς εἰκόνες, in: Θησαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους 54.

<sup>69</sup> MOUTAFOV, Cryptograms and Bilingualism 144; also WALTER, The apotropaic function 209 (however the cryptograms have not been deciphered).

<sup>70</sup> ZISIOU, Επιγραφαὶ 132; WALTER, The apotropaic function 212.

<sup>71</sup> BABIC, Les croix 3, 11; WALTER, The apotropaic function 212; MOUTAFOV, Cryptograms and Bilingualism 146.

<sup>72</sup> RHOBY, Secret Messages?; BABIC, Les croix 3, 5, 9; WALTER, The apotropaic function 210; MOUTAFOV, Cryptograms and Bilingualism 144–146.



Α Χ Υ Θ |  
 ἈΝΗΓΕΡΘΗ ΕΝ ΘΩ̄ ΟΣΟΟΦΗΣ .. Τ̄ ἈΓ̄Ι ΘΕ |  
 ΟΣΕΠΤΩ̄ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩ̄ Κ̄ ΙΣΑΠΟΣΤΟΛ̄ ΚΩ̄ΣΑΝ |  
 ΤΙΝΣ Κ̄ ΕΛΕΝ̄ ΝΑΟΣ̄ ΟΜΩ̄ Κ̄ ΤΑ ΚΕΛΛΙ |  
 Α, ΔΙᾹ ΣΥΝΔΡΟΜΗ̄ Κ̄ ΕΞΟΔΩ̄ ΠΑ |  
 ΝΟΣΙΩΤΑΤΩ̄ ἈΓΙΩ̄ ΚΑΘΗΓΜΕ |  
 ΝΩ̄ ΚΥΡΙΩ̄ ΣΑΜΟΥΗΛ, ΙΕΡΟΜΟ |  
 1699

Α Χ Υ Θ | Ἀνηγέρθη ἐν θ(ε)ῳ̄ ΟΣΟΟΦΗΣ [...] τῶν ἀγίων θε | οστέπτων βασιλέων  
 κ(αὶ) ἰσαποστόλων Κωνσταν | τίνου κ(αὶ) Ἐλένης ναὸς· ὁμοῦ κ(αὶ) τὰ κελλί | α,  
 διὰ συνδρομῆς κ(αὶ) ἐξόδου τοῦ πα||νοσιωτάτου ἀγίου καθηγουμέ | νου κυρίου  
 Σαμουήλ, ἱερομο[νάχου] | 1699

The year of the building is referred both in Greek and Arabic numbers. The name of the abbot and the patron of the structure hieromonk Samouel is also mentioned. Moreover, the Samouel's role in the constructing activity at the monastery is underlined in the literacy sources<sup>73</sup>.

The cell of Sts Forty Martyrs is located near to Iveron and depends on it. The early history of the cell is obscure. It is certain that the church was built in 1735 according to the removed dedicatory inscription (Fig. 16):

ΤΕΚ ΒΑΘΡΩΝ ΜΕΝ ΗΓΕΙΡΕ |  
 ΤΟΝΔΕ ΤΟΝ ΟΙΚΟΝ, |  
 ΠΡΟΗΓΓΜΕΝΟΣ Ο ΚΥΡ · |  
 ΙΕΡΕΜΙΑΣ |  
 ΟΣ ΓΕ ΠΕΛΩΝ ΓΕΝΝΗΜΑ |  
 ΑΣΤΥΠΑΛΛΙΑΣ |  
 ΤΗ ΤΩΝ ΙΒΗΡΩ̄ ΕΜΟ |  
 ΝΑΣΕ ΚΟΣΜΙΩΣ :- |  
 ΑΨΛΕ

<sup>73</sup> M. GEDEON, Χρονογραφία της εν Ἄθω Μονῆς των Ἰβήρων. Constantinople 1906, 19.

†Εκ βαθρων μὲν ἡγειρε | τόνδε τον οἶκον, | προηγούμενος ὁ κύρ · | Ιερεμίας |  
 ὅς γε πέλων γεννημα || Αστυπαλαίας | τῇ τῶν Ἰβήρων ἐμό | νασε κοσμίως :- |  
 ἀψλε.

The referred patron, the hieromonk and former abbot Ieremias, is known from the written texts<sup>74</sup>.

