

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS AND THEIR MESSAGE IN THE DOME OF SAINT GEORGE'S CHURCH IN SUCEAVA

OANA IACUBOVSKI
(Institut d'Études Sud-Est Européennes, Bucarest)

The dome of the former Metropolitan Church of Suceava, dedicated to St. George, preserves one of the most ample depictions of Old Testament prophets in Moldavian mural painting of the 15th and 16th centuries. The extent of the prophets' cycle is comparable to versions found in several Serbian mural ensembles dating back to late 14th and beginning of the 15th century, but the Moldavian version remains a unique case because of its content. The purpose of the study is to examine the selection of figures, paying attention to the written passages inscribed on their scrolls, the contiguity of which turns them into a "commentary" of particular significance in the overall iconographic context of the dome.

Keywords: St. George's Church – Suceava, 16th century mural painting, iconography of the dome, Old Testament prophets.

Both during the pre-Iconoclastic era¹ and after the restoration of icons², alternative iconographic solutions were practiced in the Byzantine program of the cupola. However, from the 9th century onward, the image of Christ Pantocrator, freed of the reminiscences of the prophetic vision of the enthroned Christ – former absidal image of the Early Byzantine churches³ – appeared as the most

¹ See Suzy Dufrenne, "Les programmes iconographiques des coupôles dans les églises du monde byzantin et postbyzantin", in *L'Information d'Histoire de l'Art, Dixième année*, Nr. 5, nov.–dec. 1965, Paris 1965 and André Grabar, "A propos des mosaïques de la coupole de Saint-Georges à Salonique", *Cahiers Archéologiques*, 1967, p. 77–80.

² Maria Panayotidi argued that the presence of the *Ascension of Christ* in the iconography of several post-Iconoclastic churches (from the 9th up to the 13th century) in Italy, in Greek and Serbian monuments and even in Russian art, cannot be explained as a provincial phenomenon or a later echo of a former metropolitan iconography. On the contrary, the image itself emphasizes a significant fact and central idea promoted by the defenders of images: the new statute of mankind, granted by Christ's Incarnation, which was that of man being able to contemplate God directly; see Maria Panayotidi, „Η παράσταση της Ανάληψης στον τρούλο της Αγίας Σοφίας Θεσσαλονίκης. Εικονογραφικά προβλήματα”, *Επιστημονική Επετηρίς της Πολυτεχνικής Σχολής ΑΠΘ, Τμήμα Αρχιτεκτόνων Στ' 2*, Thessaloniki, 1974, p. 74–76, 78. On the other hand, the case of Georgian churches where the *cross* is depicted until the late Middle Ages in the center of the cupola, does represent a regional preference and a delayed echo of a former widespread iconography, see T. Velmans, A. Alpago Novello, *Miroir de l'invisible. Peintures murales et architecture de la Géorgie (VI^e–XV^e s.)*, Saint-Léger-Vauban, France, Zodiaque, 1996, esp. Chapter 4.

³ For the evolution of the iconography of Early Christian and Byzantine apses see Jean-Michel Spieser, "The Representation of Christ in the Apses of Early Christian Churches", *Gesta*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (1998). Reminiscences of the prophetic vision can be observed in the domes of Nea Moni, Chios, and other 11th century cupolas; see M. Panayotidi, *Η παράσταση της Ανάληψης*, p. 80–81. A particular case of

suitable iconographic representation in relation to the essential symbolical structure of the Cross in square plan, as well as to the liturgical purpose of the overall iconographic program of the sacred space. Surrounded by heavenly powers, prophets and evangelists, Christ's icon, to which the title *Pantocrator* is not necessarily assigned as an inscription, dominates the great majority of the Byzantine cupolas.

Compositionally and theologically, the cycle of the Old Testament prophets is conceived in direct relation to the central image of Christ, which offers the iconographic program in the high surfaces of the dome the hierarchical unity, within which all the other representations are placed. The prophets' cycle has a well-established place in this hierarchy, although its compositional structure varies, according to the morphology of the vaulting system. The number of the depicted prophets, as well as their arrangement within the dome, both depend upon the dimension of the dome and upon the number of windows piercing the drum / dome, which, of course, is not random, but in agreement to the symbolical topography of the church. These circumstances lead to the fact that the prophets depicted in many of the Byzantine and Serbian churches are represented in cycles comprising eight or twelve figures. The largest compositions comprise up to 16 or 20 figures⁴, displayed in two superposed registers in the drum.

Most of the churches in which Old Testament prophets are represented in two superposed ranges date back to the late Byzantine period. We can find this elaborate form of representation in the Serbian church of Arilje (painted at the end of the 13th century)⁵, where an intermediary type has been chosen, one of the two rows of prophets comprising only half-figure portraits. Likewise, two groups of standing prophets appear in the murals at Ravanica Monastery (end of the 14th century)⁶, as well as in the frescoes at Manasija (Resava)⁷ and Kalenić⁸, both dating from the beginning of the 15th century.

An equally ample representation can be found in the dome of St. George's church in Suceava, the former Metropolitan church of Moldavia, built by prince Bogdan (son of Stephen the Great) and finished by his son Ștefăniță. The mural paintings were completed several years later, around 1534, during the reign of Petru Rareș⁹.

such reminiscences preserved in the iconography of the dome is that of several 12th– 14th century churches in Cyprus, see Tania Velmans, "Quelques programmes iconographiques de coupoles chypriotes du XII^e au XV^e siècle", *CahArch.* 32 (1984), p. 137–162.

⁴ The largest prophets' cycle is the one depicted in the church of Manasija, B. Živković, *Manasija. Les dessins des fresques*, Belgrade, 1983, fig. I.

⁵ Branislav Živković, *Arilje. Les dessins des fresques*, Belgrade 1970, fig. III.

⁶ Marina Belović, Марина Беловић, Раваница. историја и сликарство, Belgrade 1999, fig. XIII, p. 242.

⁷ B. Živković, *Manasija. Les dessins des fresques*, fig. I.

⁸ Draginja Simić-Lazar, Kalenić et la dernière période de la peinture byzantine, Paris 1995; B. Živković, Kalenić. *Les dessins des fresques*, Belgrade 1982.

⁹ Dated by Sorin Ulea to 1534, see Sorin Ulea, „Datarea frescelor bisericii mitropolitane Sf. Gheorghe din Suceava”, *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei, seria Artă Plastică* (1966), nr. 2, p. 219, p. 228–229.

While the amplitude of the representation of the prophets' cycle in St. George's church puts it in the same category as the aforementioned Serbian examples, its iconography remains a unique case because of its content. Divided into two registers (see fig. 1), the first of which comprises only Old Testament prophets, while the second group reunites prophets and apostles, all together converging towards the figure of Saint John the Baptist, the cycle comprises 24 figures holding inscribed scrolls in their hands. The prophetic inscriptions, and all the New Testament passages, are written in Greek¹⁰ (except two of them, which are written in Slavonic¹¹). Among these, one can notice variable degrees of spelling accuracy. Generally, discrepancies arise between the spoken and the written language (iotacisms and hyperurbanisms), which may indicate Greek-speaking painters. The different levels of knowledge shown by the inscriptions suggest either the participation of several different painters in writing the inscriptions, or – less likely – the inscriptions having been transcribed from different written sources.

We will further proceed sequentially through the written passages, the contiguity of which turns them into a commentary inscribed in the field of the iconography. We shall pursue the many aspects concerning iconography and painted inscriptions: (a) We will emphasize the liturgical place of the passages (where one can be identified) and the reoccurrence of each passage in other mural ensembles of the Byzantine and Balkan area, in attempt to identify thereby the path by which stereotypes are transmitted and the factors that underlie the diversity of the messages associated with the prophets in the dome area. (b) We shall proceed then to the interpretation of the global message, by analyzing the selection of the prophets and of their painted inscriptions in the overall context of the dome.

The cycle of the Old Testament prophets in St. George's church in Suceava begins in the Eastern axis of the drum, where king David and prophet Hosea are painted next to each other. King David's scroll presents a fragment of Psalm 45 (46), lines 5–6 (4–5): "The holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her (she shall not be moved)"¹², which can be found both in the liturgical readings of the Theotokos' feasts¹³ and on the First Hour service on Christmas Eve¹⁴.

¹⁰ I would like to express my deepest gratitude to professor Nicolae-Şerban Tanaşoca, for the kind guidance he extended to me in my work deciphering the Greek inscriptions painted in St. George's church in Suceava.

¹¹ See the annex, nr. 12 and 16.

¹² All the quotations are taken from *The Holy Bible. Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1962. Exceptions have been made for some of the passages, where we considered that the translation of the Septuagint renders more properly the texts inscribed on the prophets' scrolls. In these cases, that we will indicate in the notes, the translations are taken from *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, (Ed.) Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright, Oxford 2007. For the original Greek inscription, see nr. 1 in the annex.

¹³ On the Nativity (during the Matin service, Menaion for September), and on the *Presentation of the Mother of God* (during the Liturgy).

¹⁴ It is included in the Menaion for December.

In this last case, the way in which liturgical service integrates the biblical passage, is also reflected by the Patristic writings. For example, in his homily on Psalm 45, Saint Basil the Great refers to the “fortress” evoked by the psalmist¹⁵, as the Earthly Church, the Heavenly Jerusalem and “all spiritual being” – from heavenly powers to human beings”, all of which rejoice with the presence of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, “the holy habitation of the Most High” alludes to the human body, sanctified in the union with God, who himself took human body¹⁶.

We have not managed to identify the same passage in another church’s dome program, a frequent use of the sixth verse of the 71th Psalm being noted instead. This appears on king David’s scroll in many of his depictions, that range widely, both geographically and chronologically¹⁷.

