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THE PERFORMATIVITY OF SHRINES
IN A BYZANTINE CHURCH:
THE SHRINES OF ST. DEMETRIOS*

Within the Byzantine ecclesiastical tradition, shrines — architectural structures which both enclosed and revealed saints' remains — defined human bodies within the church space in a remarkable way. Starting in the fourth century, it became customary to exhume and move entire bodies, to permit their fragmentation, and to expose them in architectural settings other than the altar table in the sanctuary space¹. This practice echoed popular and private piety, which included reporting of miracles of saintly relics that recalled Gospels' miracles and the hope for corporeal salvation². Specially-

* This paper results from a case study about the delicate relations between the human body and framing of sacred space in the Byzantine ecclesiastic tradition, which figured in my doctoral dissertation (Princeton, 2008). I thank Dr. Alexei Lidov for his sustained support and interest in my work as well as for inviting me to present this paper to a wider audience. In revising my work and preparing this paper for publication I also benefited from critical remarks and unreserved help by an historian Dr. Anoush F. Terjanian, architectural historian Dr. Svetlana Popović, critical theorist Dr. Ron Graziani, art historians Dr. Ivan Drpić and Dr. Punam Madhok, graphic designer Dr. Kate LaMere, graphic designer and writer Prof. Gunnar Swanson, artist and art educator Dr. Robbie Quinn, and physicist Dr. Dušan Danilović. All mistakes, however, are unintentional and remain my responsibility.

¹ *Mango C.* *Saints // The Byzantines* / Ed. G. Cavallo. Chicago, New York, 1997, p. 255–280, with older bibliography; *Walter C.* *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church*. London, 1982, p. 144–158; *Abrahamse D.* *Rituals of Death in the Middle Byzantine Period // Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 29/2 (1984), p. 125–134; *Crook J.* *The Architectural Setting of the Cult of Saints in the Early Christian West, c. 300–1200*. Oxford, 2000, chap. 1, esp. n. 4, n. 119.

² *Vaucher A.* *The Saint // The Medieval World* / Ed. J. Le Goff. London, 1990, p. 313–346. Recently, *Miller P. C.* has discussed in particular the subtle dynamics of saints' bodily presence and absence in icons and relics in her book *The Corporeal Imagination: Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity*. Philadelphia, c. 2009. I thank I. Drpić for bringing this latter work to my attention.

designed shrines became visible and accessible to the common faithful as well as to the clergy. By emphasizing the prophylactic value of the relics of saints, this approach to the veneration of relics came to be sanctioned theologically³. As architectural installations within the church premises, the shrines emphasized the physical and psychological closeness of the faithful and the saints⁴. Simultaneously present in heaven — in spirit — and on earth in their physical, incorruptible remains, the saints occupied an important place in the economy of salvation because they healed, comforted, and protected believers⁵. According to the Byzantine belief in deification achieved by the Incarnation of the Logos, these saints communicated divine truth as the matter of divine revelation⁶. The presence of the relics and the powers they exposed — issuing from the saint and, ultimately, from God — were also accorded prominence in Byzantine society. The places of such divine intercessions, by definition, were thus both holy and performative⁷.

³ According to *Walter Ch.* Art and Ritual..., p. 181–182, already in the fourth century *John Chrysostom* in *Laudation martyrum Aegyptiorum // Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca* / Ed. J.-P. Migne. Paris, 1857–1866, vol. 50, cols. 601, 694–695, sanctioned the veneration of relics.

⁴ About the sanction of the cult of saints and bodily remains within the church space more in the seminal books by *Brown P.* *The Cult of the Saints*. Chicago, 1981, p. 1–22 and *Brown P.* *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity*. Berkeley, 1982, p. 225ff.

⁵ For a concise overview of the plan of salvation in Christian tradition: *Pelikan J.* *The Growth of Medieval Theology (600–1300) // The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine*. Chicago, London, 1978, p. 106–157.

⁶ *Meyendorff J.* *Byzantine Hesychasm: Historical, Theological and Social Problems*. London, 1974; *Pelikan J.* *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600–1700) // The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine*. Chicago, London, 1974, p. 10–16; *Nellas P.* *Deification in Christ*. Crestwood, New York, 1987.

⁷ Definitions of both sacred space and performativity heavily rely on the disciplines of those who use the terms. From religious studies, critical theory, philosophy, and feminist studies to art, archaeology, geography, and sciences, the concepts of sacred space and performativity underline that spiritual and bodily activities take place in space — physical, geographic, social, or imagined. Some of the works on the themes of sacred space and performativity are: *Knott K.* *Geography, Space and the Sacred / Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*. New York, 2010, p. 476–491, with further references; *Hierotopy. Comparative Studies of Sacred Spaces* / Ed. A. Lidov. Moscow, 2009; *Лидов А.* *Иеротопия: пространственные иконы и образы-парадигмы в византийской культуре*. Москва, 2009, with further references; *Dynamics and Performativity of Imagination: The Image between the Visible and the Invisible* / Eds. B. Huppau, C. Wulf. New York, 2009; *Sacred Space: House of God, Gate of Heaven* / Eds. P. North, J. North. London, New York, 2007; *Loxley J.* *Performativity*. London, New York, 2007, with references to seminal works by Austin, Derrida, Butler, and Turner; *Sheldrake P.* *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory, and Identity*. Baltimore, 2001; *Turner V.* *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. New York, c1995; *Experience of the Sacred. Reading in the Phenomenology of Religion* / Eds. S. B. Twiss, W. H. Conser, Jr. Hanover, London, 1992; *Eliade M.* *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. San Diego, c1987; *Rudolf O.* *Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational*. New York, 1958.

In contrast to the everyday and the profane, the sacred space is connected to the spiritual, holy and divine objects, rituals and practices. We can draw on the concept of performativity (as body- and practice-oriented) to think about the spaces and places created and transformed by individual and group actions, including the encounter with the sacred. The repetitive power of such performative communication lies in the way it produces “phenomena that it regulates and constrains”⁸. This phenomenon of the performativity and sacredness of places of divine intercessions within the Byzantine tradition is especially well demonstrated by the shrines of St. Demetrios. To illustrate this point, this paper begins by framing the performative space of St. Demetrios — geographically, historically, socially, textually, and materially-archaeologically — in order to better understand its shrines’ reiterative patterns, repetitive power, and their performativity. The analysis then focuses on the “body image” and the dynamic, ontological construct of space framed by the shrines of St. Demetrios. Finally, by juxtaposing these shrines with the Incarnational argument — the essence of the Orthodox doctrine of the Byzantine Church and the basis of the Byzantine understanding of icons — we are able to suggest that the shrines of St. Demetrios were truly spatial icons.

FRAMING THE HOLINESS: THE PERFORMATIVE SPACE OF ST. DEMETRIOS

One of the most venerated saints, St. Demetrios is an early Christian martyr, whose cult was renewed and enriched with the reporting of myrrh-gushing after the Iconoclastic controversies of the eighth and ninth centuries and whose cult remains active until present⁹. Despite an abundance of source material for St. Demetrios — cultic, textual, archaeological, iconographical — the com-

⁸ *Buttler J.* *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex.”* New York, 1993, p. 2. Indeed, Buttler is predominantly interested in feminist and gender studies, but the concept may apply to the study of religious and ritual art as well.

⁹ Major works on St. Demetrios and his cult with an extensive overview of the primary sources and controversies in scholarship are: *Grabar A.* Quelques reliquaires de saint Démétrios et le martyrium du saint à Salonique // *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5 (1950), p. 1+3–28; *Cormack R.* *Writing in Gold: Byzantine society and its icons.* London, c1985, p. 50–94; *Skedros J. C.* *Saint Demetrios of Thessaloniki: Civic Patron and Divine Protector 4th–7th Centuries CE.* Harvard Theological Studies 47. Harrisburg, 1999, with extensive references to primary and secondary sources; *Woods D.* Thessalonica's Patron: Saint Demetrios or Emeterius? // *Harvard Theological Review* 93 (2000), p. 221–234; *Walter Ch.* *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition.* London, 2003, p. 67–93, with references to work by *Lamerle P.* *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de saint Démétrius Vol. I. Le texte.* Paris, 1979 and *Lamerle P.* *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de saint Démétrius. Vol. II. Commentaires.* Paris, 1981; *Popović V.* Култ светог Димитрија Солунског у Симијуму и Равени [The Cult of St. Demetrios of Thessaloniki in Sirmium and Ravenna — in Serbian] / Sirmium i na nebu i na zemlji. 1700 godina od stradanja hrišćanskih mučenika. Sremska Mitrovica, 2004, p. 87–98.

parative information is often contradictory and perplexing. Post-Iconoclastic hagiographical and texts on the miracles report the martyrdom of a certain Christian Demetrios during the early fourth-century imperial persecutions in Thessaloniki¹⁰. Demetrios' martyrdom was marked by miracles — Demetrios kills the deadly scorpion with the sign of cross; the angel visits the captive martyr and crowns him with a martyr's crown; Demetrios blesses his disciple Nestor who empowered publicly defeats the emperor's favorite gladiator¹¹. Demetrios is eventually executed by lances in the caldarium of the public baths, where Loupos, one of Demetrios' associates removes the saint's *orarion* (τὸ ὀράριον) and *imperial ring* (τὸ βασιλικὸν δακτύλιον) and dips them both in martyr's blood. The blood-soaked *orarion* and *ring* thus became Demetrios' contact relics. Nestor and Loupos, who receive Demetrios' blessings, thus become the first witnesses of Demetrios' powers and "guardians" of this testimony as a matter of divine revelation. According to the texts, the saint's body was inhumed in the furnace room where the martyrdom occurred and where the healing miracles followed afterwards. The miraculous healing of Leontius, the eparch of Illyricum who held office in ca. 412/13, was presumably the main reason he specially honored at his time already ruinous martyrdom-shrine (οἰκία, οἰκεῖον μάρτυρα) of St. Demetrios and re-built saint's shrine within the eponymous church (εὐκτήριος οἶκος) in Thessaloniki, an important ancient capital and port, which later became the second city of the Byzantine Empire¹².

Miraculously cured Leontius sought, according to the texts, to honor St. Demetrios and build a church dedicated to the saint in yet another capital of Illyricum, in Sirmium, modern Sremska Mitrovica (literary the city of Demetrios of Sirmium) in Serbia. The hagiography of St. Demetrios, who was by the fifth century identified as a high-ranking military official of the Roman Empire, suggests that Leontius enshrined Demetrios' blood-stained garments within the silver container and protected by the saint, he crossed the dangerous waters of the Danube (*sic!*) and reached safely Sirmium¹³. There, Leontios built a second basilica with the shrine which housed Demetrios' contact relics, now identified as consular garments — the *orarion* and *chlamys* (*sic!*). This fifth-century city church, that archaeologists generally identify as St. De-

¹⁰ We learn from these ancient texts that Demetrios was martyred during the rule of Emperor Maximian. Both *Popović V. Култ ...*, p. 87–98 and *Skedros J.C. Saint Demetrios ...*, p. 8–11 date the martyrdom between 304 and 308, the period which coincides with Emperor Galerius Maximianus (ca. 260–311) and his residence in Thessaloniki.

¹¹ *Skedros J.C. Saint Demetrios...*, appendices: The Passio Altera, Martyrdom of the Holy Great-Martyr Demetrios, p. 149–157; *Woods D. Thessalonica's Patron ...*, p. 221–234.

¹² *Popović V. Култ ...*, p. 87–98 with references to primary sources esp. p. 88; *Walter Ch. The Warrior Saints ...*, p. 67–93; *Woods D. Thessalonica's Patron ...*, p. 221–234.

¹³ *Popović V. Култ ...*, p. 87–98.

metrios' church was built in rush, however, with a combination of *spolia* and low-quality building materials¹⁴. The archaeological evidence, thus, reveals potential perspectival expectations for St. Demetrios' military protection of the city in front of the concurrent Avar and Slavic attacks.

The ninth-century chronicler Agnelli, records the existence of another ancient church of St. Demetrios, the one in Classe, the port of Ravenna, Italy¹⁵. The archaeological remains of this presumably fifth-century church were recovered on the site known as Casa Bianca, two kilometers south of church San Apollinare in Classe¹⁶. Therefore, at least three fifth-century capitals — Ravenna in Italy; Sirmium, modern Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia; and Thessaloniki in Greece — had large-scale churches dedicated to St. Demetrios, which suggests wide-spread and major importance of the saint (fig. 1)¹⁷. By the sixth century the churches dedicated to St. Demetrios also existed in Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, and Nikopolis, the ancient capital city in Epiros¹⁸. The cult of the fourth-century military martyr Emeterius, whose relics are still kept in the heavily rebuilt Gothic cathedral of Calahorra (ancient Calagurris), the episcopal city of Navarre in Spain, may be identified with yet another concurrent cult of St. Demetrios¹⁹. Scholars have already proposed the imperial interventions for the development of the cult of St. Demetrios either via Hispanian-born Theodosius I (r. 379–395), the last Emperor who ruled both Western and Eastern Roman Empires²⁰, or via his fervently Christian daughter Galla Placidia (392–450) — a Goths' war-prize after the sack of Rome in 410 and the consort of Gothic king Ataulf (r. 410–415), and the wife of Naissus-

¹⁴ Jeremić M. Култне грађевине хришћанског Симијума [The Cult Architecture of Christian Sirmium — in Serbian] / Sirmium i na nebu i na zemlji. 1700 godina od stradanja hrišćanskih mučenika. Sremska Mitrovica, 2004, p. 43–78.

