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### The Greek Scribe Neophytos and the Oldest Attested Name for the Monastery of Panagia Archangeliotissa near Xanthi

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ΙΝΣΤΙΤΟΥΤΟ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΚΩΝ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ  
ΤΟΜΕΑΣ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΩΝ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ  
ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ



# BYZANTINA ΣΥΜΜΕΙΚΤΑ

BYZANTINA SYMMEIKTA

DOROTEI GETOV

THE GREEK SCRIBE NEOPHYTOS  
AND THE OLDEST ATTESTED NAME FOR THE MONASTERY  
OF PANAGIA ARCHANGELIOTISSA NEAR XANTHI

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DOROTEI GETOV

THE GREEK SCRIBE NEOPHYTOS AND THE OLDEST ATTESTED NAME FOR  
THE MONASTERY OF PANAGIA ARCHANGELIOTISSA NEAR XANTHI

Eight liturgical manuscripts, kept now in the library of *The Ecclesiastical Historical and Archival Institute* (EHAI) of the Patriarchate of Bulgaria in Sofia<sup>1</sup>, were copied by the monk Neophytos who is the subject of the present article. In addition to his scribal colophons, Neophytos wrote two dedication notes, transcribed below, which reveal how the monastery of Panagia Archangeliotissa was called in the 3rd quarter of the 16th century.

Discovered, numbered and paginated in 1907–1908 by Chrysostomos Chatzistaurov (1880–1968)<sup>2</sup>, and described briefly by him in 1912<sup>3</sup>, the manuscripts of Archangeliotissa as well as those of the nearby monastery of Panagia Kalamou were transferred to Sofia the very next year while Western Thrace was administered by Bulgarian civil and ecclesiastical authorities<sup>4</sup>. About sixty years later Linos Politis announced their rediscovery in the Ecclesiastical collection of Sofia<sup>5</sup>. Soon afterwards plans for comprehensive cataloguing of the Greek manuscripts in EHAI were drawn and a team of

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1. On this library see J.-M. OLIVIER, *Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits grecs de Marcel Richard* [Corpus Christianorum], Turnhout <sup>3</sup>1995, nos. 2217–2230.

2. Cf. P. GEORGANTZIS, *Συμβολή στην Έκκλησιαστική ιστορία της Ήρας Μητροπόλεως Ξάνθης και Περιθεωρίου*, Xanthi 2009, 905 with notes 1306, 1307.

3. CHR. CHATZISTAUROU, Κατάλογοι δύο τῶν Χειρογράφων τῶν ἐν Ξάνθῃ τῆς Θράκης ἱερῶν ἐνοριακῶν Μονῶν Παναγίας Ἀρχαγγελιωτίσσης καὶ Παναγίας Καλαμοῦς, *BZ* 21 (1912), 67–75 (repr. *Θρακικὰ Χρονικὰ* 30 (1973), 48–55) (= OLIVIER, *Répertoire*, no. 2480).

4. Between 1913 and 1919, in accordance with Article V of the Treaty of Bucharest – cf. *Traité de Paix entre la Bulgarie, la Grèce, le Monténégro, la Roumanie et la Serbie*, Sofia 1913, 6, 16.

5. L. POLITIS, Τὰ χειρόγραφα δύο μοναστηρίων τῆς Ξάνθης (Παναγίας Ἀρχαγγελιωτίσσης καὶ Παναγίας Καλαμοῦς), *Θρακικὰ Χρονικὰ* 33 (1977) (= OLIVIER, *Répertoire*, no. 2481), 15–18.

Greek scholars put in charge<sup>6</sup>. These plans have yet to materialize. Meanwhile, in 1997 the present author published a “Checklist” for this collection<sup>7</sup>, and has since then been working on a full descriptive catalogue of its ca. 210 Greek manuscripts<sup>8</sup>.

Thirty-three of them proved to come from the monastery of Panagia Archangeliotissa<sup>9</sup>. All except one served the liturgical needs of daily worship, and most were written in the 16th century – the earliest attested period for the monastery of Archangeliotissa. Copying in the third quarter of that century, a monk, named Neophytos, a professional scribe, produced the following of its manuscripts:

EHAI 321 (Arch.<sup>10</sup> 5)                      24 September 1558, paper, I + 444 pp., 310 x 210 (180 x 100) mm, col. 1, lines 20. Psalter (dated and subscribed on p. 444).

EHAI 387 (Arch. 19)                      30 March 1558, paper, 558 pp., 320 x 215 (205 x 60) mm, coll. 2, lines 27. Menaion for December (dated and subscribed on p. 556).

EHAI 388 (Arch. 8)                      16th c. (3rd quarter), paper, I + 398 pp., 310 x 215 (200 x 55) mm, coll. 2, lines 27. Menaion for June (identified by its *ductus*).

EHAI 392 (Arch. 20)                      31 October 1557, paper, I + 440 pp., 305 x 215 (200 x 60) mm, coll. 2, lines 27. Menaion for September (dated on p. 440).

6. Cf. G. STOGIOGLOU, Τὰ χειρόγραφα τῶν μονῶν τῆς Ξάνθης (Παναγίας Ἀρχαγγελιώτισσας καὶ Παναγίας Καλαμοῦς) στὸ Ἐκκλησιαστικὸ Μουσεῖο τῆς Σόφιας, in: *Κλεμμένα πολιτιστικὰ ἀγαθὰ τῆς Ἀνατολικῆς Μακεδονίας καὶ Θράκης. Ἡ ἐνεστῶσα κατάσταση καὶ τὸ νομικὸ καθεστῶς τῆς ἐπιστροφῆς (Ἡ συνάντηση τῆς Κομοτηνῆς 6/7 Μαΐου 1995), Πρακτικά*, G. K. ΠΑΡΑΖΟΓΛΟΥ (ed.) [Δημοκρίτειο Πανεπιστήμιο Θράκης, Θρακικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη 4], Komotini 1999, 76.

7. D. GETOV, *A Checklist of the Greek Manuscript Collection at the Ecclesiastical Historical and Archival Institute of the Patriarchate of Bulgaria* [“Ivan Dujčev” Centre for Slavo-Byzantine Studies University of Sofia “St. Kliment Ochridski”, Series Catalogorum 5], Sofia 1997.

8. This catalogue is nearing completion. Its first volume was published recently: D. GETOV, *A Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts at the Ecclesiastical Historical and Archival Institute of the Patriarchate of Bulgaria*, vol. I: *Bačkovo Monastery*, Turnhout 2014.

9. Authenticated manuscripts from the monastery τῆς Παναγίας Ἀρχαγγελιώτισσης: EHAI 175, 176, 297, 300, 314, 321, 383, 384, 387, 388, 392, 394–402, 412, 443, 452, 461, 467, 491, 495, 531, 546, 552, 575, 576, and 578. On the history and present state of the monastery itself see P. ΜΟΥΤΑΦΗΣ, *Τερὰ Μονὴ Παναγίας Ἀρχαγγελιώτισσης Ξάνθης*, Xanthi 2012, as well as GEORGANTZIS, *Συμβολὴ στὴν Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία*, 901–922.

10. Archangeliotissa, followed by the *olim*-number given in CHATZISTAUROU, *Κατάλογοι*.

EHAI 395 (Arch. 7) 16th c. (3rd quarter), paper, 460 pp., 300 x 215 (205 x 60) mm, coll. 2, lines 27. Menaion for October (identified by its *ductus*).

EHAI 399 (Arch. 6) 9 February 1558, paper, 564 pp., 315 x 215 (200 x 55) mm, coll. 2, lines 27. Menaion for November (dated and subscribed on p. 563).

EHAI 401 (Arch. 9) 30 August 1558, paper, 542 pp., 300 x 205 (205 x 55) mm, coll. 2, lines 27. Menaion for July (dated and subscribed on p. 539).

EHAI 575 (Arch. 13) 22 July 1558, paper, 896 pp., 315 x 200 (190 x 105) mm, col. 1, lines 21. Gospel Lectionary (dated and subscribed on p. 894).

Neophytos' career and background are obscure because he was very sparing in his subscriptions, giving only the date of completion, his name and title of monk, as in his scribal note of 22 July 1558, reproduced on Plate 2 here: + ἔτ(ους) ζ'ωξ'ωξ' ἐν μηνί ἰουλι(ίω) κβ: Νεόφυτος (μον) αχ(ό)ς:. He might have stayed in Archangeliotissa while working on codices commissioned by this monastery or its sponsors, or he might have pursued his professional scribal duties elsewhere. In any case, from published catalogues the monk Neophytos is known to have copied and subscribed in his very characteristic manner four Athonite manuscripts as well as one now in Ioannina, all of which I have not personally seen:

Athos, Dionysiou 303, "Εὐαγγέλιον" copied in 1555<sup>11</sup>,

Athos, Xiropotamou 122, "Εὐαγγέλιον" copied in 1559<sup>12</sup>,

Athos, Iviron 437, "Ἐφραῖμ τοῦ Σύρου λόγοι ξα'" copied in 1572<sup>13</sup>,

Athos, Vatopedi 952, "Εὐαγγέλιον" copied in 1571<sup>14</sup>,

11. SP. LAMPROS, *Κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς βιβλιοθήκαις τοῦ ἁγίου Ὁρους ἐλληνικῶν κωδίκων*, vol. I, Cambridge 1895 (= OLIVIER, *Répertoire*, no. 1097), 409 (no. 3837).

12. LAMPROS, *Κατάλογος*, vol. I, 207 (no. 2455) as well as EUDOKIMOS XIROPOΤΑΜΙΝΟΣ, *Κατάλογος ἀναλυτικὸς τῶν χειρογράφων κωδίκων τῆς βιβλιοθήκης τῆς ἐν Ἁγίῳ Ὁρει τοῦ Ἄθω ἱεράς καὶ σεβασμίας βασιλικῆς, πατριαρχικῆς καὶ σταυροπηγιακῆς Μονῆς τοῦ Ἐηροποτάμου*, Thessaloniki 1932 (= OLIVIER, *Répertoire*, no. 1141), 51.

13. LAMPROS, *Κατάλογος*, vol. II, Cambridge 1900, 146 (no. 4557).

14. S. EUSRATIADIS - ARKADIOS VATOPEDINOS, *Κατάλογος τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἱερᾷ Μονῇ Βατοπεδίου ἀποκειμένων κωδίκων* [Ἁγιορειτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη 1], Paris 1924 = *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts in the Library of the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mt. Athos* [Harvard Theological Studies 11], (= OLIVIER, *Répertoire*, no. 1122), 175, as well as S. N. KADAS, *Τὰ σημειώματα τῶν χειρογράφων τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μεγίστης Μονῆς Βατοπαιδίου*, Ἅγιον Ὁρος 2000, 172. This manuscript was identified as copied by our Neophytos in GEORGANTZIS, *Συμβολὴ στὴν Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ ἱστορία*, 914.

Ioannina, Archimandreo 13, “Ἐὐαγγέλιον” copied in 1549<sup>15</sup>.

For reasons of their own, in their repertory of scribes Marie Vogel and Victor Gardthausen listed under *two* Νεόφυτοι the first three Athonite codices above<sup>16</sup>. As a matter of fact, Neophytos’ books, being late and liturgical, seem not to have been of interest to the collectors for the major libraries in England, France, Italy, the Vatican, and his name is absent from the new *repertorium* of copyists<sup>17</sup>. Yet, it seems very likely that more of his work may survive in depositories on the Balkans and elsewhere than has yet been identified.

Reproduced here are one specimen of Neophytos’ formal script style (plate 1), and two of his more cursive dedication notes (plates 2 and 3). His handwriting is slightly right-inclined, in a deep brown ink with large, thick and round lettering on a generous page lay-out. It is traditional and archaizing in style, descending from the time-honored *Perlschrift* used for centuries in liturgical book-production. The degree of its aesthetic appearance is superior to that of most of his contemporaries or immediate predecessors. Neophytos was a calligrapher of ability. The internal harmony and rhythm of his script is formed by elegant diagonal currents produced by the descenders of χ, λ and ζ (plate 1, line 5) as well as by vertical currents through ι and ψ (plate 1, lines 1 and 2 *ab imo*). His letter forms are generally regular, with graceful curves, yet non-exuberant. Occasionally, one may notice enlarged letters such as κ (plate 2, line 4), uncial ζ (plate 1, line 9), φ (plate 2, line 3) and υ (plate 3, line 2). Some further scribal features are

15. SP. LAMPROS, Ἡπειρωτικά, Τὸ ἐν Ἰωαννίνοις Ἀρχιμανδρεῖον καὶ οἱ ἐν αὐτῷ κώδικες (= OLIVIER, *Répertoire*, no. 1208), *NE* 10 (1913), 411; K. N. KONSTANTINIDIS – G. N. MAUROMATIS – I. CH. NESSERIS, *Τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ Χειρόγραφα τῆς πόλεως τῶν Ἰωαννίνων. Κατάλογος ἔκθεσης*, Athens 2009, 28–29, with Plate IX.

16. M. VOGEL – V. GARDTHAUSEN, *Die griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* [Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen, Beiheft 33], Leipzig 1909 (= OLIVIER, *Répertoire*, no. 5), 333.

17. E. GAMILLSCHEG – D. HARLFINGER – H. HUNGER – P. ELEUTERI, *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten 800 –1600*. 1. Teil: *Handschriften aus Bibliotheken Grossbritanniens*. 2. Teil: *Handschriften aus Bibliotheken Frankreichs und Nachträge zu den Bibliotheken Grossbritanniens*. 3. Teil: *Handschriften aus Bibliotheken Roms mit dem Vatikan* [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik 3/1-3], Wien 1981, 1989, 1997.

shared by many copyists: superposition of τ in τὸ (plate 2, line 3); compendia for ὦν at line ends (plate 3, line 8); juxtaposition of ε (plate 1, line 16). One letter form, however, seems to be idiosyncratic (*Kennbuchstaben*) – that of initial or final ν with a crescent-like curve (plate 2, line 2 as well as plate 1, line 11).

Dedication notes by the hand of Neophytos in two manuscripts of Archangeliotissa indicate that these books were produced for the monastery of the Theotokos called Χαλχαλιώτισσα – presumably an allonym for Αρχαγγελιώτισσα. The first note appears on the last page of a manuscript copied by Neophytos himself in 1558 – EHAI 575 (Arch. 13), p. 894 (plate 2):

+ ἀφιερῶθ(η) τὸ θεῖον κ(αὶ) ἱερὸν εὐα(γγέ)λ(ιον) εἰς τὴν ἱ  
σεβασμίαν καὶ ἱερὰν μο(νὴν) τ(ῆς) ὑπ(ερα)γ(ίας) δεσποίν(ης) ἡμῶν  
θ(εοτό)κου τ(ῆς) ἐπικεκλημένης Χαλχαλιότησις ὑπὸ τῶν τιμιωτάτων  
καὶ συντεω(ι)τάτων ἀρχόν(των), κυροῦ Ἀργυροῦ καὶ κυροῦ ἱ Γεωργίου·  
εἰς μνημόσυν(ον) αὐτῶν, καὶ τῶν ἱ γονέ(ων) αὐτῶν καὶ εἴ τις βουληθεῖη  
ἐξῶσαι αὐτὸ ἢ ἐκ τῆς εἰρημ(ένης) μο(νῆς), ἐχέτω αὐτὸ(ς) ἀντίδικον, κ(αὶ)  
τὴν ὑπ(ερα)γ(ίαν) θ(εοτό)κον, ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, ἱ καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι·-

(The divine and holy *evangelion* was dedicated to the venerable and holy monastery of our most holy mistress the Mother of God, called Chalchaliotissa, by the most honorable and sensible *archontes kyr* Argyros and *kyr* Georgios in memory of themselves as well as of their parents. And if anyone would wish to remove the book from the above-mentioned monastery, may he have the most holy Mother of God, too, as his accuser in present as well as in future times).

Neophytos wrote one more dedication note on a blank page of a *Festal Menaion*, copied in 1557/58 by another scribe, Georgίος ἱερεὺς καὶ πρωτονοτάριος, a contemporary of his – EHAI 396 (Arch. 3), p. 208 (plate 3):

+ Τὸ παρὸν βιβλίον τὸ ἀνθολόγ(ον) ἱ ὑπάρχει τοῦ κυρ(οῦ) Μανουὴλ  
τοῦ ἱ Δημητρίου καὶ ἀφιέρωσ(εν) ἱ αὐτὸ εἰς τ(ῆν) μονὴν τ(ῆς) ὑπ(ερα)  
γ(ίας) θ(εοτό)κου ἱ τ(ῆς) ἐπικεκλημένης Χαλχαλιότησις εἰς μνημόσυνον  
ἱ αὐτοῦ, κ(αὶ) τῆς συμβίου αὐτοῦ ἱ Σοφίας· ἔτι δὲ κ(αὶ) τῶν γονέ(ων) ἱ  
αὐτοῦ κ(αὶ) εἴ τις εὐρεθεῖη ἱ ἀποξενῶσαι αὐτὸ ἐκ τῆς ἱ εἰρημ(ένης) μονῆς·  
κᾶν τε ἱ ἡγούμ(εν)ος κᾶν τε μοναχός ἱ κᾶν τε λαϊκός, ἡγουν κοσμίμικός,

ἔχέτω ἀντίδικον ἢ τ(ὴν) ὑπεραγί(αν) θε(οτό)κον ἐν ἡμέρ(α) ἢ κρ(ίσεως,  
κ(αὶ) τὰς ἀρὰς τ(ῶν) ἁγ(ίων) ἢ π(ατέ)ρων:-

(The present book, *anthologion*, belongs to *kyr* Manuel, son of Dimitrios, and he dedicated it to the monastery of the most holy Mother of God, called Chalchaliotissa, in memory of himself and of his wife Sophia as well as of his parents. And if anyone, whether *hegoumenos*, or monk, or lay – that is – worldly person, is found to have alienated the book from the above-mentioned monastery, may he have the most holy Mother of God as his accuser on the day of judgement as well as the curses of the holy Fathers).

Both notes were first transcribed by Chatzistaourou<sup>18</sup>, and republished and commented upon by regional historian Petros Georgantzis<sup>19</sup> as well as by archimandrite Panteleimon Moutaphis<sup>20</sup>. They are reproduced (plates 2 and 3) and transcribed here in order to correct a misreading of the word *Χαλχαλιώτισσα* as attested clearly on plate 2, lines 5-6, and again on plate 3, lines 5-6. The mistaken reading is due to Chrysostomos Chatzistaourou, the first cataloguer of the collection. Well-educated, yet palaeographically inexperienced at an age of less than 30, Chatzistaourou saw the second *χ* in *Χαλχαλιώτισσα* as *κ* and printed the word as *Χαλκαλιωτίσις*<sup>21</sup>. Surprisingly, the superbly qualified and experienced Linos Politis, mentioning only the first note<sup>22</sup> without transcribing it, misread the first *λ* in *Χαλχαλιώτισσα* as *ρ* and printed the word as *Χαρχαλιώτισσα*. One may assume that both scholars might have thought of a possible scribal error of assimilation – to the preceding *χ* in the first case, and to the following *λ* in the second – and that they might have tacitly corrected it. But Neophytos' thousands of pages are exceptionally well-spelled, his orthography is impeccable. He wrote *Χαλχαλιώτισσα* twice!

18. CHATZISTAUROU, *Κατάλογοι*, 69, 67.

19. P. GEORGANTZIS, *Συμβολή εις την ιστορίαν της Ξάνθης*, Xanthi 1976, 248.

20. MOUTAPHIS, *Τερά Μονή*, 27.

21. In another misreading of consequence, Chatzistaourou repeatedly rendered the common abbreviation (*μον*)*αχ(ὸ)ς* as *ἀρχιερεὺς* – an error, detected by Politis (*Τὰ χειρόγραφα*, 16), but ignored by others, who proceeded to look for a bishopric for Neophytos (cf. GEORGANTZIS, *Συμβολή εις την ιστορίαν*, 246, note 4, and GEORGANTZIS, *Συμβολή στην Ἐκκλησιαστική ιστορία*, 914).

22. POLITIS, *Τὰ χειρόγραφα*, 16.

A third witness for the 16th c. appellation of the monastery – this time an Ottoman one – was recently brought to light in a book by Phokion Kotzageorgis<sup>23</sup> who published an Ottoman document<sup>24</sup> – a receipt (*tezkere*) issued against payment of 200 aspra by the monks of Panagia Χαρχαλιώτισσα near Xanthi as annual tax for the year 1555. On line 4 the scribe wrote *χρχλιωτ* (خرخلیوت)<sup>25</sup>.

This double documentary attestation of the mid-sixteenth century name of Archangeliotissa Monastery forces us to choose between two variants: *Χαλχαλιώτισσα* as written by Neophytos, a native Greek scribe, and *Χαρχαλιώτισσα* as heard and rendered by a Turkish scribe. Thus, the now vulgate version *Χαλκαλιώτισσα*, a product of mistaken reading, has to be considered a *corrigendum*.

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23. PH. KOTZAGEORGIS, *Μικρές πόλεις της ελληνικής χερσονήσου κατά την πρόιμη νεότερη εποχή: η περίπτωση της Ξάνθης, 15ος-17ος αι.*, Xanthi 2008.

24. Archive of the Metropolis of Xanthi, folder 1, archive unit 11. Kotzageorgis (*Μικρές πόλεις*, 267) translated this document into Greek and reproduced it photographically on p. 301.

25. I am obliged to Olga Todorova for checking and transcribing the name in Arabic.

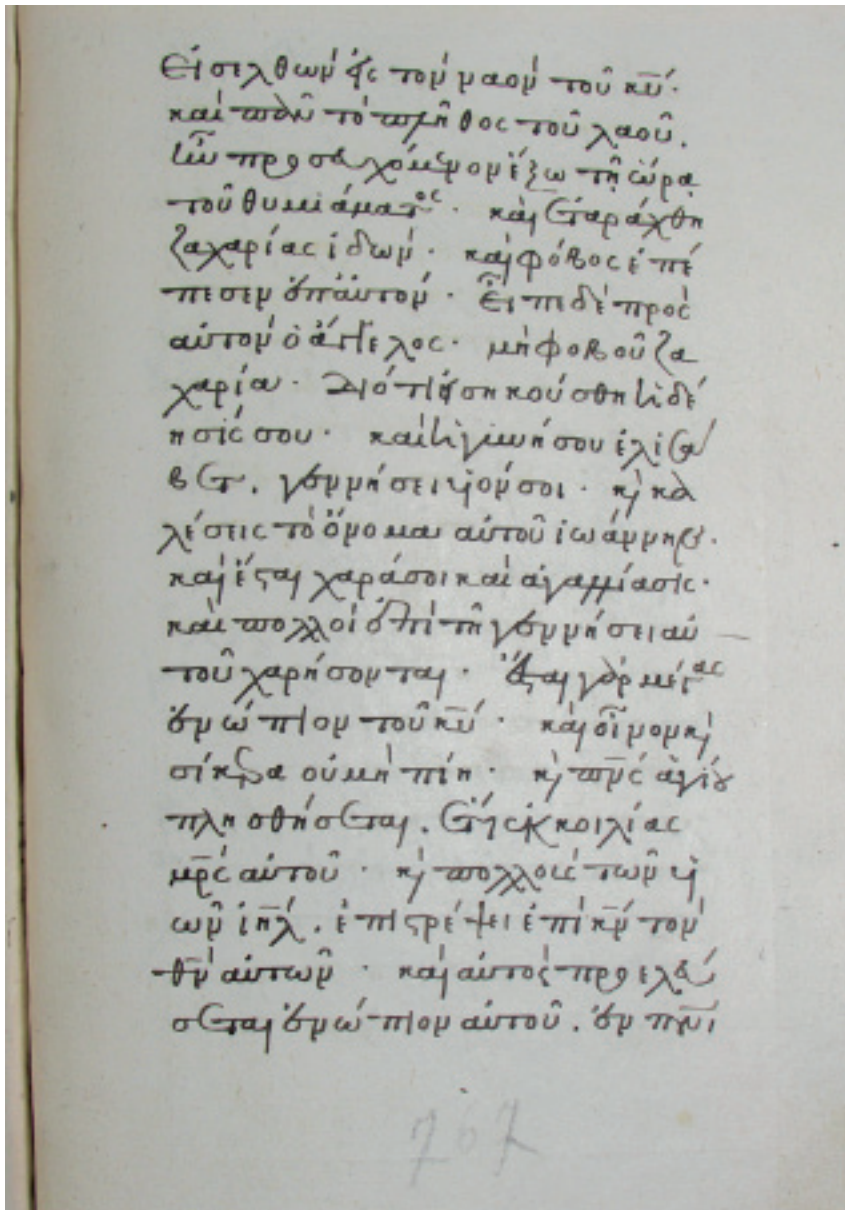


Plate 1. EHAI 575, p. 767: Handwriting of Neophytos

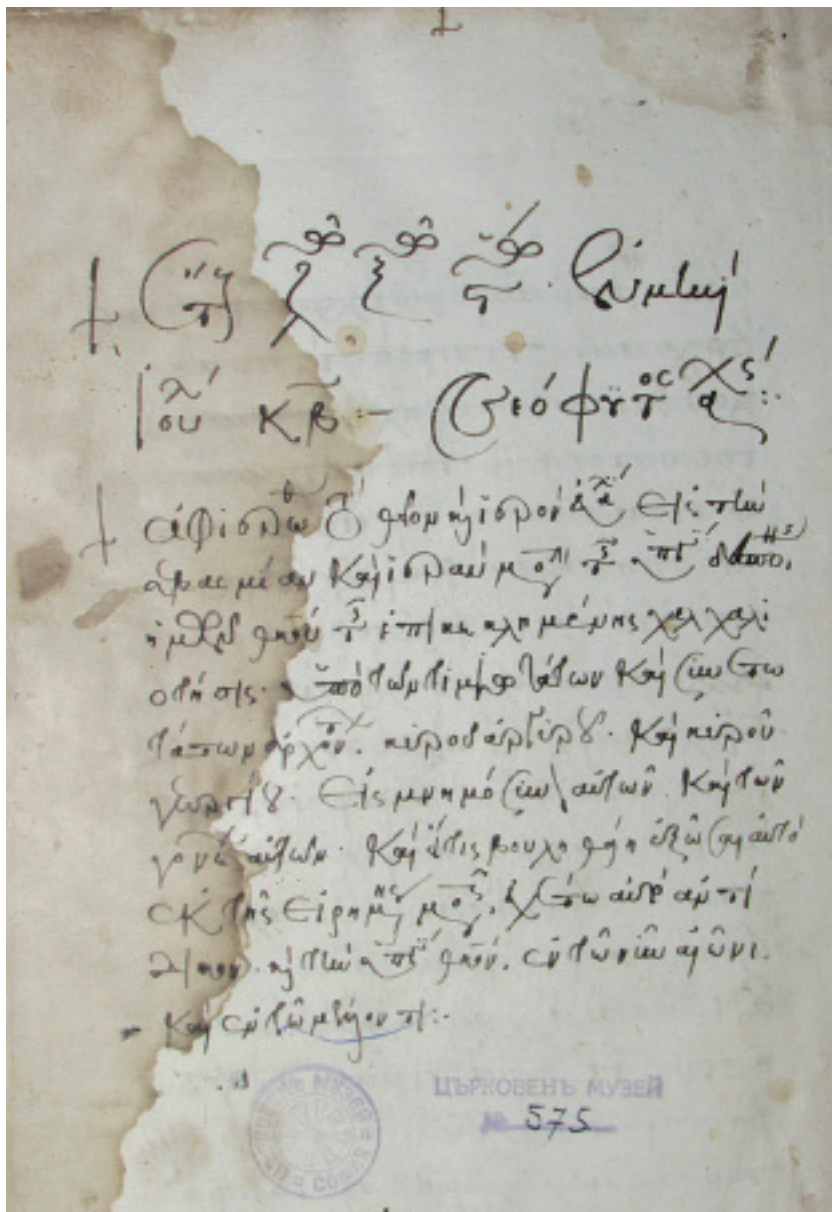


Plate 2. EHAI 575, p. 894: Subscription and dedication note by Neophytos



Ο ΕΛΛΗΝΑΣ ΑΝΤΙΓΡΑΦΕΑΣ ΝΕΟΦΥΤΟΣ ΚΑΙ Η ΠΑΛΛΑΙΟΤΕΡΗ ΟΝΟΜΑΣΙΑ ΤΗΣ  
ΜΟΝΗΣ ΠΑΝΑΓΙΑΣ ΑΡΧΑΓΓΕΛΙΩΤΙΣΣΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΠΕΡΙΟΧΗ ΤΗΣ ΞΑΝΘΗΣ

Στο άρθρο αυτό, περιγράφεται η βιβλιογραφική παραγωγή του Νεοφύτου, ενός Έλληνα επαγγελματία γραφέα του 16ου αιώνα, ο οποίος αντέγραψε οκτώ χειρόγραφα για την Μονή της Παναγίας Αρχαγγελιώτισσας στην περιοχή της Ξάνθης. Πέντε ακόμα χειρόγραφα προερχόμενα από άλλες τοποθεσίες έχουν αναγνωριστεί ως έργα του Νεοφύτου. Εξετάζονται επίσης δύο αφιερώσεις που έγραψε ο ίδιος και οι οποίες αναφέρουν την ονομασία της Μονής της Αρχαγγελιώτισσας, κατά τον 16ο αι.: *Χαλχαλιώτισσα*. Αυτές οι σημειώσεις, εκδίδονται διπλωματικά και μεταφράζονται. Παρατίθενται επίσης τρεις πίνακες με τον γραφικό χαρακτήρα του Νεοφύτου.