The text presents several unpublished Greek inscriptions written on the scrolls of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite from Bulgaria. The main focus falls on an inscription from the narthex of the Rozhen Monastery (sixteenth century) and its identification; parallel inscriptions observed in Athonite monasteries are discussed too. A second group of inscriptions from Bulgaria and Macedonia are also discussed, with a stronger focus on an inscription in the church St. Apostles Peter and Paul in Veliko Tarnovo. The linguistic analysis attempts to discern the patterns by which such ascetic texts are visualized and transformed along the way from their original textual source to their final destination – the wall painting.

Key words: Byzantine art, post-Byzantine art, Byzantine epigraphy, Greek inscriptions, ascetic texts, medieval monasticism, sayings of the desert fathers.

The main topic of this article is the textual and linguistic analysis of the Greek inscriptions written on the scrolls on two depictions of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite from Bulgaria that have not been published and discussed so far. The first inscription is recorded relatively rarely; it is located in the narthex of the cathedral in Rozhen Monastery Nativity of the Mother of God, and it is dated from the sixteenth century. The inscription was discovered during restoration work in the monastery in the 1970s and 1980s. Parallel inscriptions are observed in cathedrals and refectories in monasteries on Mount Athos. Particular attention has been devoted to the text on the scroll of the saint from the southern gallery of the metropolitan church of Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in the city of Veliko Tarnovo from the end of the sixteenth century. A few parallels from the territory of Bulgaria and Macedonia have been examined, e.g. an inscription on a scroll of a saint from the gallery of the church Nativity of Christ in Arbanassi, from the middle of the seventeenth century. The lexical analysis of all the inscriptions, the attempt to trace the origin of the texts, as well as the comparison with parallel inscriptions on one hand reveal the changes, or metamorphoses, that took place in the context; on the other, they facilitate the speculations with regards to the function of the texts, associated with the commissioners of the wall decoration and the audience, too. These speculations constitute the main focus of the study; therefore, the aim is not to seek out and describe all existing Greek inscriptions on the depictions of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite from Bulgaria or the Balkans. Such a greater academic endeavour (which could include inscriptions in Cyrillic too) could be realized at a later stage.

A further aim of the study is an attempt to classify the reasons for the changes in the texts, thus facilitating the definition of visualization and representation patterns for the moral-ascetic texts in post-Byzantine art. According to scholars these texts are the hardest for identification and the least studied so far. Thus our understanding of the practice to include monastic inscriptions on scrolls

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1 Parallel inscriptions is used in the sense of inscriptions with same source-text, which does not mean that they are identical in appearance.

2 With regards to St. Cyriacus the Anchorite’s depiction in Rozhen Monastery, v. the treatise of G. Gerov, B. Penkova, R. Bozhinov, Stenopisite na Rozhenskii manastir, Sofii 1993, 51; the inscriptions of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite that are discussed in the article were published in: I. Tablăki, To eikonoqrammato programma sto katoxhia kai tis tragikes twn moniwn ton Agiou Orou, Iastndia 1997 (diaktarikia diatirhia, Panepistimaio Iastndian), v. also N. Tsounta, G. Foutantze, Evretirio tis megaloqhs drapirikhs eno Agiou Oroua, Athina 2010, S. Tomcekov, Les saints ermites et moines dans la peinture murale byzantine, Paris 2011, 48–49, 239 es passim.

3 Most articles from the reference list for this monument concern the iconographic programme of the frescoes without further discussion of the inscriptions on the scrolls, v. G. Gerov, Stenopisni kalendvar ot Târkvata „Petar i Pavel” v Tarnovo, Izkustvo 3 (1985) 31–39. V. also the reference list about the monument in: B. Penkova, Khristova genealogiia v stenopise na Tarnovskata târkva na apostolite Petar i Pavel, ZRV1 44/2 (2007) 507–520.

4 The inscription from Arbanassi has been published without further discussion in: Korpus na stenopise ot XVII vek v Bulgariia, ed. B. Penkova et al., Sofii 2012, 120.

5 A relatively early depiction of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite from Bulgaria with an inscription in Cyrillic in the style of the ascetic messages of the collection Apophthegmata Patrum (The Sayings of the Desert Fathers) comes from the church Forty Martyrs in Veliko Tarnovo, with wall paintings dating from the rule of Tsar Ivan Asan the Second (1218–1241). The text on the inscription calls for a renunciation of worldly life.

