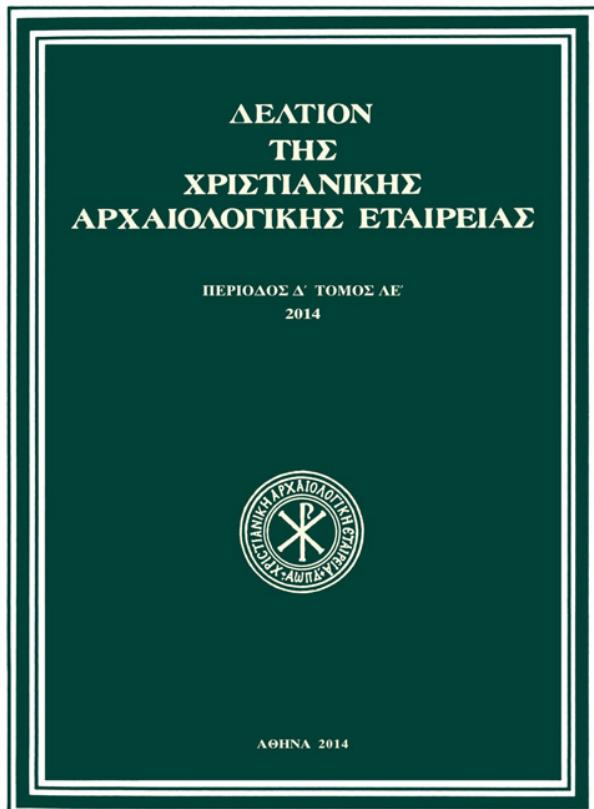


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Copper Repoussé icons of Middle and Later Byzantine Times

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Ellen C. Schwartz

COPPER REPOUSSÉ ICONS OF MIDDLE AND LATER BYZANTINE TIMES

Στο παρόν άρθρο παρουσιάζεται μια ομάδα εικόνων έκτυπης διακόσμησης από λεπτά φύλλα κραμάτων χαλκού. Παρά την αποσπασματικότητα της διατήρησής τους, μπορούν να προταθούν οι διάφορες χρήσεις τους. Συχνά μιμούνται πολύτιμες μεταλλικές διακοσμήσεις εικόνων, γνωστών από τα σύγχρονά τους κείμενα. Μέσα από αναφορές των έκτυπων αυτών εικόνων σε φιλολογικές πηγές μπορεί να ανιχνευθεί η μέτρια χρηματική τους αξία. Τέτοια αντικείμενα είναι πολύ πιθανόν να άνηκαν σε οικογένειες κάποιας ανώτερης τάξης και θα χρησίμευαν ως εικόνες ιδιωτικής λατρείας, θα διακοσμούσαν ταπεινές εκκλησίες και παρεκκλήσια, αλλά και θα αφιερώνονταν μέσω δωρεών ή κληροδοτημάτων σε μοναστήρια.

Λέξεις κλειδιά

Μεσοβυζαντινή περίοδος, υστεροβυζαντινή περίοδος, μεταλλοτεχνία, χάλκινες εικόνες, έκτυπη διακόσμηση.

Byzantine art is best known to the public through icons and mosaics, which are both dependent on gold for much of their visual effect. In publications, it is usually the images of such precious materials which are featured, as seen to advantage on the recent covers of both *Gesta* and *The Art Bulletin*.¹ Of course there was, as medievalists know, a body of Byzantine art which was much less costly: the realm of base metal objects. And included in this is a sur-

A group of icons made of thin sheets of copper alloy or bronze worked in repoussé is presented here. Despite their fragmentary state, the various purposes to which they were put can be suggested, often as imitations of precious icons and decorations known from contemporary writings. Their modest monetary worth can be deduced from references to them in literary sources. Such pieces were most likely found in the upper class milieu, where they would have served as icons for private prayer, decoration of modest churches and chapels and donations or bequests given to monasteries.

Keywords

Middle-Byzantine period, Late-Byzantine period, metalwork, copper-alloy repoussé icons, repoussé technique.

prising number of icons.² It is a subset of these which this article considers, part of a much larger study of base metal icons which is ongoing.

It will never be possible to know the full extent of metal icon creation. Metals were and are too useful as materials for other purposes to have allowed many metal icons to survive. Precious metals can be melted down, or set into new settings such as book covers. Others can be reworked

¹ *Gesta* 45/2 (2006) displayed the silver revetted icon of the Hodegetria (c. 1300) from the State Tret'iakov Gallery, Moscow and *ArtB* 88/4 (2006) illustrated the gold and jeweled Archangel Michael icon (late 10th century) from the Treasury of the Basilica of S. Marco, Venice.

² Even now, bronze and copper icons remain relatively ignored; Pentcheva gives a definition of an icon as “a portable portrait of Christ, the Virgin, and saints with scenes from their lives on wood panels or precious surfaces such as ivory, metal, enamel, mosaic and steatite.” See B. V. Pentcheva, “The Performative Icon,” *ArtB* 88/4

(2006), 631-55, at 631; Weyl Carr speaks at length of the materiality of painted surfaces and precious revetment, not mentioning other, all-metal images of either bronze or copper. A. Weyl Carr, “Donors in the Frames of Icons: Living in the Borders of Byzantine Art,” *Gesta* 45/2 (2006), 189-198, at 193-194. Other Byzantine bronze objects have been more recently studied; see B. Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires pectorales byzantines en bronze*, Paris 2006, for a study of a single type of object, or R. Bork (ed.), *De re metallica, The Uses of Metal in the Middle Ages*, Aldershot 2005, for a recent discussion of medieval metal objects in general.



Fig. 1. Votive plaque with St. Hermolaos, copper repoussé, Byzantine, early 11th century, Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks; ©Dumbarton Oaks, Byzantine Collection, Washington, DC.

³ The copy of Rodin's *Thinker*, one of seven bronze pieces stolen from the Singer Laren Museum near Amsterdam, was recovered damaged; this, along with the fact that only bronzes (and none of the iron artworks nearby) were taken "suggests that they might have been after the bronzes for their value as metal," "Rodin Thinker Recovered," in 'Arts, Briefly,' *The New York Times* (January 20, 2007), A16. Our local paper reported the stealing of gravesite urns for their copper; A. Aisner, "Metal Thieves Target Graves; Incidents Soar along with the Price of Copper," *The Ann Arbor News* (July 22, 2007), A1, A6. And on October 8, 2007 WWJ radio of Detroit discussed the disabling of fire hydrants to harvest a small amount of brass, rendering them inoperable. Similar losses and recycling of metal objects appear to have happened in Byzantine times: the crushing and rolling-up of so much of the 6th-century silver Sion treasure seems to have been in preparation for the melting pot. See S. A. Boyd, "A 'Metropolitan' Treasure from a Church in the Provinces: An Introduction to the Study of the Sion Treasure," in S. A. Boyd - M. Mundell Mango (eds), *Ecclesiastical Silver Plate in Sixth Century Byzantium*, Washington, D.C. 2000, 5-37. It has been posited that the gold table wares from the early Byzantine era had long been turned into coins by late Byzantine times; see V. H. Elbern's introductory essay to the metalwork section of Brussels, Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, *Splendeur de Byzance* (Exhibition catalogue), Brussels 1982, 128-130, at 128. On the Crusaders' depredations, see

according to current taste. Artworks in non-precious materials are not immune to these processes. In January of 2007, for example, a copy of Rodin's *Thinker* was stolen, it appears for its bronze, a modern equivalent of the Crusaders' melting down bronze statues for coinage in the 13th century.³ Yet we know of bronze icons from documents, both monastic such as *typika* like the one from Vatopedi on Mt. Athos (1247-1258), and personal, such as the will of Eustathios Boilas (1059).⁴ And enough of these icons have survived to permit this much-needed scrutiny of copper icons in terms of materiality, iconography, style, purpose and function within the society in which they were made.

The icons made of copper alloy (*σαρούτη*) worked in *repoussé* are an impressive group. They tend to be large, by metalwork standards; cast bronze pieces, much heavier, are almost always much smaller in dimension. Some of these pieces are very well-known, like the Dumbarton Oaks' St. Hermolaos (Fig. 1) and the Hodegetria in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.⁵ The copper alloy of which they are formed is a bronze-like mixture of copper and tin, but with a higher percentage of copper than regular bronze; it is known as red bronze today. The process by which most of these icons are fashioned is quite labor-intensive.⁶ To begin the process of fashioning a *repoussé* icon, a metal sheet is placed over a bowl of pitch or resin and anchored by bending down the corners. A chasing tool is then used to trace the outlines of the

sections 648-655 in N. Choniates, *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates* (transl. H. J. Magoulias), Detroit 1984, 357-362.