In some cases the dedicatory text is combined with a short invocation to the Christ, Theotokos, Holy Trinity or a Saint<sup>75</sup>. A removed inscription kept in the *kathisma* of St Eystathios (Mylopotamos), is representative. It is a fragmentary survived marble slab, in which the dedicatory inscription (1740–1749) of a church of the Presentation of Virgin Mary<sup>76</sup> was curved:

Ω ΜΗΤΕΡ Θ̄ ΛΙΜΗΝ ΧΣΜ |  
 ΔΌC ΤΗΝ ΞCΘΔΟΝ ΧΩΡΟΝ |  
 ΝΑΌΝ ΞCΘΔΙΩΝ CΧ Τ |  
 ΑΦΕCΙΝ ΠΑΡΕΧCΑ ΤΩ̄ |  
 ΕΝ ΕΤC· ΑΨ̄Μ

Ω μήτερ Θ(ε)οῦ λιμήν χεῖμ[---] | δός τὴν εἴσοδον χωρου [---] | ναόν Εἰσοδίω  
 σου τ[---] | ἀφεσιν παρέχουσα τῶν [ἀμαρτιῶν] | ἐν ἔτει · ἀψμ[---]

Unfortunately, the name of the patron does not survive.

In another item, apart from the date, the abbots and the patrons, it is given further information on the Byzantine past of the building; the given information is in accordance with the written sources in general. It is the dedicatory inscription (Fig. 17) of the church from the cell of Saint John Baptist<sup>77</sup>, which is located near to the monastery of Docheiari and depends on it:

<sup>74</sup> P. SOTIROUDIS, *Ιερά Μονή Ἰβήρων. Κατάλογος Ἑλληνικῶν Χειρογράφων*, 11 (1387–1568). Mount Athos 2007, 260. Also, in the unpublished codex Iveron 1638, f. 45v, the year of his death (1742) is noted.

<sup>75</sup> See for example LIAKOS, *Ο γλυπτός διάκοσμος σε κρήνες και φιάλες των αγιορειτικών μονών. Byzantina* 26 (2006) 349 (n. 12), 351 (n. 21).

<sup>76</sup> The position of the church is unknown.

<sup>77</sup> The inscription was transcribed by SMYRNAKES, *Το Ἅγιον Όρος* 571, with a slight difference.

κατα' τῷ ᾧ ἔκτισθες κ |  
 ἀνιστορίθς ὁ θεός οὗτος κ πάν |  
 σεπτς ναὸς τῷ θείῳ κ ἐνδόξος προφήτης |  
 προδρόμος κ βαπτιστῷ Ἰωάννου· ἐπὶ τῷ βα |  
 σιλεῖ τῷ πανευσεβεστάτῳ βασιλεῖ |  
 ἀνδρονίκῳ τοῦ παλεολόγου· νῦν δὲ ἐ |  
 κ βάθρων ἀνεκενίσθη διὰ συνδρομῆς |  
 κ ἐξόδου τῷ πανοσιωτάτῳ προηγουμένῳ ἄνα |  
 στασίῳ ἐκ τῆς ἱερᾶς μονῆς τοῦ Δοχειαρίου· δικαίβον |  
 τῷ κυρῷ Βαρθολομαίῳ μὲν ἐν μηνὶ Μαίῳ |  
 εἶς ἔτος· ἀπὸ χϛ αϛϛε.

Κατά τῷ ζωγ' ἐκτίσθαι κ(αὶ) | ἀνιστορίθς ὁ θεὸς οὗτος κ(αὶ) πάν|σεπτος ναὸς  
 τοῦ θείου καὶ ἐνδόξου προφήτου | Προδρόμου κ(αὶ) Βαπτιστοῦ Ἰω[ά]ννου· ἐπὶ  
 τῆς βα | σιλείας τοῦ πανευσεβεστάτου βασιλέως | Ἀνδρονίκου τοῦ  
 Παλεολόγου· νῦν δὲ ἐ | κ βάθρων ἀνεκενίσθη διὰ συνδρομῆς | κ(αὶ) ἐξόδου τοῦ  
 πανοσιωτάτου προηγουμένου Ἄνα | στασίου ἐκ τῆς ἱερᾶς μονῆς τοῦ Δοχειαρίου·  
 δικαίβον | τος κυροῦ Βαρθολομαίου μοναχοῦ ἐν μηνὶ Μαίῳ | ἔτους ζσγ· ἀπὸ  
 Χ(ριστο)ῦ αχϛε.

According to the inscription the church was initially built and painted in 1295/1296 in the reign of the Andronikos II Palaiologos. After four centuries, in 1695, as it is mentioned, it was reconstructed under the patronage of the former abbot Anastasios in the abbacy of Bartholomaios. The cell of Saint John the Baptist is used to be in the past a small monastery (*monydrian*), which was donated in 1330/1331 to Docheiari by a monk Neilos, as it is evidenced by his testament<sup>78</sup>. In the latter it is mentioned that the *monydrian* (with the church and the cells) was constructed before 1330/1331, when it was endowed in Docheiari. Therefore the reference to the Byzantine past of the church in the inscription appears to be reliable in general. However, the written sources do not

<sup>78</sup> Actes de Docheiariou, éd. N. OIKONOMIDÈS (*Archives de l'Athos* 13). Paris 1984, no. 17; Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents (eds. J. THOMAS – A. CONSTANTINIDES HERO – G. CONSTABLE). Washington DC 2000, 1389–1395.

confirm the precise date of the initial construction of the church in 1295/1296, as the inscription refers; thus, the question remains open.