6 For example, v. E. Bakalova, Stenopisni nadpisi v svitvata komunikativni aspekti i iztochni, in: Filologiiia. Istoriiia. Izkusevot...
during the post-Byzantine period on the Balkans is enhanced through specific examples.

We find information about the life of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite (Greek: ὅσιος Κυριακὸς ὁ ἀναχωρητής; celebrated on September 29) in two hagiographies: one written by Cyril of Scythopolis, the hagiographer of St. Euthymios the Great, and one by Symeon Metaphrastes. St. Cyriacus was born in the city of Corinth during the rule of Emperor Theodosius the Second (408 – 450) in a devout Christian family. As soon as he turned eighteen, Cyriacus withdrew from secular life and commenced his ascetic deed in Palestine under the spiritual guidance of St. Euthymios the Great. He became known for his humility and his shrewdness, his strict anchoretic life, the many miracles he performed, and last but not least for his denunciation of the followers of Origen of Alexandria. For some time he acted as the abbot of the lavra St. Chariton. He passed away at a very old age († 556).^7

St. Cyriacus the Anchorite has left no written legacy; hence, there are no messages of his to be accepted as standards over time in the manner that quotes from some hagiographic texts appear on the scrolls of St. Antony the Great or St. Euthymios the Great, for example. Therefore it is logical to ask who authored the texts on the scrolls held by St. Cyriacus the Anchorite on the frescoes? Without question the identification of the sources of the inscriptions – as much as it is possible – is the most important step for revealing the function of the texts in the depictions of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite – as well as on the depictions of monks in general.

A common depiction of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite is as a standing figure in the lower register of the narthex and of the monastery refectories, or in the naos, or the altar as well. He is depicted in this manner in the narthex of Rozhen Monastery too (Fig. 1). The name of the saint is written as follows: ὌΑΓΙΟΣ ΚΥΡΙΑΚΟΣ ὁ ΑΝΑΧΩΡΗΤΗΣ. The text on the scroll is relatively well-preserved, with the exception of a few damaged letters (Fig. 2):

[^7]: BHG I, 142; Delehaye, Synaxarium, 87–89.

Fig. 1. St. Cyriacus the Anchorite, Rozhen Monastery “Nativity of the Mother of God”, narthex, eastern wall (photo: Ts. Vasilev)

Fig. 2. St. Cyriacus the Anchorite, Rozhen Monastery, detailed view of the scroll (photo: Ts. Vasilev)
Source: Μηδείς οἴεσθω κατ’ ἐνέργειαν τέκνον Θεοῦ γεγονέναι, μήπω τοὺς θείους χαρακτήρας ἐν ἑαυτῷ κτημένον (PG 91, col. 1444A).

The textual analysis reveals that the text comes from a work by Thalassius the Abbot who lived in the seventh century – a hermit, abbot of a monastery in the Libyan Desert, friend and mentor of St. Maximos the Confessor. Only one work by Thalassius survives to the present day: 

Πέρι ἄγας καὶ ἐγκαταλείπης καὶ τῆς κατὰ νοὸν πολιτείας (About love, self-restraint and government of the mind) in four books, each containing 100 ascetic reflections. The work has a moral-ascetic content written in epigrammatic style. The text from the scroll of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite in the narthex of Rozhen Monastery is sentence 58 from the second group (centuria, a group of one hundred sayings). Here is its translation: Let no one think that through energy (κατ’ ἐνέργειαν) he can become child of the Lord without accepting within himself the Divine marks.

This sentence reveals the similarity between Thalassius’ views and Maximos the Confessor’s theological philosophical system, as well as his teachings about Divine energy (or energies), that is at least partially cognoscible – in contrast to the incognoscible essence of God, – because it ‘surrounds God’, i.e. the energy is God’s grace or the activity of this incognoscible essence. The sentence describes the entire process of transfiguration and deification (θέωσις) of man where the mind is liberated from egotism, and to reaching a state of love that allows man to unite with God. Let us come back to Thalassius’ own words (Sentence 88): That man is God’s son, who has likened himself to Him through grace, wisdom, power and righteousness. In this sense, the ‘Divine marks’ can be achieved via and at the expense of man’s removal from his passions.

The manner in which the text is written in the narthex of Rozhen Monastery suggests that the writer understood its content either only partially or not at all, probably due to its archaic, high linguistic style. Another possibility is that the writer has reproduced mechanically the inaccuracies present in the manual (the hermeneia) that he used.