Prophet Micah, depicted to David’s left side, holds in his opposite hand the scroll upon which the following passage of his own prophecy is inscribed: “In that day, says the Lord, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away, and those whom I have afflicted.” (Micah 4, 6)¹⁸. The verse marks the beginning of a *pericopa* announcing the promise of salvation that God made to the Hebrew people. The image is thus one of rescue in the particular sense, but in a larger sense, it is a prophecy of salvation, read during the Vespers in the Nativity’s eve¹⁹. Prophet Micah is attributed the same prophecy in several other wall paintings from the Byzantine and Balkan regions²⁰.

¹⁵ “There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God (τὴν πόλιν τοῦ θεοῦ), the holy habitation of the Most High...” (Ps. 46, 4/45, 5).

¹⁶ Saint Basil the Great, *Homilia in Psalmum XLV*. ΣΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΜΕ΄ ΨΑΛΜΟΝ, in PG, t. 29, 421, 424.

¹⁷ For example: in the Martorana church in Palermo, half of the 12th century (Ernst Kitzinger, *The Mosaics of St. Mary’s of the Admiral in Palermo*, *Dumbarton Oaks Studies* 27, Monumenti 3, Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neoleonici Palermo, 1990, p. 274 and fig. 19), in the Cappella Palatina, Palermo, 1140–70 (E. Kitzinger, *The Mosaics*, p. 140 and fig. 194), in the Parma Baptistery, 1250, with Psalm 71, 11 (Kathleen Maxwell, *Parma Baptistery*, p. 180–192, p. 183), in St. Clement/ Peribleptos in Ohrid, 1295 with Psalm 71, 6 (<http://www.orthodoxy-icons.com/frescoes/107-the-frescoes-of-the-church-peribleptos-ohrid-macedonia-1295-part-iv.html>, 11.03.2014), or in the St. Nicholas Philantropinon church in Ioannina (1546).

¹⁸ See nr. 2 in the Annex

¹⁹ It is found in the Menaion for December; see also Alfred Rahlfs, *Die Alttestamentlichen Lektionen der griechischen Kirche*, *Aus den Nachrichten der K. Gessellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen Philologisch historische Klasse*, 1915, p. 226 (132), 126(32). A. Rahlfs analyses the system of Old Testament readings in the Eastern Orthodox worship relying on four manuscripts of Old Testament Lectionaries dated between 10th and 13th centuries, and on the printed editions: *Triodion*, Venice (1636), *Triodion*, Rome (1879), *Penticostarion Venice* (1634) and *Penticostarion Rome* (1883), *Menaions*, Venice 1612–1648 and the edition of the *Menaions*, printed in Rome 1888–1901, *Antologhion*, Venice 1630. In the Βίβλος ἐνιαύσιος Εβδομαδάρια, Πανθέκτη καλεῖται, Nikolaos Glykis, Venice 1796, the passage appears during the third Hour service.

²⁰ Gračanica, 1320/21 (Lj. D. Popovich, *Four Prophet Cycles*, schema IV/p.302, and the archive of images: <http://www.srpskoblag.org/Archives> – a source to be consulted also for the other references to the same church) Panaghia Olympiotissa in Elasson, Thessaly – the Southern tympanum, at the base of the dome (Efthalia C. Constantinides, *The Wall Paintings of the Panaghia Olympiotissa at Elasson in Northern Thessaly*, Vol. I, Atena, 1992, p. 104, E. Constantinides, *Olympiotissa Elasson*,

Prophet Isaiah carries the scroll upon which an excerpt of the first chapter of his own prophecy is inscribed: “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken: «Sons have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me.» (Isaiah 1, 2). It is the only text indicated by the Painter’s Manual of Dionysius of Fourna to be inscribed on Isaiah’s scroll, when he appears among the other prophets in the iconographic program of the dome²¹.

The passage is part of the readings of the First Week of Lent²². In a commentary of the verse, John Chrysostomos noticed the relationship between the moment of the Old Covenant – when man was created in the image and likeness of God – and that of the New Covenant, whereby a much greater honor than before was bestowed upon mankind, as God himself sacrificed for its salvation²³. The Patristic view on Old Testament history reflects the principle underlying the liturgical use of Old Testament prophecies. The understanding of the topic of this passage changes, however, from one author to another. Referring to the same text, Theodoret of Cyrus highlights the amplitude of God’s blame to His people, the recalling of Heaven and Earth as witnesses and instruments for the salvation descended from God to His people²⁴.

The next depicted prophet is Habakkuk, who bears on his scroll a fragment of the fourth Canticle, also known as Habakkuk’s Prayer, which is sung on the Matins Canon throughout the Lent²⁵: “His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. His brightness was like the light, rays flashed [from his hand]” (Habakkuk 3, 3-4). Although part of the third chapter of Habakkuk’s prophetic book (the fourth biblical Canticle), from which most of the passages inscribed on the prophet’s scroll are extracted, the text identified in St. George’s church is not one of the usual ones – as can be seen in other Byzantine examples. Generally, it is the second²⁶ and the third (only its beginning)²⁷ verses of the same chapter that are

Vol. 2, p. 9); the *Hermeneia* of Dionysius of Fourna indicates this fragment to be inscribed upon Micah’s scroll when he is depicted among the other Old Testament prophets, Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameos: *Διονυσίου του εκ Φουρνά Ερμηνεία της ζωγραφικής τέχνης: εκ χειρογράφου του η' αιώνος εκδοθείσα κατά το πρωτότυπον αυτής κείμενον*, Α. Παπαδοπούλου-Κεραμέως (ed.), St. Petersburg 1900.

²¹ Dionysius of Fourna, *Ερμηνεία*, ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameos, p. 80; it appears on Isaiah’s scroll in the dome of St. Nicholas Philantropinon church, Ioannina (1542); it is also reported by Anne-Mette Gravgaard in the mosaics of San Marco, Venice, Anne-Mette Gravgaard, *Inscriptions of Old Testament Prophecies in Byzantine Churches*, Copenhagen, 1979, p. 48.

²² In the Triodion, Monday, First week of Lent, Sixth Hour service; Τριώδιον, 1586, Venice (APB 168701 University of Crete) and the same in Τριώδιον, 1683, Venice (Παρά Νικολάου Γλυκεῖ), see also A. Rahlfs, *Die alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, p. 128 (34) p. 226 (133).

²³ Jean Chrysostome, *Commentaire sur Isaïe*, Jean Dumortier (ed.), Sources Chrétiennes 304, Paris 1983, p.531.

²⁴ Théodoret de Cyr, *Commentaire sur Isaïe*, Sources Chrétiennes 276, Tome 1 (Sections 1–3), Paris 1980, p. 151.

²⁵ The Canticle is included in the Oration.

²⁶ As in Daphni, about 1000 (Ernst Diez, Otto Demus, *Byzantine Mosaics in Greece. Hosios Loukas & Daphni*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. 1931, fig. 63), in the Parma Baptistery, 1250–70 (K. Maxwell, *Parma Baptistery*, p. 183, n. 19, p. 184), in Fethiye Camii/ Pammakaristos (H. Belting, *Cyril*

employed in the iconographic context of the dome, when Habakkuk appears next to the Pantocrator.

In the absence of the inscription rendering his name, the next depicted prophet was identified as Zephaniah, for he bears on his scroll a passage from the third chapter of Zephaniah's prophecy: "«Therefore wait for me», says the Lord, for the day when I arise as a witness." (Zephaniah 3,8). The text is included in the readings of the Vesper performed on the Great Saturday²⁸, and is frequently associated with prophet Zephaniah in the dome program²⁹.

As for the prophet depicted next, the inscription rendering his name is barely readable. The few letters we could distinguish right of his head seem to indicate either Samuel's or Amos' name. Unfortunately, the text inscribed on his scroll does not clarify further his identity, for it is greatly faded (see annex, nr. 7).

The cycle continues with prophet Elijah, who is attributed a quotation which in biblical context does not belong to him: "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you." (2 Kings/4 Kings) 2, 2; 2, 4; 2, 6). They are Elisha's words, repeated several times during the second chapter of the fourth book of Kings, and they appear as such in other wall paintings of the Balkan area³⁰.

It is a verse found in the fragment of the fourth/second Book of Kings, which is read during the Vespers, before prophet Elijah's celebration on July 20³¹, and it is also part of the fifth preemia read on the Vespers of the Baptism³².

The depiction of Elijah in the iconographic program of the dome area is of an old tradition.³³ The Patristic commentaries present him as a prophet of the

*Mango, Doula Mouriki, Hans Belting, The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii) at Istanbul, Dumbarton Oaks, Center for Byzantine Studies, 1978, p. 49 and fig. 41), in Studenica, SS Joachim's and Anne's Church, 1314 (<http://www.srpskoblago.org/Archives>), The Church of the Virgin Hodegetria, Peć, 1331–1337 (see the same image source), Lesnovo, 1346/47 (S. Gabelnić, *Lesnovo*, p. 58); Manasija (B. Živković, *Manasija*, fig. 1); Kalenić (B. Živković, *Kalenić*, fig. 1.3 and D. Simić-Lazar, *Kalenić*, p. 47).*

²⁷ Docheiariou, Mount Athos (1568) and Vatopedi, Mount Athos (1312), on the arches of the nave, San Marco, Venice, 13th century (A.-M. Gravgaard, *Inscriptions*, p. 45–46); the *Hermeneia* of Dionysius indicates Habakkuk 3, 3 for the scene of the Nativity, but he only refers to the beginning of the passage, Dionysius of Fourni, Ερμηνεία, ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameos.

²⁸ It is included in the Triodion, on the Vespers service, celebrated together with The Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great; see also A. Rahlfs, *Die Alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, p. 227 (133), p.134 (40), p. 159 (65).

²⁹ It appears on Zephaniah's scroll in the Church of the Parigoritissa from Arta, 1294/6 (A.-M. Gravgaard, *Inscriptions*, p. 87), in Gračanica, 1320–21 (Lj. D. Popovich, *Four Prophet Cycles*, p. 293, p. 302/schema IV; Branislav Todić, *Gračanica-slikarstvo, Biblioteka Umetnički spomenici*, Beograd, 1988, fig. 14 and the reference from note 17), in the Fethiye Camii/Church of the Pammakaristos (H. Belting et al., *Pammakaristos*, p. 49, colour pl. II, fig. 40), in Manasija (B. Živković, *Manasija*, sch. 1), as well as in the Church of St. Nicholas Philantropinon in Ioanina.