Two other quite similar cases are attested in the katholikon of Vatopedi. In the known dedicatory inscription of the wall paintings dated in 1819, in the first sentence it is referred that the initial painting was executed in 1312 in the reign of Andronikos II Palaeologos<sup>79</sup>. In the written sources there is no mention about it; however the katholikon has been extensively painted in the first quarter of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, as it is known<sup>80</sup>. Therefore, it is possible that the first sentence of the 19<sup>th</sup> century inscription transcribed an older one. Moreover, the later funeral epigram (1802) above the tomb of the founders in the narthex of the chapel of Saint Nikolaos, annexed to the same katholikon, probably transcribed the older one, middle Byzantine<sup>81</sup>.

Commemorative inscriptions and epigrams do also exist on post-Byzantine Athos. The commemorative texts are usually found in the sanctuaries. In some churches in the *prothesis* a marble slab, the so-called *parresia* (παρρησία)<sup>82</sup>, is impacted in which an invocation for the salvation of the church's patrons is incised.

A representative example derives from the *kyriakon* of the St Panteleimon skete, dependency of Koutloumous. In the marble *parresia* (Fig. 18) in the *prothese* it was incised<sup>83</sup>:

<sup>79</sup> MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 48; I. PAPAGGELOS, Οι μεταβυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες, in: Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου. Παράδοση – Ιστορία – Τέχνη, I. Mount Athos 1996, 301 (fig. 268).

<sup>80</sup> E. TSIGARIDAS, Τα ψηφιδωτά και οι βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες, in: Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου I, 235.

<sup>81</sup> Th. PAZARAS, Τα βυζαντινά γλυπτά 96–97; RHOBY, Byzantinische Epigramme auf Stein 180–181.

<sup>82</sup> *Parresia* or *brebion* (βρέβιον) is a marble slab, a wooden icon (either single or triptych) or a manuscript (at the *prothesis*), on which were to be registered the names of the monasteries' donors to be commemorated during the sacred *prothesis* service; see e.g. the wood carved *parresia* (1620) at the katholikon of Iveron, LIAKOS, Έργα ξυλογλυπτικής στη μονή Ιβήρων 301–302; also see F. MIKLOSICH – I. MÜLLER, Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevi sacra et profana V. Vienna 1887, 380; Actes de Xénophon, éd. D. PAPACHRYSSANTHOU (*Archives de l'Athos* 15). Paris 1986, 206, 207. On the meaning of *parresia* generally see ODB III (1991) 1591 (E.M. Jeffreys); on *brebion* see ODB I (1991) 321 (A. Kazhdan).

<sup>83</sup> SMYRNAKES, Το Άγιον Όρος 526, transcribed the inscription with a slight difference.

ΚΟΧΗΑ ΙΕΡΟΜΟΝΑΧ|  
ΓΑΥΡΙΗΛ Κ ΓΕΡΑΣΙΜ|  
Τῶ ΜΟΝΑΧΩΝ Κ|  
ΩΝ ΓΟΝΕΝ ΚΧΡΙΣ |  
ΔΘΗΘ

Κοσμά ἱερομονάχου | Γαυριήλ κ(αὶ) Γερασίμου | των μοναχών κ(αὶ) | των γο-  
νέων κ(αὶ) Χριστ[ο] | δουλου.

Although the text gives no dating indication, it could be dated around the year 1790, when the church was built<sup>84</sup>. It is remarkable that in the text the parents of the patrons are also mentioned.

Also, a removed marble *parresia* is kept in Docheiari (Fig. 19):

+ΜΝΗΣΘΗ ΚΥ |  
ΡΙΕ ΤΩΝ ΜΑΚΑΡΙΩ ΚΗΤΟΩ, ΤΗ<sup>ς</sup> |  
ἁγίας ἐκκλησίας τῆς |  
ΤΗΣ ΓΕΡΒΑΣΙΔ ΜΝΧ |  
ΚΑΙ ΤΩ ΓΟΕΩΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ |  
ΝΑΣΧΟΝ, ΜΑΡΙΔ<sup>ς</sup>, ΙΩ |  
ΗΑΡΙΔΣ ΣΥΓΓΕΝΩΝ