Two mistakes in the text of the inscription in Rozhen Monastery make it almost impossible for the reader to understand the synthesized and meaningful message of the source: 1. the complete confusion of the verb form oiete (an additional epsilon is written in the beginning of the lexeme), 2. the term ἐνέργεια (energy), which is key to the understanding of the text, has been rendered as ὄργανον (organ), probably due to graphic similarities; however, this new rendering obliterates the initial meaning of the saying.

A parallel of this inscription is found written on the scroll of St. Chariton the Confessor (Greek ὤςος Ἰάρτου ὁ Θεολογός, celebrated on September 28) in the catholicon of Dionysiou Monastery (1546/47). There the text is written without digressions from the historic Greek orthography: ΜΗΔΕΙΣ ΟΙΕΣΘΩ ΚΑΤ ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙΑΝ ΤΕΚΝΩΝ ΘΕΟΥ ΓΕΓΟΝΕΝΑΙ ΜΗΠΩ ΤΟΥΣ ΘΕΟΥΣ ΧΑΡΑΚΤΗΡΑΣ ΕΝ ΕΑΥΤΩ ΚΤΗΜΕΝΟΣ.

We find the same text in the refectory of Dionysiou Monastery (after 1552) too, on the scroll of St. Chariton. The close celebration dates of the two saints – September 28 for St. Chariton, and September 29 for St. Cyriacus the Anchorite, lead us to the speculation that the use of the same text on their scrolls is in direct connection with their depiction next to each other in the calendar cycle; in the process, an identical text could have been ‘exchanged’ between the two depictions. On the first layer of wall painting in the monastery Dormition of the Mother of God in Gračanica (about 1321), both monks have been depicted together on the north-eastern column (one of the four central columns in the nave) within the framework of the calendar cycle (menology). Unfortunately, neither is depicted holding a scroll with text.

The parallel between the two inscriptions in Dionysiou Monastery and the inscription in Rozhen Monastery undoubtedly serves as a further confirmation of the spiritual connections between Mount Athos and the region of Melnik that became stronger from the fourteenth century onwards, as well as of the presence of Greek painters working in Rozhen Monastery in the sixteenth century.

Besides the image of St. Chariton, in the catholicon and in the refectory of Dionysiou Monastery there are two depictions of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite, too. Their examination might give a more complete idea about the function of the two texts used in depictions of St. Cyriacus in general. They are identical to each other, and to another inscription, written in the refectory of Docheiariou Mon-
A star on Mount Athos (1675/76). The inscription written on the scroll of this full-size image of the saint in the refectory of Docheiariou Monastery, located in the lower register on the western wall, was published without further discussion by I. Tablákēs as follows:

Once again, the contents of the inscription are within the context of ascetic thought: Blessed is he who is exalted in virtue but humble in his mind. He will be counted among the number of the angels.

The source of the text is Admonitions by St. Neilos of Ankyra (ἅγιος Νεῖλος ὁ ἀσκητής, celebrated on November 12), a disciple of St. John Chrysostom that lived in the fifth century. The work consists of about 200 short sentences – admonitions, probably written by St. Neilos’ disciples in the form of an anthology. The full title of the work is: Γνῶμαι ἀπάγουσαι τῶν φθαρτῶν καὶ κολλῶσαι τοῖς ἀφθάρτοις τὸν ἄνθρωπον (Admonitions to guide man away from the corruptible and connect him with the incorruptible).20 Admonition #91 states: Μακάριος ὁ τὸν βίον ὑψηλὸν ἔχων, ταπεινὸν δὲ τὸ φρόνημα, Χριστὸν γὰρ μιμεῖται, καὶ αὐτῷ συγκαθίσεται.21 Translation: Blessed is he who has had an exalted life but is humble in his mind. For he follows the example of Christ and will sit at His side.