¹⁵ Popović V. Култ ..., p. 87–98.

¹⁶ Popović V. Култ ..., p. 87–98 with reference to Cortesi G. La basilica della Casa Bianca // Atti del I Congresso nazionale di Studi Bizantini (1965), 43 sq. Tavola XVI.

¹⁷ Walter Ch. The Warrior Saints ..., p. 67–93. On the church in Sirmium and excavations that started in the 1970s: Popović V. Култ ..., p. 87–98. On the church in Thessaloniki: Sotiriou G. and M. Η βασιλική τοῦ Ἀγίου Δημητρίου Θεσσαλονίκης. Athens, 1952; Bakirtzis Ch. The Basilica of St. Demetrios Archaeological Guides of the Institute for Balkan studies (I.M.X.A.) no. 6. 1997.

¹⁸ Nikopolis contained the basilica whose ruins are today identified as basilica A, originally dedicated to Doumetios / St. Demetrios: Bakirtzis Ch. The Basilica of St. Demetrios ..., p. 16; Krautheimer R. Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture. New Haven, London, 1986, p. 131; Kitzinger E. Studies on Late Antique and Early Byzantine Floor Mosaics: I. Mosaics at Nikopolis // Dumbarton Oak Papers 3 (1951), p. 81+83–122.

¹⁹ Woods D. Thessalonica's Patron ..., p. 221–234 discusses St. Emeterius, his name in reference to Demetrios — [D]Emeterius as well as the preserved bodily relics, the contact relics — the *oraron* and ring.

²⁰ Woods D. Thessalonica's Patron ..., p. 221–34.

born Roman general and later Emperor Constantius III (d. 421) — who, due to her highly unusual life, resided in Rome and Ravenna, but also in Constantinople, Thessaloniki, Naissus (modern day Niš, Serbia), Sirmium, and major centers of Hispania and Gaul²¹. Because the cult of St. Demetrios was initiated in major civic centers of the relatively recently Christianized Roman Empire within the disturbing fifth-century political conditions threatened by the nomadic pagan warriors and above all the bloodthirsty Huns and Avars²², the performative comforting actions of St. Demetrios quite aptly combined healing of the incurable, the protection of the innocent and weak, and above all military protection of the major political and power centers of the Empire²³. As a civic protector, the saint himself was praised as “an unshakable” and “an unconquerable wall” of not only the city but also the entire countryside²⁴. The performative space of Demetrios, the warrior-saint was, thus, essentially the space of the Byzantine Empire²⁵.

Therefore, citizens of Thessaloniki were joined by those in other civic centers of the Empire in pleading for protection of the warrior-saint Demetrios, historically and topographically confirmed as St. Demetrios of Thessaloniki only after the ninth century, at the time when other centers such as Ravenna and Sirmium were long outside Roman domain. The surviving texts suggest that St. Demetrios saved Thessaloniki from the Avars and Slavs in 586 and during several similar threats in the sixth and seventh centuries including civil unrest during the reign of emperor Phocas (r. 602–610) and devastating fire of 620²⁶. The city of Ravenna with its monuments suffered from the Ostrogothic and Avar invasions but in the sixth century it was recovered under Emperor Justinian (r. 527–565), whose officials re-instated Demeter (Demetrios) as an intermediary between the Lord and faithful in the procession of male saints in the mosaics of San Appolinare Nuovo in Ravenna²⁷. The ultimate Byzantine rule in Ravenna and north Italy, however,

²¹ Popović V. Култ ..., p. 87–98, esp. p. 92–93 with references to Galla Placidia.

²² On the historical and political conditions in the Roman Empire (ca. 395–518): *Treadgold W. A History of the Byzantine State and Society*. Stanford, 1997, p. 78–173.

²³ Popović V. Култ ..., p. 87–98.

²⁴ Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios., p. 122, 125.

²⁵ For the elaborate discussion about the concept of space in Byzantine tradition: *Saradi H. G. Space in Byzantine Thought // Architecture as Icon* / Eds. S. Ćurčić, E. Hadjityphonos, New Haven, 2010, p. 73–112, with a special emphasis on the section The Space of the Empire, p. 73–86.

²⁶ Pritisak O. The Slavs and Avars // *Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto medioevo* 30 (1983), p. 353–435; Sorlin I. Slaves et Sklavènes avant et dans les Miracles de Saint Démétrius / Lamerle, *Commentaire*, p. 219–234; Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios., p. 18–40, 93, 120–132. Bakirtzis Ch. The Basilica of St. Demetrios., p. 8–12.

²⁷ Popović V. Култ ..., p. 87–98.

ended by 751²⁸. In the Balkans, similarly, Sirmium ceased to be the focal point of the saintly cult of Demetrios after the Avars destroyed the city in 582²⁹. In Thessaloniki, almost concurrently, the locus of the saint's cult was transferred from the "crypt" under the church transept and apse, the former site of Roman baths, where according to legend Demetrios was martyred and buried, to the silver-gilt hexagonal shrine in the middle of the nave length, close to its northern arcade (figs. 1A, 2)³⁰. Therefore, the site-specific and city-specific framing of St. Demetrios as the patron-saint of Thessaloniki was the result of at least three occurrences: 1) severe territorial shrinking of the Byzantine Empire (ca. 600–780s) and societal, economic and cultural depredations including Iconoclasms³¹; 2) the perceived ability of Demetrios to protect the city of Thessaloniki in times of siege and unrest while he failed to protect other cities in similar situations; 3) almost simultaneous establishment of the two prominent saint's shrines as the central loci within the city of Thessaloniki, in the prominently raised city basilica on the upward slope, just above the ancient Roman forum (fig. 3)³². The Byzantine sources explain that the basilica of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki also became known as the "house of the saint"³³.

Better understanding of the performative space of St. Demetrios is fostered by the historical and religious texts combined with the surviving archaeological evidence that reveal the contemporary beliefs in the site-transferable protective powers of this saint, usually understood to be very site-specific. Like the disparate cities of Thessaloniki, Ravenna and Sirmium, which were safeguarded by St. Demetrios and which defined the sacred space of the Christian Roman Empire but were without direct spatial links, the two different sacred *loci* of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki were united by a single church space, the Thessalonian basilica³⁴. The two sacred *loci* were not only without any direct spatial link to each other, but were also known by two different terms. The "οἰκία, οἰκίσκος" [*oikia, oikiskos*] literally the "house" or "small house," which marked the saint's tomb and testimony of his miracles,

²⁸ Treadgold W. A History ..., p. 360.

²⁹ Treadgold W. A History ..., p. 226.

³⁰ Pallas D. I. Le ciborium hexagonal de Saint-Démétrios de Thessalonique. Essai d'interprétation // *Zograf* 10 (1979), p. 44–58.

³¹ On the territorial losses as well as societal and cultural disturbances of Byzantine society: Treadgold W. A History ..., p. 371–413.

³² Similar conclusion Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios..., p. 16, 129, where he summarizes evidence for other saintly shrines in Thessaloniki located outside the city walls, following the ancient Roman law for burial outside the city walls.

³³ The basilica was praised "the home of the venerable saint." Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios..., p. 123.

³⁴ Of the fifteen miracles recorded by John, eleven are set within the basilica. Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios..., p. 123.

was within the crypt-like space below the church sanctuary, originally a two-storey construction with direct access to the street³⁵. The “κιβώριον” [*kiborion*, *ciborium*], a six-sided enclosed shrine of the saint where his icon and not his saintly remains were displayed, was in the main nave of the church, in a location that can still be discerned within hexagonal outline on the floor (figs. 1A, 2)³⁶. By the ninth century St. Demetrios received another shrine within the church, in a grotto-like crypt inside the *oikia* where a heptagonal marble canopy marked the remains of the public bath (fig. 4). Though wrongly, many believed that the canopied fountain, which provided holy water to pilgrims, was physically connected with the hexagonal silver-gilt *ciborium* in the nave³⁷. By the eleventh century, the miraculous actions of St. Demetrios were associated with the production of myrrh at his underground shrine in Thessaloniki³⁸. Therefore, the scale and site of the performative space of Demetrios was changeable, from the realm of the entire Empire, through the church of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki, to the specific shrine(s).

Archaeological works have not revealed bodily remains of St. Demetrios, crucial for myrrh-gushing that usually ascertained saint's authenticity³⁹. It remains unknown whose relics were under the canopied altar table in

³⁵ Pallas D. I. *Le ciborium* ..., p. 44–58; Walter Ch. *The Warrior Saints* ..., p. 67–93, esp. p. 74, 76; Cormack R. *The Church of St Demetrius: The Watercolours and Drawings of W.S. George / The Byzantine Eye*. London, 1989, figs. 3–4; Cormack R. *The Making of a Patron Saint: The Powers of Art and Ritual in Byzantine Thessaloniki // Themes of Unity in Diversity. Acts of the XXVIth International Congress of the History of Art / Ed. I. Lavin*. University Park, PA, 1986, p. 547–555; Cormack R. S. *The Mosaic Decoration of St. Demetrios, Thessaloniki: A Reexamination in the Light of the Drawings of W. S. George // The Annual of the British School at Athens* 64 (1969), p. 17–52, pl. 3 (black/white), pl. 7 (color).

³⁶ Pallas D. I. *Le ciborium* ..., p. 44–58; Bakirtzis Ch. *The Basilica of St. Demetrios*..., p. 14; Mentzos A. *Τὸ προσκύνημα τοῦ Αγίου Δημητρίου Θεσσαλονίκης στὰ βυζαντινά χρόνια*. Athens, 1994, p. 56–67; Papamastorakis T. *Ιστορίες και ιστορήσεις βυζαντινῶν παλληκαριῶν [Tales and Images of Byzantium's Warrior Heroes] // Δελτίον Χριστιανικῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας* 20 (1998), p. 213–230.

³⁷ Mango C. *Byzantine Architecture*. Milan, New York, 1985, p. 75–79. Cormack suggests that the crypt became the place of veneration in the centuries after the Iconoclasm: Cormack R. *The Making of a Patron Saint*..., p. 547–555. See also: Bakirtzis Ch. *Byzantine Ampullae from Thessaloniki // The Blessings of Pilgrimage / Ed. R. Ousterhout*. Urbana-Chicago, 1990, p. 140–149, esp. p. 147.

³⁸ Though the myrrh-gushing may have appeared earlier, at the end of the ninth and beginning of the tenth centuries as summarized by Walter Ch. *The Warrior Saints* ..., p. 67–93, Bakirtzis Ch. *Pilgrimage to Thessalonike: The Tomb of St. Demetrios // Dumbarton Oak Papers* 56 (2002), p. 175–192, esp. p. 176, suggests that the earliest historical evidence is from 1040.

³⁹ In 1978 Maria Theohari recognized the relics of St. Demetrios in San Lorenzo in Campo in Italy and proposed that they were brought to San Lorenzo no later than in the early 13th century. The head was brought to Thessalonike between 23rd and 25th of October 1978 and the remains of relics that are still venerated in the city between 11th and 13th of

the Thessalonian church of Hagios Demetrios. After the fire of 1917, it became clear that the reliquary under the altar table contained fragments of bloodstained garments and not bodily particles, and furthermore that it was never the focus of the saintly cult of St. Demetrios⁴⁰. The altar canopy and the two saintly shrines of St. Demetrios were separate installations, spatially and functionally distinct, and neither of which contained saintly body nor its fragments⁴¹. Moreover, the archaeological excavations showed that neither of the eponymous churches in two capital cities of Illyricum — in Thessaloniki, Greece and in Sirmium, modern Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia — contained the body of St. Demetrios⁴². That the Byzantines were unable to recover the body of highly praised saint is supported by the fact that since the sixth century the Byzantine Emperors in Constantinople had requested the relics of St. Demetrios often desiring them for assistance in the times of trouble, yet all the requests for bodily remains were substituted either by various reliquaries of St. Demetrios or by his icons⁴³.

THE PERFORMATIVITY OF THE SHRINES OF ST. DEMETRIOS

As user-oriented and user-required spaces, shrines are peculiar performative spaces. They are performative for at least two reasons. First, saints' shrines are created or transformed by individual or group encounter of the faithful with the sacred. Second, the shrines are framed spaces, where saints are rather more "using" than "being" in space, where saints are active "par-

April 1980: Βακάρος Δ. Ο πολιοῦχος τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης καὶ ὑπέρμαχος τῆς οἰκουμένης // "Ἅγιος μεγαλομάρτυς Δημήτριος ὁ Μυροβλύτης. 1700 χρόνια ἀπὸ τὸ μαρτύριό του (Thessalonike, 2006), p. 68–91; Theochari M. Ψηφιδωτὴ τοῦ ἁγίου Δημητρίου καὶ ἡ ἀνεύρεσις τῶν λειψάνων τοῦ ἁγίου εἰς Ἰταλίαν [Une icône en mosaïque de saint Déméterius et la découverte des reliques du saint en Italie] // Proceedings of the Academy in Athens 53 (1978), p. 508–536. I thank Drpić for references. However, Byzantine sources remained silent about relics of St. Demetrios and made clear that they were not exposed for veneration. See discussion below in this paper.