Μνήσθητι Κύ | ριε τῶν μακαρίων κητόρων τῆς | ἁγίας ἐκκλησίας ταύ | της  
Γερβασίου μ(ο)ν(α)χ(οῦ) | καὶ τῶν γονέων αὐτοῦ || Νάσχου, Μαρίας, Ἰω(άννου)  
| Μαρίας συγγενῶν

The church in which the slab was impacted is not mentioned and thus its provenance is obscure. The unknown church was probably built in the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>84</sup> SMYRNAKES, Το Ἅγιον Ὄρος 526; P. MYLONAS, Κυριακά σκητῶν καὶ ἄλλοι ἱσάξιοι ναοὶ στο Ἅγιον Ὄρος, in: Τρίτο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινῆς καὶ Μεταβυζαντινῆς Αρχαιολογίας καὶ Τέχνης. Πρόγραμμα καὶ περιλήψεις εἰσηγήσεων καὶ ανακοινώσεων. Athens 1983, 61–62.

Epigrams are frequently found in monumental art and some of them, as has been proved, were composed by scholar monks, such as the former abbot Gavriel in Iveron (late 16<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>85</sup> or Kaisarios Dapontes in Xeropotamou (second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>86</sup>. This epigraphic practice is also attested in the funeral chapel in the St Panteleimon *skete* (1799)<sup>87</sup>, dependency of Koutloumous. In the lintel of the main entrance no dedicatory inscription is written, as it is usual, rather the following epigram (Fig. 20):

ΒΛΕΠΩΝ Τὰ ὍΣΤ' ἘΝ Τῷ ΚΟΙΜΗΤΗΡΙῳ |  
 ΤΟΥΤῳ ΠΑΤΕΡΩΝ ΘΡΗΝῶ ΤΕ Κ ΔΑΚΡΥῶ |  
 ...ΟΙ ΘΑΝΑΤΕ ΠῶΣ ΦΟΒΟΝ Σὺ ἘΝΕΡΚΩ; |  
 ΠῶΣ ΑΛΛΩΣ ΗΣὺ ΠΑΝΤΟΤΕ ΜΝΗΜΟΝΕΥῶ; |  
 ΛΟΙΠὸΝ ἈΔΕΛΦΟὶ ΜΝΗΜΗΝ Ἀεὶ ΘΑΝΑΤῶ |  
 ἘΧΟΝΤΕΣ ΤὸΝ ΦΟΒΟΝ ἘΚΒΑΛΕΙΤΕ ΘΑΝΑΤΟΝ.

Βλέπων τὰ ὅστ' ἔν τῷ κοιμητηρίῳ | τουτῳ πατέρων θρηνῶ τε κ(αὶ) δακρύῳ |  
 [...]οὶ θάνατε πῶς φόβον σου ἐνέρκω; | Πῶς ἄλλως [Ι]ησοῦ πάντοτε  
 μνημονεύω; | Λοιπὸν ἀδελφοί μνήμην αἰεὶ θανάτου || ἔχοντες τὸν φόβον  
 ἐκβάλετε θανάτου.

Its patron is unknown. The first five lines are written in the twelve-syllable verses<sup>88</sup>, yet the last line is thirteen-syllable. It is remarkable that in the fourth line a syllable was cut in order to be created a twelve-syllable verse<sup>89</sup>.

<sup>85</sup> ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Λόγια πρόσωπα και λόγιο περιβάλλον 261.

<sup>86</sup> Μ. POLYVIΟΥ, Το καθολικό της μονῆς Ξηροποτάμου. Σχεδιασμός και κατασκευή στη ναοδομία του 18<sup>ου</sup> αιώνα. Athens 1999, 69; ΛΙΑΚΟΣ, Τα λιθανάγλυφα του Αγίου Όρους I, 106.

<sup>87</sup> SMYRNAKES, Το Ἅγιον Όρος 526.

<sup>88</sup> The common twelve-syllable verse in Byzantium (P. MAAS, Der byzantinische Zwölfsilber. BZ 12 [1903] 278–323; M. LAUXTERMANN, The Velocity of Pure Iambs. Byzantine Observations on the Metre and Rhythm of the Dodecasyllable. JÖB 48 [1998] 9–33; A. RHOBY, Vom jambischen Trimeter zum byzantinischen Zwölfsilber. Beobachtung zur Metrik des spätantiken und byzantinischen Epigramms. Wiener Studien 124 [2011] 117–142; IDEM, The meaning of inscriptions for the early and middle Byzantine culture. Remarks on the interaction of word. Image and beholder, in: Scrivere e leggere nell'alto Medioevo. Spoleto 2012, 735 [n. 14]) is also frequently found in post-Byzantine inscriptions; see for example E. ΔΡΑΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, Η