A shorter version of this admonition is found in the well-known anthology composed by St. Maximos the Confessor under the title: Κεφάλαια θεολογικὰ ἤτοι ἐκλογαὶ ἐκ διαφόρων βιβλίων τῶν τε καθ’ ἡμᾶς καὶ τῶν θύραθεν, Chapters on theology in 71 speeches or talks structured thematically around sentences from the Holy Scripture and the writings of the Holy Fathers.22 Here the sentence reads as follows: Blessed is he who has an exalted life but a humble mind.23

The passage is taken from Speech #49, titled Περὶ ταπεινοφροσύνης (On Humility), and beginning with a quote from the Gospel according to Luke: For whosoever exalted himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted (L 14:11).24 The linguistic analysis reveals that the style of both admonitions has been preserved in the inscription; in the first sentence the coincidence is almost complete, with the exception of the missing word ‘virtue’. In the second sentence of the inscription there is a change: in the original the humble person is compared to Jesus, whereas in the inscription he is compared to an angel. This is yet another example of a metamorphosis of the message of identical text in different contexts: that of the medieval manuscript and that of the inscription on the wall painting.

It is important to emphasize that not all sentences in the collection of St. Maximos the Confessor come from the writings of the Holy Fathers; it is a mixed collection of sayings from different times and origin. On one hand this makes this type of Byzantine collections highly popular, and on the other it makes them suitable for use in Christian painting.

The next inscription studied in the present article is written on the southern gallery of the church Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, Veliko Tarnovo, where St. Cyriacus the Anchorite (Στ. Κωνσταντίνος Χωροφυτζής, v. 1082/83 - 1154) is depicted in full size among the images of St. Symeon the Stylite and probably of St. Theodore of Studios, as we can assume from the contents of the inscription of his scroll, namely, a standardized text recommended for St. Theodore the Studios in the hermeneias (Fig. 3). The inscription is
Diplomatic transcription: υπνοοῦντας | εὐθήνας ἄνδρας εὐχερῶς | κλέπτης θλήβη | κόσμοι | de τοὺς θέλοντας.

Translation: Those who sleep through their punishment the thief oppresses easily. Those who wish... close to the world...

Unfortunately, the attempts to specify the literary source of this text so far have not been satisfactory. A short version of the text has been observed in a manuscript from the fourteenth century from the collection of Bibliotheca Vallicelliana in Rome; it is inventoried as #66 in the inventory by E. Martini, in a paragraph titled στίχοι καί ἀποφθέγματα τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων (Verses and Sayings of the Holy Fathers), and the quote in question has been ascribed to St. Euthymios the Great (Εὐθύμιος ὁ μέγας) but it is substantially shorter: ὑπνοοῦντας ἄνδρας εὐχερῶς. In the post-Byzantine Greek hermeneia known as the Second Jerusalem Manuscript and published by Α. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, the text is described as a recommended inscription for the scroll of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite. The text of the hermeneia reads: υπνοοῦντας ἄνδρας εὐχερῶς κλέπτης θλήβει, κόσμοι δε τοὺς θέλοντας ἀσκεῖν πλησίον συλῆς νυκτιλόχος.

Translation: The men that are asleep are easily oppressed by the thief, and those who wish to dwell close to the world will be robbed by the thief of the mind who will ambush them in the night.

The comparison between the texts from the inscription in the church Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and from the hermeneia reveals the following linguistic features:

1. The text of the inscription is shortened and incomplete, ending abruptly after the present participle θέλοντας. This hinders greatly the understanding of the second sentence – starting with the lexeme κόσμοι, – which gives meaning to the message as a whole. This particular sentence bears the moral-ascetic admonition, aimed solely to the monks – it urges the monk willing to achieve the goals of a life in contemplation of God to isolate himself from the world in order to forget it more easily; also, he must be cautious and protect his mind from any worldly thoughts and passions that may appear as ‘raiders’ of his inner peace and his contemplative disposition.

2. An additional lexeme has been included in the inscription: εὔθυνα (or εὐθύνη, if we accept its later version); in Medieval Greek it means ’responsibility, punishment’ and in this context it might also mean ’church punishment, penance’. It would mean that the original ascetic meaning of the text has been replaced, and through this metamorphosis it becomes universal for all laymen: ’those who sleep during their responsibility or penance’ are

