
A SEAL OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER OF THE 17TH CENTURY FROM THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM COLLECTION, SAINT PETERSBURG

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In 1913, prominent Russian scholar and collector Nikolai Likhachev (1862-1936) sold his famous icon collection to Tsar Nicholas II, who decided to hand it over to the recently established Russian Museum of His Imperial Majesty Alexander III in Saint-Petersburg¹. After the sale, Nikolai Likhachev became more involved in collecting and studying manuscripts, rare books, and autographs. He dreamed about establishing a special museum on the history of writing of all times and peoples. After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, life in Saint-Petersburg (Petrograd at that time) became extremely difficult and dangerous. Hunger, lack of heating, robberies, killings, and a mass terror against all those whom the new government called the “enemies of the revolution” – the members of nobility, intelligentsia, bourgeoisie, merchants, and others dominated in the former capital of the Russian Empire.

In 1918, in order to save his collections from destruction, Nikolai Likhachev (fig. 1) voluntarily and gratuitously gave his private house and collections to the Russian Academy of Sciences. Thus, the private collections of this renowned scholar led to the establishing of the Museum of Paleography of the Academy of Sciences². In 1938, the Museum was liquidated and its collections were transferred to the different museums and libraries of Saint-Petersburg (now renamed Leningrad). A significant part of the collections was distributed among the departments of the Hermitage Museum. Among the items acquired by the Byzantine collection of the Hermitage there was a round bronze medallion with the mirrored etched image of “the Descent into Hell” (“Anastasis”) in the center and an inscription in Greek over the border. The item was registered in Inventory as w – 1101

¹The Greek and Italian icons from this collection are now kept in the State Hermitage Museum.

² Later, the Museum was transformed into the Institute of Books, Documents, and Letters within the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.



Fig. 1. Academician Nikolai Likhachev in his study. Exlibris.

(fig. 2, 3), and for many years did not attract the attention of specialists. It was put on display for the first time in the summer of 1991 in the exhibition devoted to Nikolai Likhachev as a collector. The exhibition was organized by the State Russian Museum, the State Hermitage Museum, and the Saint Petersburg Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences and held at the State Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg. The medallion is listed in the catalog of the exhibition under no. 220 (due to shortage of finances the catalog was published in 1993, with a delay of two years). It was described by Curator of the Hermitage Vera Zaleskaya as a “lid of a pyxis” made in Palestine approximately in the 17th century. Based on her reading of the Greek inscription, Zaleskaya suggested that this “lid of a pyxis” was eulogia brought by a pilgrim from Jerusalem, and that it was used as a matrix for reproduction of similar pilgrims tokens (Залеская 1993, 76, №220). She repeated this interpretation in her article, “Liturgic stamps-eulogiai” (Залеская 1995, 236-242, рис. 2) and in the catalogue of the Hermitage exhibition “Christians in the Holy Land” (Христиане 1998, 55,



Fig. 2. The Hermitage seal w-1101.



Fig. 3. The obverse of the Hermitage seal w-1101.

№70). However, some of the details of the representation and the inscription raise some doubts about the accuracy of this interpretation. The study of charters of Orthodox Patriarchs in the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts in Moscow confirmed our doubts and allowed us to suggest an alternate view. My interpretation of the object as “the seal with Descent into Limbo” first time was mentioned in the catalogue accompanying the Hermitage exhibition “Pilgrim Treasures from the Hermitage: Byzantium - Jerusalem” (Catalogue Amsterdam 2005, 108, no. 14). The detailed critique of the interpretation of this and two other monastery seals of the 17th century from the Hermitage collection as pilgrim souvenirs was given in a separate article in 2011 (Пятницкий 2011, 195-214). The driven force behind it was the future exhibition dedicated to Nikolai Likhachev where all these three seals should be included and described in the forthcoming catalogue. In order to avoid the repetition of the erroneous interpretation, I presented a paper at the conference in Moscow in 2011 and published the article (Пятницкий 2011, 195-214). It should be said in general my attribution was accepted and the objects were referred as “seals” by Vera Zalesskaya in the catalogue of the Hermitage exhibition in 2012 (Каталог Санкт-Петербург 2012, 203-204, №№115-117). But the seal w-1101, perhaps due to negligence, was called “the seal of the Jerusalem Patriarchate” with Jerusalem as the place of its production (Каталог Санкт-Петербург 2012, 204, №117). This fact has prompted us once again to discuss this object.

The seal is shaped as a round lid with 4,3 cm in diameter and 0,65 cm in height. The circled, mirrored inscription in Greek on its face runs from left to right; it reads: “+ Η ΑΝΝΑΚΤΑΚΙΣ · ΤΟΥ

Κ(υρίο)Υ ΗΜΩΝ Ι(ησο)Υ Χ(ριστο)Υ ΕΝ ΒΟΥΛΑ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΖΩΟΔΟΧΟΥ ΤΑΦΟΥ (“The Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Seal of the Holy and Sacred Sepulcher”). The central part of this side occupies the etched representation of “The Descent into Hell” with a deep, extracted background and mirrored monograms IC / ΧΘς (Jesus Christ). A small, semi-round notch is on the top, near the letters “Η ΑΝΝΑΚΤΑΚΙΣ” (fig. 2, 3)