In Lavra a particular inscription (1622) is preserved<sup>90</sup>. It was carved on the marble *phiale* reused as basin (Fig. 21) in the newer fountain (1902) constructed next to the library<sup>91</sup>:

Α ΔΟΘΗ<sup>ς</sup> Ρ̄ Ω̄ ΡΥΠΤΩ<sup>ς</sup> ΜΝ̄ · ΕΞ̄ ΖΡ̄Α ΜΑΡ Γ ΝΕ

Α(?) Δ[ε]σπότην ὁρῶν ρυπτούμενον · ἔτους, ζρλ Μαρ[τίου] γ [ι]ν[δικτιῶν]ος [---]

The text origins from the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Idiomelon* of Patriarch Sophronios from Hierosolyma (†638), chanted in the Epiphany's Vesper<sup>92</sup> and obviously it is in accordance with the use of the *phiale*<sup>93</sup>. We have no evidence about the initial position of the latter; however it is almost sure that it derives from Lavra.

## GENERAL REMARKS

The short group of the known Byzantine inscriptions on Athos is enriched with some more examples. Unfortunately, some inscribed architectural members from Pantokrator and Iveron, as we saw, appear to have unclear provenance. The inscriptions in the other cases offer some new information on the building history of several monasteries, the dedicatory and artistic activity of certain persons, but also in one case the unknown from other sources craftsman. Particularly, the lack of Byzantine dedicatory inscriptions on Mt Athos is not unexpected since it could be connected to the consecutive reconstructions

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πόλη της Καστοριάς τη βυζαντινή και μεταβυζαντινή εποχή (12<sup>ος</sup>–16<sup>ος</sup> αι.). Ιστορία – Τέχνη – Επιγραφές. Athens 1997, 13; LIAKOS, Λόγια πρόσωπα και λόγιο περιβάλλον 261.

<sup>89</sup> The same instance see in LIAKOS, Λόγια πρόσωπα και λόγιο περιβάλλον 261 (n. 43).

<sup>90</sup> The inscription had been pointed out by MYLONAS, Άγνωστες χρονολογίες 94, who read only the date ζρλ.

<sup>91</sup> On the fountain see LIAKOS, Τα λιθανάγλυφα του Αγίου Όρους II, 85.

<sup>92</sup> “Σήμερον τῶν ὑδάτων, ἀγιάζεται ἡ φύσις, καὶ ῥήγνυται ὁ Ἰορδάνης, καὶ τῶν ἰδίων ναμάτων ἐπέχει τὸ ῥεῦμα, Δεσπότην ὁρῶν ρυπτόμενον”, Μηναῖον Ἰανουαρίου, Ἐκδοσις τῆς Αποστολικῆς Διακονίας τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἑλλάδας. Athens 1970, 74.

<sup>93</sup> On Byzantine *phiale* see G. PALLIS, Λίθινες φιάλες καὶ κολυμβήθρες με ἀνάγλυφο διάκοσμο τῆς Μέσης καὶ Ὑστερης Βυζαντινῆς περιόδου ἀπὸ τὴν Ελλάδα. *DChAE* 33 (2012) 119–130.



of the pre-existed Byzantine buildings in all monasteries from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards<sup>94</sup>. As it is obvious, the older structures and their inscriptions were lost.

The discussed here material dated from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, demonstrate some aspects of the patronage on Athos, when it begun a period of renovation in all Athonite monasteries<sup>95</sup>. Patriarchs, abbots, former abbots, monks and high ranking secular persons – some of them unknown from written sources – are mentioned. The honorary reference of the abbots is very common not only in the presented material, but also in the majority of the other already known inscriptions<sup>96</sup>. The referred patrons, a Patriarch in one case, the former abbots or the monks, spend a great part of their wealth. However, it could not be excluded that the former abbots and the monks used the funds accumulated by the fundraisers (the so-called *ζητείες*) which were carried out in the Balkans<sup>97</sup>. This practice is well documented in the post-Byzantine period by the written sources<sup>98</sup>. On the other hand the high-ranking secular persons, the so-called *άρχοντες*, as *Ανδρόνικος Σουρχτζής*, contributed to the artistic creation on Athos in this period. Their role will become more powerful from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, as it is documented by the other inscriptions and the

<sup>94</sup> On the building history on Athos after the 16<sup>th</sup> century see P. THEOCHARIDES, Εισαγωγή στην αρχιτεκτονική του Αγίου Όρους, in: Ελληνική Παραδοσιακή Αρχιτεκτονική. Άγιον Όρος. Athens 1991, 11–14; IDEM, Οι πτέρυγες κατοικίας στα αγιορειτικά μοναστήρια (1500–1900), in: Ελληνική Παραδοσιακή Αρχιτεκτονική. Άγιον Όρος 26–32.