⁴ Ετερον (εἰκόνισμα) ὁ Ἀρχιστράτηγος ἐκ χαλκοῦ ἰστορισμένον. *Actes de Vatopédi I, Des origines à 1329* (eds J. Bompaire - J. Lefort - V. Kravari - Ch. Giros) (Archives de l'Athos XXI), Paris 2001, no. 15, 157.178-158.178. Icons that were possibly made of copper alloy are also listed in documents from the monasteries of Docheiariou, Lavra, Mother of God Babaia Elpis and the will of Eustathios Boilas; mentions in the *typika* can be found at http://elearning.unifr.ch/apb/Typika/fiche_synthese.php?id=688 (accessed 18 October 2013). On the will, see S. Vryonis, Jr., "The Will of a Provincial Magnate, Eustathius Boilas (1059)," *DOP* 11 (1957), 263-277 at 268.

⁵ S. A. Boyd, "Ex-Voto Therapy, A Note on a Copper Plaque with St. Hermolaos," in I. Ševčenko - I. Hutter (eds), *Aetos, Studies in Honor of Cyril Mango*, Stuttgart 1998, 15-27. The V and A Hodegetria was most recently discussed by Paul Williamson in M. Vassilaki (ed.), *Mother of God. Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art* (Exhibition catalogue), Athens 2000, 304, cat. no. 20.

⁶ This process has hardly changed; the materials found as part of a metalworking studio exhibited in the Museum of Byzantine Culture in Thessaloniki is almost identical to that of the metalworking studio of Eastern Michigan University where I teach. I thank my friend and colleague in metalsmithing, Dr. Gretchen Otto, for her help in understanding these materials and techniques.



Fig. 2. Detail of Anastasis under an arcade, from the covering of a templon beam, copper repoussé, Byzantine, 10th-11th century; New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, loan from the Jaharis Collection.

figures or designs, including interior contour lines. Often heads, knees, etc. will be pushed out into the pitch from behind. The plaque is then removed from the bowl and thoroughly cleaned. It is next annealed, or subjected to heat, to render it more malleable. The piece is then worked both from the back, pushing out other parts of the design, and from the front. Front working involves chasing (pushing the metal around), and engraving (scratching lines in the front). Inscriptions are usually made by the latter technique. While most pieces are worked entirely by hand, some repetitive elements, such as borders or details of costume, may have been made with the use of punches or molds (Figs 2-4), more commonly seen in pieces displaying a less elegant style.⁷ Sometimes copper images are



Fig. 3. Repoussé plaque of Archangel Gabriel, copper/bronze, Byzantine, 12th century (?); Malcove Collection, M82.159v, Gift by bequest of Dr. Lillian Malcove, 1981, University of Toronto Art Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, Catalogue Number 193.

⁷ This may well be the case in the Metropolitan Museum pieces' borders and the arcade in the Munich donor and Deesis plaque; details of costume probably created with punches are seen in the Deesis and the Gabriel plaques. The Jaharis templon will be published by S. T. Brooks; a preliminary discussion can be found in S. T. Brooks, "Sculpting the Triumphant Cross: The Byzantine Tempron and an

Unpublished Cycle of Precious-metal Icons at the Metropolitan Museum of Art," *Thirty-Fourth Byzantine Studies Conference, Rutgers the State University of New Jersey (October 2008)*, Abstracts, 54. I thank Helen Evans for alerting me to these icons and Christine Verzár for detailed photos. Many thanks to Sarah Brooks for sharing information about them with me. My most heartfelt thanks to Dr.



Fig. 4. Part of a templon beam with donor Alexander Tormachos and the Archangel Uriel (from a Deesis) under an arcade, copper repoussé, Asia Minor (?), 11th - 12th century; Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 2913.

plated with gold; this is done by first plating a layer of silver onto which the gold is adhered, or through the use of mercury either as an adhering aid or an amalgam.⁸ Due to the thinness of the metal sheet, a high degree of skill is needed to work these plaques, despite the relative softness of the original metal involved. *Repoussé* is not a process that a poorly-trained or minimally-skilled artisan could master; it also requires a moderately-equipped shop situation, with access to tools and models. This may explain in

Schmidt of Munich for his generosity in sharing information and photos of his collection. The Malcove plaque was published in S. D. Campbell (ed.), *The Malcove Collection. A Catalogue of the Objects in the Lilliae Malcove Collection of the University of Toronto*, Toronto 1985, 132, cat. no. M82.159, fig. 193. The use of punches is also mentioned with regard to door plaques in C. Bouras, "The Byzantine Bronze Doors of the Great Lavra Monastery on Mt. Athos," *JÖB* 24 (1975), 236-237. Brooks offers the possibility that several artists, some more skilled than others, may have been involved in making these images; see S. T. Brooks, "A Note on a Newly Discovered Copper Repoussé Panel. The Icon of Saint John Chrysostom in the Loeb Art Center, Vassar College," in J. Alchermes - H. C. Evans - T. K. Thomas (eds), *Avaθήματα Εορτικά. Studies in Honor of Thomas F. Mathews*, Mainz 2009, 67-72.

⁸ This technique has been in use since early times through the present day; information on ancient techniques may be found in W. A. Oddy, "The Gilding of Roman Silver Plate," in F. Baratte (ed.), *Argenterie romaine et byzantine*, Paris 1988, 9-26. Other manufac-

part the surprising quality of many of these icons. Some of the *repoussé* icons are among the finest metal objects from the period of their manufacture, primarily the 11th and 12th centuries. There are more of high quality than among the cast images. Often, the figures are well rendered and exhibit good proportions. The preponderance of these icons have borders. Their inscriptions are mostly correct and consistent with inscriptions in other media; the paleography is usually quite readable and even elegant. They offer us a new view of artistic production in the study of their iconography, style, purpose and use.

The *repoussé* icons have come down to us in much smaller numbers than their cast bronze cousins. They are far more fragile; most of the survivors display damage around the edges and some are in fragments. The bulk of the *repoussé* group has been attributed to middle Byzantine times. Sixty-one of the 68 icons listed in the appendix have been dated into the 11th or 12th century, largely by stylistic comparisons to other media. This flourishing of *repoussé* images may reflect the growth of three-dimensional images from this time,⁹ or the general resurgence of art in all forms in the wake of the triumph of Orthodoxy in 843.

Despite their closeness in time, these *repoussé* icons are a fairly heterogeneous group. Many are rectangular, taller than they are wide. Some are fairly large; the biggest is the St. Hermolaos, at 32×23 cm. At least one is quite small; the 14th-century apostle Andrew from Recklinghausen measures a mere 4.5 by 4.8 cm.¹⁰ Some are not rectangular in format: there is a plaque with an arched top displaying the enthroned Christ in the Hermitage, and a number of taller ones which might have formed part of a templon beam in several museums.¹¹ Circular medallions of Christ

ing techniques for crafting bronze as well as silver and gold have been used together, and it is sometimes hard to differentiate among techniques used. On this issue in earlier eras, see M. Y. Treister, *Hammering Techniques in Greek and Roman Jewellery and Toreutics*, (Colloquia Pontica 8), Leiden 2001, 320, 326.

⁹ In discussing the precious images, Pentcheva asserts that there were more relief icons than painted ones in middle Byzantine times; see Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," op. cit. (n. 2), 631, 636.

¹⁰ C. Stiegemann (ed.), *Byzanz, Das Licht aus dem Osten* (Exhibition catalogue), Mainz 2001, 134-135, cat. no. I.38.

¹¹ See below for a discussion of these. The Hermitage plaque is illustrated and discussed in T. Yashaeva - E. Denisova - N. Ginkut - V. Zalesskaya - D. Zhuravlev, *Nasledie vizantijskogo Hersona / The Legacy of Byzantine Cherson*, Sevastopol - Austin 2011, 491, cat. no. 135. The publication by Bank lists this icon as having been discovered in a tomb in Cherson; see A. Bank, *L'Art byzantin dans les musées de l'Union Soviétique*, Leningrad 1977, 311, fig. 209.



Fig. 5. Covering of a templon beam, copper repoussé, Byzantine, 10th-11th century; New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, on loan from the Mary and Michael Jaharis Collection, inv. nos L.1999.34.1-12, l14, l18-21, 23.