⁴⁰ Walter Ch. The Warrior Saints ..., p. 67–93, with references to the works by Lamerle and Soteriou.

⁴¹ For the reference about the canopy above the altar in St. Demetrios church, more in: Hodinott R. F. Early Byzantine Churches in Macedonia and Southern Serbia. London, 1963, p. 130; Krautheimer R. Early Christian ..., p. 124; Mango C. Byzantine ..., p. 75–79.

⁴² Walter Ch. The Warrior Saints ..., p. 67–93; Popović V. Култ ..., p. 87–98.

⁴³ About sixth-century requests by Emperors Justinian and Maurice with in-depth analysis: Skedros J.C. Saint Demetrios..., p. 85–88. On the Middle and Late Byzantine icons and encolpia (pendants) which contained contact relics associated with St. Demetrios (myrrh and myrrh with blood), see also: Bakirtzis Ch. Pilgrimage to Thessalonike..., p. 175–192. Bakirtzis is also of the opinion that the Thessalonians did not want to disclose St. Demetrios' tomb and relics due to local patriotism. Be it as it may, there is neither archeological nor historical evidence for the existence of the body of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki during the Byzantine times.

ticipants” rather than strictly speaking permanent “inhabitants” of space⁴⁴. This is especially the case with the shrine(s) of St. Demetrios, which were strangely “empty” because they did not contain bodily remains. Within this context the architecture and architectural forms of the shrines of St. Demetrios and their expressive contents are especially revealing for understanding textuality and performativity in Byzantine culture.

The so-called *ciborium* of St. Demetrios in the nave of Thessalonian church was replaced after fires at least twice during the seventh century alone and both times in silver⁴⁵. It could have survived the Arab attack of 904, but was certainly ransacked by the Normans in the twelfth century and later replaced by a marble canopy⁴⁶. In all likelihood the *ciborium* was never a canopy, understood as a four-columned, gazebo-like structure⁴⁷. Rather, the *ciborium* was an enclosed six-sided wooden-framed chamber, approximately six feet in span, sheathed in silver revetments braced by six engaged columns supporting a pointed, most probably conical roof bearing a silver sphere at the top (figs. 2, 5)⁴⁸. The lower part of the sphere atop the canopy was surrounded by shoots of lilies, crowned by a life-giving cross, “the trophy that is victorious over death: by its silver composition it amazes our corporeal eyes, while bringing Christ to mind, it illuminates with grace the eyes of the intellect”⁴⁹. The accounts also suggest that the *ciborium* had its own doors, consisted of two silver panels, most likely engraved with the images of Sts. Nestor and Loupos, St. Demetrios’ “holy guardians” (fig. 6A)⁵⁰. From the canopy roof the lamps were suspended, suggesting eternal light and the

⁴⁴ Architectural practitioners and theorists are coming to similar conclusions in their investigation of Lefebvre’s ontological transformation of space. See for example, *Johannesen H.-L. Performative Space — or How to Provide Affinity?* 2004, URL: http://www.staff.hum.ku.dk/hanlou/publikationer/Architecture_Beyond_Media_or_how_to_Provide_Affinity.pdf.

⁴⁵ On the history of the shrine: *Bakirtzis Ch. Pilgrimage to Thessalonike...*, p. 175–192 and *Morrisson C. The Emperor, the Saint, and the City: Coinage and Money in Thessalonike from the Thirteenth to the Fifteenth Century* // *Dumbarton Oak Papers* 56 (2002), p. 173–203.

⁴⁶ From the Life of St. Elias the Younger we learn that the *ciborium* was *in situ* just before the Arab attack of 904: *Yannopoulos P. La Grèce dans la vie de S. Élie le Jeune et dans celle de S. Élie le Spéléote* // *Byzantion* 64 (1994), p. 193–221, esp. p. 215–216.; *Sotiriou G. and M. Ἡ βασιλική...*, p. 15.

⁴⁷ *Cormack R. The Making of a Patron Saint...*, p. 547–555.

⁴⁸ *Hoddinott R. F. Early Byzantine ...*, p. 128f; *Cormack R. Writing in Gold ...*, p. 62–70, 77.

⁴⁹ Quotation from an unknown relative of the seventh-century Prefect of Illyricum. *Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453. Sources and Documents* / Ed. C. Mango. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972, p. 129. On the symbolism of the lily and the split-palmette resembling a lily, as described in connection with the porch of the Solomon’s Temple (1 Kings 7:19), and in the Song of Solomon (2:2; 5:13; 6:2f) and Hosea (14:5), where they are closely related to Jerusalem and Israel, and more generally to trust in the Lord: *Farbridge M. H. Studies in Biblical and Semitic Symbolism*. New York, 1970, p. 46.

⁵⁰ *Cormack R. Writing in Gold ...*, p. 80–94, esp. fig. 27 on p. 87 the same as fig. 6A in this paper.

mystical presence of the saint. The shrine also contained a golden votive crown of martyrdom⁵¹. The use of gold and silver for the *ciborium* and its installations as well as the use of oil lamps emphasized material, aesthetic and spiritual value of the shrine.

In the middle of a shrine there was a “bed” made of silver with a golden “throne,” embellished by precious stones for “Christ’s most glorious martyr Demetrios”⁵², and one more silver throne for the Lady Eutaxie, as depicted on icons and mosaics of the church⁵³. Lady Eutaxie (literary meaning “good order”) has already been associated with the personification of the good order of the city, comparable to *Tyche* (“good fortune” of the city), which reveals her companionship with St. Demetrios as a rhetorical and performative construct, which in turn identifies St. Demetrios with the city and its good order⁵⁴. The “bed” and “thrones” most likely referred to the effigy of the saint and canopy-like *proskynetaria* installations for devotional icons⁵⁵.

Canopy-like installations for icons are occasionally depicted in Byzantine illuminated manuscripts, like the canopy enshrining the icon of St. Basil the Great in the thirteenth-century Psalter from the monastery Dionysiu at Mount Athos (fig. 7)⁵⁶. The image of the saint is in this text related to the liturgy he compiled, suggesting the liturgical use of the icon. However, canopy-like installations for private devotion to icons are also occasionally recorded and depicted in Byzantine manuscripts⁵⁷. For example, the Slavic version of the works of Constantine Manasses (Vat. Slav 2, fol. 122v) shows the seventh-century Byzantine Emperor Herakleios praying before the enshrined icon of the Virgin under the canopy⁵⁸. A canopy enshrining an icon of the Virgin, presumably large enough to accommodate seven people for devotion, is also depicted in the Hamilton Psalter (fig. 8)⁵⁹. The post-

⁵¹ Cormack R. The Making of a Patron Saint..., p. 547–555.

⁵² Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453. Sources and Documents ..., p. 129.

⁵³ Cormack R. The Making of a Patron Saint..., p. 547–555.

⁵⁴ Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios..., p. 127, Cormack R. Writing in Gold ..., p. 76–77; Pallas D. I. Le ciborium ..., p. 44–58.

⁵⁵ Pallas D. I. Le ciborium ..., p. 44–58; Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios..., p. 89; Papamastorakis T. Ιστορίες ..., p. 213–230.

⁵⁶ Pelekanidis S. M. The Treasures of Mount Athos: Illuminated Manuscripts, Miniatures-Headpieces-Initial Letters. Vol. I. Athens, 1974, p. 427; color fig. 158.

⁵⁷ For example, the eleventh-century description of the veneration of the saint informs us that a supplicant had a vision, visited the saint’s body, kissed it, and then moved to a separate space to venerate the icon. More in: Kazhdan A., Maguire H. Hagiographical texts as sources on art // *Dumbarton Oak Papers* 45 (1991), p. 1–22, esp. p. 15

⁵⁸ Pallas D. I. Le ciborium ..., p. 44–58, fig. 5

⁵⁹ On the meaning of these icons for private devotion see: Paterson-Ševčenko N. Icons in the Liturgy // *Dumbarton Oak Papers* / 45 (1991), p. 45–57, esp. figs. 2 and 5. On the devotion in front of icons as depicted in the Hamilton Psalter: Pentcheva B. V. Icons and power: the Mother of God in Byzantium. University Park, Pa., 2006, p. 180–187.

Iconoclastic accounts about St. Demetrios record that [the icon of (?)] the Virgin “visited” the saint in his shrine in Thessaloniki, suggesting the practice of icon processions and the developed ritual of saintly veneration⁶⁰. What is important for our understanding of the performative role of St. Demetrios’ shrine in Thessaloniki is that not the bodily relics, but the iconic image of St. Demetrios closely associated with his shrine interceded on behalf of the saint.

The sixth-century *ciborium* of St. Demetrios and its subsequent replacements set in a prominent space in the church functioned as a glittering stage-prop for the miraculous apparitions and intercessions of the saint. The insistence on the more-or-less consistent location, size, decoration and luxurious materials used for the shrine in the church nave were important to convey the message of the importance and beauty of this saintly house, pleasing to the beholders, including the most important viewer of all, God⁶¹. The saint would often appear to the faithful emerging from his *ciborium* as he was represented in his icons (figs. 5, 6)⁶². The expressive content of the shrine conforms to witnesses’ accounts of visions of St. Demetrios, who would appear glowing dressed in a white *chlamys*: “the door opened to reveal the saint just inside. The observer fell to the floor at the sight of the saint, who appeared as ‘on the more ancient icons’ with rays of light gleaming from his face so that the observer was light with brightness...”⁶³. The metaphor of sight and of the exchange of gazes between the saint and beholders is dominant: St. Demetrios is seen, himself who has the all-seeing eye⁶⁴. The metaphor of the opened doors of the shrine⁶⁵ as the place of meeting between the saint and beholders is also important: the be-

⁶⁰ Belting H. *Likeness and Presence*. Chicago, 1996, p. 65–69, 184–185.

⁶¹ Cormack R. *Writing in Gold* ..., p. 77.

⁶² Bishop John of Thessaloniki, Miracle no. 10. For the English translation of the tenth miracle see: *Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453. Sources and Documents*..., p. 129–130. For the references to St. Demetrios’ *ciborium* as a silver shrine within the church see also: Lemerle P. *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de saint Démentrius et la pénétration des Slaves dans les Balkans*. Vol. 1. Paris, 1979, p. 50–165, with references to other miracles as well: Miracle 1 page 66 line 24; Miracle 12 page 125 line 11; Miracle 15 page 162 line 9.

⁶³ Lemerle (1979) 145, 157, 160–161. English translation of the account: Cormack R. *Writing in Gold* ..., p. 67.

⁶⁴ About this concept: Hahn C. *Seeing and Believing: The Construction of Sanctity in Early-Medieval Saints’ Shrines* // *Speculum* 72/4 (1997), p. 1079–1106.

⁶⁵ About the analysis of the metaphor of the open doors for the Church as the abode of salvation within the context of Hagia Sophia, see: Lidov A. *The Creator of the Sacred Space as a Phenomenon of Byzantine Culture* // *L’artista a Bisanzio e nel mondo cristiano-orientale* / Ed. M. Bacci. Pisa, 2007, p. 135–176, 366–371, esp. p. 151 with reference to the Gospel of John (10:7–9): “So said the Lord: I am the door of the sheep. By me if any man enters, he shall go in and out, and find pasture”.

holders occupy the same “hieroplastic”⁶⁶ space as St. Demetrios, himself who is ever-present and performatively always the same. The metaphor of light and of the exchange of light is crucial: St. Demetrios is emanating divine light and the divine grace is transferable to the beholders enlightened.

The polygonal silver *ciborium* was an essential element for the recognition of the saint and his apparitions, because St. Demetrios was so closely associated to his shrine, as archaeological evidence, votive mosaic panels in the church, and textual accounts corroborate (figs. 5, 6)⁶⁷. The insistence on the architectural framing of the saint also suggests that the glowing *ciborium*, though highly visible, was accessible to the pious for private and popular devotion only under controlled conditions⁶⁸. The controlled physical access to the shrine actually fostered beholders’ contemplation about the meaning of the shrine and its contents, including spiritual messages conveyed, as reports on beholders’ dreams emphasize further. For example, paralyzed and on his death-bed prefect Marianos, who held his tenure at the end of the fifth and beginning of the sixth centuries, had a dream in which certain Demetrios offered a cure by inviting him to his house for sleepover⁶⁹. However, Marianos was cured during the contemplation about the meaning of the dream and more precisely only when he mentioned the name of St. Demetrios to the others. Only after he had been cured, Marianos actually visited the *ciborium*-shrine and inside this holy “house” he recognized the engraved image of the saint on the “couch” — perhaps an effigy or an icon on the icon-stand — as the final confirmation of the miraculous intercession of the saint. The metaphor of the couch within the house and of the exchange of supine body postures between the everlasting saint and Marianos in this case emphasizes the transferable body images of sickness and death vs. physical and spiritual healing and eternal life. The intertwined relations between human body, mind, and space once again define performativity of St. Demetrios’ shrine. Moreover, St. Demetrios’ miraculous healing of Marianos recalls Christ’s ministry and Gospels’ miracles and their contextual understanding. As the healing of Marianos takes place in the “home of

⁶⁶ I borrow the term “hieroplastic” as a reference to space, which is at the same time, earthly, heavenly and beyond from *Лидов А. Иеротопия...*, p. 338.