<sup>95</sup> The dedicatory inscriptions related to the rulers of the Dunabian Principalities are not included in this paper; some observations about them will be done in: LIAKOS, Athonite Dedicatory Inscriptions (forthcoming).

<sup>96</sup> See indicatively MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 200, 339.

<sup>97</sup> On the *ζητείες* from Athos see K. CHRYSOCHOIDES, Άθως και Ρωσία (15<sup>ος</sup>–18<sup>ος</sup> αιώνας). Ιδεολογήματα και πραγματικότητες (Μια προσέγγιση), in: Ρωσία και Μεσόγειος. Πρακτικά Α΄ Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Ι. Athens 2011, 268 and n. 3, with further bibliography. Also see M. NYSTAZOPOULOU-PELEKIDOU – I.-R. MIRTCEA, Τα Ρουμάνικα έγγραφα του αρχείου της εν Πάτμω Μονής. *Symm* 2 (1970) 255–327; P. STATHIS, Το ανέκδοτο οδοιπορικό του Χρύσανθου Νοταρά. *Mesaionika kai Nea Ellenika* 1 (1984) 127–280; E. ANGELOMATI-TSOUGGARAKI, Το φαινόμενο της ζητείας κατά τη μεταβυζαντινή περίοδο, in: Ιόνιος Λόγος, Επιστημονική περιοδική έκδοση, τ. Α΄. Τόμος χαριστήριος στον Δημήτρη Ζ. Σοφιανό. Τμήμα Ιστορίας – Ιόνιο Πανεπιστήμιο. Corfu 2007, 247–293.

<sup>98</sup> See indicatively S. KADAS, Κώδιξ Ιεράς Μονής Διονυσίου Αγίου Όρους, ιη΄–ιθ΄ αι. Mount Athos 1994, 7, 11, but also the (unpublished) Vatopedinus codex 5, 9v, 12r, 13v.

written sources<sup>99</sup>. Furthermore, the aforementioned discussed post-Byzantine commemorative inscriptions and epigrams enrich the short catalogue of the already known material.

The need to have a documentation of the numerous unknown inscriptions, but also the *graffiti*<sup>100</sup>, existing in all Athonite foundations is obvious. The various information either from inscriptions on monuments or on artifacts, in combination with literacy sources or archaeological evidence, will shed new light on the dark sides of the Athonite history during the Byzantine and post-Byzantine period<sup>101</sup>.

<sup>99</sup> GIANNAKOPOULOS, Αρχείο της Ιεράς Μονής Σταυρονικήτα, nos. 19, 31, 40, 41, 86, 97; MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil nos. 72, 391; LIAKOS, Η τέχνη στο Άγιον Όρος κατά τον 17<sup>ο</sup> και 18<sup>ο</sup> αι. (forthcoming).

<sup>100</sup> I present an unknown example from the building complex of the shipyard (αρσανάς) at Vatopedi, constructed in 1495/1496 (MILLET – PARGOIRE – PETIT, Recueil no. 139); in a reused marble fragment the letters N and A between two rosettes were incised (17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries). Obviously it is the abbreviation of Άγιος Νικόλαος, which is directly referred to the St Nikolaos' chapel in the upper floor of the shipyard. Also, ship graffiti were scratched in post-Byzantine era on the walls of various building on Athos, such as in the old larder annexed to the Lavra's refectory and in the funeral chapel of the St Apostles at Vatopedi (in the ossuary).

<sup>101</sup> Moreover, the unknown epigraphic material from the wider region of Chalkidike (the basic productive area of the Athonite monasteries) it would be very useful to be registered and co-evaluate; I indicatively mention the dedicatory inscription of the tower at the north entrance of the monastery of Zygos (a photograph of this see in I. PAPAGGELOS, Η Αθωνική Μονή Ζυγού. Thessalonike 2005, 16 [fig. 7] without transcription), as well as the so-called processional cross of Torone (10<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> centuries) with the depiction of the Sts George and Demetrios (Ά[γιος] Γεώργιος, Ό Δημήτριος) and the invocation + Ά(γιε) Νηκόλαε + Νήκ(α) in one side (see the photo of the cross in: I. PAPAGGELOS, Η Χαλκιδική κατά τους Μέσους Χρόνους, in: Η ιστορία της Χαλκιδικής. Thessalonike 1998, 95 fig. 24 [the inscriptions are not transcribed]).