Pantocrator can be found in collections in Munich and in Cherson; roundels of saints are also occasionally found.¹² Almost all of these have single figures, or pairs of figures belonging together, such as the Virgin and Child, or saints as pairs like the Archangels Michael and Gabriel, Uriel and Raphael on the Jaharis beam in the Metropolitan Museum (Fig. 5). Rarest are narrative illustrations; a plaque of the Anastasis in the Hermitage and some of the pieces from the Jaharis beam in New York are the few with such scenes, usually depicting some of the great feasts.¹³

Some of these pieces were originally gilded, such as the famous Hodegetria (Virgin as the Indicator of the Way) from the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.¹⁴ One, depicting St. Nicholas, is said to have been tin-plated, rendering it a silver-like appearance (Fig. 6).¹⁵ One 10th-century image from Asia Minor depicting the Archangel Michael had gems inserted in the drapery; this appears rarely to have been done, probably due to the extreme thinness of the plaques.¹⁶

Most of these repoussé pieces have individual frames around the images. Some have simple beaded or meander borders, like those found on the sides of the London plaque. More elaborate frames are occasionally seen: a 13th-century icon of St. George from the Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens, has an extensive foliate border.¹⁷ The Malcove pieces are framed, like several others,



Fig. 6. Plaque with a bust of St. Nicholas, framed by palmettes and gems, copper repoussé, Asia Minor (?), 11th-12th century; Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 1413.

¹² The Pantocrators are published in Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 127-128, cat. no. I.32, and Yashaeva *et. al.* op.cit. (n. 11), 198-199 and 490-491, cat. nos. 133, 134. A roundel of St. John can be found in W. F. Volbach, *Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Italien und Byzanz*, Berlin 1930, 148 and pl. 9, cat. no. 6592.

¹³ The Hermitage plaque can be seen in Yashaeva *et al.*, op.cit. (n. 11), 204, cat. no. 140. On the Jaharis plaques, see Brooks, "Sculpting the Triumphant Cross," op.cit. (n. 7).

¹⁴ See above, n. 5.

¹⁵ Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 131-132, cat. no. I.36.

¹⁶ See T. Yashaeva *et al.*, op.cit. (n. 11), 496, cat. no. 141. Dumbarton Oaks photograph acc. no. 94-000179 erroneously lists this icon as Archangel Gabriel, dated to the 10th century and housed in the Ukraine Museum of History and Archaeology, no. 5505.

¹⁷ O. Gkrtziou - A. Lazaridou (eds), *Από τη Χριστιανική Συλλογή στο Βυζαντινό Μουσείο (1884-1930)*, Athens 2006, 251, cat. no. 346.



Fig. 7. Plaque with the Enthroned Christ, copper repoussé, Byzantine, 12th-13th century; St. Petersburg, The Hermitage. Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum.

with a design of arches which can be understood as a stylized egg and dart band. The Dumbarton Oaks St. Hermo-

laos is framed by inscriptions contained within meanders, the only one preserved with such a frame.¹⁸ Some icons are framed with borders which imitate gem incrustation, discussed further below. Several pieces have come down to us without frames, either deliberately fashioned so, or damaged at the edges.¹⁹ And some, such as the Munich archangel Uriel from the 12th century, are surrounded by a large flange, presumably to help with mounting.²⁰

With jewels, plating, and frames imitating gems, the *repoussé* pieces evidence a clear relation to precious metal images. Ross suggested that these copper alloy pieces and many cast bronze icons were created as cheap copies of precious metal icons, or copies of famous icons from Constantinople or *loca sancta*.²¹ Recently Pentcheva has proposed a copper relief roundel as the famous Christ Chalkites image itself.²² Certainly, the *repoussé* ones echo elements of the few precious pieces remaining from the same general period. The technique for their manufacture is the same.²³ Often, the layout and decorative motifs are close. The wide frame of the 12th-century Hermitage Enthroned Christ (Fig. 7) echoes the frame of the well-known 11th-century standing St. Michael in Venice. Similarities include the geometric fields utilizing both cross- and X-shaped patterns, alternating with panels of figural design. Particularly striking is the inclusion of standing saints and bust-length images.²⁴ The St. Nicholas plaque from Munich is bordered with square and ovoid gem forms surrounding an inner frame of palmettes (Fig. 6). Other icons have frames and halos which contain raised rounded forms, cited as imitations of pearls. Several have pearl-like beads flanked by small chevrons, like the St. John roundel in Berlin and a pearl border framed by meanders is seen at

¹⁸ The inscription is transcribed and discussed in Boyd, "Ex-Voto Therapy," op.cit. (n. 5), 17-18.

¹⁹ These include the Chersonese St. Michael (see above, n. 16) and a fragmentary image of St. Paul from Kiev, State Sofiesky Monuments Museum, unnumbered photograph at Dumbarton Oaks. This latter piece, with just the head of the saint and a double-lined inscription, may date to the 11th century.

²⁰ Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 128-129, cat. no. I.33.

²¹ Ross wrote this opinion in his introduction, "Byzantine Bronzes," in Council of Europe (ed.), *Byzantine Art, A European Art* (Exhibition catalogue), Athens 1964, 439-443, at 442. A similar imitation of more expensive media decorating sanctuary screens can be seen in the case of ceramic icons; see S. E. J. Gerstel, "Ceramic Icons from Medieval Constantinople," in S. E. J. Gerstel - J. A. Lauffengurger (eds), *A Lost Art Rediscovered, The Architectural Ceramics of Byzantium*, Baltimore 2001, 54.

²² Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," op.cit. (n. 2), 636-637. While this is a provocative theory, there are doubts, especially due to the

general lumping together of base metal images in the second tier of images [after the so-called decorated (*χειροποιηέναι*) icons] when listed in various wills and monastic foundation documents, as discussed below. Further, others assert that the earliest version of the famous image was a painting, replaced after Iconoclasm by a mosaic; see C. Mango, *The Brazen House*, Copenhagen 1959, 108-142.

²³ Not only are basic processes of *repoussé* similar, objects of bronze and silver are gilded in much the same way. See Oddy, op.cit. (n. 8), 9-26. Certain techniques, however, are either rare or impossible to copy: one unique piece is a very large Pantocrator in enamel on copper instead of on gold. The enamel process requires too high a heat to work on copper with its solder, thus the rarity of this unusual piece. It is reproduced in *Exposition internationale d'art byzantin* (Exhibition catalogue), Paris 1931, 148, pl. XX, cat. no. 509. The insertion of gems is another rare technique; see above, note 16.

²⁴ The vegetal forms on the Venice icon find elaboration in the later metalwork plaques such as the Athens St. George.

the top of the Hodegetria from London.²⁵ The Christ in the Hermitage on a plaque with a half-round top not only displays the pearl border; it clearly reflects coin types: parallels are found in gold *histamenoī* of the 11th and early 12th centuries, such as those of Alexios I Comnenus.²⁶ The Munich roundel with the Pantocrator as a bust-length figure also recalls contemporary coins.²⁷

Like precious metal pieces, the *repoussé* icons functioned in a variety of ways. Some were almost certainly independent pieces, backed with wood for stability like the modern examples on sale in liturgical supplies stores in Thessaloniki today. They would have been used in many of the contexts a panel piece might have with the major constraint being that of size: the largest single icon is 32×23 cm. These individual pieces have integral frames and the edges are partially preserved, showing that nothing extended beyond them. Holes for attachment interrupt the frame, which would have been left whole if a flange had protruded beyond. Examples of this type are both Hermitage plaques and the Athens St. George. Serving as votive plaques, both in petition and in thanks, they would have been offered to a holy figure, perhaps in his or her chapel or church, or attached to such a saint's icon or stand. Study of modern Orthodox practice suggests that larger metal images are often attached to walls, columns, or the iconostasis, while smaller ones might be suspended on an individual icon or its stand, but nothing can be truly ascertained as to the location of such individual pieces.²⁸