³⁰ It appears in Gračanica (Lj. D. Popovich, *Four Prophet Cycles*, sch. IV/ p. 302, B. Todić, *Gračanica*, fig. 13), as well as in the Church of the Virgin Hodegetria, Peć.

³¹ In the *Menaion for July*, see also A. Rahlfs, *Alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, p. 224 (130).

³² In the *Menaion for January*.

³³ He appears, for example, in the mosaics of Daphni, standing next to his disciple, Elisha.

theophany of the Baptism, and a as figure of Resurrection, as well. Elijah's Ascension was read in a typological key by Gregory of Nazianzus in the Sermon dedicated to the Baptism³⁴, the chariot of fire that rose Elijah to heaven being interpreted as a prefiguration of the Baptism light. In the same way, Gregory of Nyssa, commenting the episode of the *Sacrifice of Elijah* evokes the image of the fire which consumes the water on Elijah's altar (3 Kings 18, 38), as a prefiguration of the Baptism³⁵. The crossing of river Jordan before the Ascension of the prophet is evoked by Cyril of Ierusalem in his Baptism Catechesis³⁶. Elijah's Ascension after *passing* the Jordan is there with a typology of Christ's Ascension after *spending* three days in the tomb.

The next depicted prophet is Haggai. On his scroll we find a quotation which is not part of the Old Testament readings of the liturgical year, and The Painter's Book of Dionysius of Fourna does not contain it either: "And in this place I will give peace, says the Lord Almighty, even [peace of mind for an acquisition to everyone who creates to raise up this shrine.]"³⁷, Haggai 2, 9. The observation concerning this inscription refers, on one hand, to its last segment³⁸, which does not appear in the Hebrew version of the prophecy of Haggai, and is, as already noted, an addition to the Greek translation of the Septuagint³⁹.

On the other hand, the passage (if considered entirely) corresponds to one of the main categories of topics associated to the prophets in dome area: "The House of the Most High". So far, we could not identify the same inscription in another dome program. We consider the frescoes of the monastery of St. Nicolas in Toplica (1536/37), in the region of Demir Hisar (Macedonia)⁴⁰, where prophet Haggai appears next to Habakkuk in the *Crucifixion* scene and bears a scroll inscribed with the same verse from Haggai 2, 9.

Neither were we able to identify the text of Obadiah's scroll as part of liturgical readings of any of the church feasts⁴¹: "But on Mount Sion there shall be

³⁴ Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 38–41*, Sermon sur le baptême, 40, 6, Sources Chrétiennes 384, Cerf 1992, p. 207, 209.

³⁵ Jean Daniélou, *Bible et liturgie. La théologie biblique des Sacraments et des fêtes d'après les Pères de l'Église*, Lex Orandi 11, Cerf, Paris 1951, p. 146–147.

³⁶ Idem, p. 148–149.

³⁷ Translation from: "A New English Translation of the Septuagint", Oxford 2007.

³⁸ The last part of the verse: *καὶ εἰρήνην ψυχῆς εἰς περιποίησιν παντὶ τῷ κτιζοντι τὸ ἄναστησαι τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον*–; translation after "A New English Translation of the Septuagint", Oxford 2007, David, L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: a Commentary*, Philadelphia, 1984, p. 69–70.

³⁹ David, L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: a Commentary*, Philadelphia, 1984, p. 69–70.

⁴⁰ Jehona Spahiu, "The Great Feasts Scenes in the monastery of Toplica", *Patrimonium.MK. Periodical for Cultural Heritage, Monuments, Restoration, Museums*, vol. 3, nr. 7–8 (2010), p. 341, fig. 8/p. 338; The repertory compiled by A.-M. Gravgaard notices the presence of a different verse of the 21th chapter of Haggai's prophetic book in the frescoes from Quaranlek Kilisse Göreme, Cappadocia (1020–1130); the inscription comprises here only the first part of the verse: "μεγάλη ἐστὶν ἡ δοξα τοῦ οἴκου τούτου (ν) ε(σ)χατη (υ)περ τὴν πρώτην" (A.-M. Gravgaard, *Inscriptions*, p. 21, p. 93).

⁴¹ As shown also by the documents studied by Alfred Rahlfs, A. Rahlfs, *Die Alttestamentlichen Lektionen*.

salvation, and it shall be holy and⁴² the Lord...her⁴³ (cf. Obadiah 1, 17)⁴⁴. The image of Mount Sion reappears throughout the Old Testament as a symbol of hope and salvation promised by the Lord to His people, thereby easily finding its place among the prophecies displayed in the dome area⁴⁵. It is maybe worth mentioning that, in the iconographic program of the exonarthex of St. Nicholas' church at the Probota monastery (1532)⁴⁶, prophet Obadiah bears the same message in the iconographic context of the Last Judgement.

As for prophet Jonah, it is the same passage, accompanying him in most Byzantine mural programs, that we find also in the Moldavian church of St. George: "I cried out to the Lord my God in my affliction"⁴⁷ (Jonah 2, 2 /2, 3). As the image of Jonah in the belly of the whale became almost an iconic representation for the prophet in Christian art, the same happened with the text-image connection, which has gained the same popularity. In the iconographic context of the dome, prophet Jonah is almost constantly bearing the same quotation.⁴⁸ This was also helped by the fact that Jonah 2, (3)-11 is the sixth Biblical Canticle, which is read on the Great Saturday's Vesper, celebrated together with the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great. On this occasion, the Book of Jonah is read entirely, being interpreted as a prefiguration of Christ's Resurrection⁴⁹.

⁴² In the Septuagint it follows "... and *the house* of Iakob shall take possession of those who took possession of them. And *the house* of Iakob shall be a fire".

⁴³ A New English Translation of the Septuagint, Oxford 2007.

⁴⁴ There is a verse of similar content in Joel's prophecy "And it shall come to pass that all who call upon the name of the Lord; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said" (Joel 2, 32/ Joel 3, 5) which in some of the old lecture systems (namely in the Lectionary of Jerusalem) analyzed by A. Rahlfs appears as a lecture of the Sunday of the Pentecost. A. Rahlfs, *Die Alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, p. 227 (133) In the Pentecostarion, the lecture from Joel (2, 23–32), stops at the first half of line 2, 32. The same for the Wednesday of the fourth Week of Lent.

⁴⁵ The same passage appears on the scroll of prophet Obadiah, in the dome of the Church of the Pammakaristos in Istanbul (H. Belting *et alii*, *Pammakaristos*, fig. 40, and p. 49); other passages that mention Mount Sion appear in San Marco, Venice: Obadiah 1, 21 (A.-M. Gravgaard, *Inscriptions*, p. 19) and in the Parma Baptistery: *Amos 1, 2* (K. Maxwell, *Parma Baptistery*, p. 183, nt.19/p. 184).

⁴⁶ The year 1532 was generally accepted as a *post quem* date for the mural decoration; it was proposed by the study of Sorin Ulea, "Portretul funerar al lui Ion – un fiu necunoscut al lui Petru Rareș – și datarea ansamblului de pictură de la Probota", *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei*, 1959, nr. 1.

⁴⁷ "A New English Translation of the Septuagint", Oxford 2007.

⁴⁸ This passage appears on the scroll held by prophet Jonah in the mosaics at Daphni (P. Lazarides, *Monastery of Dafni*, see the illustrations), in Arilje (B. Živković, *Arilje*, pl. 3), in the Church of SS. Joachim and Anna of the Studenica Monastery, in Church of St. Nikita, Skopje, before 1316 (Lj. D. Popovich, *Four Prophet Cycles*, p. 288 and sch. II/p. 300), in Ravanica (M. Belović, *Ravanica*, img. XXV, p. 248), in the frescoes of Dečani, before 1350 (Miodrag Marković, "Fresco Program in the Dome" [in Serbian], in *Mural Painting of the Dečani Monastery, Material and Studies*, V.J. Đurić [ed.], Belgrad 1995, fig.9), in the Fejjiye Kamii (Pammakaristos), Istanbul (H. Belting *et alii*, *Pammakaristos*, fig. 63), in Kalenic, 1420 (D. Simić-Lazar, *Kalenic*, fig. 10 and p. 48) and in the Church of the Transfiguration at Meteora (Manolis Chatzidakis, "Recherches sur le peintre Théophane le Crétois", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 1969–1970, nr. 23–24, fig. 87).

⁴⁹ It is included in the Orologion and in the Triodion; for the lecture, see also A. Rahlfs, *Alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, p. 134 (40), p. 159(65), p. 167 (73), p. 227 (133).

The inscription on Ezekiel's scroll ("then from the eighth day onward [the priests] shall [offer upon the altar]", Ezekiel 43, 27) is part of a fragment of the prophet's book, associated commonly to the feasts of the Theotokos. It is read on the Vespers service of the Nativity of the Mother of God, on the Annunciation, Presentation and Dormition of the Theotokos⁵⁰. Including this passage among the prophecies next to the Pantocrator directs the attention from the prefiguration of the Theotokos, which the passage comprises (the *altar* in the verse), upon the signification of the "eighth day", evoked in the beginning of the quotation. In the vision of the Church's Fathers, it is the day when all temporal order is replaced by the eschatological order, "the day without end which will know neither evening nor tomorrow"⁵¹. The eighth day is referred to as the beginning of the one and eternal day, which will succede the corruptible time which consumes itself in the seven days-cycle⁵².