The presence of the mirrored images, inscription, and monograms put in doubt the interpretation of the object as a “lid of a pyxis.” The lids of pyxides and eulogiai, including the ones from the Holy Land, do not bear the mirrored inscriptions and monograms. The mirrored images, however, are typical for the stamps and seal-matrixes dated to the Byzantine and post-Byzantine time. Numerous examples of such stamps are given in a book “Bread and the Liturgy” by the late George Galavaris (Galavaris 1970). Moreover, the text of the inscription itself explicitly refers to the Hermitage item as a seal: “ΕΝ ΒΟΥΛΑ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΖΩΟΔΟΧΟΥ ΤΑΦΟΥ” (in the Seal of the Holy and Sacred Sepulcher). As a rule, though not always, inscriptions on the pilgrims’ eulogiai, include the Greek word “ΕΥΛΟΓΙΑ”, i.e. “Blessing”. It is pres-



Fig. 4. The Hermitage seal w-1101 with the cross-shaped opening. The side view.

ent, for example, on the pilgrims' medallions of the 6th-7th centuries (Catalogue Mainz 2001, 200-201). Thus, there is no evidence for supporting the initial interpretation of the Hermitage object as a lid of a pyxis, or as a matrix for the pilgrims' eulogiai.

Thus, in reality, this "lid of a pyxis" is a seal stamp. It belongs to the type of seal matrixes that were stamped into a wax or special mastic (Станюкович, Фонкич 2004, 412), or directly to the surface of a paper document. In cases when a seal was applied to a paper document, its face was covered with paint or ink. The seal stamps were made out of hard metal, either silver or copper alloy (bronze); an image (a scene or a figure of a saint) was etched in the center, and a Greek inscription ran along the outer circle. The preserved exemplars of such seal stamps belonged to the patriarchs and monasteries, as well as to private persons, for example to Hierodeacon Meletius Greek of Chios (Catalogue Thessaloniki 1997, 502-507; Psilakis 1988, 168; The World 2004, 303, nos. 294, 295; Vatopaidi, 1998, I, fig. 33, 35, 36, 43, 44, 46; Станюкович, Фонкич 2004, 412-417). There is also known a significant number of charters and other official documents bearing the impressions of the seal stamps or the wax seals under the paper guard. It should be noted that the seal stamps were widely used up until the 19th century, and continue to be in use even today. As an example, we can point to the impression of a seal stamp of the Saint Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai on the documents of the 19th century prepared in connection to the handing "The Sinai Bible" (Codex Sinaiticus) over to Russia (Захарова 2007, 239, 244, 247, 253, 255, 260).

The scene of "The Descent into Hell" (The Anastasis) on the obverse of the Hermitage seal stamp is depicted in traditional Byzantine iconography (fig. 2). In the center, Jesus Christ is holding the cross on the high pole in his right hand, and taking kneeling Adam from the grave with his left hand. Jesus Christ is standing on the crossed wings of the gates of Hell. To the right of Christ, behind the kneeling Adam, there are two full-size figures of prophets, with one wearing a toothed crown. Three similar figures are depicted to the left from Christ: kneeling Eve on the foreground, and two life-sized figures behind her (one character is wearing a toothed crown). Rocky mountains are visible on the background behind two groups of people. The halo of Christ has a cross and the "ΟΩΝ" letters in it, and near the intersection of the cross that is held by Christ there is a mono-

gram "IC / ΧΟϚ" (Jesus Christ). Similar iconography of the "Anastasis" was fully formed in Byzantine art before the 11th century. Small differences could be noted in the arrangement of figures in regard to the central figure of Jesus Christ (Kartsonis 1986; Skrzyniarz 2002).

The inscription on this seal stamp gives a precise answer about its purpose and its ownership. This is the seal of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (the Church of the Resurrection) in Jerusalem, one of the main relics of Orthodoxy and a place of constant pilgrimage. The Church belongs to the Jerusalem Patriarchate, which has been continuing to play the fundamental role in the life of this Holy Place of Christianity (Тзаферис 1992, 32-42, 62-77). The shape of the Hermitage seal stamp with an opening on the border indicates that it was put on a wooden block with a handle (fig. 4).

It is interesting to note that when the Church of Resurrection and Kouvouklion of the Holy Sepulcher are shown, the graphical representations of the 19th century gave two variations of the "Resurrection of Christ" scene at the same time, in its "Latin" version (Christ with a banner in his hand over the lid of sarcophagus) and in the traditional "Greek" version (Christ takes out from the Hell the Biblical personages, that is "Anastasis") (Παλαστράτου 1986, 535-538). Thus, both iconographic variants were used in post-Byzantine art (Пятницкий 2005, 174-201). A Jerusalem patriarch, who traditionally was an ethnic Greek, used the "Greek" variant for his own seal and for the seals of the Patriarchate and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Moreover, during the Crusades, the "Latin" Patriarch of Jerusalem also used the scene "Anastasis" for his patriarchal seal. Specifically, it was depicted on the obverse of the seal of Gerold of Lausanne, the Patriarch of Jerusalem in the 13th century; earlier, in the 12th century, the scene was depicted in the seal of Patriarch Heraclius (Folda 2005, 206-207; Schlumberger 1954, 77-79).

Important comparative materials for this research provide charters of the Jerusalem patriarchs of the 17th century preserved in the Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (RGADA)³ in Moscow. Interrelations of the Jerusalem Patriarchate and Russia were always important for both sides. Russia appeared as a constant source of financial aid and political force that allowed the Patriarchate to keep the ownership of the Holy Places. One of the initia-

³ Российский Государственный Архив Древних Актов, Москва (РГАДА).