Others of this *repoussé* group were undoubtedly part of an icon beam atop a templon. This is borne out by the copper icons and decorative sections on loan from the Jäharis collection, currently at the Metropolitan Museum (Fig. 5). These pieces, attributed to the 10th or 11th century, covered both the front of the beam, and are about 28

cm. in height, as well as the bottom of the beam, where the sections measure about 15 cm. in height. Both sets of sections were surrounded by a flange, which would have helped with mounting these pieces to a wood structure. Several plaques with the *Deesis* and archangels in Munich probably also come from such an icon beam. And the plaques with arched tops in Geneva, Poughkeepsie and Toronto (Fig. 3) which are roughly the same size and display similar border ornament also might have formed part of the same ensemble, decorating a templon beam.²⁹ The partial piece with a donor and archangel Uriel under an arcade is the right size and shape to have also served as cladding of a templon beam (Fig. 4). Others which might be seen as functioning in a similar way are the gilded Hodegetria from the Victoria and Albert Museum, which has a large, decorative frame on the top and a minimal frame on the side, perhaps an indication that it was placed next to another in a series. The Archangel Uriel in Munich, with a very wide flange around the border, was also probably meant to be attached to a templon or piece of liturgical furniture in a sequence with the other archangels. The Dumbarton Oaks plaque also exhibits a flange beyond its border, indicating that it may have been affixed next to another one of similar technique and related content – in this case, a second healing saint. It, too, may have been part of a templon.³⁰ The use of copper in this role of decorating the chancel barrier undoubtedly echoes the role of precious cladding; copper images would have shared the glitter and shine of more expensive metal surfaces, especially in lamp- and candlelit church interiors.³¹ Such precious covering of templon screens is preserved in fragments, and described in contemporary writings. Enamel icons are known to have decorated some templon beams in Constantinople, such as a lost one at the

²⁵ Bank identifies these as pearls, op. cit. (n. 11), 311 in the description of fig. 209. For the St. John roundel, see above, n. 12.

²⁶ H. C. Evans – W. D. Wixom (eds), *The Glory of Byzantium* (Exhibition catalogue), New York 1997, 215, cat. no. 147 K; see also 214, cat. nos. 147 H and J.

²⁷ Compare Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 127-128, cat. no. I.32 to Evans – Wixom (eds), op.cit. (n. 26), 214, cat. nos. 147 D and E.

²⁸ Boyd discusses this in “Ex-Voto Therapy,” op.cit. (n. 5), 26-27.

²⁹ See Brooks, “Sculpting the Triumphant Cross,” op.cit. (n. 7). On the Munich *Deesis*, see Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 132-134, cat. no. I.37. The Geneva plaques are published in M. Martiniani-Reber (ed.), *Antiquités paléochrétiennes et byzantines. Collections du Musée d’art et d’histoire – Genève*, Geneva 2011, 104, cat. no. 45. For the Poughkeepsie piece see Brooks, “A Note,” op.cit. (n. 7). The plaques in

Toronto may be found in Campbell, op.cit. (n. 7), 130-132, figs 188-193.

³⁰ Boyd links Hermolaos, a healing saint, to others such as St. Pantaleimon; See Boyd, “Ex-Voto Therapy,” op.cit. (n. 5), 27; however, she believes this piece was primarily a votive. Gerstel connects this plaque with some made of ceramic, occasionally drilled at the top, which served as votives; see S. E. J. Gerstel, “Tiles of Nicomedia” and the Cult of St. Panteleimon,” in D. Sullivan – E. Fisher – S. Papaioannou (eds), *Byzantine Religious Culture, Studies in Honor of Alice-Mary Talbot*, Leiden 2012, 179-180 and n. 32. And Brooks posits the Uriel plaque as a stand-alone piece; see Brooks, “A Note,” op.cit. (n. 7), 67-72.

³¹ Work on the sensory effects of light can be found in Pentcheva, “The Performative Icon,” op.cit. (n. 2) and ead., *The Sensual Icon. Space, Ritual and the Senses in Byzantium*, Pennsylvania 2010.

Pantocrator monastery and another described in the *Vita Basilii*.³² Silver covering of the templon along with other members is mentioned in a homily by Photius, believed by Mango to refer to the Church of the Virgin of the Pharos.³³ Another mid-Byzantine description of a plated templon beam is found in the 9th-century description of the Nea Ekklesia, where the templon, along with the synthronon and other features, are described as being of “silver that is gilded all over...”³⁴ Further, plaques of metal, precious or bronze – gilded or tinned, perhaps – may have embellished doors on the templon, as well.

Additional bronze plaques were found on larger doors, namely those opening onto the sanctuary. Doors ornamented with bronze plaques in repoussé are known from the Athonite monastery of the Great Lavra; a bronze fragment made in Constantinople in 1070 for the Roman church of St. Paul Outside the Walls shows the use of this humbler metal to decorate doors in another technique.³⁵ Again, these may have been imitating the precious metal sheathing of architectonic features. Descriptions of silver-covered doors with gold inlay depicting scenes are preserved in literary accounts from the same period. One such is mentioned in the *Typikon* of Empress Irene Doukaina Komnene for the Convent of the Mother of God

Kecharitomene in Constantinople from the early 12th century. The silver doors of the sanctuary there are said to be “completely [covered with] gold inlay [depicting] the Annunciation,” along with “The doorposts of the holy doors of silver completely [covered with] gold inlay depicting Christ and the Mother of God...”³⁶ The copper alloy *repoussé* plaques may be imitating earlier cast bronze doors, another use of a less expensive medium and technique imitating a more costly one.³⁷ It is possible that individual *repoussé* panels could have been attached singly to wooden doors, as well. The adorning of doors with individual plaques is proved by a small Limousin enamel which was attached to the Justinianic wooden doors between the narthex and nave at the Sinai church.³⁸

Along with the silver plating of doors, similar covering of other architectural features such as walls, dividers and columns can be found in various building descriptions, like the early account of Justinian’s Hagia Sophia by Paul the Silentary, and the description of a church in the mid-Byzantine *Vita Basilii*.³⁹ Photius’ aforementioned text includes, along with descriptions of walls and pavements covered in silver, mention of a ciborium over the altar, which echoes an early 7th-century description of a similar one at the church of Hagios Demetrios, Thessaloniki.⁴⁰

³² The seven uppermost enamels of the Pala d’Oro in Venice are generally accepted as having come from a templon screen at the Pantocrator monastery; these are discussed in A. W. Epstein, “The Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier: Templon or Iconostasis?” *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 134 (1981), 1-28, at 5. The second church is described in the *Vita Basilii*; See *Vita Basilii Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Liber Quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris Amplectitur* (ed. I. Ševčenko) (CFHB 42), 2011, 87.

³³ C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453, Sources and Documents*, Toronto, 1986, 185-186. The Greek text may be found in B. Λαούδας, “Φωτίου Ὄμηλία,” *Ἑλληνικά Suppl.* 12 (1959), 100ff.

³⁴ *Vita Basilii*, op.cit. (n. 32), 275, section 84. This text goes on to describe another church with an altar screen covered in silver; see *ibid.*, 285, section 87.

³⁵ Bouras, op. cit. (n. 7), 229-250. The engraved piece cited is published in J. Durand *et al.* (eds), *Byzance, L’art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises* (Exhibition catalogue), Paris 1992, cat. nos 238, 323. Another bronze plaque thought to be from a door is a circular piece with the nimbed bust of a saint in a border of acanthus scrolls, no. 1941.57 in the Cleveland Museum of Art. Slightly convex, this appears thick enough to have been cast. See [http://www.clevelandart.org/art/1941.57?collection_search_views_fulltext=&created_date_op=%3D&created_date=&between_start=&between_end=&field_artist=&page=1&f\[0\]=field_classification_text%3AMetalwork&f\[1\]=object_on_view%3A1](http://www.clevelandart.org/art/1941.57?collection_search_views_fulltext=&created_date_op=%3D&created_date=&between_start=&between_end=&field_artist=&page=1&f[0]=field_classification_text%3AMetalwork&f[1]=object_on_view%3A1) (accessed 25 June 2013).

³⁶ *Typikon of Empress Irene Doukaina Komnene for the Convent of*

the Mother of God Kecharitomene in Constantinople (trans. R. Jordan) (*Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Studies, vol. 35) (eds J. Thomas – C. Hero), Washington, D.C. 2000, 61 pages, <http://www.doaks.org/resources/publications/doaks-online-publications/byzantine-studies/typikapdf/typ037.pdf>, 716 (accessed 25 June 2013). A mention of ‘silver doors’ – reveted or ornamented, it is not known which – is made in regard to the Chrysotrichion as a donation of Constantine Porphyrogenitus; see Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire*, op.cit. (n. 33), 208 and I. Bekker (ed.), *Theophanes Continuatus, Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae*, Bonn 1828-1897, 447ff.