ILLUSTRATIONS



FIGURE 1: *Pantokrator; part of a marble inscribed cornice (5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> centuries)*



FIGURE 2: *Cell of Trochala (dependency of Vatopedi); church; inscribed lintel of a door frame (late 10<sup>th</sup> century), now in Vatopedi*



FIGURE 3: *Vatopedi; sacristy; fragment of the dedicatory inscription from the non-survived chapel of Sts Constantine and Helen (1416)*



FIGURE 4: *Pantokrator; fragment of an inscribed cornice (late Byzantine)*



FIGURE 5: *Iviron*; fragment of a marble inscription (late Byzantine)



FIGURE 6: *Lavra*; *katholikon*; epigram on frescoes' remains of the *katechoumena* (late 14<sup>th</sup> century)



FIGURE 7: *Pantokrator; chapel of the Dormition annexed to the katholikon; door frame; the mason's signature in the lintel (end of the 13<sup>th</sup>–beginnings of the 14<sup>th</sup> century)*



FIGURE 8: *Vatopedi; sacristy; dedicatory inscription of an unknown church (1622)*

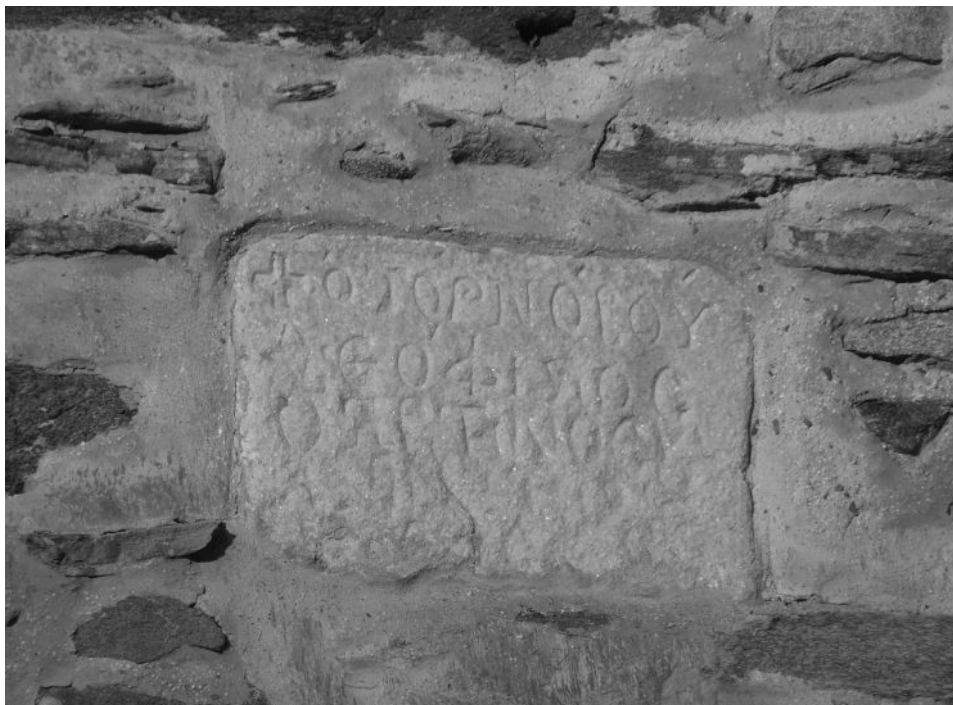


FIGURE 9: *Kathisma of St Eystathios (the so-called Mylopotamos, dependency of Lavra); tower; dedicatory inscription (first decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, after 1527 or 1528)*

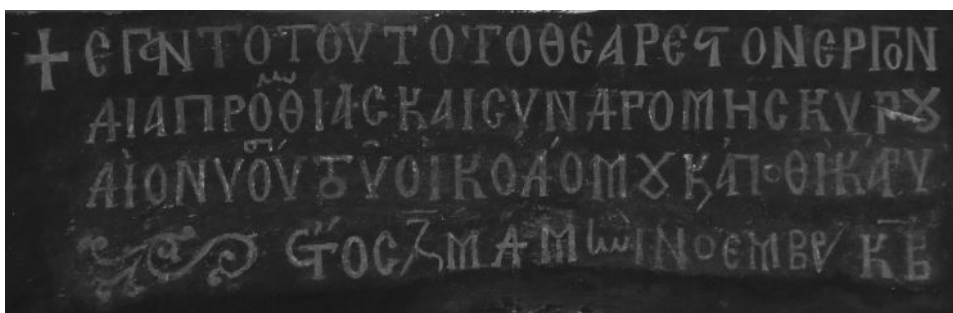


FIGURE 10: *Lavra; old larder annexed to the refectory; dedicatory inscription (1535)*