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25 Cf. E. Martini. Catalogo di manoscritti greci esistenti nelle biblioteche italiane II, Milano 1902, 107.
26 Διονυσίου του εκ Φουρνά, Ερμηνεία της ζωγραφικής τέχνης, ed. Α. Παπαδόπουλος-Κεραμέως, Εν Πετρούπολε 1909, 286. In this publication the adjective νυκτιλόχος (a combination of the nouns νυξ, ‘night’ + λόχος, ‘ambush’) has been written incorrectly as νυκτολόχος.
27 However it should be noted that the meaning ’church punishment’ has not been attested by me in other Medieval Christian inscriptions, so this meaning is only a speculation.
those Christians who do not abide by the instructions of their spiritual father – an act that is inconceivable for a monk-hermit, and is more typical of a layman who has already sinned and must be awakened. Such a message corresponds fully with the purpose of a metropolitan city church such as Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, namely a church in which bishopric services were held, and, being located in the city, attended by laymen. This might also be an indication of the relative freedom that the painter scribe or the commissioner of the wall decoration had – if we accept that one of them added the lexeme coauthoring the text (i.e. the writer did not copy it from a hermeneia where the change was already present). Of course, this should be regarded merely as a speculation, as far as an exact counterpart of the inscription from Veliko Tarnovo is not known to me.

For comparison, the same text – but in its version from the Second Jerusalem Manuscript – can be seen on the scroll of another saint: St. Antony the Great, from the church St. Niketas (around 1324) by the village of Banjani (Fig. 5) near Skopje. The inscription on the scroll of St. Antony the Great (Fig. 6) was published by M. Marković without a discussion on the text. For the purposes of the linguistic analysis I include the following diplomatic transcription: ὑπνοῦντας ἄνδρας εὐχερῶς κλέπτης θλίβει· κόσμῳ δὲ τοὺς θέλοντας ἀσκεῖν πλησίον, συλᾷ νοητῶς κλεπτόνους νυκτιλόχος.

The same inscription is written on the scroll of St. Antony the Great in the church The Holy Mother of God – Peribleptos (1294/95) in Ohrid (Fig. 8) from the church Sts. Constantine and Helen (the end of the fourteenth century) in Ohrid (Fig. 9) falls into the same group of inscriptions.

The inscription from the scroll of St. Antony the Great (Fig. 8) from the church Sts. Constantine and Helen (the end of the fourteenth century) in Ohrid (Fig. 9) falls into the same group of inscriptions.

28 M. Marković, Sveti Nikita kod Skoplja. Zadaća knjiga kralja Milutina, Beograd 2015, 104.

29 I. Zarov has identified correctly the inscription and has published the Greek text of the admonition from the Second Jerusalem Manuscript, together with a translation of the text, v. I. Zarov, Portreti i natpisi vo oltarskiot prostor i naosot na Sv. Bogorodica Periblepta vo Ohrid, Patrimonium.Mk 3–6 (2009) 77.

30 G. Subotić, Sveti Konstantin i Jelena u Ohridu, Beograd 1971, 51. For the reading of the text of the inscription, ibid., 110, no. 73.
The comparison between the post-Byzantine inscription from the church Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Veliko Tarnovo and the inscriptions from the Byzantine period indisputably demonstrates a more elaborate execution of the inscriptions in the churches Holy Mother of God – Peribleptos, St. Niketas near Banjani, and Sts. Constantine and Helen in Ohrid. Despite some phonetic transcriptions and minute discrepancies the three inscriptions from vicinity of Skopje and from Ohrid have fully preserved the implied meaning of the text with the necessary attention to all diacritics and graphic details. This allowed the reading audience to understand fully the meaning of the message.

This, however, is not the case with the post-Byzantine image of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite with a Greek inscription in the gallery of the church of Nativity of Christ in the village of Arbanassi from the middle of the seventeenth century (Fig. 10). Unfortunately the text of the inscription is partially obliterated but even in its original form it was composed of two or three words, thus depriving the reader of the chance to understand the meaning of the message:

\[\text{Diplomatic transcription: } \text{ἡπνοῦντας}.\]

\[\text{Hπνο}<\text{ντ}>\text{ας}.\]
It appears that the inscription started with the first words from the admonition to be written on the scroll of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite from the Second Jerusalem Manuscript.

This type of metamorphosis of the text could be categorized as a shortening resulting in a loss of communicativeness of the text; it is typical for many post-Byzantine monuments. This implies that this type of inscriptions were not intended to be read by the audience but at the same time they preserved some distant connection with the texts, recommended in the hermeneias.

In the context of all the above observations the metamorphoses of the texts, the changes of the bearer of the message allow us to outline some patterns in the reproduction or the visualization of moral-ascetic texts in the post-Byzantine period.