Fig. 5. The charter of Patriarch Theophanes of Jerusalem concerning the Confirmation of Filaret Nikitich as Patriarch of Moscow. 1619 / 1629. RGADA, Moscow.

tors of the close ties with Russia was the Jerusalem Patriarch Theophanes (1606-1644). This prominent figure of Oriental Orthodoxy visited Moscow twice, in 1603 and in 1619; during his last visit he ordained Filaret Nikitich (the father of Russian tsar Michail Romanov) as a Muscovian patriarch. The funds of the RGADA keep 32 original charters and letters of this patriarch sent between 1619 and 1644 (Фонкич 1994, 212-218; Фонкич 2003а, 411-420; Ченцова 2006, 124-143)⁴, and a copy of the confirmation charter made in 1629. The original charter of 1619 perished in the Moscow fire of 1626, and it was substituted with a new charter of 1629 sent by Patriarch Theophanes from Jassy (Moldova), where he stayed at that time.

The charter was written in liturgical script on parchment; it is richly decorated with gold ornamentation, and has a patriarchal seal in the gilded silver box on the blue silk cord (fig. 5). Thanks to Boris Fonkich, who made the special publication of this charter (Fonkich 1989-1990, 45-60; Фонкич 2003b, 400-410), it was shown in 1995 at the exhibition "Greek Documents and Manuscripts, Icons, and Applied Art Objects from the Moscow Depositories". (Греческие документы 1995, 55). The hanging seal is a two-folding box with a silk cord; it is made out of gilded silver; the image and the inscription on the obverse and the inscription on the reverse of the seal are etched.

On the face of the box, the inscription " + Η ΑΝΑΤΑΞΙΣ ΤΟΥ Κ[ΥΡΙΟΥ] ΗΜΩΝ Ι[ΗΣΟΥ] Χ[ΡΙΣΤΟΥ] ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΠΟΛΕΩΣ ΙΕΡΟΣΟΛΥΜΩΝ" (Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus of the Holy City of Jerusalem) is running around the scene of "the Descent into Hell." The obverse bears the inscription in seven lines with the name and title of Patriarch Theophanes, and the date, ΑΧΙΘ (1619).

During our visit to the RGADA we had the fortunate opportunity to study this charter and its seal⁵. The silver box has 6,5 cm in diameter and 1,3 in width. Inside of the box is the wax seal stamp on the silk blue cord; décor of the seal, probably, is identical to the gilded silver box.⁶ By its iconogra-



Fig. 6. The silver box of the charter of Patriarch Theophanes of Jerusalem. 1619 / 1629. RGADA, Moscow.

phy, the scene "the Descent into Hell" on the box is very similar to the Hermitage seal (no. w-1101). The box of the hanging seal of the 1619/1629 charter has the image of the full-size figure of Jesus Christ turning right, standing on the fallen gates of Hell; Christ is holding the cross on the long pole in his right hand, while taking Adam from his knees with his left hand. To the left from Christ, the depicted are King Solomon and King David holding a scroll; to the right from Christ are kneeling Adam and the full-sized figure of Eve standing behind Adam. Two overhang mountains are shown in the background. The whole image is circled with a ring of the dot pearls (fig. 6). The seven-line inscription etched on the reverse ends with the year, "ΑΧ · ΙΘ·", and a floral rosette. The sides of the box are decorated with the etched interlace. In iconographic aspect, we see here the composition of "the Descent into Hell," which appears as a specific symbol of the Jerusalem Patriarchate. The bossing and etching are quite rough and unrefined. The folds of the clothes are made with a chisel on the deepened background; the remains of niello are visible in the lines of the folds. Thus, all three techniques were used in making the box for this seal: bossing, etching, and niello, as well as gilding. Despite the fact that only fragments of the niello preserved, the box impresses by its luxury and splendor. We can imagine how it looked originally: the embossed elements appeared against the noble gold background sparking with reflexes of playing light, while the deepened lines with lusterless niello effectively contrasted with the golden surface.

According to Boris Fonkich's article, the charter was written in Jassy no later than the end of July of 1629, and copied the original act of 1619. Fonkich believes that "Patriarch Theophanes used ei-

⁴ In this article I mention only Theophanes' charters which I had the opportunity to examine in the RGADA myself. Unfortunately, it was not possible to study all documents written by Theophanes at the time of my visits to the archive.

⁵ RGADA, fond 52, opis' 2, delo 9. Original in parchment, 72,5×59,6 cm.

⁶ It would be very interesting to open the box with the wax stamp and compare the "Anastasis" scene on it with the one on the obverse of the silver box itself, but the existing danger of damaging the seal makes it unlikely in the nearest future.

ther a draft of the text that served as a basis for the original document which later perished in the fire of 1626, or availed a copy from the original charter compiled in 1619 and sent to him from Moscow with Russian Archimandrite Kirill” (Фонкич 2003b, 401). This assumption seems well-grounded in regard to the text of the charter and its connection to the lost original, but the question of the decorative ornamentation of the charter and the seal in the box still persists.

How close the décor of the 1629 charter repeats the original one made in 1619? Unfortunately, the available Russian archival documents do not give an answer to this question. The Russian translation of the 1619 charter preserved in RGADA gives only the description of the seal: “The charter has a hanging silver-gilt seal; one side cast the image of the Resurrection of Christ, and the inscription near it: the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy City of Jerusalem. And the words “Theophanes by Lord’s mercy Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and whole Palestine in the year of AXΘI”⁷ are cast on the other side of the seal” (Фонкич 2003b, 409).