³⁷ The Lavra doors include cast elements; Bouras implies that this indicates an attempt to imitate fully cast bronze doors. See Bouras, op.cit. (n. 7), 37. On Byzantine bronze doors in general, see G. Matthiae, *Le porte bronze Bizantine in Italia*, Rome 1971. A discussion of the imitation of precious materials in lesser expensive ones and the hierarchy of metals can be found in A. Cutler, “Art in Byzantine Society: Motive Forces of Byzantine Patronage,” *JÖB* 31/2 (1981), 759-787 [reprinted in *Imagery and Ideology in Byzantine Art* (Variorum Collected Studies Series, Great Yarmouth) Norfolk 1992, XI].

³⁸ G. Forsyth – K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai: The Church and Fortress of Justinian*, Ann Arbor, MI 1973, pl. XLVI; I thank Sharon Gerstel for alerting me to this plaque, and Rob Nelson for sending me pictures of it.

³⁹ See above, n. 33 and 34. On Hagia Sophia, see Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire*, op.cit. (n. 33), 80-91.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 129.

The bronze fragments interpreted as an 11th-century ciborium from Constantinople, today in Munich (Fig. 8), allow us to see how closely the bronze *repoussé* sheathing echoes that of precious metal.⁴¹ Silver cladding of an altar and perhaps other liturgical furniture has been found as part of the Sion treasure from Lycia.⁴² While this material comes from the 6th century, a small rectangular plaque depicting the visit of the Magi and dated to the 8th-9th century is just the size to have decorated such a piece of liturgical furniture; it, along with the revetment of furniture discussed in later writings, offers evidence of the continued use of such decoration.⁴³ Part of an engraved inscription in Latin attributed to the 9th-10th century offers a bronze parallel to the silver altar cladding, albeit from the west; its shape indicates its possible use as the edge of an altar table or the framing of a door.⁴⁴

Another obvious set of precious-metal objects which might suggest themselves as comparisons are the metal revetments of icons. Such revetments are usually silver or silver-gilt. They, too, are produced by the *repoussé* technique; by covering much of the icon, they largely produce the impression of a precious metal icon.⁴⁵ Most of these, however, are from the 14th century, and, while they add three-dimensionality and a glittering surface to an icon, they are too late to serve as models for the icons under consideration. These revetments, however, are linked to our icons in a different way. Like other metalwork items such as reliquaries and book covers, they often include small icon-like inserts showing individual saints, complete with inscriptions; these squares, rectangles and roundels occasionally depict narrative scenes from the life of Christ.⁴⁶ A similar use of small inserted images or scenes



Fig. 8. Fragment with St. Cosmas and a cross from an altar ciborium, copper repoussé, Constantinople (?), 11th century; Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt.

reminiscent of our more diminutive icons may be found on silver book covers, especially those made in Georgia⁴⁷ and on reliquaries. Some of the smaller *repoussé* icons, such as

⁴¹ Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 129-130, cat. no. I.34. Just as the ciborium panels include figural images, revetting of other pieces of liturgical furniture may have included *repoussé* icons, too. It has been suggested that the Walters Virgin orans (Walters Art Museum, no. 57.1818) may have been used in this way; my thanks to Gary Vikan and his staff for pictures and information pertaining to this image. Some of our bronze *repoussé* icons may have served in similar capacities.

⁴² Boyd, "A Metropolitan Treasure," op.cit. (n. 5), 12, 31-34. Mundell Mango discusses the common use of silver revetment in "The Monetary Value of Silver Revetments and Objects Belonging to Churches, A.D. 300-700," in *ibid.*, 124-132; further discussion of these may be found in J. C. Anderson, "The Byzantine Panel Portrait before and after Iconoclasm," in R. Ousterhout - L. Brubaker (eds), *The Sacred Image East and West*, Urbana 1995, 37-38. The votive use of the St. Simeon plaque is suggested in C. Metzger, "Nouvelles observations sur le 'vase d'Emese' et la 'plaque de saint Symeon,'" in Boyd - Mundell Mango (eds), op.cit. (n. 3), 110.

⁴³ The Magi plaque is pictured in Volbach, op.cit. (n. 12), 153, pl. 5.

cat. no. 1007. A silver table is described in a description of the Chrysotriklinos in the writings of Theophanes Continuatus (first half of the 9th century), found in Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire*, op.cit. (n. 33), 208.

⁴⁴ The bronze inscription piece is 12.8 cm. tall; see Volbach, op.cit. (n. 12), 154, cat. no. 6416.

⁴⁵ The defining work done on these revetments is A. Grabar, *Les revêtements en or et en argent des icônes Byzantines du Moyen Âge*, Venice 1975; a recent treatment is J. Durand, "Precious-Metal Icon Revetments," in H. C. Evans (ed.), *Byzantium, Faith and Power* (Exhibition catalogue), New Haven 2004, 242-257. N. Ševčenko makes comparisons between 'vita' icons and metal and metal-framed icons in N. Ševčenko, "Vita Icons and 'Decorated' Icons of the Komnenian Period," in B. Davezac (ed.), *Four Icons in the Menil Collection* (The Menil Collection Monographs 1), Houston 1992, 56-69.

⁴⁶ See Grabar, op.cit. (n. 45), pls 32-34 and 48.

⁴⁷ For an example, see Y. Piatnitsky et al. (eds), *Sinai, Byzantium, Russia, Orthodox Art from the Sixth to the Twentieth Century*, London

the St. Nicholas in Munich (Fig. 6), have even been suggested as originally forming part of the elaborate frames of enamel icons.⁴⁸ Precious metals, either as decorative coverings or as the materials out of which icons are fashioned, were clearly used for a number of purposes and in a variety of contexts and were thus open to imitation in less expensive materials.

Bronze icons imitate more than just precious metal images. They are closely related to carved and painted icons in a variety of forms, as well as to other works. Due to the far better survival of these in later times, comparanda are not hard to find. The *repoussé* pieces share many characteristics with these in terms of iconography, composition and style, as well as function. The composition of the Jaharis icon beam is a case in point. The copper beam has scenes and figures set under double and triple-arched arcades (Figs. 2, 4, 5). The arched setting is similar that framing scenes on several 12th-century icon beams at Mt. Sinai. Each of moderate size, such an icon beam would have served as the top portion of a templon screen separating the apse from the naos in a small church or chapel. The framing arches in the painted beams are either indicated by outlines against the background, or by burnishing, creating a monochromatic framing similar to that of the copper revetment.⁴⁹

The Metropolitan beam also displays the rare use of Christological scenes in copper *repoussé*. Under the abovementioned arches, the Nativity, Crucifixion, Deesis, Discovery of the Empty Tomb, Anastasis, Doubting Thomas, and Ascension share the space with Constantine and Helen, and pairs of Archangels (Michael and Gabriel, Uriel and Raphael). This is another point of similarity to painted icon beams, which often feature scenes in addition to individual figures.

Most of the *repoussé* pieces display single figures or images functioning as a single unit, like the Hodegetria. In

terms of layout and style, numerous parallels in other media may be invoked. The figure of St. Cosmas (Fig. 8) from the bronze ciborium discussed above can be compared to the figure of John Chrysostom painted on the interior lid of a staurotheke from 10th-century Constantinople: proportions of face and body as well as drapery patterns show many similarities.⁵⁰ The Dumbarton Oaks Hermolaos also finds parallels in paint, seen in a saint from a menologion icon for August from Sinai, dated to around 1200. The stance, shape of head and beard, and folds of drapery are close despite the difference in material.⁵¹

Three-dimensional media show even closer affinities. The St. George standing under an arch (11th-12th century) from Munich finds similarities in proportion, posture, and placement of inscription in a pair of 12th-century stone reliefs in the Hermitage.⁵² The large scale of the enthroned Christ in the Hermitage half-round plaque echoes a number of images in ivory, cameo and steatite from the 10th through the 12th century.⁵³ The facial types in the bronzes often echo those in ivory carving; scholars often date the metal pieces, in fact, by comparing them to the better-studied ivories. Closeness in face and draperies can be seen when comparing the Dumbarton Oaks Hermolaos and figures in the Vatican ivory triptych dated to the 10th-11th century; especially close is the figure of St. Paul in the lower register.⁵⁴ Not only are the figurative pieces related to those in other media; the ornamental sections at the end of the Jaharis icon beam relate closely to marble plaques carved to screen spaces between columns in churches. The diamond-shaped field filled with a roundel and the round floral or vegetal ornaments filling the corners find parallels in several of these mid-Byzantine parapet slabs in Athens and New York. And a similar vocabulary of decorative forms fills the underside of a carved marble architrave in Sebaste.⁵⁵ The *repoussé* works clearly partake of the standard vocabulary of forms as well as

2000, 121-122, cat. nos. B. 99 a, b. On Georgian art in general, including many silver book covers, see G. Chubinashvili, *Gruzinskoe chekannoe iskusstvo: issledovanie po istorii gruzinskogo srednevekovnogo iskusstva*, 2 vols, Tbilisi 1959.