Evidently the ‘scribes’ (or the artists who were responsible for writing the inscriptions), had at their disposal a textual base or a source-text, i.e. a text from a hermeneia, in which the connection to the original (or the source) was lost. As the identification of the texts in the present study show, the texts on the monks’ scrolls were taken from mixed collections or anthologies with short wise sentences with instructive function – a highly popular genre in the medieval Byzantine literature. One such collection that was used frequently by painters from the Byzantine and the post-Byzantine periods undoubtedly is Apophthegmata patrum.\(^3\) Due to different factors the textual base has been altered in several ways:

1. Adaptation of the text in accordance to the style of the textual base – examples are the texts from the monasteries on Mount Athos – Dionysiou

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\(^3\) V. for example the identification of the texts from the rotunda St. George in Sofia: E. Bakalova, T. Vasilev, Images and texts across time: The three layers of mural paintings in the church of St. George in Sofia, in: Byzantine and Post-Byzantine art: Crossing borders, ed. A. Moutafow, I. Toth, Sofia 2018, 171–191.

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Fig. 8. St. Antony the Great, Sts. Constantine and Helen church, Ohrid (photo: Ts. Vasilev)

Fig. 9. St. Antony the Great, Sts. Constantine and Helen church, Ohrid, detailed view of the scroll (photo: Ts. Vasilev)
Vasilev T.: Metamorphoses of ascetic texts in some depictions of St. Cyriacus the Anchorite in the Balkans

and Docheiariou. This type of metamorphosis requires competent artists, capable of adequate work with the text in order to alter and complement it.

2. Adaptation that alters the meaning of the original, for example from the church Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Veliko Tarnovo, where the text has been transformed from strictly ascetic to more universal. In strictly ascetic and monastic admonitions in the medieval Byzantine tradition the direct connection with the Divine is of the utmost importance and they rarely treat anything but the personal deed.

Of course, the distinction between the first two patterns is relative and elusive.

3. Disrupting the communicativeness and the meaning of the text due to incapacity to understand its original meaning. This is clearly exemplified by the inscription in the narthex of Rozhen Monastery where the linguistic problems of the text are easily identified after a textual analysis and correct identification of the text.

4. The last type of interference can be categorized as shortening resulting in a complete loss of the communicativeness of the text. It is illustrated by the example from the church Nativity of Christ in Arbanassi. It could be the result of incompetence or of intentional shortening depending on the requirements and expectations of the audience.

Without doubt the use and adaptation of medieval ascetic texts for the purposes of church wall painting is an extremely complex subject that poses many challenges. Many of those are connected to the correct identification and attribution of the texts used in fresco inscriptions; those have undergone serious changes that are difficult to track. The metamorphoses of the message and the changes of the bearer of the scroll pose a further challenge to the identification of the text but at the same time they provide the clearest evidence for the stability of the epigrammatic genre and the moral-ascetic admonition. This stability apparently is rooted in the universal Christian themes and topics that the genre refers to.

**Fig. 10. St. Cyriacus the Anchorite, Nativity of Christ church, Arbanassi (photo: I. Vanev)**

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Преображаји аскетски текстови на неким представама Светог Киријака Отшелника на Балкану од трниастог до седамнаестог века

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Грчки натписи на свицима у рукама светог Киријака Отшелника приказаних на фрескама цркава у Бугарској до сада нису били детаљно проучени. У овом чланку представљени су текстови са две представе светог Киријака: на првом слоју сликарства у припрати Роженског манастира (XVI век) и у јужној галерији цркве Светих апостола Петра и Павла у Великом Трнову (XVI век).

Детаљна лексичка анализа натписа користи се као средство за проналажење аналогних натписа, као и пример натписа на слици светог Харитона Исповедника у католикону манастира Дионисија на Светој Гори, или слични текстови на представама светог Антонија Великог у цркви Светог Никите код Скопља и храмовима Богородице Перивлепте и Светог Константина и Јелене у Охриду. Анализа литературних извора открива живу везу са средњовековним епиграмским жанром и морално-аскетском поуком.

На основу такве студије може се закључити да постоје две главне тенденције у исписивању грчких текстова на монашким представама током поствизантијског периода: варијабилност (разменљивост) текстова и слика, на једној страни, и појава варијација у значењу текстова, на другој; ово потоње се уочава у скраћивању текстова у односу на првобитни изворник, променама у посебним лексемама итд.

Једно од изазова и занимљивих питања јесте: у којој мери су ти натписи исписани с намером да их посетиоци цркве заиста прочитају? Одговор на њега мења се у односу на сваки посебан споменик и тиче се образа усвајања или нивоа преображаја у текстовима изабраним за буду истакнути на фресци.