The charter of 1619 on the confirmation of Patriarch Filaret Nikitich was made in Moscow during the visit of Theophanes, the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Its text in Greek was probably written by a scribe from the Patriarch’s circle; it had the original signature of Theophanes (as it is said in the 1629 letter of Filaret Nikitich to Patriarch Theophanes, “and according to the tradition of the Holy commitment, the confirmation charter was written, and own hand to the charter was put, and gave it to us” (Фонкич 2003b, 401) and, as it was mentioned above, the hanging seal of the Jerusalem Patriarchate. Who decorated this charter and who made the silver box for the hanging seal? While it is possible to assume that the retinue of the Patriarch included an artist-miniaturist who could ornament the charter, it would be unlikely that the Patriarch also brought with him a skillful master-jeweler who made the box for the seal. Taking into account the importance of the charter for the Russian Church and the statehood, as well as for the new dynasty of Romanovs, it is more logical and realistic to suggest that both the box for the seal and décor on the leaf were made by the artists of the Moscow Tsar. The decorated

parchment leaf (probably with gold floral ornament) for the 1619 charter and the silver, gilded with niello, box for the Patriarchal seal were prepared at the tsar’s court workshops. The image and inscription on the silver box repeated the original seal of Theophanes, which the Patriarch was carrying with him, and which he used to seal this charter. Such assumption corresponds with the meaning of the charter as one of the most significant state documents. Indirectly, supportive evidence can be seen in a request of Filaret Nikitich about the charter’s duplicate after the fire of 1626. In his letter, Filaret Nikitich wrote to Patriarch Theophanes, “and left a copy from it, and we, copying from the charter word for word, sent it to your Grace with our Archimandrite Kirill, and to you, the brother of ours, sent for this charter two forties of sables. And would your Grace, if you have a copy, ordering to write a new charter, the same as the previous charter. And if you do not have a copy of the charter, would your Grace ordering to write it from the copy we sent to you, and sign it with your hand, and place the seal on it <...>” (Фонкич 2003b, 401)

It could be suggested that in 1629, Patriarch Theophanes preparing in Jassy a copy (perhaps, a “duplicate” is the more correct word) of the 1619 charter engaged the local artists for its ornamentation; he possessed a sufficient amount of money to pay for this work, while the local artists (a painter and a silver craftsman) were famous by their artistic skills all over the Orthodox Orient. However, after careful analysis of numerous preserved charters of the Moldovan rulers and ornamental design of the Moldovan manuscripts, we have to reject this assumption. Though the gold floral décor is richly used in these manuscripts, it differs radically from the décor of 1629 charter in both the general principle of its arrangement and the floral-vegetable elements of ornamentation. At the same time, its décor is almost identical to the ornamentation of the Russian charters of the 17th century. As far as we know, this fact was first noted by Vera Chentsova who suggested that a leaf with the already painted initial “Б,” splendidly ornamented with gold paint was made in the tsar’s Office, and that the leaf, together with a copy of the text of the 1619 charter were sent to Patriarch Theophanes from Moscow to Jassy for the new charter (Ченцова 2006, 128, примеч. 16). An excellent confirmation of this conjecture is the tsar’s charter of 1630 kept in the Saint Catherine’s Monastery at Mount

⁷This is exactly like in the document, but it is error. Correct date is “·AX · IO·”.

Sinai in Egypt (fig. 7). In 2000, it was shown on the exhibition at the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, and published in the exhibition catalogue (Pyatnitsky et al. 2000, 233-234, no. S-53)⁸. Both charters are ornamented at the top, in the width of the text, with the gold vignette which has a crown projected upward in the middle. The vignette in the charter of the 1630 is comprised of the floral volutes, and the floral volutes in the charter of the Jerusalem Patriarch Theophanes are additionally enriched with the rosette flowers. However, the multi-petal flower rosettes are interweaved into the initial letters at the left margin in both charters. Besides that, the charter of the Jerusalem Patriarchate has a large flower rosette on the stem at the right margin. For sure, the patriarchal charter is decorated more splendidly; its ornamentation is more complex and bears a slight "Oriental" flavor. However, there are no doubts that both parchments were decorated with gold in the same workshop by the artists of the same school (and possible, by the same painter). It is also clear that it was the so-called "art workshop of the Ambassadorial Chamber," where many charters and documents decorated with gold floral vignettes and initial letters were prepared (Калишевич 1961, 392-411; Беляков 2004, 58-81; Масленникова 2012, 182-194)⁹. The correctness of Vera Chentsova's hypothesis is also proved by the comparison of the texts in the two above-mentioned documents (the charter of 1630 and the Patriarchal charter of 1629). The text in the charter of 1630 is neatly written in the space of the leaf; the margins are even on the both sides; it is delicately arranged near the initial letter, and does not cross over the ornamentation. The Patriarchal charter, on a contrary, has the Greek text over the ornamentation; the lines are uneven; the margins have different width at the top and bottom parts of the leaf. It is quite obvious that the Greek text was fitted into the already ornamented leaf. It is also evident during the comparison of this charter with the charters of the Jerusalem patriarchs that were written and decorated in Constantinople. For example, we can compare the charter of Patriarch Paisius to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich from 18th

July of 1645 with the gold décor, the 1682 charter of Patriarch Dositheus to Tsar Fedor Alekseevich, the gold initial letter, or similar to it 1682 charter of this Patriarch Dositheus on Remission of Patriarch Nikon (Греческие документы 1995, 59, 61, 62). Thus, asking the Jerusalem Patriarch to restore the lost charter of 1619, Moscow authorities fully secured the successful realization of their request: they sent a copy of the original text, the decorated leaf with the silk cord, and the silver box for the wax seal stamp. They greatly desire to get to Moscow the authentic duplicate of the perished charter.