⁴⁸ N. Asutay makes this assertion this for this tinned icon in her entry in Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 132. A comparison cited is a gold/enamel ensemble depicted in Bank, op.cit. (n. 11), fig. 192. Similar usage has also been asserted in the case of a similarly-sized silver-gilt icon *repoussé* image of the Virgin in the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore. The same may be posited for the Andrew plaque in Recklinghausen (see above, n. 10).

⁴⁹ Similar to the patterned arches of the Jaharis set is the monochromatic decoration in two of the Sinai beams; see R. S. Nelson - K. M.

Collins (eds), *Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai* (Exhibition catalogue), Los Angeles 2006, 170-173, cat. no. 20, and 174-177, cat. no. 21; a beam with burnished arches is published in Evans - Wixom (eds), op.cit. (n. 26), 337 and 339, cat. no. 248.

⁵⁰ Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 130, cat. no. I.34 and Evans - Wixom, op.cit. (n. 26), 76-77, cat. no. 35.

⁵¹ Nelson - Collins (eds), op.cit. (n. 49), 196-99, detail on 198, cat. no. 31.

⁵² Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 11), 130-131, cat. no. I.35, and Bank, op.cit. (n. 11), figs 247, 248, described on 318.

⁵³ Evans - Wixom (eds), op.cit. (n. 26), cat. nos 104, 129, 135 and 139, for example.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 131-132, cat. no. 79.

⁵⁵ The parapet slabs are published in Gkratziou - Lazaridou (eds),

inscription language of their time. They seem to come from a variety of places, as the stylistic variation and relationship to comparanda indicate;⁵⁶ some pieces are associated historically with certain places like the London Hodegetria may be with Torcello, and several icons with Cherson and its region. Copper *repoussé* should thus be seen as an international medium option among the high- and more popular style of artistic productions in the middle and later eras of the Byzantine empire.

Despite all the references to precious materials in their appearance and the occasional gilding preserved, the modest monetary worth of these icons can be deduced from references to them in literary sources such as monastic foundation documents. These various documents mention bronze icons as part of the listings of wills, bequests to monastic establishments, and monastery inventories. They are often listed among the other icons, separated by the presence or absence of adornment or decoration. This epithet, which often refers to a frame or revetment, seems to have been one of the deciding factors in monetary worth, the other being size.⁵⁷ Bronze icons are often listed

last, even after icons painted on wood. Bronze objects of other types, such as tools and kitchen or table utensils, are also listed toward the bottom of such groupings, indicating the lower monetary value and status of this more humble material. And some icons show a lower level of craftsmanship one might expect in a less precious material. Nonetheless, bronze icons were not cheap. The social milieu to which they most likely belonged included the upper class patron or household, where the images would have probably served as icons for private prayer and as gifts to churches and monasteries. The London Hodegetria, for example, was commissioned by an ecclesiastic of high rank; the inscription on the plaque reads, 'Mother of God help thy servant Philip the Bishop.'⁵⁸ The high quality of a number of these images may indicate cultured patrons of some means. Boyd makes the analogy of tin-plated liturgical vessels imitating silver which were common at the time our icons flourished, along with water containers of similar materials used by the nobility, and others of high status.⁵⁹ The small size of a number of copper icons may indicate their function in a private context, related to

op.cit. (n. 17), 283-84. cat. nos 431 and 432, and Evans – Wixom (eds), op.cit. (n. 49), 38, cat. no. 3. The architrave carving is reproduced in Gerstel – Lauffenburger (eds), op.cit. (n. 21), 55, fig. 18.

⁵⁶ The Metropolitan Museum label on the Jaharis pieces, for example, indicates that the expressive style and some spellings in the inscriptions suggest that they were made outside of Constantinople.

⁵⁷ In the Eleousa inventory, a bronze icon opens the section, presumably because of its silver-gilt frame. See the listing in L. Bender – M. Parani – B. Pitarakis – J.-M. Spieser – A. Vuilloud, *Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents / Objets et matériaux dans les documents d'archives byzantins*, URL: <http://www.unifr.ch/go/typika>. at http://elearning.unifr.ch/apb/Typika/fiche_artefact.php?id=74 (accessed 18 October 2013), and the *Inventory of the Monastery of the Mother of God Eleousa in Stroumitza* (transl. A. Bandy – N. Ševčenko) (eds J. Thomas – C. Hero) (Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents, Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Studies, vol. 35), Washington, D.C. 2000, 11 pages, <http://www.doaks.org/resources/publications/doaks-online-publications/byzantine-studies/typikapdf/typ075.pdf/view>, 1671 (accessed 18 October 2013). Bronze icons are listed after painted wooden images in the *Rule of Michael Attaleiates*; see Bender *et al.*, op.cit., http://elearning.unifr.ch/apb/Typika/fiche_artefact.php?id=3255 (accessed 17 October 2013) and *Rule of Michael Attaleiates for his Almshouse in Rhaidestos and for the Monastery of Christ Panoiktitmon in Constantinople* (transl. A.-M. Talbot), (eds J. Thomas – C. Hero) (Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents, Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Studies, vol. 35), Washington, D.C. 2000, 50 pages, <http://www.doaks.org/resources/publications/doaks-online-publications/byzantine-studies/typikapdf/typ027.pdf/view> 357 (accessed 17 October 2013); and in the *Typikon of Gregory Pakourianos*; see Bender *et al.*, op.cit., http://elearning.unifr.ch/apb/Typika/fiche_artefact.php?id=68 and *Typikon of Gregory Pa-*

kourianos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Petritzonitissa in Bačkovo (transl. R. Jordan) (eds J. Thomas - C. Hero) (Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents, Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Studies, vol. 35), Washington, D.C. 2000, 56 pages, <http://www.doaks.org/resources/publications/doaks-online-publications/byzantine-studies/typikapdf/typ032.pdf>, 552 (accessed 17 October 2013). The gilded bronze icon of St. Menas is listed toward the end of the section on icons in *Eleousa*, 1671. An icon is referred to as "un-adorned" in the typika of *Typikon* of Empress Irene Doukaina Komnene for the Convent of the Mother of God Kecharitomene in Constantinople, <http://www.doaks.org/resources/publications/doaks-online-publications/byzantine-studies/typikapdf/typ037.pdf> (accessed 29 October 2013).

⁵⁸ Evans – Wixom (eds), op.cit. (n.26), 495.

⁵⁹ While these vessels were used by the nobility on military campaigns, the emperor used real silver. Boyd discusses the different metal equipment as noted in the Book of Ceremonies in "Ex-Voto Therapy," op.cit. (n. 5), 25; on this tinned copperware, see M. Mundell Mango, "The Significance of Byzantine Tinned Copper Objects," *Θυμίαμα στην μνήμη της Λασκαρίνας Μπούρα*, Athens 1994, 221-227. My thanks to Dr. Mundell Mango for her offprint of this article.

Illustration Credits

Fig. 1: Photograph courtesy of Dumbarton Oaks. Fig. 2: C. Verzár. Fig. 3: Photograph courtesy of the Malcove Collection. Fig. 4: Photodesign Friedrich, Munich. Fig. 5: E. C. Schwartz. Fig. 6, 8: Photograph courtesy of Dr. Christian Schmidt. Fig. 7: Photograph courtesy of The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Photo by Svetlana Suetova, Leonard Kheifets.

by a single worshiper, either in a private chapel or a domestic setting. These icons, thus, help illuminate the private sphere of devotion and donation, while widening our knowledge of artistic practices in Byzantine times.

The copper *repoussé* icons find their place as part of the corpus of Byzantine icons from the post-Iconoclastic period. Gilded, they could double for precious icons, or echo the golden glow of painted images with gold-leaf backgrounds. Their small size meant that they could serve as revetment, part of a composite piece such as a smaller

icon beam, or as single small panels for private devotion and votive offerings. Their humble medium belies their exacting craftsmanship and often high artistic quality. Copper *repoussé* should thus be seen as yet another material option in the artistic production of icons during middle and late Byzantine times.