⁶⁷ *Cormack R. Writing in Gold ...*, p. 50–94; *Cormack R. S. The Mosaic Decoration ...*, p. 17–52. On comparative visual evidence from other sites see also: *Koltsida-Makre I. Μολυβδόβουλλα με απεικόνιση σκηνής από το βίο του αγίου Δημητρίου* [Lead Seals Representing a Scene from the Life of St. Demetrius] // *Δελτίον Χριστιανικής Ἀρχαιολογικής Ἑταιρείας* 23 (2002), p. 149–154; *Grabar A. Un nouveau reliquaire de saint Démétrios* // *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954), p. 305+307–313; *Grabar A. Quelques reliquaires ...*, p. 1+3–28.

⁶⁸ On the limited access to the interior of the *ciborium*: *Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios...*, p. 91–92, with further references.

⁶⁹ *Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios...*, p. 99, miracles 10–24.

Demetrios” and shows how spiritual healing proceeded physical healing through the contemplation and intercession of the others so the Gospels’ miracle of the Healing of the Paralytic (Mark 2:1–12; Matt 9:2–8; Luke 5:17–26)⁷⁰ takes place in Capernaum “the home of Jesus,” shows the pre-eminence of spiritual above physical healing, and shows how the actual healing occurred through the contemplation and intercession of friends on the man’s behalf.

Therefore, the performativity and con-textuality of St. Demetrios’ shrine were crucial. Presumably the principal function of the shrine of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki was not to expose the physical remains of the saint, but to frame its active presence in physical absence. In the seventh century Bishop John of Thessaloniki recorded that the Thessalonians did not have the habit of exposing their saints’ relics in order to inspire pious sentiments and response of the faithful, though many of them believed that the *ciborium*, shaped as a typical Roman mausoleum, either contained the tomb or at least functioned as a cenotaph and marked the place of the underground tomb of the saint⁷¹. The shrine of St. Demetrios thus “localized” the miraculous actions and the saint so closely associated with his shrine not only because St. Demetrios’ icons of veneration were placed in the shrine but also because St. Demetrios and his intercessions were otherwise associated with his shrine. Surviving archaeological evidence of St. Demetrios’ shrines, votive mosaic panels in the church showing St. Demetrios in front of his shrine, or various textual accounts about the apparitions of St. Demetrios who would often appear in visions of the faithful emerging from his shrine and looking the same as he was represented in his icons all

⁷⁰ Mark 2: 1 Now after some days, when he returned to Capernaum, the news spread that he was at home. 2 So many gathered that there was no longer any room, not even by the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some people came bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. 4 When they were not able to bring him in because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Jesus. Then, after tearing it out, they lowered the stretcher the paralytic was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” 6 Now some of the experts in the law were sitting there, turning these things over in their minds: 7 “Why does this man speak this way? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” 8 Now immediately, when Jesus realized in his spirit that they were contemplating such thoughts, he said to them, “Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up, take your stretcher, and walk’? 10 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,” — he said to the paralytic — 11 “I tell you, stand up, take your stretcher, and go home.” 12 And immediately the man stood up, took his stretcher, and went out in front of them all. They were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

⁷¹ Bishop John’s Miracle no. 5, according to Lemerle (1979) 87–90, 50–4. See also: *Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios...*, p. 91–92 with references. *Grabar A. Quelques reliquaires ...*, p. 1+3–28.

corroborate that the shrine functioned as a spatial channel of communication with the divine. By extension, the shrine “localized” divine actions on earth. The shrine acted as a container of sacredness, and in time the *ciborium* itself was invested with the sacredness.

The shrine of St. Demetrios enclosing the space of saintly presence rather than the saintly body itself increased in importance as the accounts of the miraculous intercessions accomplished by St. Demetrios spread throughout the Byzantine world. The performative aspects of the shrine of St. Demetrios and the importance of its generic physical characteristics can be exemplified by textual and material evidence about the production of various “copies” of St. Demetrios’ shrines from Thessaloniki⁷². A certain Kyprianos, bishop of Thenae, after being aided by a person identical in appearance to St. Demetrios, as he was portrayed on the icon at the Thessaloniki shrine, commissioned a replica of the *ciborium* for his church in Thenae, now the port of Henchir Tina in Tunisia, North Africa⁷³. This *ciborium*, made of marble in the church in Thenae, became a site of miraculous healings and the oil from the lamps cured scorpion stings in particular, echoing the miraculous power of St. Demetrios as recorded in his hagiography⁷⁴.

The Constantinopolitan small-scale *ciborium*-reliquary made for Emperor Constantine X Doukas (1059–1067) and his second wife Eudokia Makrembolitissa, today in the Armory of the Kremlin museums, is another example (fig. 9)⁷⁵. This octagonal silver-gilt reliquary is shaped as a replica of Thessalonian silver-gilt *ciborium* of St. Demetrios⁷⁶. Engraved in low relief, four narrow panels contain representations of vines and palmetto leaves while other four panels contain images and inscriptions. One of the panels functions as a door with engraved images of Sts. Nestor and Loupos, St. Demetrios’ “holy guardians” (fig. 9 A, cf. fig. 6A)⁷⁷. On the opposite side is the engraved representation of the imperial couple being

⁷² The visual evidence confirms various forms of St. Demetrios shrines in the Thessalonian church itself (Figs. 5, 6). Supra n. 62.

⁷³ Lamerle P. *Les plus anciens recueils ...*, p. 234–41; Cormack R. *Writing in Gold ...*, p. 73–74.

⁷⁴ Cormack R. *Writing in Gold ...*, p. 73–74.

⁷⁵ Grabar A. *Quelques reliquaires ...*, p. 1+3–28; Kalavrezou I. *Reliquary of Saint Demetrios*. Cat. entry 36 // *The Glory of Byzantium, Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843–1261* / Eds. H. C. Evans, W. D. Wixom. New York, 1997, p. 77–78, with further bibliography.

⁷⁶ Indeed, the Thessalonian *ciborium* was six-sided object, yet it has been effectively demonstrated how the exact number of sides was not crucial for making medieval replicas, because as long as the major and a few features are repeated so that invoke the original, the Byzantines would accept these replicas as valuable copies of the original. Kalavrezou I. *Reliquary of Saint Demetrios...*, p. 77–78, with further bibliography; supra n. 67.

⁷⁷ Kalavrezou I. *Reliquary of Saint Demetrios...*, p. 77–78, with further bibliography.

crowned by Christ (fig. 9 B)⁷⁸. The other two panels have a dodecasyllabic inscription in Greek: “I am the true image of the *ciborium* of the lance-pierced martyr Demetrios. On the outside I have Christ inscribed [represented], who with his hands crowns the fair couple. He who made me anew is John of the family of the Autoreianoï, by profession *mystographos*” (fig. 9 C)⁷⁹.

The *ciborium* “made anew” thus becomes the authenticated replica or a type of the archetype which was made by a *mystographos*. The profession of *mystographos* (literally the “scribe of the mysterious”) a high official at the Byzantine court, remains unclear⁸⁰. Yet, it resonates the profession of the *zoographos* (literally the “scribe of life”), an icon-painter who made the holy image “alive.” By extension, in addition to being the high imperial personal secretary, the *mystographos* could suggest the spiritual guide in the pursuit of communion or knowledge of ultimate spiritual truth and mysterious union with God through orthopraxy or direct experience or insight, which defined the concept of *theosis* in the Byzantine religious tradition⁸¹.

Indeed, this replica of the shrine of St. Demetrios has additional features of sacred space. Essentially a container, this *ciborium*-reliquary in its interior once had attached box which based on size and comparative surviving examples may have been like the one from the Monastery of Vatopaidi on Mt. Athos, which recalled the saint’s empty tomb and contained sweet-smelling myrrh and blood of St. Demetrios (fig. 10)⁸². The *ciborium*-reliquary is an enclosed chamber with a lantern-like roof. The engaged columns are connected on the level of the foliated capitals not by an entablature but by a

⁷⁸ This image of Christ crowning the imperial couple is consistent with the “marriage” images of imperial couples as the coronation was often accompanied with the marriage ceremony which is testified by the tenth-century Middle Byzantine and Ottonian ivories showing Christ crowning Emperor Romanos II and Empress Eudocia and Emperor Otto II and Empress Theophano. Kalavrezou proposed that this image in conjunction with St. Demetrios’ reliquary shows expectations for the cure of at the time sick emperor Constantine X Doukas. Kalavrezou I. Reliquary of Saint Demetrios., p. 77–78. At the same time, the entire Byzantine Empire is also in instable condition, which could affirm the perspectival expectations for military protection as well. For brief historical overview of the time period and emperor Constantine X: Treadgold W. A History ..., p. 599–601. Whatever the specific reason(s) may have been for the production of the *ciborium*-reliquary in Moscow, the expectations for St. Demetrios’ intercession remain crucial.

⁷⁹ Kalavrezou I. Reliquary of Saint Demetrios., p. 77–78, translation on p. 77. Theotoka N. Περί τῶν κιβωρίων τῶν ναῶν τοῦ ἁγίου Δημητρίου Θεσσαλονίκης καὶ Κωνσταντινουπόλεως // Μακεδονικά 2 (1941–1952), p. 395–413.

⁸⁰ Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium / Eds. A. Kazhdan et al. Vol. 2 New York, Oxford, 1991, sv. *Mystikos*.

⁸¹ On *theosis* or deification in Christ see supra n. 6.

⁸² Kalavrezou I. Reliquary of Saint Demetrios., p. 77–78; Grabar A. Quelques reliquaires ..., p. 1+3–28.

rope-like cord. The rope connecting the silver columns is tied around the column necks so as to produce the look of a veil with embroidered acanthus leaves instead of masonry walls carved with foliated motifs. Though our references to curtains for St. Demetrios' shrine(s) in Thessaloniki come only from visual depictions of the Saint reveled in front of drawn curtains of the shrine⁸³, we learn about the use of movable curtains for saintly shrines from the church of St. Menas in Maryût, Egypt (figs. 6 C, 11)⁸⁴. Moreover, the canopy-like roof of the *ciborium*-reliquary today in the Kremlin's museum is silver-gilt, yet its materialization gives the appearance of being made of textile. Eight ropes on the reliquary are tied at the apex of the roof as if to suggest the rising movement of the cloth above the centralized shrine chamber⁸⁵. The materialization of the reliquary evokes a play between light and darkness as well. On the cornice level, the lamp-like cups situated between the columns and below the arches hint at a mystical light shining from the darkness of the chamber interior. Motifs of embroidery, ropes, acacia, and silver columns are recognizable from the narratives of the Scriptures related to the structural elements and decoration of Solomon's temple (cf. 1 Kings 7, 2 Chr. 3)⁸⁶ and the desert tabernacle made of four pillars of acacia overlaid

⁸³ Cormack R. S. The Mosaic Decoration ..., p. 17–52.

⁸⁴ Hahn C. Seeing and Believing..., p. 1079–1106 with references to primary sources.

⁸⁵ On the Middle-Eastern words ḥ-l-l, ḥalla, and ḥulûl referencing to the rope design via desert scenario of untying or loosening a knot and by extension for signifying alighting, descending, stopping, or abiding in a place as well as to non-technical sense of resting or dwelling, and more specifically of incarnation, see elaborate discussion: Lobel D. A Dwelling Place for the Shekhinah // Jewish Quarterly Review 90/1–2 (1999), p. 103–125.

⁸⁶ 1 Kgs. 7: 1 But Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house. 2 He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon... 9 All these were of costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and so on the outside toward the great court. 10 And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones...

2 Chr. 3: 1 Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite... 3 Now these are the things wherein Solomon was instructed for the building of the house of God... 5 And the greater house he ceiled with fir tree, which he overlaid with fine gold, and set thereon palm trees and chains. 6 And he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty... 7 He overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and graved cherubim on the walls. 8 ...And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold. 10 And in the most holy house he made two cherubim of image work, and overlaid them with gold. 11 And the wings of the cherubim were twenty cubits long: one wing of the one cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was likewise five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub... 14 And he made the veil of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and wrought cherubim thereon. 15 Also he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high, and the chapter that was on the top of each of them was five cubits. 16 And he made chains, as in the oracle,

with gold, upon four bases of silver (cf. Ex. 26:32)⁸⁷. The shrine itself is suggestive of the tent, a basic, free-standing and portable architecture which temporarily marks the place, and in this particular case, we would propose, closely associated with the notion of the sacred tent, the Temple veil, the Tabernacle (2 Sam. 7:6)⁸⁸, and the common meaning of the place of the Holy of Holies (cf. 1 Kings 6:19)⁸⁹, believed place of the meeting with the Lord⁹⁰, and the Judeo-Christian prototype of the performative sacred space activated by the human encounter with the divine⁹¹.