FIGURE 11: *Stavronikita; south wing; dedicatory inscription (1546)*



FIGURE 12: *Vatopedi; sacristy; an early Christian capital with the dedicatory inscription from the old bakery (1563–1568)*





FIGURE 13: Karyes; cell of St Anna (dependency of Lavra); a removed middle Byzantine panel with the dedicatory inscription of the church (1615)



FIGURE 14A, B: Stavronikita; katholikon; lite; the partially survived dedicatory inscription of the older painting layer (c. 1628)



FIGURE 14C: Stavronikita; katholikon; lite; the partially survived dedicatory inscription of the older painting layer (c. 1628)

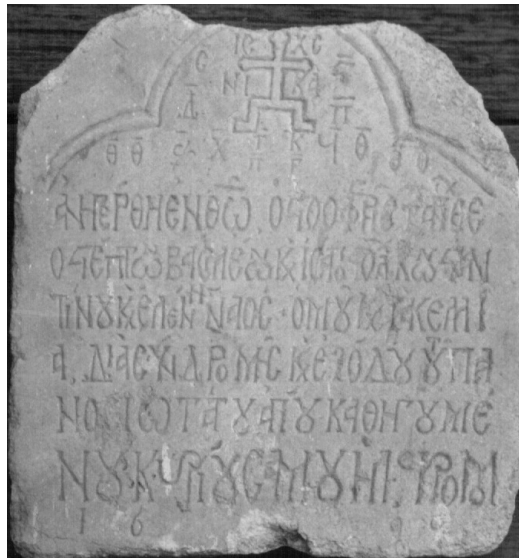


FIGURE 15: Iviron; the removed dedicatory inscription from the chapel of Sts Constantine and Helen (1699)

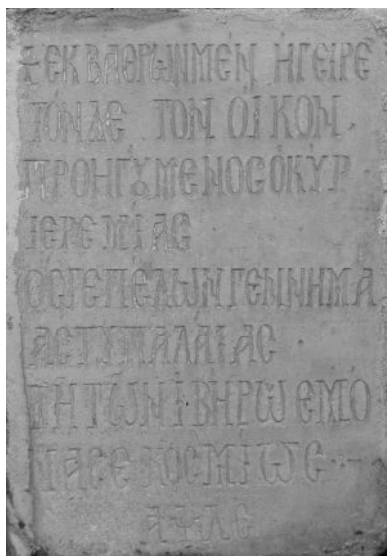


FIGURE 16: *Cell of Sts Forty Martyrs (dependency of Iviron);  
the dedicatory inscription (1735)*



FIGURE 17: *Cell of St John Baptist (dependency of Docheiari);  
the removed dedicatory inscription (1695), now in Docheiari*

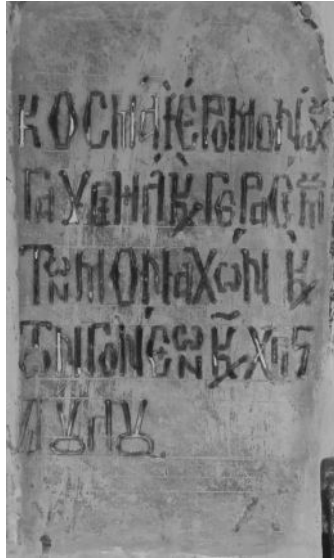


FIGURE 18: *Skete of St Panteleimon (dependency of Koutloumous); kyriakon; marble parresia (c. 1790)*



FIGURE 19: *Docheiari; a removed parresia from an unknown church (17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries)*

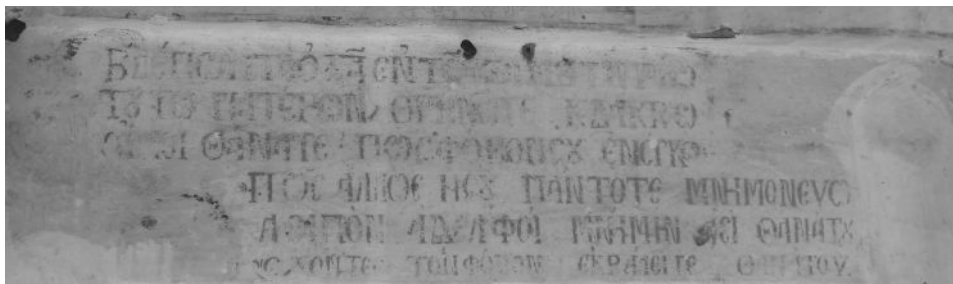


FIGURE 20: *Skete of St Panteleimon (dependency of Koutloumous); funeral chapel; epigram on the lintel of the door frame (1799)*



FIGURE 21: *Lavra; fountain next to the library; inscription on the reused phiale (1622)*