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APPENDIX A: LIST OF BYZANTINE COPPER *REPOUSSÉ* ICONS*

1. Plaque with St. Simon, 9th-10th century, 21.9×13.8 cm, New Haven, CT, Yale University Art Gallery, acc. no. ILE2008.15.3, on loan from Cindy Heusel; unpublished.
2. Pair of plaques with angels holding discs and censers, provincial Byzantium (?), 10th century, dimensions unknown, London, Collection of Theo Sarmas; unpublished.
3. Plaque with St. John Chrysostom, 10th-11th century, 24.8×14.5 cm., Poughkeepsie, NY, Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, acc. no. 1997.17.2; Brooks, “A Note on a Newly Discovered Copper Repoussé Panel,” op.cit. (n. 7).
4. Saints Lucillian and Cyrus, Asia Minor, excavated from a secular setting in Cherson, gilt, 10th-11th century, 22×23.5 cm., Sevastopol, Crimea, National Reserve of Tauric Chersonesos, no. 11/36672; Yashaeva *et al.*, op.cit. (n. 11), 494, cat. no. 139.
5. Covering of a templon beam with 12 large panels including scenes of Christ’s life (the Nativity, Crucifixion, Ascension, Empty Tomb, Doubting Thomas, Anastasis and Deesis), portraits (Constantine and Helen, and Archangels Michael and Gabriel, Uriel and Raphael, and apostles James and Phillip, Thomas and Bartholomew, and Theodore and George) and decoration, along with 12 smaller panels displaying crosses and decorative designs, from provincial Byzantium or Cappadocia, 10th-11th century, main panels forming a lintel totaling 28 cm.× c. 2.75 m. and secondary panels, 15×23 cm. each, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, on loan from the Mary and Michael Jaharis Collection, nos L.1999.34.1-12, 114, 118-21, 23; Brooks, forthcoming and ead, “Sculpting the Triumphant Cross”, op.cit. (n. 7).
6. Standing Christ, Asia Minor (?), early 11th century, 11×8.6 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 2346; unpublished.
7. Votive plaque with St. Hermolaos, Constantinople (?), early 11th century, 32×23 cm., Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, acc. no. 87.2; Boyd, “Ex-Voto Therapy”, op.cit. (n. 5), 15-27, pl. 1.
8. Archangel Michael of Chonai with donor John from Asia Minor, found at Cherson, 11th century, 12.3×8.5 cm., Sevastopol, National Reserve of Tauric Chersonesos, no. 5505; Yashaeva *et al.*, op.cit. (n. 11), 496, cat. no. 141.
9. Fragment of a Christ Pantokrator, from Asia Minor, excavated from a secular setting in Cherson, 11th century, 7×13 cm., St. Petersburg, The Hermitage, no. x 1565; *ibid.*, 490, cat. no. 133.
10. St. Peter, provincial Byzantium (?), 11th century, 21×12.5 cm., London, Collection of Theo Sarmas; Schwartz, “An Unpublished Icon of St. Peter in Copper Repoussé,” *Thirty-Fourth Byzantine Studies Conference*, op.cit. (n. 7), 55.
11. Fragmentary plaque of St. Paul, 11th century, dimensions unknown, Kiev, State Sofiefsky Monuments Museum; Dumbarton Oaks photograph, unnumbered.
12. Fragment of an altar ciborium with St. Cosmas and a cross from Constantinople (?), 11th century, 19.2×14.4 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 1044; Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 129-130, cat. no. I.34.
13. Circular plaque of St. John found in Syria, 11th century, 14.3 cm. in diameter, Berlin, Staatliche Museen; Volbach, op.cit. (n. 12), 148 and pl. 9, cat. no. 6592.
14. Virgin Hodegetria, Constantinople (?), said to be found at Tercello, gilt, late 11th century, 20.8×14 cm., London, Victoria and Albert Museum, no. 818-1891; Vassilaki (ed.), op.cit. (n. 5), 304, cat. no. 20; Evans - Wixom (eds), op.cit. (n. 26), 495-496, cat. no. 331.
15. Fragments of an Anastasis, Byzantium, excavated in Cherson, turn of the 11th-12th century, 19×16.8 cm., St. Petersburg, The Hermitage, no. x 872; Yashaeva *et al.*, op.cit. (n. 11), 495, cat. no. 140.
16. Square plaque with an image of St. Procopius in a roundel probably from Asia Minor, 11th-12th century, 7×8.4 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 1812; L. Wamser, *Die Welt von Byzanz - Europas östliches Erbe. Glanz, Krisen und Fortleben einer tausendjährigen Kultur* (Exhibition catalogue), Munich 2004, 178, cat. no. 220.

* Listed chronologically. References focus on primary publication of pieces and catalogue entries with extensive bibliography. Full citations can be found in the footnotes to the text. Only figural plaques are included in the count.

17. Christ Pantocrator, Asia Minor?, 11th-12th century, 6.4×5.1 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 2290, unpublished.

18. Christ Pantocrator with an arched top, provincial Byzantium, 11th-12th century, 23.4×13.2 cm., Geneva, Musée d'art et d'histoire, inv. no. AD 2401; Martiniani-Reber (ed.), op.cit. (n. 29), 104, cat. no. 45.

19. St. Damien with an arched top, provincial Byzantium, 11th-12th century, 22.2×13.4 cm., Geneva, Musée d'art et d'histoire, inv. no. AD 2403; ibid., 104, cat. no. 45. Undoubtedly originally paired with another of the 'moneyless healer' saints such as St. Cosmas, perhaps one sold in Munich in 2007, discussed in the catalogue.

20. St. George under an arch from Asia Minor (?), 11th-12th century, 12.7×5.1 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 1724; Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 130-131, cat. no. I.35.

21. Circular plaque of Christ Pantocrator from Asia Minor (?), 11th-12th century, 14.5 cm. in diameter, Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 1112; ibid., 127-128, cat. no. I.32.

22. Circular plaque of Christ Pantocrator with inscription in relief, gilt, Cherson, excavated from a church 11th-12th century, 17.2 cm. in diameter, Sevastopol, National Preserve of Tauric Chersonesos, no. 34286; Yashaeva *et al.*, op.cit. (n. 11), 491, cat. no. 134.

23. Circular plaque of St. Panteleimon, possibly from Asia Minor, 11th-12th century, 3.9 cm. in diameter, Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 2271; unpublished.

24. Circular plaque of St. Peter, Asia Minor (?), 11th-12th century, 3.3 cm. in diameter, Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 2866; unpublished.

25. Fragments of a Deesis, Byzantium, excavated from a secular site at Cherson, 11th-12th century, 10.8×11.2 cm., Sevastopol, National Preserve of Tauric Chersonesos, no. 117/37226; Yashaeva *et al.*, op.cit. (n. 11), 493, cat. no. 138.

26. Part of a templon beam with donor Alexander Tormachos and the Archangel Uriel (from a Deesis) under an arcade, Asia Minor (?), 11th-12th century, 17.8×20.4 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 2913; unpublished.

27. St. Nicholas from Asia Minor (?), said to have been tin-plated, 11th-12th century, 9.5×7.9 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 1413; Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 131-132, cat. no. I.36.

28. Military saint (George?) from a row of figures, 11th-12th century, 15.8×8 cm., Columbia, MO, Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri, acc. 70.14; O. Overby (ed.), *Illustrated Museum Handbook: A Guide to the Collections in the Museum of Art and Archaeology*, University of Missouri-Columbia, Missouri 1982, 69.

29. Archangel Uriel from Asia Minor (?), 12th century, 16.6×17.1 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 1109; Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 128-129, cat. no. I.33.

30. Plaque displaying the Enthroned Christ with an arched top, Byzantium, excavated from a church in Cherson, 12th century, 12×9 cm., St. Petersburg, The Hermitage, no. x 872; Yashaeva *et al.*, op.cit. (n. 11), 491, cat. no. 135.

31. Trefoil-shaped plaque consisting of a central roundel of St. Michael flanked by two circles containing flowers or stars, probably from the top of an icon, Asia Minor?, 12th century, 4.9×8.8 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 6026; unpublished.

32. Six plaques from a templon beam, door, chest or icon frame with David on horseback and two of Gabriel, along with a cross and two displaying spiral interlace, provincial Byzantium, second half of the 12th century, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, The Malcove Collection, University of Toronto Art Centre.