Other personal objects for private devotion such as Middle Byzantine encolpia⁹² of St. Demetrios and various icon-reliquaries are further examples of conceptual replicas of St. Demetrios' shrine as the place of divine intercessions. The thirteenth-century enamel and gold-relief encolpia, today in the Dumbarton Oaks and British Museums, display supine images of St. Demetrios under canopy-like installations, which may refer to St. Demetrios' shrine in Thessaloniki, believed place of saint's martyrdom and death (figs. 12, 13)⁹³. Both encolpia functioned as protective amulets as

and put them on the heads of the pillars; and made a hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains. 17 And he reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.

⁸⁷ Ex. 26:32 And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver.

⁸⁸ 2 Sam. 7:6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.

⁸⁹ 1 Kings 6:19 And the oracle he prepared in the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

⁹⁰ The word tabernacle a derivative from Latin *tabernaculum* (tent). Tabernacle in Hebrew is referred by 'ohel (tent), 'ohel mo'ed (tent of meeting), 'ohel ha-'eduth (tent of testimony), mishkan 'ohel (dwelling), mishkan ha-'eduth (dwelling of testimony), mishkan 'ohel (dwelling of the tent), beth Yahweh (house of Yahweh), godesh (holy), miqdash (sanctuary), hekal (temple). The various expressions in the Hebrew text for the tabernacle make it possible to form an idea of its construction, and the description of a "portable tent-like sanctuary" seems the most accurate. More in: *Morganstern J.* The Ark the Ephod and the "Tent of Meeting". Cincinnati, 1945, chaps. 6 and 7; *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia* / Eds. M. Glazier, M. K. Hellwig. Collegeville, Minn., c. 1994, s.v. tabernacle; *Meek H. A.* The Synagogues. London, 1995, p. 30–39.

⁹¹ Lidov has already pointed to the Hebrew term tavnit (copy, pattern) which was used for the entire design and creation of the Tabernacle as a prototype of sacred space and space-paradigm. *Lidov A.* The Creator ..., p. 135–176, 366–371, esp. p. 144.

⁹² Encolpia are reliquary pendants that worn round the neck literary stood "on the chest" as the name encolpion suggests.

⁹³ *Katsarelias D.* Enkolpion Reliquary of Saint Demetrios. Cat. entry 116 // *The Glory of Byzantium...*, p. 167–168; *Kalavrezou I.* Enkolpion Reliquary of Saint Demetrios. Cat. entry 117 // *The Glory of Byzantium...*, p. 168, with further bibliography; *Grabar A.* Un nouveau reliquaire ..., p. 305+307–313; *Grabar A.* Quelques reliquaires ..., p. 1+3–28.

images of warrior saints and inscriptions pleading for the protection in life and death suggest⁹⁴. When the reliquaries are opened, both display the dead saint enclosed by a rope-like golden wire, framed by the “image-paradigm”⁹⁵ of long-established contact relics of the saint. Namely, the plaques with the image of Demetrios are in each case surrounded by a ring-shaped container echoing the “royal ring” of the saint that Loupos received and dipped in martyr’s blood. This hollow golden ring of the encolpion was literary soaked in blood as mentioned in hagiographies. The encolpia presumably contained other known contact relics of the saint — myrrh, often mixed with soil, and soaked in blood of the saint — as the inscriptions in Greek around the edge of the pendants suggest: “[Anointed] with [your] blood and myrrh”⁹⁶.

Therefore, the reliquaries closely and effectively combined not only selected physical characteristics of the shrine in Thessaloniki and rhetoric stemming from hagiographical accounts and records of miracles of St. Demetrios, but also “generic”, reiterative and theologically recognizable concepts of divine revelations and divine truth as the Byzantines understood them. In other words, the reliquaries and shrines of St. Demetrios exemplify yet another “icon-paradigm” within the indecomposable continuum of the network of beholders and saints which proclaimed sacred history, personalized in the Incarnate Christ. Consequently, the shrines and reliquaries are the spatial iconic passageways to the realm *other* and *beyond*, intimately shared by the historical figures who visited the shrines or for whom the specific private objects were made.

Rather than pleading for a veristic replication of the *ciborium* from Hagios Demetrios, the creators of St. Demetrios’ reliquaries sought to

⁹⁴ The inscriptions on the encolpion from the British Museum read: “He supplicates you to be his fervent guardian in battles”; “Being anointed by your blood and your myrrh”; and a mid-eighteenth century Georgian inscription was added: “Saint Kethevan [the] Queen’s relic: Cross: True”. *Katsarelias D.* Enkolpion Reliquary of Saint Demetrios. Cat. entry 116 // *The Glory of Byzantium*..., p. 167–168. The inscriptions on the encolpion from the Dumbarton Oaks collection read: “The faith of Sergios carries the venerable container with the blood and myrrh of Saint Demetrios. He asks to have you as protector both in life and in death together with the two victorious martyrs [Sts. Sergios and Bakchos]”. *Kalavrezou I.* Enkolpion Reliquary of Saint Demetrios. Cat. entry 117 // *The Glory of Byzantium*..., p. 168.

⁹⁵ I borrow the term and concept of the “image-paradigm” from *Lidov A.* Holy Face, Holy Script, Holy Gate: Revealing the Edessa Paradigm in Christian Imagery // *Intorno al Sacro Volto. Bisanzio, Genova e il Mediterraneo* / Eds. A.R. Calderoni, C. Dufour, G. Wolf. Venice, 2007, p. 195–212.

⁹⁶ For full inscriptions supra n. 93; *Grabar A.* Un nouveau reliquaire ..., p. 305+307–313; *Grabar A.* Quelques reliquaires ..., p. 1+3–28. I also thank Drpić for communicating his personal investigation of pendant reliquaries of St. Demetrios in the British Museum and Dumbarton Oaks collections.

employ generic architectural symbols and mental images with potent meanings⁹⁷. The insistence on the more-or-less consistent generic architectural image for these shrines based on “codified” symbols and decoration and on use of precious materials — motifs of embroidery, ropes, acacia, the use of silver, gold, and potentially myrrh and blood of saint — carried potent meanings in order to convey the sacredness the saint’s shrine symbolized in a Byzantine church. The formulaic imagery of St. Demetrios’ shrines could easily acquire multiple meanings of anachronistic and spatially unrelated objects. The generic symbols and their conflation in various objects, we would suggest, did not contradict the Byzantine view of sanctity, which was typological rather than chronological or topographical.

THE SHRINES OF ST. DEMETRIOS AS A DYNAMIC CONSTRUCT OF SPACE

Because the shrines of St. Demetrios not only frame the presence of the saint, but also their architecture is the embodiment of presence; they provide a testimony to how divine grace became more vivid and accessible to the faithful beholders in a Byzantine church. The faithful contemplated and captured the significance of human encounters with the sacred, materially and socially framed in time and space by shrines. As a dynamic construct of sacred space, where the immaterial is revealed, the shrines of St. Demetrios aided overarching knowing of God, cognitively and experientially.

It has been suggested that Bishop John recorded only the miracles of St. Demetrios’ in which the major protagonists were members of the elite — the aristocracy, eparchs, administrative officials, wealthy citizens, ecclesiastical officials and soldiers — as if popular piety of other members of the society was not of importance⁹⁸. However, we would suggest, the promotional work by Bishop John was not so much elitist in nature as much it may have been concerned with the “role-models” in the Byzantine society, crucial for instructing about the appropriate veneration of St. Demetrios and for spreading the adequate spiritual messages associated with St. Demetrios and his shrine to all beholders. For example, though certainly commissioned by a wealthy patron and today preserved in the civic museum of Sassoferato in Italy, the high-quality late Byzantine mosaic icon of St. Demetrios combined with an affordable and widely used metal

⁹⁷ On the opposite view see Grabar A. *Quelques reliquaires...*, p. 1+3–28, where he suggested that the reliquary from Moscow is a faithful coeval replica of the shrine of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki.

⁹⁸ *Skedros J.C.* *Saint Demetrios...*, p. 115–120 with older references.

ampulla reliquary⁹⁹ reveals the universal message of the significance of the material body beyond its nature (fig. 14)¹⁰⁰. The Greek inscription on this hybrid object made of icon and ampulla reads: “This ampulla bears holy oil drawn from the well in which the body of the divine Demetrios reposes, which gushes here and accomplishes miracles for the entire universe and for the faithful”¹⁰¹.

The presence or absence of actual body remains of Demetrios, were not necessarily crucial for understanding and “capturing” saint’s presence. Even if the larger-scale shrines of St. Demetrios could have been fixed, immovable structures within the church space, their performativity and understanding as movable and dynamic places is anchored in the faithful responses to them, their actions, movement and prayers, rather than to permanent qualities of the physical reality of shrines and their contents. Bishop John recorded himself:

“However, lest anyone doubt, that this one [St. Demeterios] is one of the saints, nor that this is the all-glorious and victorious Demetrios, I bring to your attention that famous and much talked about appearance of the saint. Therefore, let us raise up our minds to heaven, and let us hold fast to our yearning for the victorious martyr, and let us urge our own hearts to always follow in the spiritual footsteps of the saint”¹⁰².

The religious practices for the controversial veneration of saints captured a long attention in the Byzantine tradition. Therefore, on another occasion, Bishop John, essentially reinstated earlier-established rhetoric from Eusebius’ letter to Emperor Maurice:

“It is not the practice, O Emperor, of the inhabitants of god-loving Thessaloniki, as it is of course in other areas, to visibly display the bodies of the martyred saints in order to arouse the souls towards the piety through the continued viewing and physical touching of their bodies. On the contrary, we have established the faith intellectually in our hearts and we shudder at the physical view of the relics on account of our deep piety”¹⁰³.

⁹⁹ Bakirtzis Ch. Byzantine Ampullae ..., p. 140–149.

¹⁰⁰ Durrand J. Mosaic Icon with Saint Demetrios and Reliquary. Cat. entry 139 // Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557) / Ed. H. C. Evans. New York, New Haven [Conn.], c2004, p. 231–233, with further bibliography; Theochari M. Ψηφιδωτή τοῦ ἁγίου ..., p. 508–536.

¹⁰¹ Durrand J. Mosaic Icon with Saint Demetrios and Reliquary. Cat. entry 139 // Byzantium: Faith and Power ..., p. 231–233, citation on p. 231.

¹⁰² End of the Miracle no. 14 as translated by Skedros J.C. Saint Demetrios..., p. 123.

¹⁰³ Skedros J. C. Saint Demetrios..., p. 87, with references to the Miracles 89, 17–23.

The fact that several holy shrines of St. Demetrios were built within churches assumes the group identity of the faithful beholders, patron saints, High Priests, and Christ Himself, as shown by the invocation of their names in prayers or liturgical celebrations¹⁰⁴. The location of a prayer in relation to the saint was significant for a dynamic construction of such spatial icon. Medieval texts often inform us that the prayer to a saint was most effective if it was made at the saint's tomb or near his translated relics.¹⁰⁵ The belief that the protection of the saints was presumably strongest in places connected with their cultic presence might have influenced the choice of the location of saintly shrines within the church. However, often saints communicated their powers in remote places, when they would appear in a dream of the faithful. The architectural background in the form of a canopy effectively and visually "localized" saintly miracles. Canopies framing images of Demetrios, in a similar manner, shared a common spatial organization and architectural vocabulary, with all visual elements readily understood by the beholders. The conflated imagery of various shrines and divine apparitions tied to them regardless of chronological and geographical confines can be explained by strong corporeal ties between the saint, his image, and his power to transfer grace through the iconic images — both spatial and visual — but above all mental and spiritual images. The persistent use of architecture for understanding the performative sacred space of St. Demetrios actually underlines the use of architecture to replace the material with immaterial world as within the ritual and mysterious the material body acquires significance beyond its nature and allows the beholder to participate in the space beyond¹⁰⁶.

We are reminded that the prominent building and highly visible within the cityscape of Thessaloniki was the basilica of St. Demetrios and not its contents (fig. 3). Access to the shrine(s) of St. Demetrios' was highly controlled and yet the shrine(s) became the emblematic images of the city within the Byzantine Empire. The illuminated page (fol. 217r) of the famous twelfth-century manuscript of *Skyltizes' Synopsis Historiarum* (Cod. Vitr. 26-2, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid) shows the historical event — the failed Bulgarians' siege of Thessaloniki (fig. 15)¹⁰⁷. The city of Thessaloniki, inscribed in Greek as such, is represented by the crenellated city walls and

¹⁰⁴ About the theological approval of this notion: *Crook J.* The Architectural..., p. 32, with further references.

¹⁰⁵ See for example: *Brown P.* The Cult ..., p. 1–22.

¹⁰⁶ *Harrington L. M.* Sacred Place in Early Medieval Neoplatonism. New York, 2004, Conclusion: Rethinking the Sacred Space, p. 201–205; *Eliade M.* The World, the City, the House // Experience of the Sacred. Reading in the Phenomenology of Religion / Eds. S. B. Twiss, W. H. Conser, Jr. Hanover, London, 1992, p. 188–199.