We also studied several other charters of the Jerusalem Patriarch Theophanes kept in the funds of the RGADA. All of them have the patriarchal stamp under the paper guard. The charter from 15 September of 1625 (fig. 8) has the red wax stamp (4.1 cm in diameter) beneath paper guard (5,5×5,4 cm); the scene of "Anastasis" with Christ taking Adam from the sarcophagus occupies the center; a king from the Old Testament and John the Prodromos with a scroll depicted to the left from Christ; on the opposite side, there is the figure of Eve standing behind kneeling Adam (fig. 9); the inscription in Greek running in circle is identical to the inscription on the silver box of the 1629 charter¹⁰. The impression demonstrates that the workmanship of the original patriarchal seal-matrix was more elegant, finer, and of higher quality than the workmanship of the silver box made, as it was mentioned above, by the Moscow craftsmen around 1629.

Another charter of the Jerusalem patriarch is dated 1644; it was sent to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich "with Greek Thomas the Verian asking to award him, the Greek, with alms, because he was ruined by the damaging words of the Turks."¹¹ At the bottom of the charter, near the signature of Patriarch Theophanes, and even partially covering it was placed the red wax seal under the paper guard. The seal is slightly broken, and its contour is uneven, its diameter can be determined to approximately 4,5 cm. The inscription that runs in a circle is damaged and illegible. Nevertheless, the details of the image give the possibility to assert that the Patriarch had used for this charter the same seal-matrix as for the charter of 1625 described above. Perhaps, the same seal-matrix

⁸ It was reproduced also in Manafis 1990, 376 fig. 21.

⁹ Few charters of the 17th century ornamented with floral décor were preserved: the charter of 1656 in the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian in Patmos Island, and the charter of 1688 in the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopedi on the Mount Athos: Kominis 1988, 357, fig. 20; Vatopaidi 1998, II, 634-635, fig. 592, 593.

¹⁰ RGADA, fond 52, opis' 2, delo 20, list 5 – original, in list 1-4 reverse is copy of charter.

¹¹ It is the title of file - RGADA, fond 52, opis' 2-1644, delo 223

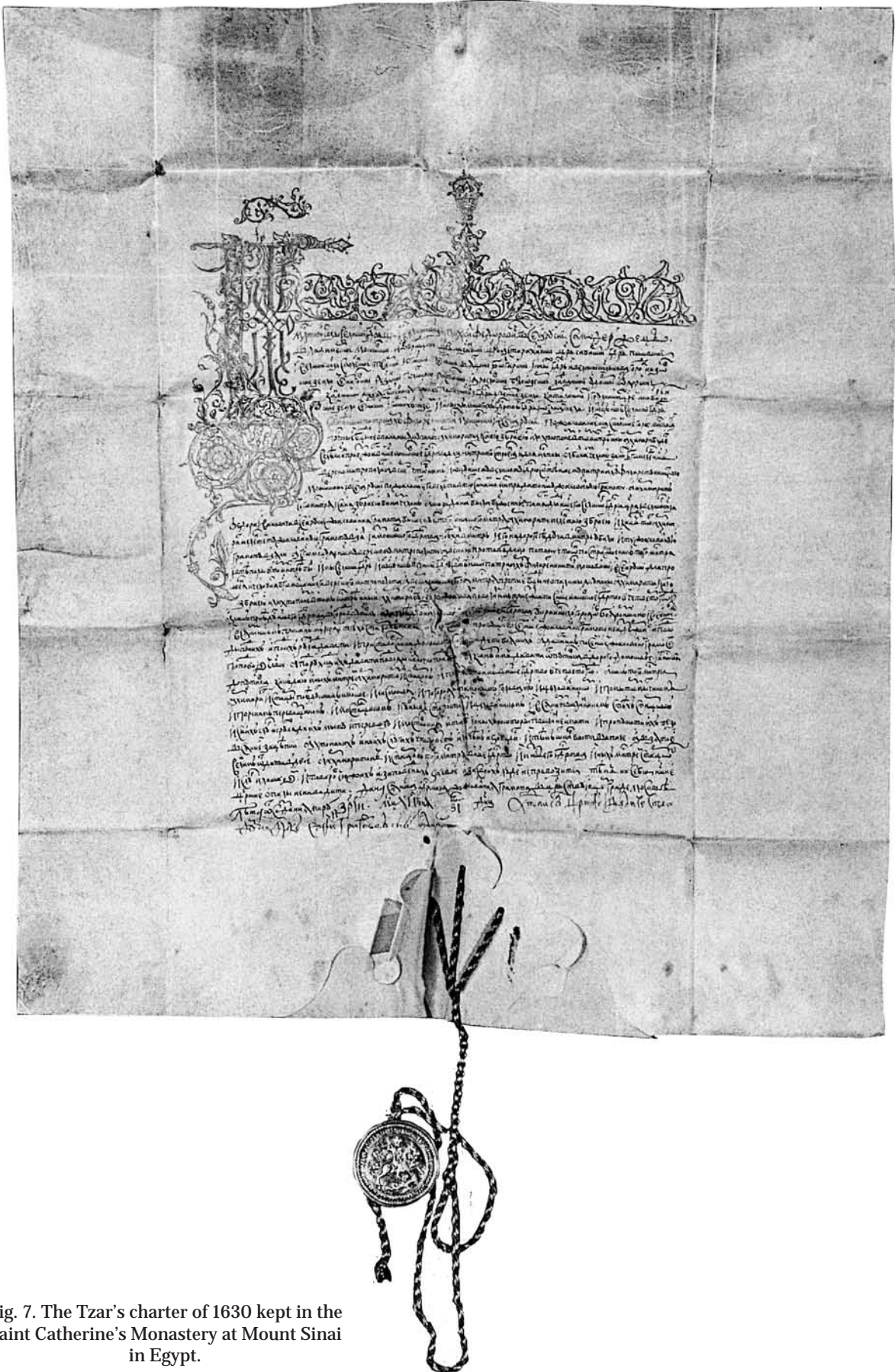


Fig. 7. The Tzar's charter of 1630 kept in the Saint Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai in Egypt.

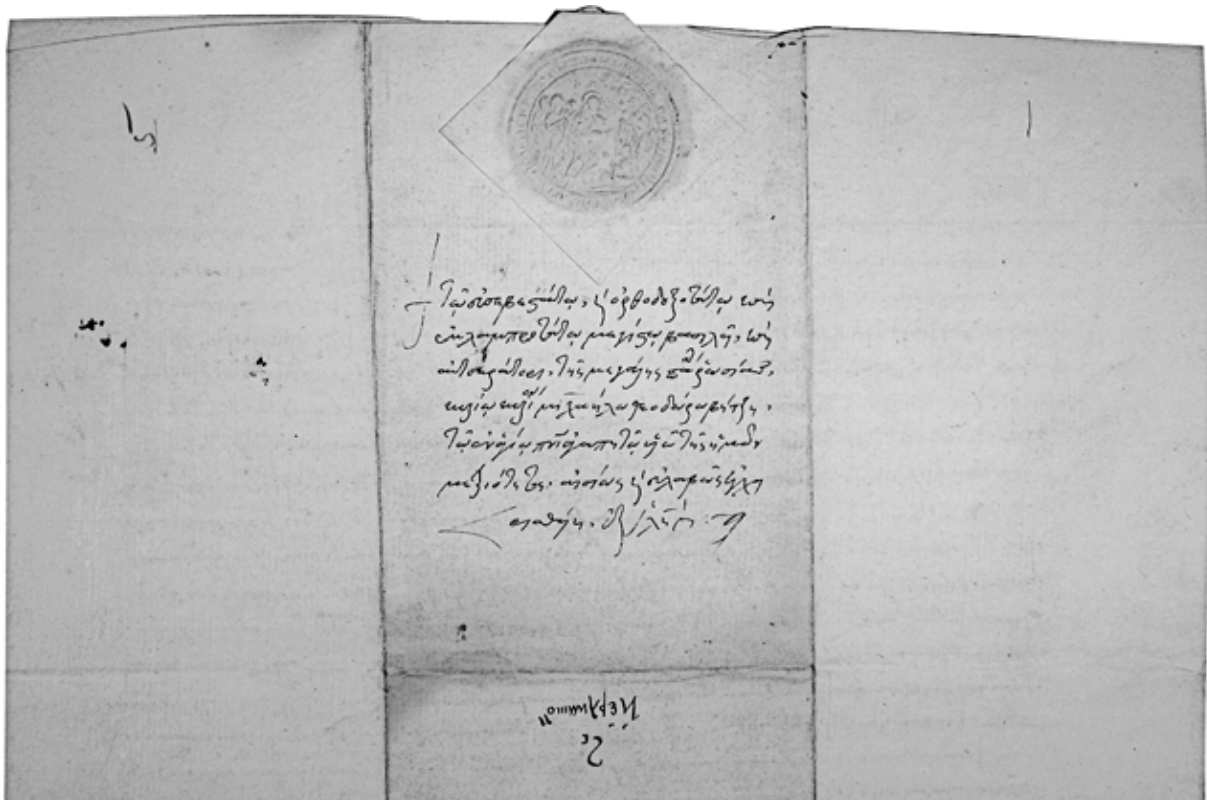


Fig. 8. The charter of Patriarch Theophanes of Jerusalem, 1625. RGADA, Moscow.

was also used for the charter of 1644 sent by Patriarch Theophanes to the Moscow tsar with Greek George. Unfortunately, the seal under the paper guard on this charter is lost (probably, it was cut off by someone)¹². In the following year, 1645, “the charter of the Jerusalem Patriarch to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich from Archdeakon Makarius, informing about the confirmation of Jerusalem Patriarch Theophanes, and about a prisoner, priest Larion, on whose ransom the Patriarch used his money, and about refund of which he is asking”¹³ was received in Moscow. The verso has a note from 21 May, 1645 made by a scribe of the Ambassadorial Chamber. The face side has the ink seal (1,7 cm in diameter) on the left side at the top of the leaf; the seal bears an image of the dove with stretched wings and nimbus, on both sides of which, against the black background, the white letters “Θ” “Π” “Ι” (Feofan= Theophanes, the Patriarch of Jerusalem) are visible. At the bottom of the charter, to the right from the signature of the Patriarch, there is the red wax seal under the figured paper guard. Its approximate diameter is 4,5 cm. Though the



Fig. 9. The seal with Anastasis on the charter of Patriarch Theophanes of Jerusalem 1625. RGADA, Moscow.

seal is slightly damaged and the inscription is illegible, there are no doubts that the same seal-matrix, as for the charter of 1625, was used here again. Thus, the discussed charters of the Jerusalem Patriarch Theophanes indicate that for several decades the Patriarch used the same seal stamp with the representation of the scene of “Anastasis” with the images of two Old Testament’s kings on one side, and Adam and Eve on the other side. The

¹² RGADA, fond 52, opis’ 2-1644, delo 222.