33. Six plaques (listed by figure number in the Malcove collection catalogue) [Campbell (ed.), op.cit. (n. 7), 130-132, no. M82.159]:

- a.** plaque with spiral interlace made of leaves, enclosing an 8-petaled flower, 14.2×19.5 cm.; ibid., 130, fig. 188.
- b.** plaque with spiral interlace made of leaves, enclosing an 8-petaled flower, 13×19 cm.; ibid., 130, fig. 189.
- c.** plaque with foliate jeweled cross, 13.5×18.8 cm.; ibid., 131, fig. 190.
- d.** David on horseback, 14×18.5 cm.; ibid., 131, fig. 191.
- e.** plaque depicting Archangel Gabriel (probably from an Annunciation pair), with a rounded top, 12.5×24 cm.; ibid., 132, fig. 192.
- f.** plaque with frontal Archangel Gabriel, with a rounded top, 12×23 cm; ibid., 132, fig. 193.

34. Deesis with Archangels Michael and Gabriel, eastern Asia Minor (?), late 12th century, Deesis: 17×15.1 cm, Michael: 16.7×13.7 cm., Gabriel: 9×12 cm. Deesis and Michael in Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. nos. 81, 82, Gabriel in Recklinghausen, Ikonen-Museum, no. 282; Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 132-134, cat. nos. I.37, a, b, c.

35. Enthroned Christ and saints, Byzantium, excavated from a house at Cherson, turn of the 12th-13th century, 24.3×18 cm., St. Petersburg, The Hermitage, no. x 1038; Yashaeva *et al.*, op.cit. (n. 11), 492, cat. no. 136.

36. Virgin and Child found in Venice, gilt, 12th-13th century, 20.5×15.7 cm., Berlin, Kaiser-Friedrich Museen, no. 2419; Kaiser-Friedrich Museen catalogue, 65.

37. St. George, 2nd quarter of the 13th century, Greece, 13×4.5 cm., Athens, Byzantine and Christian Museum, no. 1129; Gkratziou - Lazaridou, op.cit. (n. 17), 251, cat. no. 346.

38. Apostle Andrew, gilt, Byzantine, beginning of the 14th century, 4.5 by 4.8 cm., Recklinghausen, Ikonen-Museum, no. 248; Stiegemann (ed.), op.cit. (n. 10), 134-135, cat. no. I.38.

39. Military saint, Bulgaria (?), 14th century, 12.2×8.3 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 6032; unpublished.

40. Double sided icon, with St. Nicholas en buste and St. George on horseback spearing the dragon with inscriptions in relief, northern Greece (?), 15th century, 5.8×4.9 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. nos. 1094-1 and 1094-2; *Sankt Georg. Der Ritter mit dem Drachen. Katalog zur Ausstellung im Diözesanmuseum Freising* (Exhibition catalogue), Freising 2001, 151, cat. no. II.35. *Die Welt von Byzanz*, op.cit. (APPENDIX A no. 16), 179, cat. no. 222.

APPENDIX B: LIST OF NON-BYZANTINE COPPER REPOUSSÉ ICONS AND OTHER PIECES

1. Magi before the Virgin, gilt, 8th-9th century, 6×13.1 cm., Berlin, Staatliche Museen; Volbach, op.cit. (n. 12), 153, pl. 5, cat. no. 1007.
2. Inscription in Latin found in Salerno, 9th-10th century, 12.8 cm. in height, Berlin, Staatliche Museen; ibid., 154, cat. no. 6416.
3. Virgin and Child from Italy, originally gilt, 14th century, 22×14.7 cm., Berlin, Staatliche Museen; ibid., 150-151, pl. 10, cat. no. 722.
4. St. Matthew with relief inscription, western origin, gilded, 12th -13th century, 6.2×5.1 cm., Munich, Collection of Dr. Christian Schmidt, inv. no. 0083; *Die Welt von Byzanz*, op.cit. (APPENDIX A no. 16), 179, cat. no. 221.

Ellen C. Schwartz

**ΧΑΛΚΙΝΕΣ ΕΙΚΟΝΕΣ ΕΚΤΥΠΗΣ ΔΙΑΚΟΣΜΗΣΗΣ ΜΕΣΟΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΗΣ
ΚΑΙ ΥΣΤΕΡΟΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΗΣ ΠΕΡΙΟΔΟΥ**

Το παρόν άρθρο εστιάζει σε μια ομάδα έκτυπων εικόνων από κράματα χαλκού, μέρος ενός πολύ μεγαλύτερου υπό μελέτη συνόλου μεταλλικών εικόνων. Αυτή η ομάδα των εικόνων δεν έχει ακόμη μελετηθεί, ενώ η δημιουργία ενός *corpus* μεταλλικών εικόνων δεν είναι δυνατή, καθώς πολλές εικόνες καταστράφηκαν λόγω της χρησιμότητας του μετάλλου τους. Ωστόσο έχουν σωθεί αρκετές εικόνες, τόσες που να επιτρέπουν και να καθιστούν απαραίτητη αυτήν τη μελέτη. Γίνεται λοιπόν εδώ μια πρώτη προσπάθεια διερεύνησης αυτών των εικόνων ως προς το υλικό, την εικονογραφία, το ύφος, το σκοπό και τη λειτουργία τους μέσα στην κοινωνία, στην οποία δημιουργήθηκαν.

Αυτές οι έκτυπες εικόνες αποτελούνται από λεπτά φύλλα κραμάτων χαλκού, επεξεργασμένα με μια χρονοβόρα και κοπιώδη διαδικασία, που χρησιμοποιείται για την παραγωγή αυτών των μοναδικών εικόνων. Οι περισσότερες έκτυπες εικόνες αυτής της ομάδας είναι πολύ υψηλής ποιότητας οι μορφές αποδίδονται με σωστές αναλογίες και οι επιγραφές είναι συνήθως ευανάγνωστες και ορθογραφημένες. Παρά τη συνήθη αποσπασματική τους κατάσταση, υπάρχουν στοιχεία που παραπέμπουν σε διάφορες πιθανές χρήσεις τους, όπως μεταξύ άλλων ως εικόνων ιδιωτικής λατρείας, τμημάτων επιστυλών ή εικόνων τέμπλων, διακόσμησης θυρών, ή ίσως ως ένθετων στοιχείων σε λειτουργικά έπιπλα και άλλα αντικείμενα.

Ως λιγότερο ακριβά αντίγραφα των πολύτιμων επεν-

δύσεων και διακοσμήσεων, γνωστών από περιγραφές γραπτών πηγών, αυτές οι εικόνες από κράμα χαλκού μπορούν να συνδεθούν με τις σωζόμενες πολύτιμες μεταλλικές επενδύσεις που μιμούνται. Σχετίζονται, επίσης, με εικόνες ζωγραφιστές, αλλά και αποδοσμένες σε χαμηλό ανάγλυφο σε άλλα καλλιτεχνικά είδη, όπου εντοπίζονται ανάλογα έκτυπα έργα ως απομιμήσεις ακριβότερων υλικών. Η μέτρια χρηματική αξία των μπρούτζινων και χάλκινων εικόνων μπορεί να συναχθεί από σχετικές αναφορές σε διαθήκες και άλλες φιλολογικές πηγές, όπου κατατάσσονται μαζί με άλλα έργα, εξίσου χαμηλής αξίας στην αποτίμηση του υλικού. Το κοινωνικό περιβάλλον των περισσότερων πιθανότατα εικόνων αποτελούν οι οικογένειες της ανώτερης τάξης, οι οποίες χρησιμοποιούσαν τις εικόνες για ιδιωτική λατρεία, για το διάκοσμο ταπεινών εκκλησιών και παρεκκλησίων, αλλά και ως δωρεές ή κληροδοτήματα σε μοναστήρια. Έτσι, αυτές οι εικόνες φωτίζουν το ιδιωτικό πλαίσιο της αφέρωσης και της χρησής, ενώ διευρύνουν τη γνώση μας για τις καλλιτεχνικές πρακτικές σε διάφορα είδη κατά τη διάρκεια των βυζαντινών χρόνων.

Στο τέλος, παρατίθενται δύο παραρτήματα, στο πρώτο αναφέρονται οι βυζαντινές έκτυπες εικόνες με τις σχετικές πληροφορίες και στο δεύτερο οι αντίστοιχες μη βυζαντινές.

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