¹⁰⁷ See for example, *Saradi H. G.* Space in Byzantine ..., p. 73–112, esp. p. 84–85.

civic architecture within. According to the tradition, the city survived the siege due to the miraculous intercession of the city's patron, St. Demetrios. St. Demetrios, however, is not represented by his iconic image, but by architecture traditionally associated with him.

The Byzantines occasionally placed protective icons and chapels above the monastic, imperial, and city gates. For example, the famous icon of *Christ Chalkites* publicly displayed above the imperial gate in Constantinople not only protected the city but also marked the actual place of important imperial and military events in Byzantine history as well as the removals and re-installations of the very same icon signified declarations of imperial iconoclasm or returns to Orthodoxy¹⁰⁸. Above the city gates of Thessaloniki, instead of an icon the illustrator of the *Skytizes*' manuscript depicts a prominent structure. Usually identified as the church of St. Demetrios, this object is, however, shown as a centrally-planned architectural structure and may actually stand for otherwise invisible shrine(s) of St. Demetrios within his basilica, which, we are reminded, is an oblong-planned building without a dome. Understood within this context, once again the shrine of St. Demetrios becomes multi-layered icon in space, incorporating devotional icons of Demetrios within his shrine and the shrine as a spatial icon within Demetrios-loving city.

Portable, smaller-scale reliquaries associated with St. Demetrios also emphasized the significance of saint's shrine as a spatial icon and did not contradict the perception and reality of large-scale, fixed, architectonic structures. The small-scale reliquaries and conceptual replicas of St. Demetrios' shrines are comparable examples that confirm the transferable and dynamic aspects of all these large- and small-scale spatial icons, as channels of communication with the divine, *beyond* and *other than*. The shrines of St. Demetrios, as historically created places of sacred revelations, are thus simultaneously frames of sacredness *beyond* and *other than* representation in space and time.

THE SHRINES OF ST. DEMETRIOS AS SPATIAL ICONS

As with other icons, the concept of St. Demetrios' shrines as *spatial icons*, is understood best when examined through the Incarnational argu-

¹⁰⁸ Mango C. The Brazen House; a study of the vestibule of the imperial palace of Constantinople. Imprint: Arkæologisk-kunsthistoriske Meddelelser edgivet af Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab. Vol. 4, no. 4. København, 1959, p. 21 with references to *Constantine Porphyrogenitus*, Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris de cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae. 2 vols. // Ed. J. J. Reiske / Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae. Bonn, 1829–40, p. 276, 458 and *Theophanes Continuatus* // Theophanes Continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Monachus / Ed. I. Bekker. Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae. Bonn: Weber, 1838, p. 467. More about Christ Chalkites: *Bogdanović J.* Chalke Gate (Entrance of Great Palace) // Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Constantinople. 2008, URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=12432> with further references and older bibliography.

ment¹⁰⁹. By juxtaposing the Incarnational argument with the performativity and textuality of shrines we may exemplify how such a conceptual framework of the shrines creatively mediates the relationships with the sacred. The particular emphasis is placed on the concepts of: 1) ontological construct of the icon; 2) prototype and replica; 3) spatial icon as the literal and spiritual window into another world beyond time and space; and 4) spatial icon as the creation of the Church as a whole.

The mystery of the Incarnation, when God had taken human form and participated in time and space, implied the Incarnation of the Divine Word made flesh (Jn. 1:14)¹¹⁰ and the concept that the invisible and inaccessible became visible and accessible to humankind. The miracle of the Incarnation was not meant to be repeated literary, but rather, it was meant to provide the anchor for contemplation of the archetype. This ontological construct is the basis of the Byzantine understanding of icons, and an integral part of the Christian Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy as well. The icons imply and testify the holy image and identity of the saints, but especially the image of Christ and the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15)¹¹¹, who by becoming matter, and through the medium of matter, brings about salvation¹¹². The Incarnation not only affirms the flesh, but sanctifies it and gives it a new “transfigured” meaning as the body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19)¹¹³ and the earthly container that bears the divine content (2 Cor. 4:2, 18)¹¹⁴. The body-less shrines of St. Demetrios exemplify these two extremely oppositional concepts of the cult of the body and its rejection in the deification consistently, as the “body image” of Demetrios is tied to his shrine yet remains weightless and incorporeal.

¹⁰⁹ Among numerous works about icons in English: *Vassilaki M. Icons* // The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies / Eds. E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, R. Cormack. Oxford, 2008, p. 758–769, with older references; *Yazykova I., Hegumen Luka Golovkov. The Theological Principles of the Icon and Iconography // A History of Icon Painting. Sources, Traditions, Present Day* / Ed. Archimandrite Zacchaeus Wood. Moscow, 2002, p. 9–28; *Ouspensky L. Theology of the Icon*. Crestwood, NY, 1992.

¹¹⁰ Jn. 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

¹¹¹ Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature ...

¹¹² From *St. John Damascus. On the Divine Images. Three Apologies against Those Who Attack the Divine Images* / Transl. D. Anderson. Crestwood, NY, 1980, as emphasized by *Yazykova I., Hegumen Luka Golovkov. The Theological Principles of the Icon ...*, p. 9–28, esp. p. 12.

¹¹³ 1 Cor. 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

¹¹⁴ 2 Cor. 4: 2 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us... 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

As vehicles for the transmission of the grace of the Holy Spirit, saints impersonated the presence of Christ after His Incarnation on earth. The “body image” of lance-pierced St. Demetrios endorsed the “body image” of lance-pierced Christ¹¹⁵. Moreover, the form and symbolism of the examined reliquaries and *ciborium*-shrines of St. Demetrios can be related to the canopy-like shrine of the Tomb of Christ in Jerusalem¹¹⁶. Like the Holy Sepulchre, in which the Tomb *Aedicula* bore witness to the human ministry of Christ, the shrines of St. Demetrios confirm that the main object of veneration were not the physical remains of the saint. For, like the tomb-bench in Christ’s tomb, the bench-like “bed” from the *ciborium* of St. Demetrios in the eponymous church in Thessaloniki implies the saint’s presence despite his visible absence. The miracle of the Incarnation was not meant to be repeated literally, but to provide the perspectival contemplation of the Second Coming. This complex concept of disappearance of presence is analogous with the spaces of memory and creation, where the parts which really make them continuous are the parts that cannot be represented. The shrines of St. Demetrios are ontological constructs of saintly presence even though they did not contain the body of the saint and were therefore “strangely empty;” they did not provide a palpable foretaste of the resurrection of the body, despite the fact that the recorded apparitions of the saint included vivid references to his body. The coincidence of these opposites, based on perceptual contrivances and perspectival expectations (even if the saintly miracles themselves were not perspectival)¹¹⁷ triggers and captures the temporary qualities of shrines as vehicles of spirituality activated by human encounter with the sacred defined by human body and framed by site-specific and relational architecture.

By the eighth century the Orthodox doctrine on the veneration of icons was defined, while the production of icons and their wide distribution was especially encouraged for “the more we see them ... the more in contemplating them, we shall be led to remember and love the prototype”¹¹⁸. As the co-

¹¹⁵ *Ksingopoulos A* Ἡ τοιχογραφία τοῦ μαρτυρίου τοῦ Ἁγίου Δημητρίου εἰς τοὺς Ἁγίους Ἀποστόλους Θεσσαλονίκης [La scène du martyre de saint Démétrius dans l’église des Saints-Apôtres de Thessalonique] // Δελτίον Χριστιανικῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας 8 (1975–1976), p. 531–553 compares St. Demetrios with Christ and emphasizes the comparable wounds in the bodies of the two. I thank Drpić for bringing Ksingopoulos’ work to my attention.

¹¹⁶ *Grabar A.* Quelques reliquaires ..., p. 1+3–28, has suggested already a comparison of St. Demetrios’ shrines with the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

¹¹⁷ We are reminded that Demetrios did not save Sirmium nor that the city of Thessaloniki, conquered several times, was absolutely impregnable.

¹¹⁸ *Yazykova I., Hegumen Luka Golovkov.* The Theological Principles of the Icon ..., p. 9–28, esp. p. 12 with reference to the letter of the Seventh Ecumenical Council of 787 written to the Emperor and Empress. Interestingly, the reverence for icons is compared with the performative construct of the meeting of two friends: “for that which one loves he also reverences and

pious production of icons as conventional replicas of the prototype was encouraged so too the various replicas of St. Demetrios' shrine (made to resemble the Thessalonian shrine) emphasized and empowered the divine archetype. All these symbolic types and shadows (replicas?) were signs and indications of the ultimate truth¹¹⁹.

Through this ontological construct the enigma of St. Demetrios' shrines is not so much in the miracles achieved through St. Demetrios' intercessions, nor in providing the ultimate truth, but in the bearing of witness to the ultimate source and truth, revealing Christ and His Church Triumphant. Whereas icons are often understood as two-dimensional windows into another, invisible world, both literally and symbolically, we have sought to suggest that they do not show segments of the heavenly world, but rather reveal its fullness and fulfillment. Thus, the three-dimensional shrines of St. Demetrios are spatial icons that reveal the essence within the material and site-specific domain and the world other and beyond time and space. The shrines of St. Demetrios as spatial icons could have been shrines in the shape of miniature buildings in their own right within the church space or they could have had this status within any other small-scale, portable containers that also stood for the house of the saint and could be "activated" as a place

what he reverences that he greatly loves, as the everyday custom, which we observe towards those we love, bears witness, and in which both ideas are practically illustrated when two friends meet together. The word is not only made use of by us, but we also find it set down in the Divine Scriptures by the ancients. For it is written in the histories of the Kings." The Letter of the Synod to the Emperor and Empress. *Labbe, Cossart. Concilia. Vol. VII. col. 577, p. 572.* URL: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/nicea2.html> ©Paul Halsall Feb 1996.

¹¹⁹ The famous 82nd Canon from the Council of Trullo from 692 re-affirms the use of icons: "In some pictures of the venerable icons, a lamb is painted to which the Precursor points his finger, which is received as a type of grace, indicating beforehand through the Law, our true Lamb, Christ our God. Embracing therefore the ancient types (τύπους / figures — J.B.) and shadows (σκιᾶς / umbras — the meaning of the Greek word is obscure because it may stand for any kind of image of higher entity often understood via Platonic philosophy as foreshadowing of the ultimate truth, but was also used for visual images as well as for shadows, shelters, and canopies — J. B.) as symbols of the truth, and patterns given to the Church, we prefer grace and truth, receiving it as the fulfillment of the Law. In order therefore that "that which is perfect" may be delineated to the eyes of all, at least in colored expression, we decree that the figure in human form of the Lamb who taketh away the sin of the world, Christ our God, be henceforth exhibited in images, instead of the ancient lamb, so that all may understand by means of it the depths of the humiliation of the Word of God, and that we may recall to our memory his conversation in the flesh, his passion and salutary death, and his redemption which was wrought for the whole world." English translation: *The Seven Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church // Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers / Eds. P. Schaff, H. Wace. Trans. H. R. Percival. Vol. XIV Grand Rapids MI, 1955, p. 356–408; URL: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/trullo.html.* ©Paul Halsall Feb 1996. For the bi-lingual text in Greek and Latin see: *Mansi G. D. Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio. Vol. XI Paris, Leipzig, 1901–27, cols. 977–80.*

and vehicle of veneration of divine regardless of its actual location within a larger spatial whole: in the city, in a church, in a private house, or on the move. Paradoxically, the material reality of these shrines as spatial icons and icons in space, would not contradict but would only creatively confirm the Byzantine perception of “supra-spatial” space, that is transcendent concept of space, defined by God who defies space.

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ПЕРФОРМАТИВНОСТЬ УСЫПАЛЬНИЦ
В ВИЗАНТИЙСКОЙ ЦЕРКВИ:
СВЯТИЛИЩА И РЕЛИКВАРИИ СВ. ДИМИТРИЯ

В византийской церковной традиции усыпальницы представляли собой архитектурные конструкции, которые одновременно и скрывали останки святых, и показывали их. Начиная с IV в. вошло в обычай эксгумировать и перемещать тела целиком, с целью их дальнейшего разделения, а также демонстрации в архитектурно оформленном пространстве, которое не ограничивалось священным пространством алтаря. Такая практика сочеталась с общественными и частными религиозными обрядами, включавшими рассказы о чудесах, свершенных святыми мощами, которые напоминали о евангельских чудесах и давали надежду на воскресение из мертвых.

Специально построенные усыпальницы были доступны не только духовенству, но и простым верующим. Такой подход к поклонению мощам святых получил богословское обоснование. В форме архитектурных инсталляций в пространстве церкви усыпальницы подчёркивали физическую и психологическую близость верующих и святых.

Согласно византийской вере в обожение, святые несли божественную истину, полученную в результате откровения. Присутствию мощей и чудотворящих сил, исходящих от святого и, в конечном итоге, от Бога, также придавалось большое значение в византийском обществе. Места таких божественных проявлений, связанные с духовными, священными и божественными предметами, ритуалами и практиками, являлись, таким образом, по определению, и святыми, и перформативными. Мы можем обратиться к концепции перформативности (ориентированной как на тело, так и на действие) для осмысления усыпальниц как мест, созданных и преобразованных индивидуальными и групповыми встречами со священным. Усыпальницы занимают строго определённое пространство, в котором святые не просто «находятся», а

которое они «используют», где святые являются активными «участниками», а не постоянными «обитателями».