The prophets' cycle continues on the same iconographic level with the portrait of prophet Joel, who bears the following text: "Thus saith the Lord⁵³, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh", (Joel 2, 28/ Joel 3,1), which is included in the Pentecostarion, together with a passage of similar content from the book of Ezekiel (Ez. 36, 24), and is part of the Old Testament readings of the Great Vesper, celebrated in the Eve of Pentecost⁵⁴. During the celebration of prophet Joel on October 19th, the topics of the Descent of Holy Spirit and that of Eschaton reappear. Besides Joel 2, 28⁵⁵, there are other passages from Joel included in the program of the domes in Byzantine art, all referring to one of the topics evoked during the prophet's celebration day⁵⁶. We should also note the rendering of Joel 3,

⁵⁰ In the Menaion for September and in the Menaions for November and March; in the 17th century Βίβλος έναύσιος Εβδομαδαρια, Πανθέκτη καλείται (Nikolaos Glykei, Venice 1796) there is another lecture from Ezekiel on November 21, on the feast of the Presentation of the Mother of God; See also: A. Rahlfs, *Alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, p. 230 (136) and Dosoftei, *Parimiile preste an. Iasi 1683*, Mădălina Ungureanu (ed.), Ed. Univ. Alexandru Ioan Cuza, Iași 2012, translated into Romanian after either a Greek Προφητολόγιον or its Slavonic version, the Parimijnik- both sources mentioning Ezekiel 43, 27; the *Hermeneia* of Dionysius of Fourna does not indicate this passage in relation to the feasts of the Theotokos or to other representations of the Mother of God.

⁵¹ „...δι' ἑαυτῆς ἐμφανίζουσα, τὴν μετὰ τὸν χρόνον τοῦτον κατάστασιν, τὴν ἄπαστον ἡμέραν, τὴν ἀνέσπερον, τὴν ἀδιάδοχον, τὸν ἄληκτον ἐκείνον καὶ ἀγήρω αἰῶνα.”, Basil of Caesarea, *Sur le Saint Esprit*, Sources Chrétiennes 17 bis, Cherf 1968, p. 486 (193B 75).

⁵² “Πᾶσα γὰρ ἐπιμέλεια τῆς ἐναρέτου ζωῆς πρὸς τὸν ἐφεξῆς αἰῶνα βλέπει, οὗ ἡ ἀρχὴ ὁδὸς λέγεται τὸν αἰσθητὸν διαδεξαμένη χρόνον τὸν ἐν ἑβδομάδι ἀνακυκλούμενον”, Grégoire de Nysse, *Sur les titres des Psaumes*, Deuxième partie, V, 35, Cerf 2002, p. 299, 298 and p. 298, 300.

⁵³ This introductory formula was added in order to integrate the passage in the specific context of the liturgical book.

⁵⁴ In the Pantekostarion; see also A. Rahlfs, *Die alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, p. 227 (133); the *Hermeneia* of Dionysius of Fourna recommends the prophecy to be written next to the Pentecost scene.

⁵⁵ Which we find in the Church of Panaghia Olympiotissa at Ellasson (see E. Constantinides, *Olympiotissa Ellasson*, p. 103), in Kalenić (see D. Simić-Lazar, *Kalenić*, p. 47), in San Marco, Venice and on Mount Athos, in the Docheiariou monastery (1568) – on the arches of the vault (see A.-M. Gravgaard, *Inscriptions*, p. 67–68).

⁵⁶ *Joel 2,21* at Fethiye Camii or Pammakaristos church in Istanbul (H. Belting et alii, *Pammakaristos*, p. 49 and fig.35), *Joel 2, 12* in Dečani (M. Marković, *Fresco Program*, fig.7); *Joel 2, 23* in Daphni (A.-M. Gravgaard, *Inscriptions*, p. 67; P. Lazarides, *Daphni*, illustrations).

1 in the same iconographic context mentioned before in the case of Daniel, namely in the depiction of the Last Judgement in the exonarthex of the Probota church. Here, however, the passage is attributed to Zephaniah.

The quotation written on Malachi's scroll extends the series of prophecies in the dome area by a praise of the Lord: "Great is the Lord, beyond the borders of Israel" (Malachi 1, 5) – passage which can be found also in earlier Byzantine domes⁵⁷. Next to him, prophet Zechariah bears a message from his own prophecy, more difficult to interpret both in its originary context, and in the semantic context of the dome program: "Then the Lord showed me Joshua the high priest" (*cf.* Zechariah 3,1). The absence of the word "Lord" from the biblical text⁵⁸ and the uncertain identity of the person called "Joshua" are the reasons for which commentators of this passage have reported an ambiguity to it⁵⁹. Placing this passage in the context of the prophetic message displayed on the high surfaces of the dome, next to the Pantocrator, could suggest, we may assume, an allusion to the theme of Christ's priesthood, referred to by the seventh and eighth chapters of St. Paul's *Epistle to Hebrews*, as of a new priesthood that will replace the older one, and upon which the New Covenant was established⁶⁰.

An unusual occurrence in this first group of prophets is the figure depicted to the left of Zechariah, and which is identified by the inscription as NABOYΘEAC [Ναβουθα]. Properly, Naboth is not a prophet and we are not aware of another depiction of him among a group of prophets, either in the dome or in another iconographical context. The episode of Naboth's vineyard and his killing through a plot, arranged by the wife of king Ahab of Samaria, is narrated in the 21th chapter of the First/Third *Book of Kings* and evoked during the liturgical celebration of prophet Elijah, on July 20th, among other episodes of the prophet's life, meant to present him as a forerunner of Christ. The text inscribed on the scroll held by Naboth in the frescoes of St. George's church in Suceava was not taken from the *Book of Kings*, but inspired from the prophecy of Isaiah: "the day of the Lord with wrath..." (Isaiah 13, 9)⁶¹. The fact itself is not unusual, as it has been demonstrated⁶²; it

⁵⁷ The text is present in the dome of the Saints Apostles church in Thessaloniki (H. Belting *et alii*, *Pammakaristos*, fig. 118) and in the drum of the Holy Trinity church of Manasija (B. Živković, *Manasija*, sch.I); it is not mentioned by the Hermeneia.

⁵⁸ "Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord" (Zechariah 3,1).

⁵⁹ D.L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah* 1–8, p. 188.

⁶⁰ "For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well" (Hebrews, 7, 12), "But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises." (Hebrews 8, 6).

⁶¹ "Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the earth a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it" (Isaiah 13, 9). In the Moldavian mural painting the same inscription can be found in the drum of the St. Cross church at Pătrăuți (before 1496), on the scroll held by Isaiah (in a version closer to the biblical one), and also in the Church of St. George (1496) of the Voroneț monastery, on Jeremiah's scroll.

⁶² Lj. D. Popovich, "Prophets Carrying Texts by other Authors in Byzantine Painting: Mistakes or Intentional Substitutions?" in *Recueil des travaux de l'Institut d'études byzantines* XLIV 2007, p. 234, n. 21/ p. 236, p 238–240.

is the extent and importance of the prophetic book of Isaiah that make it far better represented in the liturgical context, compared to the minor prophetic books, and thereby we sometimes encounter a transfer of quotations from Isaiah to other prophets in the iconography of the dome⁶³. The choice of this particular passage on the scroll of Naboth is not without significance: Naboth's name is evoked in connection to and in the context of the Lord's coming "day of wrath" and "righteous judgment"⁶⁴.

Prophet Daniel stands next to Naboth, holding a scroll on which an excerpt of his well-known vision is written: I, Daniel⁶⁵, I kept watching until [thrones] were set, [and an ancient of days sat]⁶⁶, Daniel 7, 9. One notes a large employment of this text in the Byzantine and post-Byzantine wall painting, particularly when prophet Daniel is depicted in a *Christological* context⁶⁷. The same Greek version of the passage is inscribed on Daniel's scroll in the large composition of the *Last Judgement* in the exonarthex of St. Nicholas' church of the Probota monastery⁶⁸.

The first cycle of prophets ends with Hosea who in the Moldavian church of St. George bears the inscription: "[the mountain] of the Lord Almighty, a holy mountain"⁶⁹, which is taken from Zechariah's prophecy (Zechariah 8, 3), a fact rather unusual for Hosea who generally bears messages of his own prophetic book⁷⁰. The passage, even if not an excerpt of Hosea's own prophecy, this directly

⁶³ For Is. 13,9, see the *Triodion, Friday of the Third Week of Lent, on the Sixth Hour service*; see also A. Rahlfs, *Die Alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, p. 228 (136), p. 130 (36). It is included in the *Parimiile preste an* in the translation of Dosoftei.

⁶⁴ "Riches serve no purpose in the *day of wrath*, but righteousness delivers from death." (Proverbs 11, 4)," But by your hard and impenitent heart you are gathering wrath for yourself on the *day of wrath*, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed." (Romans 2, 5).

⁶⁵ The introductory formula „I, Daniel" (*Ἐγὼ Δανιηλ*"), which is meant to emphasize the prophet's voice, does not appear in the Septuagint; instead, we find the same particularity of the same inscription at Sušica in St. Demetrius church: *ἐγὼ δανιηλ ἐθεωροῦν εἰς οὐ θρονῶν ἐτεθησαν καὶ παλαίος*), transcription after A.-M. Gravaard, *Inscriptions*, p. 25.

⁶⁶ *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, Oxford 2007.

⁶⁷ It appears in Manasija (B. Živković, *Manasija*, sch. I, in Poganovo (B. Živković, *Poganovo*, p. 12–13, p. 14), Lesnovo, 1346/47 (S. Gabelnić, *Lesnovo*, fig. 5), the church of the Mother of Hodegetria in Peć (see. n. 22), the church of Saint Demetrius at Marko's Monastery, Sušica, painted between 1366–1371 (A.-M. Gravaard, *Inscriptions*, p. 25) the church of St. Neofit, Cyprus, before 1183 (unspecified location of the inscription, A.-M. Gravaard, *Inscriptions*, p. 96), the Martorana church in Palermo, about 1143 (E. Kitzinger, *The Mosaics*, pl. 5); the given examples include only the representations of the prophet in the iconography of the dome/drum; the passage is not mentioned in the *Hermeneia* of Dionysius of Fourna.

⁶⁸ The passage can be found in the Moldavian Lectionary – *Parimiile preste an*, as a reading on December 17th, during the celebration of prophet Daniel, Dosoftei, *Parimiile*, p. 322.

⁶⁹ *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, Oxford 2007.

⁷⁰ He appears in Manasija (1406/7–1418), holding a message inspired by Hosea 3, 5 (B. Živković, *Manasija*, schema 1), in Ravanica, with the inscription: "What is [this] high place which I see/saw (M. Belović, *Ravanica*, p. 88) or in the Parma Baptistery with a quotation from Hosea 4, 6 (see K. Maxwell, "A Textual Source for the Prophet Zone of the Parma Baptistery Cupola" in *Acts of the XVIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Selected Papers*, Moscow 1991, vol. 3: Art History, Architecture, Music, Ihor Sevchenko, Gennady G. Litavrin (ed.), Byzantine Studies Press 1996, p.183, n. 19/p.184); The passage *Zaharia 8, 3* appears in Fethiye Kamii (Pammakaristos), Istanbul (1305–1310), on Zechariah's scroll (H. Belting et alii, *Pammakaristos*, fig. 40, pl. XII and p. 49).

refers to the Pantocrator in the dome (ὄρος κυρίου παντοκράτορος⁷¹), which justifies its rendering in this particular place within the iconographic programme.

A second group of figures, prophets and apostles, has been represented between the first prophets' cycle, which runs below it, and the Heavenly Liturgy depicted above. The figures of this group converge toward the central image of John the Baptist, placed in the Eastern part of the drum. In St. George's church, the Forerunner bears on his unfolded scroll the well-known passage, read on the proskomide service: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John, 1, 29)⁷².

His depiction in the middle of the Old Testament prophets is a common topic of the Byzantine iconography, based on exegetical and liturgical support and assumed, as we can see, by the post-Byzantine iconography⁷³. In St. George's church, John the Baptist is no longer flanked by prophets, but by apostles. Rendered in pairs of four on each side of the Forerunner, the apostles are aligned in the Eastern half of the drum. On the Baptist's left side, St. apostle Paul bears a closed Gospel in his hands. He is followed by Simon, James and Thomas, all holding opened scrolls. The text starting on Simons's scroll extends to James's and ends on the one held by Thomas⁷⁴ (see annex nr. 21, 22, 23). It is a fragment representing the beginning of St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy (2 Timothy 2, 2): "Timothy my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men..."

On John the Baptist's right side stands apostle Peter, bearing the opening line of the *First Epistle to Hebrews*. The passage, if read entirely, conveys the exegetical intention manifested in this particular segment of the iconographic program where prophets and apostles meet each other on the same level: "In many and various ways (God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world), Hebrews 1,1–2. The passage is read on Verspers before the celebration of the Nativity of the Lord.

⁷¹ Nr. 18 in the annex of inscriptions.

⁷² Nr. 19 in the annex of inscriptions.

⁷³ It appears, in the same place, in Lesnovo (Smiljka Gabelnić, *Lesnovo*, fig. 3), Kalenić (Simić-Lazar, *Kalenić*, p. 45, B. Živković, *Kalenić*, fig. 1), Ravanica (M. Belović, *Ravanica*, p. 254, fig. XXXVIII), Manasija (B. Živković, *Manasija*, sch. I). In the Moldavian mural painting we note the cases of Moldovița (the Forerunner appears between the prophets, in the drum of the dome) and Probota (the Forerunner in medallion, in the axis of the Western arch of the dome, with the beginning of the passage from John 1, 29).

⁷⁴ A similar system can be observed in the apsis of Râșca (painted in 1554), where a passage from the incipit prayer of the Cherubikon, written on the open scroll held by St. Gregory the Theologian is followed by a passage in close succession to the previous one, inscribed on the scroll held by St. Basil the Great, see Vlad Bedros, "Selecția sfinților ierarhi în absidele moldovenesti (secolele XV–XVI)", *Polichronion. Profesorului Nicolae-Șerban Tanașoca la 70 de ani*, București 2012, p. 68. Sharon Gerstel notices the system of a continuous prayer as a rarely employed one, even in the Byzantine and Balkan medieval wall painting; she mentions the examples found in the absis of St. Neophytos church in Cyprus, in the church of the Trinity, Sopočani, and in the crypt of St. Nicholas in Kambia, see Sharon Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries: Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary*, Seattle 1998, p. 33 and n.116/p. 119.

Next to Peter, St. Andrew, bears upon his scroll a message taken from St. Paul's *First Epistle to the Corinthians*: (I Corinthians 4, 9), "Brothers, God has exhibited us apostles [last of all...]", which is included in the Epistle Book (*Apostolos*) as a reading of the tenth Sunday after the Pentecost, but is also used in other liturgical contexts.

The following apostle is Bartholomew, who has been assigned the following passage: "Titus my son, the grace of God has appeared [for the salvation of all men]", taken from St. Paul's *Letter to Titus* (Titus 2, 11)⁷⁵. The passage is read at the Ninth Hour service on the Eve of the Baptism feast, and in the form employed herein, points to the Menaion book as its direct source⁷⁶. On his right side, Phillip, whose inscription couldn't be deciphered so far (see annex, nr. 31) closes the apostle's group.

The series of portraits continues on the Western half of the drum, with prophets selected from the Old Testament kings and patriarchs, prefiguring Christ's Incarnation. Among them appears prophet Samuel, who bears on his scroll a verse of Psalm 109 (110): "From the womb of the morning, like dew your youth will come to you" (Ps. 110, 3/109, 3). This passage is read at different times during the Nativity celebration: the third verse of Psalm 109 is read during the Sixth Hour service, on the Eve of Nativity, while during the Psalmody of the Ninth Hour and on the Liturgy of December 25th, Psalm 109 is read entirely. The same kind of thought, which intends an alignment of the iconography with the ceremonial practice, is reflected in the frescoes of the Holy Cross church in Pătrăuți, where prophet David, bearing on his scroll the third verse of Psalm 109, is depicted right above the Nativity scene.

On the left side of prophet Samuel, Elisha holds an unfolded scroll upon which an assertion belonging to Elijah has been inscribed: "Stay here, for the Lord has sent me (to Bethel)", 2 Kings/ 4 Kings 2,2; 2,4; 2,6⁷⁷. Although depicted on different iconographic levels, the two prophets are placed, accidentally or not, on the same axis, engaged in a "reversed" dialogue. Just as Elijah, whose disciple he was, Elisha is evoked in the patristic literature as a prophet of the Baptism. One of the typological images that such interpretations evoke is that of the ax of Elisha,

⁷⁵ Nr. 32 in the annex of inscriptions.

⁷⁶ It is included in the Menaion for January.

⁷⁷ Most iconographic representations (as well as the *Hermeneia*) assign the scriptural passage according to the biblical context: Studenica, Kraljeva Crkva (Lj. D. Popovich: *Four Prophet Cycles*, fig. 4 / 306 and fig. 5 / 307, schema 1 / 229), St. Nikita, Skopje (see Lj. D. Popovich: *Four Prophet Cycles*, schema 2 / 300 and 292–293), Staro Nagoričino (Lj. D. Popovich: *Four Prophet Cycles*, schema 3 / 301 and 292–293), Gračanica (B. Todić, *Gračanica*, final ill. 12, 13; Lj. D. Popovich, *Four Prophet Cycles*, schema IV / 302, 292–293), Church of the Hodegetria, Peć (see supra n. 26), Poganovo (see B. Živković, *Poganovo, Les dessins des fresques*, Belgrad 1986, fig. 1 / 12–1, 14). Other depictions present a situation similar to that in St. George's church in Suceava: Ravanica, for example, where Elisha bears an assertion which belongs to Elijah (see M. Belović, *Ravanica*, 202 and fig. 36). The reversed "dialogue" appears also in Poganovo (see B. Živković, *Poganovo, Les dessins des fresques*, Belgrad 1986, fig. 1 / 12–13 and 14).

floating on Jordan (4 Kings/ 2 Kings 6, 1–7) – a prefiguration the “Baptism of sins” through Christ’s Crucifixion on the wood timber of the cross⁷⁸.

Prophet Moses, holding in his right hand the symbol of the vessel, bears in the other an unfolded scroll upon which one reads the following fragment of the second biblical Canticle: “Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, [all Lord’s angels]”⁷⁹ (Deuteronomy 32,43). Because of its exceeding length (Deut. 32, 1–43) and its penitential character, the third biblical Canticle is included nowhere else but in the Canon of Triodion, being absent both from the poetical Canons of the Menaions and Octoechos, and from the other Old Testament readings throughout the liturgical year⁸⁰.

Therefore, the texts attributed to Moses vary significantly⁸¹, even when he is included in the group of prophets depicted next to the Pantocrator in the dome. One cannot say the same for another great figure of the Old Testament depicted in the dome of the Moldavian metropolitan church, which is king Solomon. The well-known passage of the Proverbs: “Wisdom has built her [house]” (Proverbs 9, 1) accompanies him in various iconographical contexts, and is the inscription most frequently associated to him in the iconography of the dome⁸². Just as varied as the iconographic context of the painted inscription are the liturgical frames which encompass it: The same passage is a pericopa read on the Vespers of the Wednesday of mid-Pentecost, on the Vespers before the Theotokos feasts (Birth of the Mother of God and Koimesis) and on the day of the Annunciation⁸³.

The most clear reference to Christ’s Incarnation from the Theotokos is comprised in Aaron’s text: “the rod of Aaron once sprouted”, a passage inspired by the biblical text⁸⁴, but taken actually from the Canon chanted on Matins service of

⁷⁸ This typological image is evoked by many comentators: Pseudo-Barnabas (*Testimonia*), Irenaeus of Lyon (*Adversus Haereses*), Tertullian (*Adversus Iudaeos*), St. Ambrose (*De mysteriis* and *De Sacramentis*), see J. Daniélou, *Bible et liturgie*, p. 150–151.

⁷⁹ The translation is adapted in order to render faithfully the text of the inscription.

⁸⁰ Makarios of Simonos Petra, *Triodul explicat. Mistagogia timpului liturgic [Triodion explained. The Mystagogy of Liturgical Time]*, Sibiu 2008, p. 187.

⁸¹ e. g. *Genesis I, I* in Daphni (see E. Kitzinger, *The Mosaics*, 140 and fig. 194), *Deuteronomy 10, 17* in Fethiye Kamii or the Pammakaristos church in Istanbul), *Acts 3:22*, paraphrase of *Deuteronomy 18:15* in Martorana, Palermo (see E. Kitzinger, *The Mosaics*, 140 and fig. 18), the *Deuteronomy 32, 1* (Canticles 2, 1) in Pătrăuți; the *Hermeneia* recommends the same fragment from the “Song of Moses”, Dionysius of Fourna, *Ερμηνεία*, ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameos.

⁸² The text appears in St. Clement church in Ohrid (<http://www.orthodoxy-icons.com/frescoes/107-the-frescoes-of-the-church-perivlepty-ohrid-macedonia-1295-part-iv.html>, 11.03.2014), in Ravanica (see M. Belović, *Ravanica*, 201 and fig. 30), in the Panaghia Olympiotissa in Elasson (see E. Constantinides, *Olympiotissa Elasson*, Vol I, 101 and E. Constantinides, *Olympiotissa Elasson*, Vol II, 16), in the church of the Hodegetria, Peć, (see supra n. 26); the passage is recommended also by the *Hermeneia* (Dionysius of Fourna, *Ερμηνεία*, ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameos, 80); the same text is inscribed on king Solomon’s scroll in the dome of Voroneț, while in the frescoes of Pătrăuți another fragment of the Proverbs has been selected (Prov. 10, 31); in Moldovița (1537), Solomon carries a fragment of the Psalm 131, 8.

⁸³ See also A. Rahlfs, *Die Alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, 224 (130), 158 (64), 224 (130).

⁸⁴ “The rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and put forth buds and produced blossoms” (Numbers 17, 8).

the feast of the Presentation of the Mother of God: “the rod of Aaron once sprouted, prefiguring the Holy birth of the Lord” (see annex, nr. 28).

For now, the prophet depicted on the left side of Aaron remains unidentified. He is followed by Gideon, holding an unrolled scroll upon which one reads the generic introductory formula “Thus speaks the Lord” (see annex, no. 30)

A first noticeable aspect of the arrangement of prophets in the drum of the Serbian churches – to which we can relate the Moldavian case of St. George – is that they are usually segregated in the iconographic renderings, according to their statute: the kings and patriarchs of Old Testament appear on the one side, the prophets “by vocation” on the other. This formula is used in Arilje, as well as in Kalenić, where prophets holding inscribed scrolls are rendered below the group of kings and patriarchs which, instead, do not bear inscribed messages. It is the same premise reflected by the 16th century frescoes at Moldovița in a small cycle. The prophets, depicted on a single range, converge toward John the Baptist in a defined order: Melchisedec, Moses and Aaron are placed next to the Forerunner, on his right side, while Aaron and David are on his left side. Among the major prophets, Daniel and Isaiah are represented on the right side, while Jeremiah and Ezekiel appear symmetrically on the left. Smaller prophets and other Old Testament figures follow, completing the group.

The particularity of the iconography encountered in the former metropolitan church of Suceava lies in abandoning this formula, emphasizing instead the East-West symbolism of the drum, by representing the apostles – witnesses of the New Covenant – on the same level with the Old Testament prophets, in close proximity of the Prodomos. The eight depicted apostles occupy the Eastern half of the drum, facing the messengers of Christ’s Incarnation, who are rendered on the Western half of the drum (see fig. 1).

Except St. Apostle Paul, whose Gospel is closed, all the other apostles hold unfolded scrolls upon which fragments of the Epistles have been inscribed, all proclaiming the descending of grace and of the New Covenant. In their close proximity, the messianic subjects carried by the Old Testament prophets, assigned to the vigil which precedes the main liturgical feasts, as well as to the preparatory weeks of the Lent, are regarded from the perspective of their fulfillment in the Gospels history. During the Vesper of the Holy Saturday an important number of Old Testament lectures are read⁸⁵. Significantly, according to the ancient Typic of Easter vigil⁸⁶, the Old Testament lectures were read until midnight. After this moment, which represents the threshold beyond which Easter Sunday begins, the Old Testament readings are replaced by New Testament lectures.

Looking above at the first group of prophets, one notices that most of texts lend to an interpretation which inclines toward a different paradigm: the

⁸⁵ See also F. Mercenier, G. Bainbridge, *La prière des églises de rite byzantin. II. Les Fêtes. L’Acatiste. La Quinzaine de Pâques. L’Ascension et la Pentecôte*, esp. p. 260–261.

⁸⁶ See A. Rahlfs, *Die Alttestamentlichen Lektionen*, 166 (72)–167 (73).

eschatological message of the program. Topics found on the prophets' scrolls encourage such an interpretation. We remark the often-evoked Day of the Lord, as well as God's promise of salvation.

The idea of the Second Parousia becomes even clearer in relation to the message inscribed around the Pantocrator, in the center of the cupola: "I, God and Judge of all leaning down from on high before the Judgment [I advise you to obey my laws, whoever wishes to escape the tortures]⁸⁷. The passage, which is not an exact biblical quotation, rewords the commandment God addresses to his people through the prophets, throughout the Old Testament⁸⁸.

This particular choice of a statement wherein God asserts his authority as omnipotent fearful judge, although not a very widespread one, it is related by meaning and by the specific direct speech formula to the inscriptions commonly found in Byzantine and post-Byzantine domes⁸⁹. When appearing, these inscriptions reveal in a specific way the function and meaning of Christ's icon, visible from the place under the dome, when the worshiper is found on the same axis with the Lord above⁹⁰: it is God Almighty, Christ Pantocrator revealing himself, making himself visible to man and uniting man to himself.

The manifold of nuances contained in the iconographic program of the central dome of the Byzantine church is due to the interference of celestial and liturgical symbolism, present there since the beginning⁹¹. In late and post-Byzantine domes, this predisposition has not disappeared, but, as already noted, it became more visible along with the multiplication of the painted zones in the drum⁹². The iconographic program depicted in the dome of St. George's Church in Suceava unfolds the same kind of interference, not only by its iconographic conception, but also by means of the painted inscriptions that accompany the representations.

⁸⁷ [E]ΓΩ ΘC [TE KAI KPITHC] ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΠΙCΑ [O ΙΔΟΥ ΠΡ]ΟΚ[ΥΨΑC Υ]ΨΩΕ [... Δ]ΙΚΗC [...], the continuation of which, I have rendered by comparison with the inscription found in the church of St. Nicholas Filantropinon, Ioannina (1542), see Athanassios Semoglou, *Le décor mural de la chapelle athonite de Saint-Nicolas (1560): application d'un nouveau langage pictural par le peintre thébain Frangos Catellanos*, doctoral thesis, Lille: A.N.R.T. 1996, p. 54, n. 105; another possible continuation of the inscription is: "...showing myself from above before the judgement, I order you only My laws to keep. And if you do not mark My words, I shall sentence you to hell" (as in the chapel of St. Nicholas at the Lavra monastery, Mount Athos, 1560) see, Heinrich Brockhaus, *Die Kunst in den Athos-Klöstern*, Leipzig, 1891, p. 274.

⁸⁸ Leviticus 18, 4–5; Leviticus 20, 8, Ezekiel 20, 19 or Hebr. 12, 23.

⁸⁹ See Carmelo Capizzi, *ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ. Saggio d'esegesi letterario-iconografica*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 170, Pont. Inst. Orient. Stud. Rome, 1964, Part 2, Appendix.

⁹⁰ Thomas F. Mathews, "The Transformation Symbolism in Byzantine Architecture and the Meaning of the Pantokrator in the Dome", in ed. Rosemary Morris, *Church and People in Byzantium*, Twentieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Manchester 1986.

⁹¹ "L'introduction de la coupole dans cet edifice [the basilica] superpose à une symbolique eucharistique et théophanique, une symbolique celeste...", "la coupole conserve son sens celeste; mais son programme iconographique n'évolue que par l'apport de themes novateurs issus de l'abside". S. Dufrenne, *Les programmes iconographiques des coupoles*, p.199; See also J.-M. Spieser, "Les programmes iconographiques des églises byzantines après l'iconoclasme" in *L'Image et la production du sacré*, Paris, Méridiens Klincksieck, 1991, p. 126–128.

⁹² S. Dufrenne, *Les programmes iconographiques des coupoles*, p. 197–199.

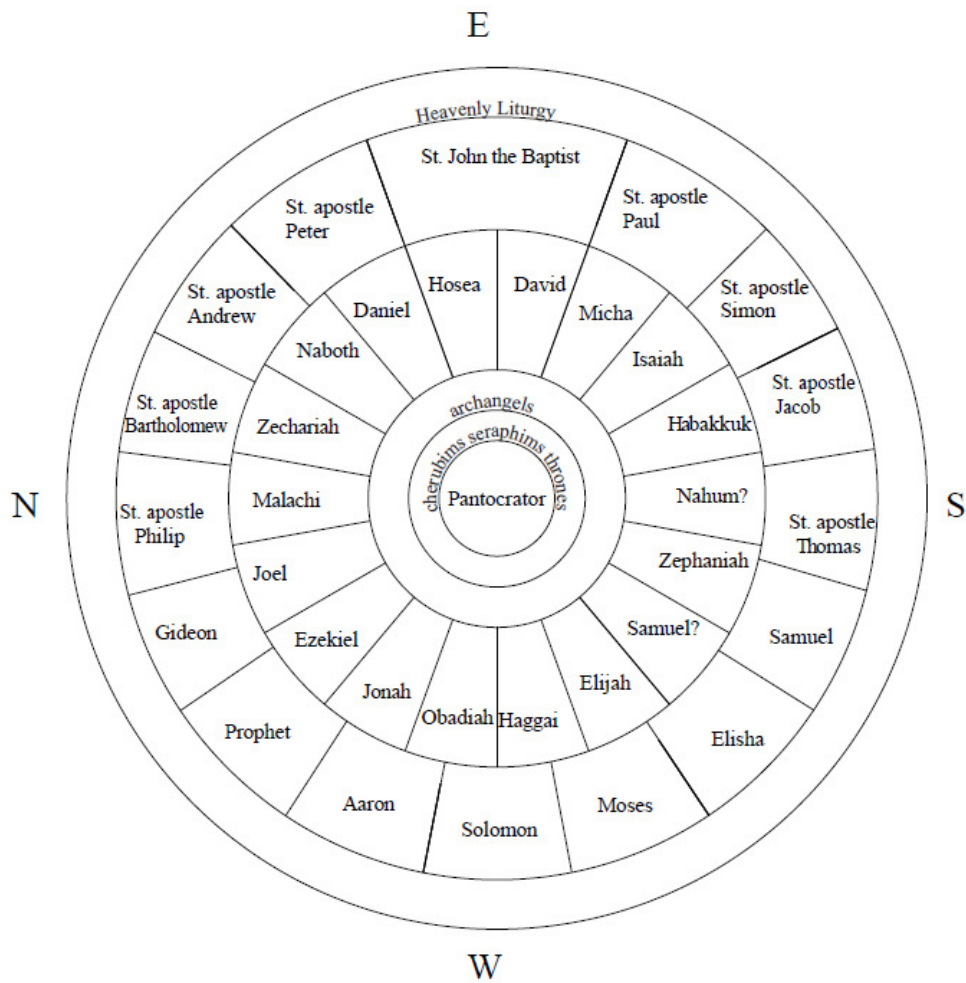


Fig. 1, Dome of St. George's Church, Suceava

ANNEX
List of inscriptions

1. Prophet David, $\text{πρ}\hat{\kappa}$ $\Delta\text{Α}\hat{\Delta}$: ΕΙΓΙΑC/Ε ΤΟ C/ΚΗΝΟ/ΜΑ ΑΥ/ΤΟΥ Ο/ΥΨΙC/ΤΟC Ο/Θ̄C ΕΝ/ ΜΕCΟ/ ΑΥΤΗC/ ΚΕ ΝΜΕ/), *Ἥγίασε(ν) τὸ σκῆνωμα αὐτοῦ ὁ ὕμνιστος. ὁ θ<εὸ>ς ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῆς καὶ λ.* (Psalm 45, 5–6)⁹³

2. Prophet Micah, $\text{πρ}\hat{\tau}\text{ο}\kappa$ $\mu\text{ι}\chi\text{Ι}\alpha$: ΤΑΔΕ ΛΕ/ Κ̄C CHN/ ΤΗΝ CHN/TΕΤΡΙ/MΕΝΗ/ ΚΕ ΤΗΝ ΑΜ/ΕΝΗΝ/ ΕΙCΔΕΞΕ/ΜΕ ΚΕ/ ΟΥ ΑΠΟ/CΑΜΕΝ/, *Τάδε λέ<γει> κ<ύριο>ς, συν<άξω> τὴν συντετριμμένην καὶ τὴν (ἐξωσ)μένην εἰσδέξ(ο)μ(αι) καὶ οὐ(ς) ἀπωσάμ(η)ν.* (Micah 4,6)

3. Prophet Isaiah, $\text{πρ}\hat{\kappa}$ $\text{Ι}\sigma\alpha\text{Ι}\alpha$: ΑΚΟΥ/Ε ΟΥΡΑΝΕ ΚΕ/ ΕΝΟΤΗ/ΖΟΥ Η ΓΗ/ ΟΤΗ/ Κ̄C ΕΛΑ/ΛΙCΕΝ/ ΥΟΥC/ ΕΓΕΝΗ/CΑ ΚΕ/ ΙΨΟC/Α ΑΥΤΗ/, *Ἄκουε, οὐρανέ, καὶ ἐνωτίζου, ἡ γῆ, ὅτι κ<ύριο>ς ἐλάλησεν· υἱοὺς ἐγέννησα καὶ ὕμῳσα, αὐτ(οῖ).* (Isaiah 1,2)

4. Prophet Habakkuk, $\text{πρ}\hat{\kappa}$ $\alpha\beta\alpha\kappa\upsilon\kappa\omega\mu$: ΕΚΑΛΗ/ΨΕΝ Ο/PANOC/ Η ΑΡΕΤΗ/ ΑΥΤΟΥ/ ΚΕ ΤΕC/ ΕΝΕCΕ/ΟC ΑΥΤΟΥ/ ΠΑΙΡΗC Η/ ΓΗ ΚΕ ΦΕΓΓ/ΟC ΑΥΤΟΥ, *Ἐκάλωνγεν οὐρανοὺς ἡ ἀρετὴ αὐτοῦ, καὶ τῆς αἰνέσεως αὐτοῦ πλήρης ἡ γῆ καὶ φέγγος αὐτοῦ* (Habakkuk 3, 3–4)

5. Prophet Nahum?, $\text{πρ}\hat{\kappa}$ $\eta\alpha\upsilon\mu$: blurred inscription

6. Zephaniah:[...]/[.] ΠΟ/ΜΕ ΕΙC/ ΜΕC ΑΝΑ/CTACIOC/ ΜΟΥ ΟΙC ΜΑΡΤΗΡΗΟΝ ΜΟΥ/, [...] *[ὕ]πόμε[ινόν] εἰς [ἡ]μέραν] ἀναστάσεώς μου εἰς μαρτύριον μου.* (Zephaniah 3, 8)

7. Prophet Samuel/Amos?, $\text{πρ}\hat{\kappa}$ $[\epsilon]\alpha\mu\omega\eta[\lambda]$: ΥΛ.../N.../...Κ̄C/..Α Κ Λ.../.../Λ...TC/..P ΙΨ..)

8. Prophet Elijah, $\text{πρ}\hat{\delta}\kappa$ $\eta\lambda\iota\alpha$: ΖΗ Κ̄C ΚΕ/ ΖΗ Η ΨΥΧ/ ΜΟΥ [ΕΙ./ ΕΓΑ[ΤΑ]/ΛΟΠΟ/ CΕ; *Ζῆ κ<ύριο>ς καὶ ζῆ ἡ ψυχὴ μου, [εἰ] ἐκατα(ε)ύμω σε.* (2 Kings/ 4 Kings 2, 2; 2, 4 or 2, 6)

9. Haggai, $\text{πρ}\hat{\delta}\kappa$ $\eta\kappa\kappa\alpha\iota$: ΚΕ[...]/Τ [...] [Τ]/ΟΥΤΟ Δ/ΟCΩ ΗΡΗ/ΝΗΝ ΛΕΓ ΚC/ ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑ/ΤΟΡ ΚΕ ΗΡ/, *καὶ [ἐν τῷ τόπῳ] [τ]οὔτω δώσω εἰρήνην, λέγ<ει> κ<ύριο>ς παντοκράτωρ καὶ εἰρ(ήνην).* (Haggai 2, 9)

10. Prophet Obadiah, Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗC ΑΥΔΙΟΥ: ΕΝ ΤΟ ΟΡΕΙ/ CΙΩΝ ΕC/ΤΑΙ Η C̄ΡΙ/ ΚΑΙ Ο Κ̄C Π/ΕΙ ΑΥΤΙΝ, *Ἐν τῷ ὄρει Σιων ἔσται ἡ σ<ωτη>ρί<α>, καὶ⁹⁴ ὁ κ<ύριο>ς αὐτήν.* (Obadiah 1, 17)

⁹³ We used "<>" for abbreviations, "[]" for completing the existing gaps where possible, and "()" for completing a word or phrasal on the basis of the source text, in order to render the sense of the passage.

⁹⁴ The text continues in a different way in the Septuagint: ...καὶ κατακληρονομήσουσιν ὁ οἶκος Ἰακώβ τοὺς κατακληρονομήσαντας αὐτούς.

11. Prophet Jonah, **πρ̂δκ ΙΩΝΑΣ**: ΕΒΟΗCΑ/ ΕΝ ΘΛΗΨΕΙ/ ΜΟΥ ΠΡΟC/ Κ̂Ν/ ΤΟΝ Θ̂Ν ΜΟΥ⁹⁵/, *Ἐβόησα ἐν θλίψει μου πρὸς κ<ύριο>ν τὸν θ<εὸ>ν μου.* (Jonah 2, 3)

12. Prophet Ezekiel, **πρ̂δκ ΙΕΖΕΚΙΗΛ**: БЪДЕ(Т) Ѡ(Т) Д/НЕ Ѡ(С)МАГО/ И ПРΟCΕΕ/Δ CЪТВОРИТЬ/ Ιερ/. (Ezekiel 43, 27)

13. Prophet Joel, Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΙΩΗΛ: ΤΑΔΕ ΛΕ/ΓΕΙ Κ̂C ΕΚΧΕ/Ω ΑΠΟ ΤΟΥ/ Π̂N̂C ΜΟΥ Ε/ΠΙ ΠΑCαν CΑΡ/ΚΑ, *Τάδε λέγει κ<ύριο>ς ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πν<εῦματό>ς μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα.* (Joel 3, 1)⁹⁶

14. Prophet Malachi, Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΜΑΛΑΧΙ: ΕΜΕΓΑΛΗ/ΘΗ Κ̂C ΥΠΕ/ΡΑΝΩ ΤΩΝ/ ΟΡΕΩΝ Ἰ/ΗΛ⁹⁷, *Ἐμεγαλύνθη κ<ύριο>ς ὑπεράνω τῶν ὀρέων (τοῦ) Ἰ<σρα>ηλ.* (Malachi 1, 5)

15. Prophet Zechariah, Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΖΑΧΑΡΙΑ: ΚΑΙ ΕΔΕΙΞΕ/ ΜΕ Κ̂C ΙΗCΟ/ΥΝ ΤΟΝ ΙΕΡΕ/Α ΤΟΝ ΜΕΓΑΝ/, *Καὶ ἔδειξέ(ν) μῆ⁹⁸ κ<ύριο>ς⁹⁹ Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἱερέα τὸν μέγαν.* (Zechariah 3,1)

16. Prophet Naboth, Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΝΑΒΟΥΘΕΑΣ: CΕ ΓΡΕ/ Δ̂ΗΝΟ/ ΓΑЖЕ/. (cf. Isaiah 13, 9)

17. Prophet Daniel, Ο ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΔΑΝΙΗΛ: ΕΓΩ Δ/ΑΝΙΗΛ/ ΕΘΕΟ//ΡΟΥΝ/ ΕΟ/С ΟΥ Ε/ΤΕΘΗ/, *Εγὼ Δανιηλ ἐθεώρουν ἕως ὄ(τε) ἐτέθη(σαν) καὶ παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν ἐκάθητο.* (Daniel 7, 9)

18. Prophet Hosea, ΟCΙΕ: ΤΟ [...]/ Κ̂Υ ΠΑΝ/ΤΟΚΡΑ/ΤΟΡΟC ΟΡΟC/ ΑΓΙΟΝ, *Τὸ [ὄρος] κ<υρίο>ν παντοκράτορος ὄρος ἄγιον.* (Zechariah 8, 3)

19. Saint John the Baptist, ΙΩΑ(ΝΕC): ΙΔΕ Ο ΑΜΝ/ΟC ΤΟΥ Θ̂Υ/ Ο ΑΙΡΟΝ/ ΤΕΝ ΑΜΑΡΤΙΑΝ/, *Ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θ<εο>ῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἀμαρτίαν (τοῦ κόσμου).* (John 1, 29)

20. St. Apostle Paul, **с̂т̂ы̂ павел**: with closed Gospel

21. St. Apostle Simon, **с̂т̂ы̂ симон**: ΤΕΚΝ/Ο ΤΕΜ/ΟΘΗ Ε/ΝΔΗ/ΝΑΜΟ/ ΕΝ ΤΕ, *τέκνο(ν) Τιμόθ(ε)¹⁰⁰, ἐνδυναμοῦ ἐν τῇ.* (2 Timothy 2, 1)

⁹⁵ This inscription and the following five Greek inscriptions are written more accurately than the previous ones (spits and accents are placed correctly).

⁹⁶ The introductory passage differs from the Septuagint, where the Lord's words are introduced by „Καὶ ἔσται μετὰ ταῦτα”. The formula in the painted inscription – „Τάδε λέγει κ<ύριο>ς” is a characteristic of the service books, where biblical passages are adapted in new contexts.

⁹⁷ The orthography of the word ΟΡΕΩΝ is, probably, the result of the confusion between ὀρέων (the genitive form of ὄρος = mountain) and ὀρίων (the genitive form of ὄριον = boundary; Septuagint: Ἐμεγαλύνθη κύριος ὑπεράνω τῶν ὀρίων τοῦ Ἰσραηλ). The same particularity occurs in the much earlier inscription in the St. Apostles church from Thessaloniki: ΕΜΕΓΑΛΥΝ/ΘΗ Κ<ΥΡΙΟ>C ΥΠ[Ε]ΡΑ/ΝΩ ΤΟΝ ΟΡΕ[Ω]Ν/ Ι<CΡΑ>ΗΛ ΥΙΟC ΔΟ/ΞΑΖΕΙ Π<ΑΤΕ>ΡΑ ΚΑΙ/ ΔΟΥΛ[ΟC] Τ[Ο]Ν Κ<ΥΡΙΟ>Ν ΑΥ[ΤΟΥ]/, (Malachi 1, 5–6), transcription after H. Belting *et alii*, *Pammakaristos*, fig. 118.

⁹⁸ Instead of the dative „μοι”, in the inscription appears the accusative „μη.

⁹⁹ The word κ<ύριο>ς does not appear in the Septuagint (*Καὶ ἔδειξέν μοι Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἱερέα τὸν μέγαν*).

¹⁰⁰ Septuagint: *τέκνον μου, ἐνδυναμοῦ ἐν τῇ χάριτι...*

22. St. Apostle Iacob, **στυ Πακο(β)**: ΧΑΡΗΤΗ/ ΤΕ ΕΝ/ ΧΥ¹⁰¹ ἼC/ ΚΕ ΑΓ ΗΚΟΥCΑ/C ΠΑ, *χάριτι τῇ ἐν Χ<ριστ>(ῶ) Ἰ<η>σ<οῦ>, καὶ (ᾧ) ἤκουσας πα(ρ')*. (2 Timothy 2,1-2)

23. St. Apostle Toma, **στυ Φομα**: ΜΟΥ ΔΙΑ/ ΠΟΛΟΝ/ ΜΑΡΤΗΡΟΝ/ ΤΑΥΤΑ/ ΠΑΡΑΘ/ΟΥ/, *(έμοῦ διὰ πολ(λ)ῶν μαρτύρων, ταῦτα παράθου.* (2 Timothy 2, 2)

24. Prophet Samuel, **πρδκ, σαμουηλ**: ΕΚ ΓΑ/CΤΡΟC/ ΠΡΟ Ε/ΟCΦΩ/ΡΟ ΕΓΕ, *Ἐκ γαστρὸς πρὸ ἐωσφόρο(υ) (ἐξ)εγέ(ννησά σε).* (Psalm109, 3)

25. Prophet Elisha, **πρδκ ελισεν**: ΚΑΘΟΥ/ ΔΗ ΕΝΤΑΥ/ΤΑ ΟΤΗ/ ΚΕ¹⁰² ΑΠΕ/CΤΑΛΚΕ/, *Κάθου δὴ ἐνταῦ(θ)α, ὅτι κύριος ἀπέσταλκέ(ν με ἕως Βαιθηλ).* (2 Kings/4 Kings 2,2; 2,4 or 2, 6)

26. Prophet Moses, **πρδκ μονί**: ΕΥΦΡΑΝ/ΘΥΤΕ Ο/ΡΑΝΟΗ/ ΑΜΑ ΑΥΤ/Ο ΚΕ ΠΡΟC/, *Εὐφράνθητε οὐρανο(ί) ἅμα αὐτ(ῶ) καὶ προσ(κυνησάτωσαν αὐτῶ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι θεοῦ).* (Deuteronomy 32, 43)

27. Prophet Solomon, **πρ(δ)κ εσολωμο(η)**: Η CΟ/ΦΗΑ ΕΚΩ/ΔΟΜ/ΗCΕΝ/ ΕΑΥ/, *Ἡ σοφία ἠκοδόμησεν ἑαυ(τῇ οἶκον).* (Proverbs 9, 1)

28. Prophet Aaron: ΚΑΙ Η ΡΑ/VΔΟC Α/ΑΡΟΜ/ ΗΒΛΑ/CΤΗCΑ/, *Καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος Ααρ(ων) ἐβλάστησεν.* (Numbers 17, 23)¹⁰³

29. Unidentified Prophet: ΕΓΩ Λ/ ΕΟΡΟC/ ΑΛΛΑ ΤΟ/ ΜΗ ΤΟΝ

30. Prophet Gideon, ΓΕΔΕΩΝ:ΤΑΔΕ/ ΛΕΓΕΙ/ Κ̄C ΔΗΑ ΜΕΤΑ/, *Τάδε λέγει κ<ύριο>ς...*

31. St. Apostle Philip, Ο ΑΓΙΟC ΦΥΛΙΠΠΙΟC: [..]ΤΕ/ ΗΜΕΡΕ/ ΕΚΗΝΕCΑΝ Ρ/

32. St. Apostle Bartholomew, Ο ΑΓΙΟC ΒΑΡΘΟΛΟΜΑΙΟC: ΤΕΚΝ/ ΤΗΤΕΕ/ ΕΠΕΦΑ/ΝΗ ΧΑ/ΡΗC ΤΟΥ/, *Τέκν(ον) Τ(ί)τε επεφάνη χάρις τοῦ (θεοῦ).* (Titus 2,11)¹⁰⁴

33. St. Apostle Andrew, ΑΝΔΡΕΑC: ΑΔΕΛΦ/ΟΙ Ο Θ̄C/ ΗΜ ΤΟΥC Α/ ΠΟCΤΟΛουc, *Ἀδελφοί ὁ θ<εδ>ς ἡμ(ᾶc) τοῖc ἀποστολόuc.* (1 Corinthians 4, 6 and 9)

34. St. Apostle Peter, ΠΕΤΡΟC: ΠΟΛΗΜΕ/ΡΟC ΚΑΙ Π/ΟΛΗΤΡΟ/ΠΙΟC, *Πολ(υ)μερῶc καὶ πολ(υ)τρόπωc (πάλαι ὁ θεὸc λαλήσας τοῖc πατράcιν ἐν τοῖc προφήταιc).* (Hebrews 1,1)

¹⁰¹ The genitive desinence (οῦ) appears instead of the dative desinence (ῶ).

¹⁰² The vocative (κύριε) appears instead of the nominativ (κύριος).

¹⁰³ Septuagint: „...καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐβλάστησεν ἡ ῥάβδος Ααρων...”; Menaion for November (Βιβλος ενιαυσιος Εβδομαδαρια, πανθεκτη καλειται, Ακολουθιαν, Nicolaos Glykis, Venice 1796): „...ἐβλάστησεν ἡ ῥάβδος ποτὲ τῷ Ααρων...”

¹⁰⁴ The direct addressing – Τέκνον Τίτε – appears in the Menaion (January Menaion, The Baptism of Christ, the Ninth Hour service) and, in the *Letter to Titus*, 1, 4.