¹³ It is the title of file - RGADA, fond 52, opis’ 2-1645, delo 230.

inscription mentions “the Holy city of Jerusalem.” The silver box for the seal of the 1619/1629 charter crafted by the Moscow masters bears the inscription almost identical to the patriarchal seal, but the small changes were added to the iconography of the “Anastasis” scene.

The seal-matrix of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher from the Hermitage collection has some differences in the inscription (that is natural) and in the iconography of the “Anastasis”. In particular, each group flanked Jesus Christ has three figures, not two, as in the seal of Patriarch Theophanes. Adam and Eve are shown on the opposite sides, and both of them are kneeling. Furthermore, the comparison of the Hermitage seal and the patriarchal seals under paper guards in the charters of 1619-1645 allows us to conclude that the Hermitage seal and the seal-matrix used by Theophanes for his charters were made around the same time, and even in the same workshop between 1606 and 1619. Though there is still some room for discussion about the geographical location of the workshop, more likely it was Istanbul-Constantinople famous for its silversmiths and jewelers (Pitarakis, Merantzias 2006). We cannot exclude the possibility that the seal-matrixes for the Jerusalem Patriarch were crafted in the Holy City of Jerusalem, this assumption, however, has little basis. In the beginning of the 17th century Jerusalem was a provincial city with the poorly developed handicraft infrastructure. It is more logical to believe that Jerusalem patriarchs, who had a possibility to visit Istanbul-Constantinople and stay there for a long time, could order the personal patriarchal seal and seals of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher from the famous Istanbul craftsmen, especially, if we take into account that the most skillful jewelers there were Greeks.

In our opinion it is more likely that Theophanes’ seal was made in Istanbul-Constantinople, in the same workshop as the seal of the Hermitage Museum discussed in this article.

An example of a work of Istanbul craftsmen is the silver box for the hanging seal on the charter of May of 1682 by the Jerusalem Patriarch Dosipheus about the release Nikon from his duties as Patriarch (fig. 10). Its gilded silver box, judging by its spoon-like shape and floral décor, undoubtedly belongs to the work of the Istanbul-Constantinople masters. According to the text of the charter, it was made in Constantinople that

confirms the location of a workshop (Греческие документы 1995, 62) The Jerusalem patriarchs of the second half of the 17th century used for their charter a different seal-matrix. It was much greater in diameter and more complex by its composition: the “Anastasis” occupied the center place; it was surrounded by the representation of the Twelve Feasts, with a legend in Greek run along the outer border. The composition of the central scene, “Anastasis -The Descend into Hell” is given in more detailed version than in the seal of Patriarch Theophanes and in the Hermitage seal: Jesus Christ is shown enface, flanked by four characters from the Old Testament. Such a seal was used for their charters the Jerusalem Patriarch Paisius (two charters of 1655: Ченцова 2004, 77-93, прим. 9, 10)¹⁴ and Patriarch Dosipheus (the charter of 1693: Греческие документы 1995, 63).

Thus, I would like to repeat that in my opinion somewhat between 1606 and 1619 Patriarch Theophanes of Jerusalem ordered in Istanbul-Constantinople, in the same jewelry workshop, two bronze seals for stamping the documents. Both seals had the carved scene Anastasis with almost identical iconography. Inscriptions encircling the scene, however, varied.

An inscription on the personal seal reads: «+ Η ΑΝΑΤΑΚΙΣ ΤΟΥ Κ(ΥΡΙΟΥ) Υ ΗΜΩΝ Ι[ησο]Υ Χ[ριστο]Υ ΤΗΣ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΠΟΛΕΩΣ ΙΕΡΟΣΟΛΥΜΩΝ» (The Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus of the Holy City of Jerusalem). An inscription on the Hermitage seal reads: «+ Η ΑΝΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ ΤΟΥ Κ(ΥΡΙΟΥ)Ψ ΗΜΩΝ Ι(ησο)Ψ Χ(ριστο)Ψ ΚΑΙ ΖΩΟΔΟΧΟΥ ΤΑΦΥ» (The Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus seal of the True Holy Sepulcher) that attests that it was the seal of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This seemingly insignificant difference in the carved inscriptions has great importance. The ownership of these two seals by Patriarch Theophanes gave him the possibility to handle the property and finances not only those that belonged to the Jerusalem Patriarchate but also those that belonged to (and to some degree independent from the Patriarchate) the Brotherhood of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Meanwhile, the monetary funds and estate of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher were bigger than financial resources of the Patriarch. Many

¹⁴With error about the subject in the centre of seal. Vera Chencova said that it is the image of the Transfiguration, but the seal has the image of the Anastasis in it.



Fig. 10. The charter of May of 1682 by the Jerusalem Patriarch Dosiphueus about the permission to honor of Patriarch Nikon. RGADA, Moscow.

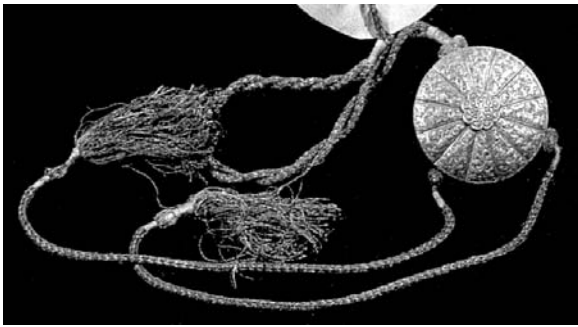


Fig. 11. The silver box of the charter of Patriarch Dosipheus, 1682. RGADA, Moscow.

noble pilgrims donated their lands, houses, and valuables specifically to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It is known that the Church owned the sizeable property in Moldova and Walachia. In order to legitimately and legally use funds collected from these estates while travelling, the Je-

rusalem Patriarch needed the resolution stamped by the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulcher. Since the members of the Brotherhood were usually in the Patriarch's retinue, it was not difficult to secure the necessary conclusion. And the own seal of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher kept by the Patriarch or by his secretary added legitimacy to it. Exactly this kind of a seal became a subject of our study.

The seal matrix of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher from the Hermitage collection discussed in this article is a rather rare object in the museum collections of Russia, and is of significant interest for the history of Oriental Christian art of the post-Byzantine period. The main goal of this publication is the correct attribution of the seal's type, purpose, and date, and we hope that it will spur further scholarly interest and comprehensive analysis of this valuable seal.

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Sigiliul Bisericii Sfântului Mormânt (sec. XVII) din patrimoniul Muzeului Ermitaj, Sankt Petersburg

Rezumat

Articolul este consacrat unui mic medalion metalic cu scena „Coborârea în iad” gravată și cu o inscripție circulară în greacă, din colecțiile Ermitajului. Cercetătorul de la Muzeul Ermitaj, Vera Zaleskaia, a scris și a publicat mai multe articole despre această piesă, considerând că ea reprezintă „capacul unei pixide adus de un pelerin din Ierusalim, care putea fi utilizat ca matriță pentru reproducerea elogiilor”. Această interpretare fantastică, Vera Zaleskaia a considerat necesar să o repete și să o publice în Catalogul expoziției consacrate aniversării a 150-a de la nașterea academicianului Nikolai Lihaciov. Tocmai respectiva intenție l-a determinat pe Iu. Piatnițki să scrie în 2011 un articol consacrat acestei piese și altor două identice, dar într-o nouă interpretare. Studiind documentele grecești în Arhiva Actelor Vechi din Moscova, autorul a observat că ștampilele imprimare pe gramotele patriarhilor din Ierusalim după tipologie, iconografie și inscripții sunt foarte asemănătoare cu piesa muzeală menționată. Continuând cercetările în această direcție, autorul a adunat argumente solide pentru atribuirea acestei piese ca sigiliu al Frăției (Asociației) Bisericii Sfântului Mormânt din Ierusalim. Compararea cu gramotele primului pătrar al veacului XVII ale patriarhului Teofan al Ierusalimului a permis autorului să expună ipoteza despre executarea sigiliului dat la Constantinopol, la comanda acestui patriarh, înaintea călătoriei sale la Moscova pentru înscăunarea patriarhului Moscovei Filaret, tatăl țarului rus Mihail Romanov. Timpul executării poate fi determinat ca primul pătrar al secolului XVII, după analogie cu ștampila personală a patriarhului Teofan.

Lista ilustrațiilor:

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Fig. 3. Sigiliu, revers, Ermitaj, nr. inv. w-1101.
Fig. 4. Sigiliu. Muchie cu tăietură cruciformă, Ermitaj, nr. inv. w-1101.
Fig. 5. Gramota patriarhului Teofan al Ierusalimului privind înscăunarea lui Filaret Nikitici Romanov, patriarh al Moscovei, anii 1619-1629, RGADA, Moscova.
Fig. 6. Garnitura de argint de protecție a gramotei patriarhului Teofan al Ierusalimului, anii 1619-1629, RGADA, Moscova.
Fig. 7. Hrisov al țarului, de danie, 1630, Mănăstirea Sfânta Ecaterina, Sinai, Egipt.
Fig. 8. Gramota patriarhului Teofan al Ierusalimului, 1625, RGADA, Moscova.
Fig. 9. Sigiliul cu scena „Coborârea în iad” pe gramota patriarhului Teofan al Ierusalimului, 1625, RGADA, Moscova.
Fig. 10. Gramota patriarhului Dositei al Ierusalimului din mai 1682 despre detronarea patriarhului Nikon, RGADA, Moscova.
Fig. 11. Garnitura de argint de protecție a gramotei patriarhului Dositei, 1682, RGADA, Moscova.

Печать Храма Гроба Господня 17 века из собрания Государственного Эрмитажа, Санкт-Петербург

Резюме

Статья посвящена небольшому металлическому медальону с гравированной сценой «Сошествие во ад» и греческой надписью по кругу в собрании Государственного Эрмитажа. Этот предмет был несколько раз опубликован научным сотрудником Эрмитажа Верой Залеской, как «крышечка пиксиды, привезенной паломником из Иерусалима, которая в свою очередь могла использоваться как матрица для воспроизведения евлогий». Эта фантастическая интерпретация была ею повторена в нескольких публикациях и её она вновь хотела публиковать в каталоге выставки, посвященной 150-летию со дня рождения академика Николая Лихачева. Именно последнее побудило меня написать в 2011 г. специальную статью с другой интерпретацией этого предмета и двух других аналогичных ему. Изучая греческие документы в Архиве Древних Актов в Москве я обратил внимание, что печати, оттиснутые на грамотах Иерусалимских патриархов чрезвычайно похожи на предмет из Эрмитажа по типологии, по иконографии и по надписи. Продолжив исследование в этом направлении, я собрал веские аргументы для атрибуции изучаемого предмета как печати Братства Иерусалимского Храма Гроба Господня XVII века. Сравнение с грамотами первой четверти XVII в. Иерусалимского патриарха Феофана позволило высказать предположение об изготовлении этой печати в Константинополе именно по заказу этого патриарха перед его поездкой в Россию для поставления Московским патриархом Филарета Никитича, отца царя Михаила Романова. Время изготовления может быть определено, как первая четверть XVII в. по аналогии с личной печатью патриарха Феофана.

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