Данное явление перформативности и святости мест божественных проявлений в византийской традиции особенно хорошо видно на примере усыпальниц св. Димитрия, одного из наиболее почитаемых христианских святых. Существовавшее уже в начале V в., почитание св. Димитрия было возобновлено и обогащено свидетельствами о мироточении по окончании 'смутного времени' иконоборчества VIII–IX вв. и соблюдается по сей день. Несмотря на обилие источников, результаты их сравнительного анализа часто противоречивы и вызывают вопросы, более всего потому, что физические останки не являлись необходимым условием для проявления святых сил.

По результатам сравнительного анализа имеющихся документальных свидетельств мы можем показать, что масштаб и точное местоположение перформативного пространства св. Димитрия варьировалось, от просторов всей Империи и базилики Св. Димитрия в Фессалониках до отдельных монументальных или переносных реликвариев. Основанное на культе конкретного места и града, почитание св. Димитрия как особого покровителя города Фессалоники явилось результатом стечения как минимум трёх обстоятельств: 1) резкого сокращения территории Византийской империи (ок. 600 — 780 гг.) и общественных, экономических и культурных потрясений, включая два периода иконоборчества; 2) способности, как полагали, св. Димитрия защищать город Фессалоники от вражеских нападений и разрушительных бедствий, в то время как спасти другие города в схожих ситуациях ему не удавалось; 3) создания двух значительных усыпальниц святого (в крипте и в нефе) как центральных мест поклонения на территории города Фессалоники, в расположенной на заметном возвышении городской базилике, которая, в свою очередь, стала известна как «дом святого».

Так называемый киворий св. Димитрия в Фессалониках и его последующие реплики, являвшиеся основными объектами поклонения, не демонстрировали ни святого тела, ни его фрагментов. Логично предположить, что основной функцией раки св. Димитрия в Фессалониках было не представление физических останков святого, а обозначение его присутствия при физическом отсутствии. В седьмом веке епископ Иоанн Фессалоникийский засвидетельствовал, что фессалоникийцы не имели привычки выставлять мощи своих святых для того, чтобы вызвать благочестивые чувства верующих. Рака св. Димитрия «локализовывала» чудеса святого, столь тесно ассоциировавшегося со своей ракой не только потому, что в ней помещались иконы св. Димитрия. Дошедшие до нас археологические сведения о раке и реликвариях св. Димитрия, votivные мозаичные панно, изображающие св. Димит-

рия на фоне собственной усыпальницы, а также различные письменные свидетельства о явлениях св. Димитрия, который в видениях верующих часто являлся выходящим из своей раки и выглядевшим так, как он был изображён на иконах, — всё подтверждает нашу гипотезу о том, что усыпальница-святилище выполняла функцию пространственной иконы, которая обеспечивала перформативную и контекстуальную коммуникацию с божественным. Усыпальница выступала в роли декорации для чудесного заступничества святого. Иными словами, усыпальница «локализовывала» божественные деяния на земле.

С течением времени значение усыпальницы скорее как конструкции, обозначавшей место святого присутствия, чем содержащей непосредственно святое тело, росло по мере распространения на пространстве византийского мира свидетельств о чудесах, совершенных св. Димитрием. Подтверждение перформативных аспектов усыпальницы св. Димитрия можно найти в письменных и материальных свидетельствах о «копиях» усыпальницы св. Димитрия в Фессалониках. Некий Киприан, епископ Фены, заказал копию *кивория* для своей церкви в Северной Африке. Константинопольский реликварий, выполненный для императора Константина X Дуки (1059–1067) и его второй жены Евдокии Макремболитиссы, находящийся сегодня в Оружейной палате Музеев Московского Кремля, является ещё одним примером. На небольшом *кивории*-реликварии из Москвы имеется надпись на греческом: «Я есть истинный образ *кивория* пронзённого копьём мученика Димитрия. Снаружи на мне изображён Христос, который своими руками венчает достойную пару. Сделавший меня вновь зовётся Иоанн из семьи Авториану, по профессии *мистограф* (*mystographos*)». Данная копия Фессалоникийской раки, подписанная автором, по сути представляет собой контейнер в форме палатки, с завершением, напоминающим фонарь. Колонны объединены на уровне процветших капителей не антаблементом, а элементом, напоминающим прочную веревку. Верёвка, связывающая серебряные колонны, обвязана вокруг них таким образом, чтобы создавался эффект завесы с вышитыми листьями аканфа вместо каменной кладки, украшенной резными растительными мотивами. Мотивы вышивки, верёвки, акация и серебряные колонны наводят на мысль о шатре или элементарной, отдельно стоящей и переносной конструкции, которая обозначает какое-либо место лишь временно. Как мы предполагаем, в данном случае перечисленные мотивы тесно связаны с понятием Завесы Храма и Святая Святых, где происходит встреча с Господом и которое является иудейско-христианским прототипом перформативного священного пространства, активированного встречей человека с божественным.

Такие предметы частного религиозного обихода, как средневизантийские энколпионы св. Димитрия и различные иконы-реликварии, яв-

ляются дополнительными примерами концептуальных копий усыпальницы св. Димитрия как места проявления божественных сил. Например, эмалевые с золотым рельефом энколпионы XIII в., находящиеся сегодня в коллекциях Дамбартон Оакс и Британского музея, украшены изображениями св. Димитрия, лежащего под сооружениями, напоминающими балдахин, которые могут иметь прототипом усыпальницу св. Димитрия в Фессалониках. Оба энколпиона выполняли роль священных оберегов, на что указывают образы святых воинов и надписи с мольбой о защите. В открытом виде оба реликвария представляют мёртвого святого, окруженного имитирующей веревку золотой проволокой, которая напоминала о контактной реликвии святого — «императорском кольце», омытом кровью мученика, как о том сообщают жития. Золотые кольца энколпионов содержали и другие известные контактные реликвии святого — миро, часто смешанное с землей, пропитанной кровью святого. Это следует из надписей на греческом языке по краю: «[Помазанное] [твоей] кровью и миро».

Последовательное использование во всех рассмотренных реликвариях более или менее постоянного пространственного образа, основанного на «зафиксированных» символах и орнаментике и на использовании драгоценных материалов (мотивов вышивки, веревок, акации, использовании серебра, золота и, потенциально, миро и крови святого) воплощало главную идею, указывало на исключительную святость рака святого в византийской церкви. Заданное единообразие усыпальниц св. Димитрия без труда могло обрести многозначность, переходящую и на предметы, пространственно связанные с ракой. Общие символы и их сведение воедино в различных предметах, как мы предполагаем, не противоречили византийскому представлению о святости, которое являлось скорее типологическим, чем хронологическим или топографическим.

В таком контексте реликварии св. Димитрия обозначают не только присутствие святого, воплощенное в архитектуре этих сооружений. Реликварии делали божественную благодать более осязаемой и доступной верующим. В процессе созерцания верующие приходили к пониманию важности встречи человека со святым, обозначенным во времени и пространстве усыпальницы. Действительное наличие или отсутствие мощей св. Димитрия совершенно не обязательно являлось необходимым условием для понимания или «улавливания» присутствия святого. Даже если бóльшие по размеру усыпальницы и были неподвижно закреплёнными конструкциями внутри церковного пространства, их перформативность и восприятие их как мобильных, динамичных структур обусловлено реакцией верующих на них, их дей-

ствиями, передвижениями и молитвами, а не неизменными физическими свойствами реальной архитектуры усыпальниц.

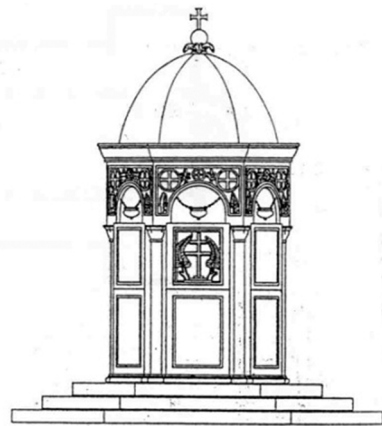
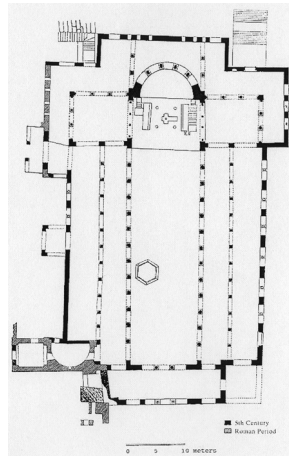
Более того, небольшие по размеру, переносные реликварии св. Димитрия подчёркивали важность усыпальницы св. Димитрия как пространственной иконы и не вступали в противоречие с тем, как ощущались и чем являлись в реальности монументальные пространственные конструкции. Небольшие реликварии и концептуальные копии усыпальницы св. Димитрия подтверждают способность к передаче динамичных аспектов всех рассмотренных крупно- и мелкомасштабных пространственных икон как каналов общения с божественным. Все указанные усыпальницы и реликварии объединяли не только специфические физические характеристики усыпальницы в Фессалониках, но и риторика в жизнеописаниях и свидетельствах о чудесах св. Димитрия, укорененная в 'общих', повторяющихся и узнаваемых богословских концепциях. Иными словами, реликварии св. Димитрия являют пример ещё одного образа-парадигмы. Следовательно, реликварии могут быть осмыслены как медиативные пространственные иконы, обеспечивающие связь с царством небесным, глубоко лично прочувствованную историческими личностями, видевшими усыпальницы, или теми, для частного поклонения которых были выполнены рассмотренные выше священные предметы.

Как и в случае с другими иконами, концепцию реликвариев св. Димитрия как пространственных икон легче всего понять при помощи учения о Воплощении. Сопоставляя идею Воплощения с перформативностью и текстуальностью усыпальниц, мы можем проиллюстрировать, каким образом такая концептуальная система усыпальниц облегчает общение со священным. Особенное внимание уделяется следующим концепциям: 1) онтологическое построение иконы; 2) прототип и копия; 3) пространственная икона как буквальное и духовное окно в другой мир, вне времени и пространства; 4) пространственная икона как сотворение Церкви в целом.

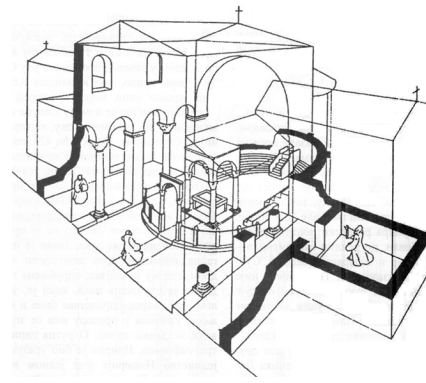
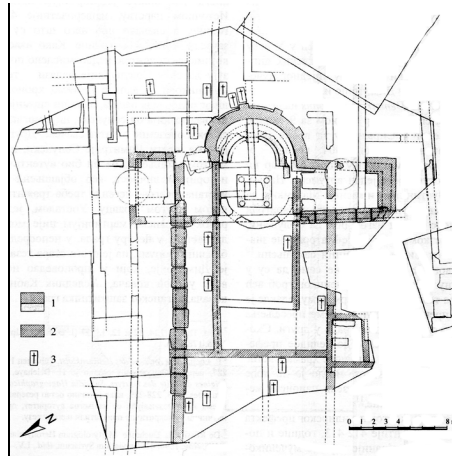
Выполняя роль проводников благодати Святого Духа, святые имитировали присутствие Христа после Его Воплощения на земле. Чудо воплощения должно было не в буквальном смысле слова повториться, но дать пищу философскому осмыслению Второго Пришествия. Данная сложная концепция исчезновения присутствия аналогична категориям памяти и творчества, где невозможно физически отобразить элементы, сообщающие непрерывность данным категориям, однако эти факторы можно активировать через посредничество человека и божественной милости. Следовательно, «телесный образ» («body image») пронзённого копьём св. Димитрия отсылал к «телесному образу» пронзённого копьём Христа, а форма и символизм рассмотренных реликва-

риев и рак-кивориев св. Димитрия перекликается с напоминающей по форме балдахин усыпальницей Гроба Господня в Иерусалиме. Усыпальницы св. Димитрия остаются главным образом онтологическими построениями святого присутствия, несмотря на тот факт, что, поскольку усыпальницы не содержали тело святого, они были «странно пустыми» и не позволяли полноценно пережить предвкушение воскресения плоти, невзирая на имеющиеся свидетельства о явлениях святого, содержащих, среди прочего, яркие описания его тела.

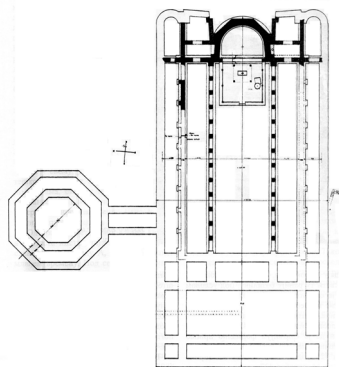
Бестелесные усыпальницы св. Димитрия иллюстрируют две прямо противоположные концепции — культа тела и его отвержения в обожествлении, так как представления о «телесном образе» св. Димитрия связаны с его усыпальницей, и в то же время он остаётся бестелесным. Совпадение этих противоположностей, основанное на ощущениях и философских чаяниях, связано со способностью усыпальниц служить проводниками духовности, активированной встречей со священным, чьё присутствие обозначалось определённой архитектурой. Примером такой архитектуры может являться усыпальница, которая сама по себе есть здание в миниатюре, расположенное внутри церковного пространства, или любой другой, более мелкий по размеру переносной сосуд, обозначавший дом святого, свидетельство о высшем источнике и истине, наглядно представлявший Христа и Его Церковь Торжествующую. Каждый из этих реликвариев мог быть «активирован» как место и способ поклонения божественному, независимо от его расположения относительно большего целого: внутри города, церкви, в частном доме или в путешествии. Парадоксально, что материальная реальность реликвариев как пространственных икон и икон в пространстве не противоречила, а лишь творчески подтверждала византийское отношение к «надпространственному» пространству, то есть трансцендентной концепции пространства, определённого Богом, который над пространством.



A

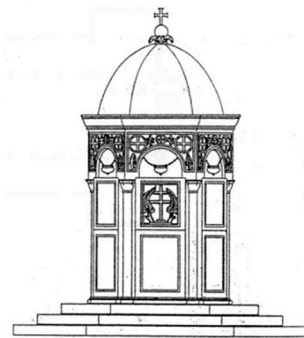


B



C

1. Fifth-century churches dedicated to St. Demetrios and shrines to St. Demetrios:
A) in Thessaloniki, Greece; B) in Sirmium, Serbia; C) in Ravenna, Italy



2. Reconstruction drawing of the marble *ciborium* built after the 12th century instead of the original six-sided silver-gilt *ciborium*-shrine of St. Demetrios; the original location of the *ciborium* can still be discerned within hexagonal outline on the floor, Thessaloniki, dated before the 12th century



3. Basilica of Hagios Demetrios, Thessaloniki, Greece



4. Seven-sided marble canopy abutted to the wall over the myrrhobletic basin, St. Demetrios, Thessaloniki, after 9th century



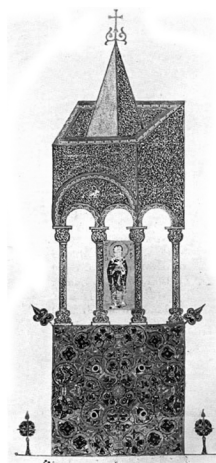
5. St. Demetrios in front of his shrine, mosaic, Church of St. Demetrios, Thessaloniki, 7th–8th century

**A****B****C****D**

6. The lost mosaic cycle from the nave arcades in the church of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki show St. Demetrios in front of his shrine, which is represented as:

- A) six-sided open chamber with the doors with engraved images of Sts. Nestor and Laupos (?);
- B) six-sided columnar canopy;
- C) curtained colonnade;
- D) conch-shelled niche;

the drawings were made by architect W. S. George in 1907



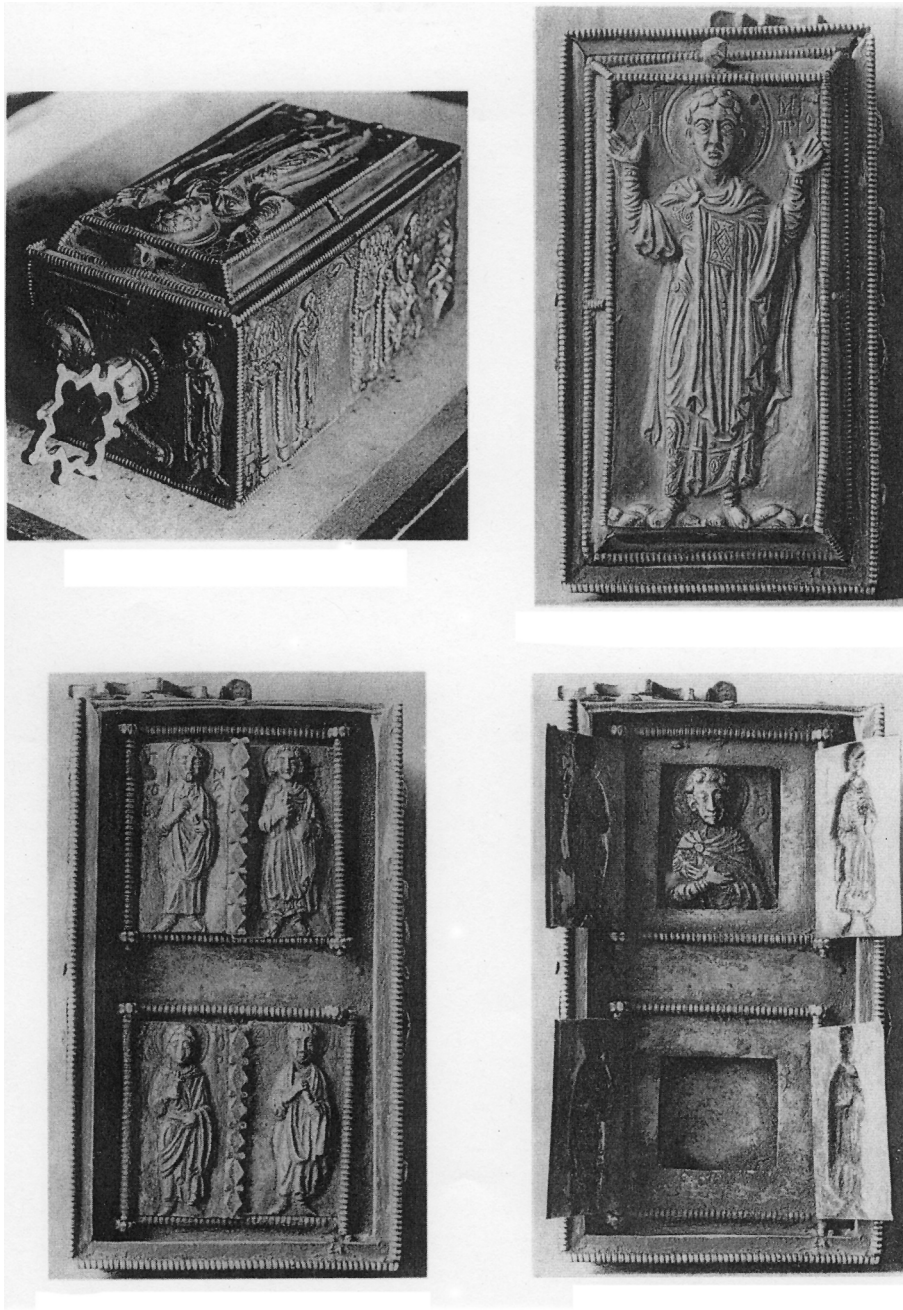
7. Canopy with the proskynetaria icon of St. Basil, Mount Athos, Monastery Dionysiu, 105, Psalter, 13th century



8. Icon Canopy, Hamilton Psalter, 78.A.9, fol. 39v, ca. 1300, made in Constantinople, belonged to Queen Charlotte of Jerusalem, Cyprus and Armenia, granddaughter of Theodore Palaeologue, despot of Mystra

**A****B****C**

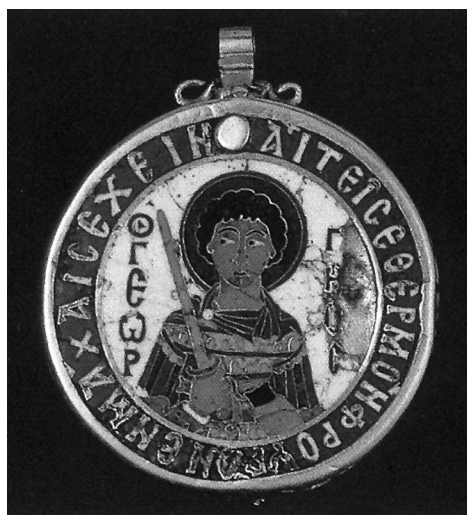
9. St. Demetrios' Reliquary, 11th c, made in Constantinople, Kremlin Armoury Museum in Moscow: A) Sts. Nestor and Loupos engraved on the reliquary doors; B) Emperor Constantine X Doukas (1059–1067) and his second wife Eudokia Makrembolitissa crowned by Christ; C) Dodecasyllabic inscription in Greek



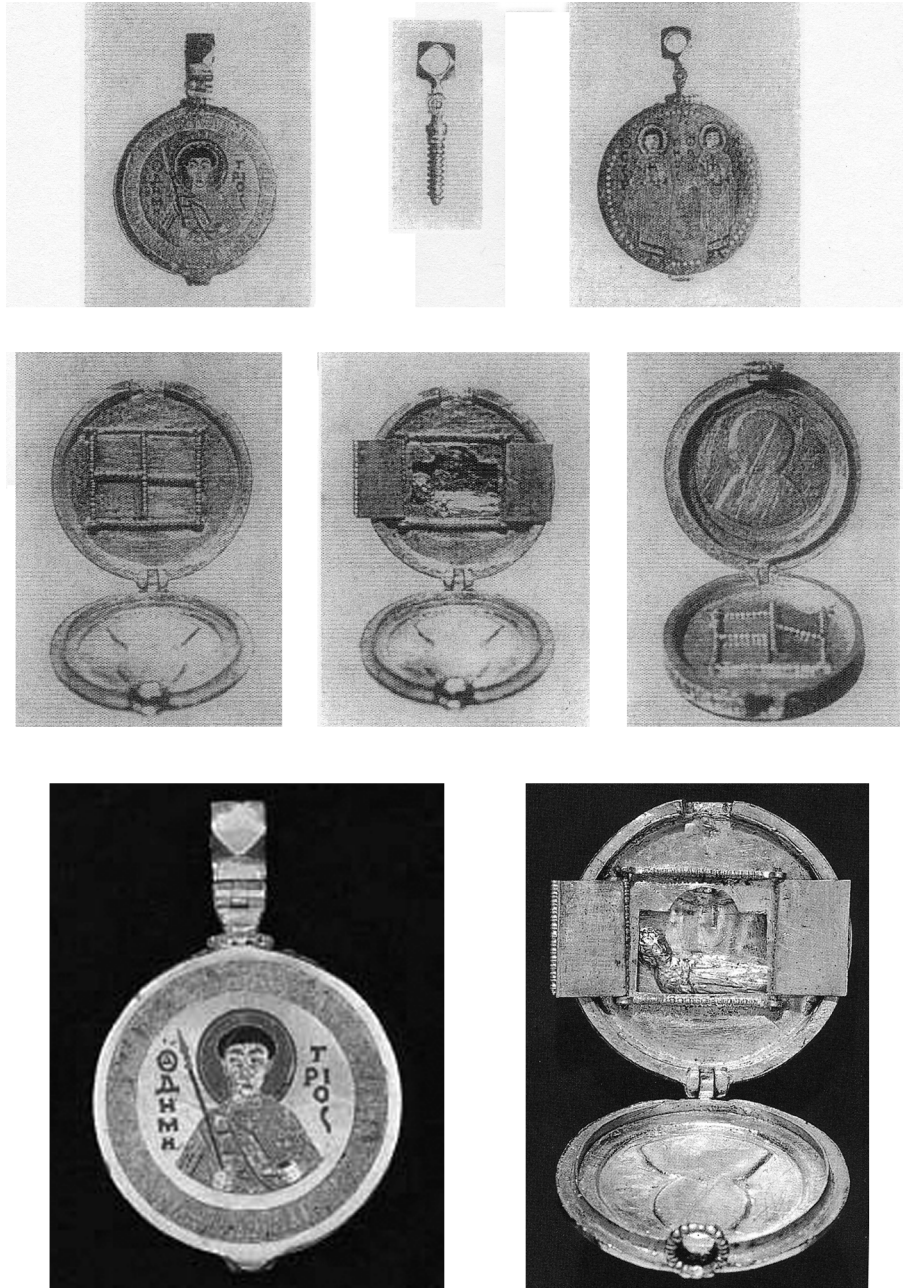
10. St. Demetrios' Reliquary, 11th c. (?), made in Constantinople,
Monastery of Vatopaidi, Mt. Athos



11. St. Menas, ivory plaque, ca. 6th c (?), from Alexandria, today in Milan, Museo d'Arte Antica



12. Encolpion reliquary of St. Demetrios, gold and cloisonné enamel, Byzantine, 12th–13th c (?), British Museum, England (M&LA 1926.4-9.1)



13. Encolpion reliquary of St. Demetrios, gold and cloisonné enamel, Byzantine, 13th–14th c (?), Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C., U.S.A. (53.20)



14. Mosaic icon with the reliquary of St. Demetrios, mosaic icon — Constantinople, 14th century (?); lead ampulla — Thessaloniki, 13th–14th century (?); silver-gilt revetment — 15th century (?); Museo Civico, Sassoferrato, Italy



15. The siege of Thessaloniki (inscribed as such in Greek) showing the shrine of St. Demetrios (?) above the city gates, Skyltizes' *Synopsis Historiarum*, Cod. Vitr. 26-2, fol. 217r, 12th c, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid